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SELECTIONS FROM WORDSWORTH.

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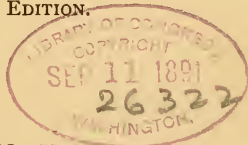
BY

A. J. GEORGE, M.A.,

INSTRUCTOR IN ENGLISH LITERATURE AND HISTORY IN
NEWTON (MASS.) HIGH SCHOOL.

Blessings be with them, and eternal praise,
Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler cares —
The Poets, who on earth have made us heirs
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays.

SECOND EDITION.



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To My Wife.

IN MEMORY OF HOURS WITH WORDSWORTH
AT THE ENGLISH LAKES.

•

P R E F A C E.

IF it be true that ancient literature concerned itself largely with Nature, and mediæval with ideas of God, surely the literature of the modern world has neglected neither of these great subjects, but has united them with a third, — the character of man, his origin, his present condition, and his future destiny. Again, while in the earlier periods man was a creature of the present and lived in the senses, and in the Middle Ages he was oblivious of the present and looked only to the securing of a peaceful future, now he considers the present in its relation to the future, and views life as one and continuous, having no abrupt changes or limitations.

Views of the place of man in the Divine plan, which prevail now among the most thoughtful, are more consistent with the spirit of Christianity than those which were held heretofore. To what is this due? I believe that it is quite as much the result of the transparent Christian character, the beautiful sympathy, and the catholic fraternity of those who have influenced literary taste, as to the founding of systems of philosophy or theology. While modern science has often

assumed the truth of conclusions which have seemed atheistic, it has been confronted, not with theoretical commonplace, but with moral life ; and when it has attempted to account for this, and it has failed to find in its laboratory apparatus sufficiently delicate to test spirit, motive, life, men have concluded that its philosophy was not *final* after all.

The struggle of this century has been between the advocates of blind force — worshippers at the altar of an eternal *It* — and the disciples of Intelligent Free Causation, with results by no means discouraging to the latter. It is in aid of faith that literature has contributed its best efforts, and in it we find that trinity of God, Man, and Nature which appeals to the imagination, the heart, and the conscience ; its motive has been to free, arouse, dilate.

A companionship with those who have been foremost in the application of ideas to life will assist us in dispelling those illusions which tend to refine away the personality of man, and attempt to account for consciousness in terms of physics, destroying the unity both of the world and of the mind.

The connection between literature and life is vital ; and what we need is not acquisition and information, so much as inspiration and illumination — a consciousness of mental and moral power which can see clearly and feel deeply. By living in vital relation to such writers as have furnished the literature of power, and feeling the force of their clear and pure spirituality, we attain that attitude of mind in which we are able to receive faithful impressions, and to make true observations. When the heart of the reader beats in sympathy with the heart of the writer, both the sense and beauty

of the work become apparent. But this mental attitude is one of the rarest in the history of criticism; it requires patience and fortitude, a willingness to use all the faculties of our nature, and then abide the result without exercising a prurient curiosity, or becoming anxious lest we be not able to formulate the method.

In the matter of literary criticism we need to guard against those scientific methods which assume that culture is mainly a thing of the head, and that the interpretation of literature is a thing to be acquired by the same methods as the ability to demonstrate Euclid. An age of speculation is not an age of faith, nor is an age of criticism an age of creation. A system has prevailed by which the critic is constituted a supreme judge, who, sitting apart, without sympathy or reverence, is to pronounce sentence upon the culprit who has dared to violate the judicial standard. In his charge he uses those maxims and doctrines which have become the commonest furniture of the commonest minds; he pronounces the style obscure, affected, or classical, the method involved, and the matter puerile or unintelligible, but does not explain what he means by these terms; 'if he would only give us the law by which we might be prevented from writing or speaking anything that is not simple, natural, and manly' what a blessing he would confer! Our disciples of this inner temple of formalism ply their trade and insist upon a microscopical analysis, a fine sifting of word and phrase, a delicate classification of figure, and a comparative anatomy of form; while the student, who may not taste a flower till it have yielded up its sweets a prelibation to this pedant's idol, seeing that his

knowledge is purchased by the loss of power, votes the author dull and the study of literature a bore : —

“ For this unnatural growth the trainer blame,
Pity the tree.”

It was at the bar of such criticism that Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott, Tennyson, and Browning were condemned. Now if the history of art has decided anything, it is that an attitude of mental receptivity is what enables one to sympathize, to grasp a work as an organic whole, and to understand the law governing the combination of phenomena which produced the supreme total effect.

Maurice, one of the most sympathetic and catholic men of this century, says : “ Let us try to *know* what an author says before we proceed to classify or to pass sentence upon him. It is wonderful how much our faculties of discernment will grow and unfold themselves if we begin by throwing all our notions about style overboard, and simply come to be taught why this author spoke in this way, and that in another ; why this was significant of him and of the time in which he lived, and another belonged to a person who lived in a different time and who had another work.”

It is by vital energy of soul projected into their works that the poets have moved men.

Wordsworth, “ a severe but genial critic,” was the first to insist that each new genius, each new personality, should be judged by new canons applicable to him alone, and that every artist must create the taste by which he is to be appreciated. For this he was roundly abused ; his prefaces were

called "stuff and nonsense ;" but the truth he uttered has, nevertheless, become one of the established canons of criticism.

It is not worth while for us to spend our time with those authors who have made literature a trade or a profession ; life is too short for us to stand listening to those who do not recognize that "the life is more than meat," and that the rise and fall of books obey the same law now as thousands of years ago, — the degree in which they bear witness to the grand truth of the priceless value of every human soul, rather than to what is distinctive of a particular class.

A distinguished living poet and critic,¹ after asking whether literature, under the present ideas of life and education, will on the whole be an enemy to luxury and an inspirer of virtue, or an ally of materialism and a pander to vice, says : "There is not a rural village, nor a mighty city, the peace of which will not one day depend upon the answer time must make to this question."

In these times of "storm and stress," as the Germans say, of handicrafts and trades and mechanical marvels, of rapid reading of newspapers, reviews, and periodicals, it may seem presumption to insist upon any degree of literary culture for the majority ; they must be left to their newspapers and reviews, which are so much better than those their fathers had. Now the objection to this *laissez faire* theory is that they are thus left entirely ignorant of that personal element in literature which constitutes its very life ; they are in intercourse with an infinite *We*, for which it is impossible to form

¹ Aubrey de Vere.

an intimate friendship. Now the power of personality, of exalted manhood, has everywhere stamped its impress upon the masterpieces of literature ; and a true appreciation of these indicates a moral earnestness, a disposition to seek "the best that has been thought and said in the world," and this is what we mean by culture.

This work has been a labor of love, for as I have come under the power of Wordsworth's strong and pure personality — whether in the sacred associations of the class-room, in the solitude of the study, or in the inspiring and recreating atmosphere of his beloved Lake-land — he has spoken as a friend and companion, not as from some lofty and far-off sphere of perfected manhood, but from the common highway of duty and responsibility, cheering with the *God-speed* of one who has faced the same trials and wrestled with the same problems that beset our common humanity ; and best of all, he encourages with the faith which comes to one who lives ever in the light of high endeavor.

It is encouraging to notice the position that English studies are occupying in our best schools and colleges : it is one indication of the return to that ideal and spiritual philosophy taught by Wordsworth, Coleridge, Tennyson, and Browning, Newman, Robertson, Kingsley, and Maurice, — a philosophy in which the facts of human experience were interpreted and referred to an order and a world beyond that which the senses can reveal. They have looked at life steadily and as a whole, and have given to the world ideas which are broader, deeper, and more consistent than those of a materialistic philosophy ; representing no system of education or school of

morals, they have taught that all education is a failure which does not develop an eye to see and a heart to feel moral, artistic, and intellectual excellence. While the professional moralists and the doctrinaires have been formulating what the world should think and believe, these earnest men, by the simplicity and sincerity of their lives, have brought the truths of God and the beauties of heaven to the deeper heart of the young men of this generation.

The clear, pure voice of these poets and prophets continues to be heard above the incessant din of our modern Babylon, calling upon men to live the life of the spirit; to leave the dispute of words for the discernment of things, and declaring that not a syllable of God's infinite language can be understood without a deed.

“ All that is, at all,
Lasts ever, past recall ;
Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure ;
What entered into thee,
That was, is, and shall be ;
Time's wheel runs back or stops ; Potter and clay endure.”

These Selections have been chosen after some experience in their use with classes, and are, it is hoped, the best representative of the poet's work. If they had been limited to those poems which represent his best work, the plan of exhibiting the growth of Wordsworth's mind and art could not have been realized. Wordsworth more than most poets needs careful, and even reverential, study; he wrote so much, and his work extends over so many years, that one needs to be familiar with the best product of each period of his work — dawn, mid-day, and sunset — in order to appreciate the beauty

and the variety, the breadth and the intensity, of his contributions to literature.

Professor Shairp has said that a thorough and appreciative commentary, which should open avenues to the study of Wordsworth, and render accessible his imaginative heights and his meditative depths, would be a boon to the younger part of this generation. With the hope of contributing something to the accomplishment of such a result the *Prelude* was published; a familiarity with that great poem is essential to a proper understanding of the influences which did so much to shape Wordsworth's career. The reception that was accorded that work has encouraged me to fulfil the promise then made, that it would be followed by other of his works. Most of the work was done in the delightful surroundings of the Lake country, and nothing has been omitted which it was thought would add to the understanding or the appreciation of the poems. Wordsworth's interpreters have been for the most part wise and prudent, and the homage which they have paid him has been worthy both of them and of him.

I am greatly indebted to Mr. Aubrey de Vere, who, with Professor Shairp and Matthew Arnold, has merited the gratitude of all lovers of poetry in general and of Wordsworth's poetry in particular. His kindness in reviewing the list of poems selected, his thoughtful suggestions, and his sympathy and encouragement have added not a little to the pleasure of my work.

The chronological order has been followed as the only suitable one. The Sonnets have been grouped by themselves, as it is often desirable to make a study of sonnet literature,

and Wordsworth's Sonnets illustrate a special and distinct phase of this work, and are extensive enough to be considered separately.

The text adopted is in every case the poet's last revision.

As regards annotation, an attempt has been made to suggest and stimulate rather than to complete. Wordsworth's own notes dictated to Miss Fenwick are especially helpful; these are given for the most part in full. Whenever it has seemed that a description of the scene connected with a given poem would shed light upon it, I have not hesitated to introduce it.

In regard to the use to be made of the notes in class, I would say that with the exception of the poet's own, which are in the main historical, they should be supplementary, *never* introductory. The pupil should in every case by careful reading and afterthought form his own ideas first; for it would be better that he should disagree with every interpretation in the notes, than that he should substitute one of them in place of his own thought. Burke says that the method of teaching which approaches most nearly to the method of investigation is incomparably the best.

This work is based upon the idea that we should keep close to those writers who have enriched the tone and expanded the compass of our literature. Is it any wonder that there is an escape from the dry class drudgery in "Elegant Extracts" and "Gems of Poetry" to the forbidden fruit of sentimental novel writers, after the mind has been conducted through the thousand and one writers with no time to rest with any? Professor Dowden says: "To submit our-

selves to as many masters as may be counted on the fingers of one hand is as much as can really be accomplished in a lifetime."

From the Memoirs of the Poet, and the critical notes in the third volume of his Prose Works, I have taken much of the material herein contained. To the excellent edition of the poems of Wordsworth by Professor Knight, I am indebted for the notes from hitherto unpublished Journals.

To the late Mrs. William Wordsworth, of the Stepping Stones, Ambleside, whose sickness and death saddened my last visit to the Lakes, I am indebted for both information and encouragement.

Of the dates at the head of each poem, the first refers to the year of composition, the second to the year of publication.

This work will be followed by *The Excursion* and *The White Doe of Rylstone*.

A. J. G.

BROOKLINE, MASS.,
August, 1889.

NOTE TO SECOND EDITION.

THE "Reverie of Poor Susan," which was by mistake omitted from the first edition, will be found upon page 296.

A. J. G.

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SELECTIONS FROM WORDSWORTH.

SELECTIONS FROM WORDSWORTH.



EXTRACT

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

1786.—1815.

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

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

10

LINES

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

1795. — 1798.

NAY, Traveller ! rest. This lonely Yew-tree stands
Far from all human dwelling : what if here
No sparkling rivulet spread the verdant herb ?
What if the bee love not these barren boughs ?
Yet if the wind breathe soft, the curling waves
That break against the shore shall lull thy mind
By one soft impulse saved from vacancy.

————— Who he was
That piled these stones and with the mossy sod
First covered, and here taught this aged Tree 10
With its dark arms to form a circling bower,
I well remember. — He was one who owned
No common soul. In youth by science nursed,
And led by nature into a wild scene
Of lofty hopes, he to the world went forth
A favored Being, knowing no desire
Which genius did not hallow ; 'gainst the taint
Of dissolute tongues, and jealousy, and hate,
And scorn, — against all enemies prepared,
All but neglect. The world, for so it thought, 20
Owed him no service ; wherefore he at once
With indignation turned himself away,
And with the food of pride sustained his soul

In solitude. — Stranger ! these gloomy boughs
 Had charms for him ; and here he loved to sit,
 His only visitants a straggling sheep,
 The stone-chat, or the glancing sand-piper :
 And on these barren rocks, with fern and heath,
 And juniper and thistle sprinkled o'er,
 Fixing his downcast eye, he many an hour 30
 A morbid pleasure nourished, tracing here
 An emblem of his own unfruitful life :
 And lifting up his head, he then would gaze
 On the more distant scene, — how lovely 't is
 Thou seest, — and he would gaze till it became
 Far lovelier, and his heart could not sustain
 The beauty, still more beauteous ! Nor that time,
 When Nature had subdued him to herself,
 Would he forget those beings to whose minds,
 Warm from the labors of benevolence, 40
 The world and human life appeared a scene
 Of kindred loveliness : then he would sigh,
 Inly disturbed, to think that others felt
 What he must never feel : and so, lost Man !
 On visionary views would fancy feed,
 Till his eye streamed with tears. In this deep vale
 He died, — this seat his only monument.

If thou be one whose heart the holy forms
 Of young imagination have kept pure,
 Stranger ! henceforth be warned ; and know that pride, 50
 Howe'er disguised in its own majesty,
 Is littleness ; that he who feels contempt
 For any living thing, hath faculties

Which he has never used ; that thought with him
 Is in its infancy. The man whose eye
 Is ever on himself doth look on one,
 The least of Nature's works, one who might move
 The wise man to that scorn which wisdom holds
 Unlawful ever. Oh, be wiser, thou !
 Instructed that true knowledge leads to love ; 60
 True dignity abides with him alone
 Who, in the silent hour of inward thought,
 Can still suspect, and still revere himself,
 In lowliness of heart.



WE ARE SEVEN.

1798. — 1798.

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

I met a little cottage Girl :
 She was eight years old, she said ;
 Her hair was thick with many a curl
 That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,
 And she was wildly clad : 10
 Her eyes were fair, and very fair ;
 — Her beauty made me glad.

“Sisters and brothers, little Maid,
How many may you be?”
“How many? Seven in all,” she said,
And wondering looked at me.

“And where are they? I pray you tell.”
She answered, “Seven are we ;
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea. 20

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

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

Then did the little Maid reply,
“Seven boys and girls are we ; 30
Two of us in the church-yard lie,
Beneath the church-yard tree.”

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

“Their graves are green, they may be seen,”
The little Maid replied,

“Twelve steps or more from my mother’s door,
And they are side by side. 40

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

“And often after sunset, Sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there.

“The first that died was sister Jane ;
In bed she moaning lay, 50
Till God released her of her pain ;
And then she went away.

“So in the church-yard she was laid ;
And when the grass was dry,
Together round her grave we played,
My brother John and I.

“And when the ground was white with snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go,
And he lies by her side.” 60

“How many are you, then,” said I,
“If they two are in heaven ?”
Quick was the little Maid’s reply,
“O master ! we are seven.”

“ But they are dead ; those two are dead !
Their spirits are in Heaven ! ”
’T was throwing words away ; for still
The little Maid would have her will,
And said, “ Nay, we are seven ! ”



SIMON LEE, THE OLD HUNTSMAN ;

WITH AN INCIDENT IN WHICH HE WAS CONCERNED,

1798. — 1798.

In the sweet shire of Cardigan,
Not far from pleasant Ivor-hall,
An old Man dwells, a little man, —
’T is said he once was tall.
Full five-and-thirty years he lived
A running huntsman merry ;
And still the centre of his cheek
Is red as a ripe cherry.

No man like him the horn could sound,
And hill and valley rang with glee
When Echo banded round and round
The halloo of Simon Lee.
In those proud days, he little cared
For husbandry or tillage ;
To blither tasks did Simon rouse
The sleepers of the village.

He all the country could outrun,
 Could leave both man and horse behind ;
 And often, ere the chase was done,
 He reeled, and was stone-blind. 20
 And still there 's something in the world
 At which his heart rejoices ;
 For when the chiming hounds are out,
 He dearly loves their voices !

But, oh the heavy change ! — bereft
 Of health, strength, friends, and kindred, see !
 Old Simon to the world is left
 In liveried poverty.
 His Master 's dead, — and no one now
 Dwells in the Hall of Ivor ; 30
 Men, dogs, and horses, all are dead ;
 He is the sole survivor.

And he is lean and he is sick ;
 His body, dwindled and awry,
 Rests upon ankles swollen and thick ;
 His legs are thin and dry.
 One prop he has, and only one :
 His wife, an aged woman,
 Lives with him, near the waterfall,
 Upon the village Common. 40

Beside their moss-grown hut of clay,
 Not twenty paces from the door,
 A scrap of land they have, but they
 Are poorest of the poor.

This scrap of land he from the heath
Enclosed when he was stronger ;
But what to them avails the land
Which he can till no longer ?

Oft, working by her husband's side,
Ruth does what Simon cannot do ; 50
For she, with scanty cause for pride,
Is stouter of the two.
And though you with your utmost skill
From labor could not wean them,
'T is little, very little — all
That they can do between them.

Few months of life has he in store,
As he to you will tell,
For still, the more he works, the more
Do his weak ankles swell. 60
My gentle Reader, I perceive
How patiently you 've waited,
And now I fear that you expect
Some tale will be related.

O Reader ! had you in your mind
Such stores as silent thought can bring,
O gentle Reader ! you would find
A tale in everything.
What more I have to say is short,
And you must kindly take it : 70
It is no tale ; but, should you *think*,
Perhaps a tale you 'll make it.

One summer day I chanced to see
This old Man doing all he could
To unearth the root of an old tree,
A stump of rotten wood.
The mattock tottered in his hand ;
So vain was his endeavor,
That at the root of the old tree
He might have worked forever.

80

“ You ’re overtasked, good Simon Lee,
Give me your tool,” to him I said ;
And at the word right gladly he
Received my proffered aid.
I struck, and with a single blow
The tangled root I severed,
At which the poor old Man so long
And vainly had endeavored.

The tears into his eyes were brought,
And thanks and praises seemed to run
So fast out of his heart, I thought
They never would have done.
— I ’ve heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds
With coldness still returning ;
Alas ! the gratitude of men
Hath oftener left me mourning.

90

LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING.

1798. — 1798.

I HEARD a thousand blended notes,
While in a grove I sate reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran ;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths ;
And 't is my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

10

The birds around me hopped and played,
Their thoughts I cannot measure : —
But the least motion which they made,
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,
To catch the breezy air ;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

20

If this belief from Heaven be sent,
 If such be Nature's holy plan,
 Have I not reason to lament
 What man has made of man?



TO MY SISTER.

1798. — 1798.

It is the first mild day of March :
 Each minute sweeter than before,
 The redbreast sings from the tall larch
 That stands beside our door.

There is a blessing in the air,
 Which seems a sense of joy to yield
 To the bare trees, and mountains bare,
 And grass in the green field.

My Sister ! ('t is a wish of mine)
 Now that our morning meal is done,
 Make haste, your morning task resign ;
 Come forth and feel the sun.

10

Edward will come with you — and, pray,
 Put on with speed your woodland dress ;
 And bring no book : for this one day
 We 'll give to idleness.

No joyless forms shall regulate
Our living calendar :
We from to-day, my Friend, will date
The opening of the year. 20

Love, now a universal birth,
From heart to heart is stealing,
From earth to man, from man to earth :
— It is the hour of feeling.

One moment now may give us more
Than years of toiling reason :
Our minds shall drink at every pore
The spirit of the season.

Some silent laws our hearts will make,
Which they shall long obey : 30
We for the year to come may take
Our temper from to-day.

And from the blessed power that rolls
About, below, above,
We 'll frame the measure of our souls :
They shall be tuned to love.

Then come, my Sister ! come, I pray,
With speed put on your woodland dress ;
— And bring no book : for this one day
We 'll give to idleness. 40

EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY.

1798. — 1798.

“ WHY, William, on that old gray stone,
 Thus for the length of half a day,
 Why, William, sit you thus alone,
 And dream your time away ?

“ Where are your books ? — that light bequeathed
 To beings else forlorn and blind !
 Up ! up ! and drink the spirit breathed
 From dead men to their kind.

“ You look round on your Mother Earth,
 As if she for no purpose bore you ; 10
 As if you were her first-born birth,
 And none had lived before you ! ”

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,
 When life was sweet, I knew not why,
 To me my good friend Matthew spake,
 And thus I made reply :

“ The eye — it cannot choose but see ;
 We cannot bid the ear be still ;
 Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
 Against or with our will. 20

“ Nor less I deem that there are Powers
Which of themselves our minds impress ;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness.

“ Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum
Of things forever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come,
But we must still be seeking?

“ — Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,
Conversing as I may,
I sit upon this old gray stone,
And dream my time away.”

30



THE TABLES TURNED :

AN EVENING SCENE ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

1798. — 1798.

UP! up! my Friend, and quit your books ;
Or surely you 'll grow double :
Up! up! my Friend, and clear your looks ;
Why all this toil and trouble ?

The sun, above the mountain's head,
A freshening lustre mellow
Through all the long green fields has spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books ! 't is a dull and endless strife :
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music ! on my life,
There 's more of wisdom in it. 10

And hark ! how blithe the throstle sings !
He, too, is no mean preacher :
Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless —
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness. 20

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings ;
Our meddling intellect
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things : —
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art ;
Close up those barren leaves ;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives. 30

LINES,

COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN ABBEY, ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE WYE DURING A TOUR, JULY 13, 1798.

1798. — 1798.

FIVE years have passed ; five summers, with the length
 Of five long winters ! and again I hear
 These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
 With a soft inland murmur. — Once again
 Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
 That on a wild secluded scene impress
 Thoughts of more deep seclusion ; and connect
 The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
 The day is come when I again repose
 Here, under this dark sycamore, and view 10
 These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts,
 Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,
 Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
 'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see
 These hedge-rows, — hardly hedge-rows, little lines
 Of sportive wood run wild : these pastoral farms,
 Green to the very door ; and wreaths of smoke
 Sent up, in silence, from among the trees,
 With some uncertain notice, as might seem
 Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods, 20
 Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire
 The Hermit sits alone.

These beautiful forms,
 Through a long absence, have not been to me

As is a landscape to a blind man's eye :
 But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
 Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
 In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
 Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart,
 And passing even into my purer mind,
 With tranquil restoration ; — feelings too 30
 Of unremembered pleasure : such, perhaps,
 As have no slight or trivial influence
 On that best portion of a good man's life,
 His little, nameless, unremembered acts
 Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
 To them I may have owed another gift,
 Of aspect more sublime, — that blessed mood,
 In which the burthen of the mystery,
 In which the heavy and the weary weight 40
 Of all this unintelligible world
 Is lightened, — that serene and blessed mood
 In which the affections gently lead us on, —
 Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
 And even the motion of our human blood
 Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
 In body, and become a living soul ;
 While with an eye made quiet by the power
 Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
 We see into the life of things.

If this

Be but a vain belief, yet, oh ! how oft — 50
 In darkness and amid the many shapes
 Of joyless daylight ; when the fretful stir

Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart —
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
O sylvan Wye ! thou wanderer through the woods,
How often has my spirit turned to thee !

And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,
With many recognitions dim and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity, 60
The picture of the mind revives again :
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first
I came among these hills ; when like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever Nature led : more like a man 70
Flying from something that he dreads, than one
Who sought the thing he loved. For Nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all. — I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion ; the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colors and their forms, were then to me
An appetite ; a feeling and a love, 80
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye. — That time is past,

And all its aching joys are now no more,
 And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
 Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur ; other gifts
 Have followed ; for such loss, I would believe,
 Abundant recompense. For I have learned
 To look on nature, not as in the hour
 Of thoughtless youth ; but hearing oftentimes 90
 The still, sad music of humanity,
 Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
 To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
 A presence that disturbs me with the joy
 Of elevated thoughts ; a sense sublime
 Of something far more deeply interfused,
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
 And the round ocean and the living air,
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of man :
 A motion and a spirit, that impels 100
 All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
 And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
 A lover of the meadows and the woods
 And mountains, and of all that we behold
 From this green earth ; of all the mighty world
 Of eye and ear, — both what they half create,
 And what perceive ; well pleased to recognize
 In Nature and the language of the sense,
 The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
 The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul 110
 Of all my moral being.

Nor perchance,
 If I were not thus taught, should I the more
 Suffer my genial spirits to decay ;

For thou art with me here upon the banks
Of this fair river — thou, my dearest Friend,
My dear, dear Friend ! and in thy voice I catch
The language of my former heart, and read
My former pleasures in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes. Oh ! yet a little while
May I behold in thee what I was once, 120
My dear, dear Sister ! and this prayer I make
Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her ; 't is her privilege
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy : for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all 130
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk ;
And let the misty mountain-winds be free
To blow against thee : and, in after years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
Into a sober pleasure ; when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms, 140
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies ; oh ! then,
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief
Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts

Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
 And these my exhortations ! Nor, perchance —
 If I should be where I no more can hear
 Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams
 Of past existence — wilt thou then forget
 That on the banks of this delightful stream 150
 We stood together ; and that I, so long
 A worshipper of Nature, hither came
 Unwearied in that service : rather say
 With warmer love. — oh ! with far deeper zeal
 Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,
 That after many wanderings, many years
 Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
 And this green pastoral landscape were to me
 More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake !



THE OLD CUMBERLAND BEGGAR.

The Class of Beggars to which the Old Man here described belongs will probably soon be extinct. It consisted of poor, and mostly old and infirm persons, who confined themselves to a stated round in their neighborhood, and had certain fixed days on which, at different houses, they regularly received alms, sometimes in money, but mostly in provisions.

1798. — 1798.

I SAW an aged Beggar in my walk ;
 And he was seated by the highway side,
 On a low structure of rude masonry
 Built at the foot of a huge hill, that they

Who lead their horses down the steep rough road
May thence remount at ease. The aged man
Had placed his staff across the broad smooth stone
That overlays the pile ; and, from a bag
All white with flour, the dole of village dames,
He drew his scraps and fragments, one by one, 10
And scanned them with a fixed and serious look
Of idle computation. In the sun,
Upon the second step of that small pile,
Surrounded by those wild unpeopled hills,
He sat, and ate his food in solitude :
And ever, scattered from his palsied hand,
That, still attempting to prevent the waste,
Was baffled still, the crumbs in little showers
Fell on the ground ; and the small mountain birds,
Not venturing yet to peck their destined meal, 20
Approached within the length of half his staff.

Him from my childhood have I known ; and then
He was so old, he seems not older now.
He travels on, a solitary man,
So helpless in appearance, that for him
The sauntering horseman throws not with a slack
And careless hand his alms upon the ground,
But stops, — that he may safely lodge the coin
Within the old man's hat ; nor quits him so,
But still, when he has given his horse the rein, 30
Watches the aged Beggar with a look
Sidelong, and half-reverted. She who tends
The toll-gate, when in summer at her door
She turns her wheel, if on the road she sees

The aged Beggar coming, quits her work,
 And lifts the latch for him that he may pass.
 The post-boy, when his rattling wheels o'ertake
 The aged Beggar in the woody lane,
 Shouts to him from behind ; and, if thus warned,
 The old man does not change his course, the boy 40
 Turns with less noisy wheels to the roadside,
 And passes gently by, without a curse
 Upon his lips, or anger at his heart.

He travels on, a solitary man ;
 His age has no companion. On the ground
 His eyes are turned, and, as he moves along,
They move along the ground ; and, evermore,
 Instead of common and habitual sight
 Of fields with rural works, of hill and dale
 And the blue sky, one little span of earth 50
 Is all his prospect. Thus, from day to day,
 Bow-bent, his eyes forever on the ground,
 He plies his weary journey ; seeing still,
 And seldom knowing that he sees, some straw,
 Some scattered leaf, or marks which, in one track,
 The nails of cart or chariot-wheel have left
 Impressed on the white road, — in the same line,
 At distance still the same. Poor traveller !
 His staff trails with him ; scarcely do his feet
 Disturb the summer dust ; he is so still 60
 In look and motion that the cottage curs,
 Ere he has passed the door, will turn away,
 Weary of barking at him. Boys and girls,
 The vacant and the busy, maids and youths,

And urchins newly breeched — all pass him by ;
Him even the slow-paced wagon leaves behind.

But deem not this man useless. — Statesmen ! ye
Who are so restless in your wisdom, ye
Who have a broom still ready in your hands
To rid the world of nuisances ; ye proud, 70
Heart-sworn, while in your pride ye contemplate
Your talents, power, or wisdom, deem him not
A burden of the earth ! 'T is Nature's law
That none, the meanest of created things,
Of forms created the most vile and brute,
The dullest or most noxious, should exist
Divorced from good, — a spirit and pulse of good,
A life and soul, to every mode of being
Inseparably linked. Then be assured
'That least of all can aught, that ever owned 80
The heaven-regarding eye and front sublime
Which man is born to, sink, howe'er depressed,
So low as to be scorned without a sin ;
Without offence to God cast out of view,
Like the dry remnant of a garden-flower
Whose seeds are shed, or as an implement
Worn out and worthless. While from door to door
This old man creeps, the villagers in him
Behold a record which together binds
Past deeds and offices of charity, 90
Else unremembered, and so keeps alive
The kindly mood in hearts which lapse of years,
And that half-wisdom half-experience gives,
Make slow to feel, and by sure steps resign

To selfishness and cold oblivious cares.
 Among the farms and solitary huts,
 Hamlets and thinly scattered villages,
 Where'er the aged Beggar takes his round,
 The mild necessity of use compels
 To acts of love, and habit does the work 100
 Of reason, yet prepares that after-joy
 Which reason cherishes. And thus the soul,
 By that sweet taste of pleasure unpursued,
 Doth find herself insensibly disposed
 To virtue and true goodness.

Some there are,
 By their good works exalted, lofty minds
 And meditative, authors of delight
 And happiness, which to the end of time
 Will live, and spread, and kindle : even such minds
 In childhood, from this solitary being, 110
 Or from like wanderer, haply have received
 (A thing more precious far than all that books
 Or the solitudes of love can do !)
 That first mild touch of sympathy and thought,
 In which they found their kindred with a world
 Where want and sorrow were. The easy man
 Who sits at his own door, and, like the pear
 That overhangs his head from the green wall,
 Feeds in the sunshine ; the robust and young,
 The prosperous and unthinking, they who live 120
 Sheltered, and flourish in a little grove
 Of their own kindred, — all behold in him
 A silent monitor, which on their minds
 Must needs impress a transitory thought

Of self-congratulation, to the heart
 Of each recalling his peculiar boons,
 His charters and exemptions ; and, perchance,
 Though he to no one give the fortitude
 And circumspection needful to preserve
 His present blessings, and to husband up 130
 The respite of the season, he, at least,
 And 't is no vulgar service, makes them felt.

Yet further. — Many, I believe, there are
 Who live a life of virtuous decency,
 Men who can hear the Decalogue and feel
 No self-reproach ; who of the moral law
 Established in the land where they abide
 Are strict observers ; and not negligent
 In acts of love to those with whom they dwell,
 Their kindred, and the children of their blood. 140
 Praise be to such, and to their slumbers peace !
 — But of the poor man ask, the abject poor ;
 Go, and demand of him, if there be here,
 In this cold abstinence from evil deeds,
 And these inevitable charities,
 Wherewith to satisfy the human soul?
 No, man is dear to man ; the poorest, poor
 Long for some moments in a weary life
 When they can know and feel that they have been,
 Themselves, the fathers and the dealers-out 150
 Of some small blessings ; have been kind to such
 As needed kindness, for this single cause,
 That we have all of us one human heart.
 — Such pleasure is to one kind being known,

My neighbor, when with punctual care each week,
 Duly as Friday comes, though pressed herself
 By her own wants, she from her store of meal
 Takes one unsparing handful for the scrip
 Of this old mendicant, and from her door
 Returning with exhilarated heart, 160
 Sits by her fire, and builds her hope in heaven.

Then let him pass, a blessing on his head !
 And while, in that vast solitude to which
 The tide of things has borne him, he appears
 To breathe and live but for himself alone,
 Unblamed, uninjured, let him bear about
 The good which the benignant law of Heaven
 Has hung around him ; and while life is his,
 Still let him prompt the unlettered villagers
 To tender offices and pensive thoughts. 170

— Then let him pass, a blessing on his head !
 And long as he can wander, let him breathe
 The freshness of the valleys ; let his blood
 Struggle with frosty air and winter snows ;
 And let the chartered wind that sweeps the heath
 Beat his gray locks against his withered face.
 Reverence the hope whose vital anxiousness
 Gives the last human interest to his heart.
 May never HOUSE, misnamed of INDUSTRY,
 Make him a captive ! — for that pent-up din, 180
 Those life-consuming sounds that clog the air,
 Be his the natural silence of old age !
 Let him be free of mountain solitudes,
 And have around him, whether heard or not,

The pleasant melody of woodland birds.
 Few are his pleasures : if his eyes have now
 Been doomed so long to settle upon earth
 That not without some effort they behold
 The countenance of the horizontal sun,
 Rising or setting, let the light at least 190
 Find a free entrance to their languid orbs.
 And let him, *where* and *when* he will, sit down
 Beneath the trees, or on a grassy bank
 Of highway side, and with the little birds
 Share his chance-gathered meal ; and, finally,
 As in the eye of Nature he has lived,
 So in the eye of Nature let him die !



ANIMAL TRANQUILLITY AND DECAY.

1798. — 1798.

THE little hedge-row birds,
 That peck along the road, regard him not.
 He travels on, and in his face, his step,
 His gait, his one expression, — every limb,
 His look and bending figure, all bespeak
 A man who does not move with pain, but moves
 With thought. He is insensibly subdued
 To settled quiet ; he is one by whom
 All effort seems forgotten ; one to whom
 Long patience hath such mild composure given 10
 That patience now doth seem a thing of which
 He hath no need. He is by Nature led
 To peace so perfect that the young behold
 With envy what the old man hardly feels.

NUTTING.

1799. — 1800.

——— It seems a day
 (I speak of one from many singled out),
 One of those heavenly days that cannot die ;
 When, in the eagerness of boyish hope,
 I left our cottage threshold, sallying forth
 With a huge wallet o'er my shoulders slung,
 A nutting-crook in hand, and turned my step
 Toward some far-distant wood, a figure quaint,
 Tricked out in proud disguise of cast-off weeds,
 Which for that service had been husbanded, 10
 By exhortation of my frugal dame, —
 Motley accoutrement, of power to smile
 At thorns, and brakes, and brambles, and, in truth,
 More ragged than need was ! O'er pathless rocks,
 Through beds of matted fern and tangled thickets,
 Forcing my way, I came to one dear nook
 Unvisited, where not a broken bough
 Drooped with its withered leaves, ungracious sign
 Of devastation ; but the hazels rose
 Tall and erect, with tempting clusters hung, 20
 A virgin scene ! A little while I stood,
 Breathing with such suppression of the heart
 As joy delights in ; and with wise restraint,
 Voluptuous, fearless of a rival, eyed
 The banquet ; or beneath the trees I sate
 Among the flowers, and with the flowers I played, —

A temper known to those who, after long
And weary expectation, have been blest
With sudden happiness beyond all hope.
Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose leaves 30
The violets of five seasons reappear
And fade, unseen by any human eye ;
Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on
Forever ; and I saw the sparkling foam,
And, with my cheek on one of those green stones
That, fleeced with moss, under the shady trees,
Lay round me, scattered like a flock of sheep,
I heard the murmur and the murmuring sound,
In that sweet mood when pleasure loves to pay
Tribute to ease ; and of its joy secure, 40
The heart luxuriates with indifferent things,
Wasting its kindliness on stocks and stones,
And on the vacant air. Then up I rose,
And dragged to earth both branch and bough, with crash
And merciless ravage ; and the shady nook
Of hazels, and the green and mossy bower,
Deformed and sullied, patiently gave up
Their quiet being : and unless I now
Confound my present feelings with the past,
Ere from the mutilated bower I turned 50
Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings,
I felt a sense of pain when I beheld
The silent trees, and saw the intruding sky.
Then, dearest maiden, move along these shades
In gentleness of heart ; with gentle hand
Touch, — for there is a spirit in the woods.

"STRANGE FITS OF PASSION HAVE I KNOWN."

1799. — 1800.

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

When she I loved looked every day
 Fresh as a rose in June,
 I to her cottage bent my way,
 Beneath an evening moon.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,
 All over the wide lea ;
 With quickening pace my horse drew nigh
 Those paths so dear to me.

10

And now we reached the orchard-plot ;
 And as we climbed the hill,
 The sinking moon to Lucy's cot
 Came near, and nearer still.

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

20

My horse moved on ; hoof after hoof
 He raised, and never stopped :
 When down behind the cottage-roof,
 At once, the bright moon dropped.

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



“SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTRODDEN
 WAYS.”

1799. — 1800.

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

A violet by a mossy stone
 Half hidden from the eye !
 — Fair as a star, when only one
 Is shining in the sky.

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

10

"I TRAVELLED AMONG UNKNOWN MEN."

1799. — 1800.

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

'T is past, that melancholy dream !
 Nor will I quit thy shore
 A second time ; for still I seem
 To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel
 The joy of my desire ; 10
 And she I cherished turned her wheel
 Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed,
 The bowers where Lucy played ;
 And thine too is the last green field
 That Lucy's eyes surveyed.

"THREE YEARS SHE GREW IN SUN AND
SHOWER."

1799. — 1800.

THREE years she grew in sun and shower,
 Then Nature said, " A lovelier flower
 On earth was never sown ;

This Child I to myself will take ;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A Lady of my own.

“ Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse ; and with me
The Girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower, 10
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

“ She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs ;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm,
Of mute insensate things.

“ The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her ; for her the willow bend ; 20
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the storm
Grace that shall mould the Maiden’s form
By silent sympathy.

“ The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her ; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face. 30

“ And vital feelings of delight
 Shall rear her form to stately height,
 Her virgin bosom swell ;
 Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
 While she and I together live
 Here in this happy dell.”

Thus Nature spake — The work was done —
 How soon my Lucy's race was run !
 She died, and left to me
 This heath, this calm and quiet scene ;
 The memory of what has been,
 And never more will be.

40



“ A SLUMBER DID MY SPIRIT SEAL.”

1799. — 1800.

A SLUMBER did my spirit seal ;
 I had no human fears :
 She seemed a thing that could not feel
 The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force ;
 She neither hears nor sees ;
 Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,
 With rocks and stones and trees.

A POET'S EPITAPH.

1799. — 1800.

ART thou a Statist, in the van
 Of public conflicts trained and bred?
 — First learn to love one living man;
Then may'st thou think upon the dead.

A Lawyer art thou? — draw not nigh!
 Go, carry to some fitter place
 The keenness of that practised eye,
 The hardness of that sallow face.

Art thou a Man of purple cheer?
 A rosy Man, right plump to see? 10
 Approach; yet, Doctor, not too near,
 This grave no cushion is for thee.

Or art thou one of gallant pride,
 A Soldier and no man of chaff?
 Welcome! — but lay thy sword aside,
 And lean upon a peasant's staff.

Physician art thou? one all eyes,
 Philosopher! a fingering slave,
 One that would peep and botanize
 Upon his mother's grave? 20

Wrapt closely in thy sensual fleece,
 Oh turn aside, and take, I pray,

That he below may rest in peace,
Thy ever-dwindling soul away !

A Moralist perchance appears ;
Led, Heaven knows how ! to this poor sod :
And he has neither eyes nor ears ;
Himself his world, and his own God ;

One to whose smooth-rubbed soul can cling
Nor form, nor feeling, great or small ; 30
A reasoning, self-sufficing thing,
An intellectual All-in-all !

Shut close the door ; press down the latch ;
Sleep in thy intellectual crust ;
Nor lose ten tickings of thy watch
Near this unprofitable dust.

But who is He, with modest looks,
And clad in homely russet brown ?
He murmurs near the running brooks
A music sweeter than their own. 40

He is retired as noontide dew,
Or fountain in a noon-day grove ;
And you must love him, ere to you
He will seem worthy of your love.

The outward shows of sky and earth,
Of hill and valley, he has viewed ;
And impulses of deeper birth
Have come to him in solitude.

In common things that round us lie
Some random truths he can impart, — 50
The harvest of a quiet eye
That broods and sleeps on his own heart.

But he is weak ; both man and boy,
Hath been an idler in the land ;
Contented if he might enjoy
The things which others understand.

—Come hither in thy hour of strength ;
Come, weak as is a breaking wave !
Here stretch thy body at full length ;
Or build thy house upon this grave ! 60



ADDRESS TO THE SCHOLARS OF THE VILLAGE
SCHOOL OF —.

1799. — 1845.

I COME, ye little noisy crew,
Not long your pastime to prevent :
I heard the blessing which to you
Our common Friend and Father sent.
I kissed his cheek before he died ;
And when his breath was fled,
I raised, while kneeling by his side,
His hand — it dropped like lead.
Your hands, dear Little-ones, do all

That can be done, will never fall 10
 Like his till they are dead.
 By night or day, blow foul or fair,
 Ne'er will the best of all your train
 Play with the locks of his white hair
 Or stand between his knees again.

Here did he sit confined for hours ;
 But he could see the woods and plains,
 Could hear the wind and mark the showers
 Come streaming down the streaming panes.
 Now stretched beneath his grass-green mound 20
 He rests a prisoner of the ground.
 He loved the breathing air,
 He loved the sun, but if it rise
 Or set, to him where now he lies,
 Brings not a moment's care.
 Alas ! what idle words ; but take
 The Dirge which for our Master's sake
 And yours, love prompted me to make.
 The rhymes so homely in attire
 With learned ears may ill agree, 30
 But chanted by your Orphan Quire
 Will make a touching melody.

DIRGE.

MOURN, shepherd, near thy old gray stone ;
 Thou angler, by the silent flood ;
 And mourn when thou art all alone,
 Thou woodman, in the distant wood !

Thou one blind sailor, rich in joy
Though blind, thy tunes in sadness hum ;
And mourn, thou poor half-witted boy !
Born deaf, and living deaf and dumb. 40

Thou drooping sick man, bless the Guide
Who checked or turned thy headstrong youth,
As he before had sanctified
Thy infancy with heavenly truth.

Ye striplings, light of heart and gay,
Bold settlers on some foreign shore,
Give, when your thoughts are turned this way,
A sigh to him whom we deplore.

For us who here in funeral strain
With one accord our voices raise, 50
Let sorrow overcharged with pain
Be lost in thankfulness and praise.

And when our hearts shall feel a sting
From ill we meet or good we miss,
May touches of his memory bring
Fond healing, like a mother's kiss.

BY THE SIDE OF THE GRAVE SOME YEARS AFTER.

LONG time his pulse hath ceased to beat ;
But benefits, his gift, we trace —
Expressed in every eye we meet
Round this dear Vale, his native place. 60

To stately hall and cottage rude
 Flowed from his life what still they hold, —
 Light pleasures, every day renewed,
 And blessings half a century old.

O true of heart, of spirit gay,
 Thy faults, where not already gone
 From memory, prolong their stay
 For charity's sweet sake alone.

Such solace find we for our loss ;
 And what beyond this thought we crave
 Comes in the promise from the Cross,
 Shining upon thy happy grave.

70



MATTHEW.

1799. — 1800.

IF Nature, for a favorite child,
 In thee hath tempered so her clay,
 That every hour thy heart runs wild,
 Yet never once doth go astray,

Read o'er these lines ; and then review
 This tablet, that thus humbly rears
 In such diversity of hue
 Its history of two hundred years.

— When through this little wreck of fame,
Cipher and syllable ! thine eye
Has travelled down to Matthew's name,
Pause with no common sympathy. 10

And if a sleeping tear should wake,
Then be it neither checked nor stayed :
For Matthew a request I make
Which for himself he had not made.

Poor Matthew, all his frolics o'er,
Is silent as a standing pool ;
Far from the chimney's merry roar,
And murmur of the village school. 20

The sighs which Matthew heaved were sighs
Of one tired out with fun and madness ;
The tears which came to Matthew's eyes
Were tears of light, the dew of gladness.

Yet, sometimes, when the secret cup
Of still and serious thought went round,
It seemed as if he drank it up —
He felt with spirit so profound.

— Thou soul of God's best earthly mould !
Thou happy soul ! and can it be 30
That these two words of glittering gold
Are all that must remain of thee ?

THE TWO APRIL MORNINGS.

1799. — 1800.

WE walked along, while bright and red
Uprose the morning sun ;
And Matthew stopped, he looked, and said,
“ The will of God be done ! ”

A village schoolmaster was he,
With hair of glittering gray ;
As blithe a man as you could see
On a spring holiday.

And on that morning, through the grass,
And by the steaming rills,
We travelled merrily, to pass
A day among the hills.

10

“ Our work,” said I, “ was well begun ;
Then, from thy breast what thought,
Beneath so beautiful a sun,
So sad a sigh was brought ? ”

A second time did Matthew stop,
And fixing still his eye
Upon the eastern mountain-top,
To me he made reply :

20

“ Yon cloud with that long purple cleft
Brings fresh into my mind

A day like this which I have left
Full thirty years behind.

“ And just above yon slope of corn
Such colors, and no other,
Were in the sky that April morn,
Of this the very brother.

“ With rod and line I sued the sport
Which that sweet season gave, 30
And, to the church-yard come, stopped short
Beside my daughter's grave.

“ Nine summers had she scarcely seen,
The pride of all the vale ;
And then she sang, — she would have been
A very nightingale.

“ Six feet in earth my Emma lay ;
And yet I loved her more,
For so it seemed, than till that day
I e'er had loved before. 40

“ And turning from her grave, I met,
Beside the church-yard yew,
A blooming girl, whose hair was wet
With points of morning dew.

“ A basket on her head she bare ;
Her brow was smooth and white :
To see a child so very fair,
It was a pure delight !

“ No fountain from its rocky cave
 E'er tripped with foot so free ; 50
 She seemed as happy as a wave
 That dances on the sea.

“ There came from me a sigh of pain
 Which I could ill confine ;
 I looked at her, and looked again :
 And did not wish her mine !”

Matthew is in his grave, yet now,
 Methinks, I see him stand,
 As at that moment, with a bough
 Of wilding in his hand. 60



THE FOUNTAIN.

A CONVERSATION.

1799. — 1800.

WE talked with open heart, and tongue
 Affectionate and true,
 A pair of friends, though I was young,
 And Matthew seventy-two.

We lay beneath a spreading oak,
 Beside a mossy seat ;
 And from the turf a fountain broke,
 And gurgled at our feet.

“ Now, Matthew ! ” said I, “ let us match
This water’s pleasant tune
With some old border-song, or catch
That suits a summer’s noon ;

10

“ Or of the church-clock and the chimes
Sing here beneath the shade,
That half-mad thing of witty rhymes
Which you last April made ! ”

In silence Matthew lay, and eyed
The spring beneath the tree ;
And thus the dear old man replied,
The gray-haired man of glee :

20

“ No check, no stay, this streamlet fears ;
How merrily it goes !
'T will murmur on a thousand years,
And flow as now it flows.

“ And here, on this delightful day,
I cannot choose but think
How oft, a vigorous man, I lay
Beside this fountain’s brink.

“ My eyes are dim with childish tears,
My heart is idly stirred,
For the same sound is in my ears
Which in those days I heard.

30

“ Thus fares it still in our decay :
And yet the wiser mind

Mourns less for what age takes away
Than what it leaves behind.

“ The blackbird amid leafy trees,
The lark above the hill,
Let loose their carols when they please,
Are quiet when they will.

40

“ With Nature never do *they* wage
A foolish strife ; they see
A happy youth, and their old age
Is beautiful and free ;

“ But we are pressed by heavy laws ;
And often, glad no more,
We wear a face of joy, because
We have been glad of yore.

“ If there be one who need bemoan
His kindred laid in earth,
The household hearts that were his own,
It is the man of mirth.

50

“ My days, my friend, are almost gone,
My life has been approved,
And many love me ; but by none
Am I enough beloved.”

“ Now both himself and me he wrongs,
The man who thus complains !
I live and sing my idle songs
Upon these happy plains ;

60

“ And, Matthew, for thy children dead
I ’ll be a son to thee ! ”
At this he grasped my hand, and said,
“ Alas ! that cannot be.”

We rose up from the fountain-side,
And down the smooth descent
Of the green sheep-track did we glide ;
And through the wood we went ;

And ere we came to Leonard’s rock
He sang those witty rhymes
About the crazy old church-clock,
And the bewildered chimes.

70

LUCY GRAY ;

OR, SOLITUDE.

1799. — 1800.

OFT I had heard of Lucy Gray ;
And when I crossed the wild,
I chanced to see at break of day
The solitary child.

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

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
The hare upon the green ;
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
Will never more be seen. 10

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

“That, Father ! will I gladly do :
’T is scarcely afternoon —
The minster-clock has just struck two,
And yonder is the moon !” 20

At this the father raised his hook,
And snapped a faggot-band ;
He plied his work ; and Lucy took
The lantern in her hand.

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

The storm came on before its time :
She wandered up and down ;
And many a hill did Lucy climb,
But never reached the town. 30

The wretched parents all that night
Went shouting far and wide ;

But there was neither sound nor sight
To serve them for a guide.

At day-break on a hill they stood
That overlooked the moor ;
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,
A furlong from their door.

40

They wept, and turning homeward, cried,
“ In heaven we all shall meet ; ”
— When in the snow the mother spied
The print of Lucy’s feet.

Then downwards from the steep hill’s edge
They tracked the footmarks small ;
And through the broken hawthorn hedge,
And by the long stone-wall.

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

50

They followed from the snowy bank
Those footmarks, one by one,
Into the middle of the plank ;
And further there were none !

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

60

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



“ON NATURE’S INVITATION DO I COME.”

1800. — 1850.

ON Nature’s invitation do I come,
 By Reason sanctioned. Can the choice mislead,
 That made the calmest, fairest spot on earth,
 With all its unappropriated good,
 My own ; and not mine only, for with me
 Entrenched — say rather peacefully embowered —
 Under yon orchard, in yon humble cot,
 A younger orphan of a name extinct,
 The only daughter of my parents, dwells :
 Aye, think on that, my heart, and cease to stir ; 10
 Pause upon that, and let the breathing frame
 No longer breathe, but all be satisfied.
 Oh, if such silence be not thanks to God
 For what hath been bestowed, then where, where then
 Shall gratitude find rest? Mine eyes did ne’er
 Fix on a lovely object, nor my mind
 Take pleasure in the midst of happy thought,
 But either she, whom now I have, who now
 Divides with me that loved abode, was there,
 Or not far off. Where’er my footsteps turned, 20
 Her voice was like a hidden bird that sang ;

The thought of her was like a flash of light,
 Or an unseen companionship ; a breath
 Or fragrance independent of the wind.
 In all my goings, in the new and old
 Of all my meditations, and in this
 Favorite of all, in this the most of all. . . .
 Embrace me then, ye hills, and close me in.
 Now in the clear and open day I feel
 Your guardianship : I take it to my heart ; 30
 'T is like the solemn shelter of the night.
 But I would call thee beautiful ; for mild
 And soft, and gay, and beautiful thou art,
 Dear valley, having in thy face a smile,
 Though peaceful, full of gladness. Thou art pleased,
 Pleased with thy crags, and woody steeps, thy lake,
 Its one green island, and its winding shores,
 The multitude of little rocky hills,
 Thy church, and cottages of mountain stone
 Clustered like stars some few, but single most, 40
 And lurking dimly in their shy retreats,
 Or glancing at each other cheerful looks
 Like separated stars with clouds between.



“ BLEAK SEASON WAS IT, TURBULENT AND
 WILD.”

1800(?). — 1850.

BLEAK season was it, turbulent and wild,
 When hitherward we journeyed, side by side,
 Through bursts of sunshine and through flying showers,

Paced the long vales, — how long they were, and yet
 How fast that length of way was left behind ! —
 Wensley's rich dale, and Sedberge's naked heights.
 The frosty wind, as if to make amends
 For its keen breath, was aiding to our steps,
 And drove us onward as two ships at sea ;
 Or like two birds, companions in mid-air, 10
 Parted and reunited by the blast.
 Stern was the face of Nature ; we rejoiced
 In that stern countenance ; for our souls thence drew
 A feeling of their strength.

The naked trees,
 The icy brooks, as on we passed, appeared
 To question us, " Whence come ye, to what end ? "



HART-LEAP WELL.

Hart-Leap Well is a small spring of water, about five miles from Richmond in Yorkshire, and near the side of the road that leads from Richmond to Askrigg. Its name is derived from a remarkable Chase, the memory of which is preserved by the monuments spoken of in the second part of the following Poem, which monuments do now exist as I have there described them.

1800. — 1800.

THE Knight had ridden down from Wensley Moor
 With the slow motion of a summer's cloud,
 And now, as he approached a vassal's door,
 " Bring forth another horse ! " he cried aloud.

“Another horse !” — That shout the vassal heard,
And saddled his best steed, a comely gray ;
Sir Walter mounted him : he was the third
Which he had mounted on that glorious day.

Joy sparkled in the prancing courser's eyes ;
The horse and horseman are a happy pair ; 10
But, though Sir Walter like a falcon flies,
There is a doleful silence in the air.

A rout this morning left Sir Walter's Hall,
That as they galloped made the echoes roar ;
But horse and man are vanished, one and all ;
Such race, I think, was never seen before.

Sir Walter, restless as a veering wind,
Calls to the few tired dogs that yet remain :
Blanch, Swift, and Music, noblest of their kind,
Follow, and up the weary mountain strain. 20

The Knight hallooed, he cheered and chid them on
With suppliant gestures and upbraidings stern :
But breath and eyesight fail ; and, one by one,
The dogs are stretched among the mountain fern.

Where is the throng, the tumult of the race,
The bugles that so joyfully were blown ?
— This chase it looks not like an earthly chase ;
Sir Walter and the hart are left alone.

The poor hart toils along the mountain-side ;
I will not stop to tell how far he fled, 30

Nor will I mention by what death he died ;
But now the knight beholds him lying dead.

Dismounting, then, he leaned against a thorn ;
He had no follower, dog, nor man, nor boy ;
He neither cracked his whip, nor blew his horn,
But gazed upon the spoil with silent joy.

Close to the thorn on which Sir Walter leaned,
Stood his dumb partner in this glorious feat,
Weak as a lamb the hour that it is yeaned,
And white with foam as if with cleaving sleet. 40

Upon his side the hart was lying stretched :
His nostril touched a spring beneath a hill,
And with the last deep groan his breath had fetched
The waters of the spring were trembling still.

And now, too happy for repose or rest,
(Never had living man such joyful lot !)
Sir Walter walked all round, north, south, and west,
And gazed and gazed upon that darling spot.

And climbing up the hill — (it was at least
Four roods of sheer ascent) Sir Walter found 50
Three several hoof-marks which the hunted beast
Had left imprinted on the grassy ground.

Sir Walter wiped his face, and cried, “Till now
Such sight was never seen by human eyes :
Three leaps have borne him from this lofty brow
Down to the very fountain where he lies.

“ I ’ll build a pleasure-house upon this spot,
 And a small arbor made for rural joy ;
 ’T will be the traveller’s shed, the pilgrim’s cot,
 A place of love for damsels that are coy. 60

“ A cunning artist will I have to frame
 A basin for that fountain in the dell !
 And they who do make mention of the same,
 From this day forth shall call it HART-LEAP WELL.

“ And, gallant stag ! to make thy praises known,
 Another monument shall here be raised ;
 Three several pillars, each a rough-hewn stone,
 And planted where thy hoofs the turf have grazed.

“ And in the summer-time when days are long,
 I will come hither with my paramour ; 70
 And with the dancers and the minstrel’s song
 We will make merry in that pleasant bower.

“ Till the foundations of the mountains fail
 My mansion with its arbor shall endure, —
 The joy of them who till the fields of Swale,
 And them who dwell among the woods of Ure ! ”

Then home he went, and left the hart stone-dead,
 With breathless nostrils stretched above the spring.
 — Soon did the Knight perform what he had said ;
 And far and wide the fame thereof did ring. 80

Ere thrice the moon into her port had steered,
 A cup of stone received the living well ;

Three pillars of rude stone Sir Walter reared,
And built a house of pleasure in the dell.

And near the fountain, flowers of stature tall
With trailing plants and trees were intertwined,
Which soon composed a little sylvan hall,
A leafy shelter from the sun and wind.

And thither, when the summer days were long,
Sir Walter led his wondering paramour ; 90
And with the dancers and the minstrel's song
Made merriment within that pleasant bower.

The knight, Sir Walter, died in course of time,
And his bones lie in his paternal vale. —
And there is matter for a second rhyme,
And I to this would add another tale.

PART SECOND.

THE moving accident is not my trade ;
To freeze the blood I have no ready arts :
'T is my delight, alone in summer shade,
To pipe a simple song for thinking hearts. 100

As I from Hawes to Richmond did repair,
It chanced that I saw standing in a dell
Three aspens at three corners of a square ;
And one, not four yards distant, near a well.

What this imported I could ill divine :
And, pulling now the rein my horse to stop,

I saw three pillars standing in a line, —
The last stone-pillar on a dark hill-top.

The trees were gray, with neither arms nor head ;
Half wasted the square mound of tawny green ; 110
So that you just might say, as then I said,
“ Here in old time the hand of man hath been.”

I looked upon the hill both far and near,
More doleful place did never eye survey ;
It seemed as if the spring-time came not here,
And Nature here were willing to decay.

I stood in various thoughts and fancies lost,
When one, who was in shepherd's garb attired,
Came up the hollow : him did I accost,
And what this place might be I then inquired. 120

The Shepherd stopped, and that same story told
Which in my former rhyme I have rehearsed ;
“ A jolly place,” said he, “ in time of old !
But something ails it now : the spot is curst.

“ You see these lifeless stumps of aspen wood —
Some say that they are beeches, others elms —
These were the bower ; and here a mansion stood,
The finest palace of a hundred realms !

“ The arbor does its own condition tell ;
You see the stones, the fountain, and the stream : 130
But as to the great Lodge ! you might as well
Hunt half a day for a forgotten dream.

“ There ’s neither dog nor heifer, horse nor sheep,
Will wet his lips within that cup of stone ;
And oftentimes, when all are fast asleep,
This water doth send forth a dolorous groan.

“ Some say that here a murder has been done,
And blood cries out for blood ; but, for my part,
I ’ve guessed, when I ’ve been sitting in the sun,
That it was all for that unhappy hart.

140

“ What thoughts must through the creature’s brain have past !
Even from the topmost stone, upon the steep,
Are but three bounds — and look, Sir, at this last —
O Master ! it has been a cruel leap.

“ For thirteen hours he ran a desperate race ;
And in my simple mind we cannot tell
What cause the hart might have to love this place,
And come and make his death-bed near the well.

“ Here on the grass perhaps asleep he sank,
Lulled by the fountain in the summer-tide ;
This water was perhaps the first he drank
When he had wandered from his mother’s side.

150

“ In April here beneath the flowering thorn
He heard the birds their morning carols sing ;
And he, perhaps, for aught we know, was born
Not half a furlong from that self-same spring.

“ Now, here is neither grass nor pleasant shade ;
The sun on drearier hollow never shone ;

So will it be, as I have often said,
Till trees and stones and fountain, all are gone." 160

" Gray-headed Shepherd, thou hast spoken well ;
Small difference lies between thy creed and mine :
This beast not unobserved by Nature fell ;
His death was mourned by sympathy divine.

" The Being that is in the clouds and air,
That is in the green leaves among the groves,
Maintains a deep and reverential care
For the unoffending creatures whom he loves.

" The pleasure-house is dust : — behind, before,
This is no common waste, no common gloom ; 170
But Nature, in due course of time, once more
Shall here put on her beauty and her bloom.

" She leaves these objects to a slow decay,
That what we are, and have been, may be known ;
But at the coming of the milder day,
These monuments shall all be overgrown.

" One lesson, Shepherd, let us two divide,
Taught both by what she shows, and what conceals ;
Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels." 180

THE BROTHERS.

1800. — 1800.

"THESE tourists, heaven preserve us! needs must live
 A profitable life: some glance along,
 Rapid and gay, as if the earth were air,
 And they were butterflies to wheel about
 Long as the summer lasted; some, as wise,
 Perched on the forehead of a jutting crag,
 Pencil in hand and book upon the knee,
 Will look and scribble, scribble on and look,
 Until a man might travel twelve stout miles,
 Or reap an acre of his neighbor's corn. 10
 But, for that moping son of idleness,
 Why can he tarry *yonder*? In our church-yard
 Is neither epitaph nor monument,
 Tombstone nor name, — only the turf we tread
 And a few natural graves."

To Jane, his wife,

Thus spake the homely Priest of Ennerdale.
 It was a July evening; and he sate
 Upon the long stone seat beneath the eaves
 Of his old cottage, as it chanced, that day,
 Employed in winter's work. Upon the stone 20
 His wife sate near him, teasing matted wool,
 While, from the twin cards toothed with glittering wire,
 He fed the spindle of his youngest child,
 Who, in the open air, with due accord

Of busy hands and back-and-forward steps,
 Her large round wheel was turning. Towards the field
 In which the parish chapel stood alone,
 Girt round with a bare ring of mossy wall,
 While half an hour went by, the Priest had sent
 Many a long look of wonder ; and at last, 30
 Risen from his seat, beside the snow-white ridge
 Of carded wool which the old man had piled,
 He laid his implements with gentle care,
 Each in the other locked ; and down the path
 That from his cottage to the church-yard led,
 He took his way, impatient to accost
 The stranger, whom he saw still lingering there.

'T was one well known to him in former days, —
 A shepherd-lad, who ere his sixteenth year
 Had left that calling, tempted to intrust 40
 His expectations to the fickle winds
 And perilous waters, with the mariners
 A fellow-mariner ; and so had fared
 Through twenty seasons ; but he had been reared
 Among the mountains, and he in his heart
 Was half a shepherd on the stormy seas.
 Oft in the piping shrouds had Leonard heard
 The tones of waterfalls, and inland sounds
 Of caves and trees ; and when the regular wind
 Between the tropics filled the steady sail, 50
 And blew with the same breath through days and weeks,
 Lengthening invisibly its weary line
 Along the cloudless main, he, in those hours
 Of tiresome indolence, would often hang

Over the vessel's side, and gaze and gaze ;
 And, while the broad blue wave and sparkling foam
 Flashed round him images and hues, that wrought
 In union with the employment of his heart,
 He, thus by feverish passion overcome,
 Even with the organs of his bodily eye, 60
 Below him, in the bosom of the deep,
 Saw mountains ; saw the forms of sheep that grazed
 On verdant hills, with dwellings among trees,
 And shepherds clad in the same country gray
 Which he himself had worn.

And now, at last,
 From perils manifold, with some small wealth
 Acquired by traffic 'mid the Indian Isles,
 To his paternal home he is returned,
 With a determined purpose to resume
 The life he had lived there ; both for the sake 70
 Of many darling pleasures, and the love
 Which to an only brother he has borne
 In all his hardships, since that happy time
 When, whether it blew foul or fair, they two
 Were brother-shepherds on their native hills.
 — They were the last of all their race : and now,
 When Leonard had approached his home, his heart
 Failed in him ; and, not venturing to inquire
 Tidings of one so long and dearly loved,
 He to the solitary church-yard turned ; 80
 That, as he knew in what particular spot
 His family were laid, he thence might learn
 If still his brother lived, or to the file
 Another grave was added. He had found

Another grave, near which a full half-hour
 He had remained ; but, as he gazed, there grew
 Such a confusion in his memory,
 That he began to doubt, and even to hope
 That he had seen this heap of turf before, —
 That it was not another grave, but one 90
 He had forgotten. He had lost his path,
 As up the vale, that afternoon, he walked
 Through fields which once had been well known to him ;
 And oh, what joy this recollection now
 Sent to his heart ! He lifted up his eyes,
 And looking round, imagined that he saw
 Strange alteration wrought on every side
 Among the woods and fields, and that the rocks
 And everlasting hills themselves were changed.

By this the Priest, who down the field had come, 100
 Unseen by Leonard, at the church-yard gate
 Stopped short, and thence, at leisure, limb by limb
 Perused him with a gay complacency.
 Ay, thought the Vicar, smiling to himself,
 'T is one of those who needs must leave the path
 Of the world's business to go wild alone :
 His arms have a perpetual holiday ;
 The happy man will creep about the fields,
 Following his fancies by the hour, to bring
 Tears down his cheek, or solitary smiles 110
 Into his face, until the setting sun
 Write fool upon his forehead. — Planted thus
 Beneath a shed that overarched the gate
 Of this rude church-yard, till the stars appeared

The good Man might have communed with himself,
 But that the Stranger, who had left the grave,
 Approached; he recognized the Priest at once,
 And after greetings interchanged, and given
 By Leonard to the Vicar as to one
 Unknown to him, this dialogue ensued. 120

Leonard. You live, Sir, in these dales, a quiet life :
 Your years make up one peaceful family ;
 And who would grieve and fret, if, welcome come
 And welcome gone, they are so like each other,
 They cannot be remembered? Scarce a funeral
 Comes to this church-yard once in eighteen months ;
 And yet some changes must take place among you :
 And you, who dwell here, even among these rocks,
 Can trace the finger of mortality,
 And see, that with our threescore years and ten 130
 We are not all that perish. I remember,
 (For many years ago I passed this road)
 There was a foot-way all along the fields
 By the brook-side, — 't is gone ! — and that dark cleft !
 To me it does not seem to wear the face
 Which then it had !

Priest. Nay, Sir, for aught I know,
 That chasm is much the same —

Leonard. But, surely, yonder —

Priest. Ay, there, indeed, your memory is a friend
 That does not play you false. On that tall pike
 (It is the loneliest place of all these hills) 140
 There were two springs which bubbled side by side,
 As if they had been made that they might be
 Companions for each other : the huge crag

Was rent with lightning, — one hath disappeared ;
 The other, left behind, is flowing still.
 For accidents and changes such as these
 We want not store of them : — a water-spout
 Will bring down half a mountain ; what a feast
 For folks that wander up and down like you,
 To see an acre's breadth of that wide cliff 150
 One roaring cataract ! A sharp May-storm
 Will come with loads of January snow,
 And in one night send twenty score of sheep
 To feed the ravens ; or a shepherd dies
 By some untoward death among the rocks ;
 The ice breaks up and sweeps away a bridge ;
 A wood is felled. — And then for our own homes !
 A child is born or christened, a field ploughed,
 A daughter sent to service, a web spun,
 The old house-clock is decked with a new face ; 160
 And hence, so far from wanting facts or dates
 To chronicle the time, we all have here
 A pair of diaries, — one serving, Sir,
 For the whole dale, and one for each fireside —
 Yours was a stranger's judgment : for historians,
 Commend me to these valleys !

Leonard. Yet your Church-yard
 Seems, if such freedom may be used with you,
 To say that you are heedless of the past :
 An orphan could not find his mother's grave :
 Here 's neither head nor foot stone, plate of brass, 170
 Cross-bones nor skull, — type of our earthly state
 Nor emblem of our hopes : the dead man's home
 Is but a fellow to that pasture-field.

Priest. Why, there, Sir, is a thought that 's new to me !
 The stone-cutters, 't is true, might beg their bread
 If every English church-yard were like ours ;
 Yet your conclusion wanders from the truth :
 We have no need of names and epitaphs ;
 We talk about the dead by our firesides.
 And then, for our immortal part ! *we* want 180
 No symbols, Sir, to tell us that plain tale :
 The thought of death sits easy on the man
 Who has been born and dies among the mountains.

Leonard. Your Dalesmen, then, do in each other's
 thoughts
 Possess a kind of second life : no doubt
 You, Sir, could help me to the history
 Of half these graves ?

Priest. For eightscore winters past,
 With what I 've witnessed, and with what I 've heard,
 Perhaps I might ; and on a winter-evening,
 If you were seated at my chimney's nook, 190
 By turning o'er these hillocks one by one,
 We two could travel, Sir, through a strange round ;
 Yet all in the broad highway of the world.
 Now there 's a grave, — your foot is half upon it, —
 It looks just like the rest ; and yet that man
 Died broken-hearted.

Leonard. 'T is a common case.
 We 'll take another : who is he that lies
 Beneath yon ridge, the last of those three graves ?
 It touches on that piece of native rock
 Left in the church-yard wall.

Priest. That 's Walter Ewbank. 200

He had as white a head and fresh a cheek
 As ever were produced by youth and age
 Engendering in the blood of hale fourscore.
 Through five long generations had the heart
 Of Walter's forefathers o'erflowed the bounds
 Of their inheritance, that single cottage —
 You see it yonder — and those few green fields.
 They toiled and wrought, and still, from sire to son,
 Each struggled, and each yielded as before
 A little, yet a little ; and old Walter, 210
 They left to him the family heart, and land
 With other burdens than the crop it bore.
 Year after year the old man still kept up
 A cheerful mind, and buffeted with bond,
 Interest, and mortgages ; at last he sank,
 And went into his grave before his time.
 Poor Walter ! whether it was care that spurred him
 God only knows, but to the very last
 He had the lightest foot in Ennerdale :
 His pace was never that of an old man : 220
 I almost see him tripping down the path
 With his two grandsons after him. But you,
 Unless our Landlord be your host to-night,
 Have far to travel ; and on these rough paths
 Even in the longest day of midsummer —
Leonard. But those two Orphans !
Priest. Orphans ! Such they were —
 Yet not while Walter lived ; for, though their parents
 Lay buried side by side as now they lie,
 The old man was a father to the boys, —
 Two fathers in one father ; and if tears, 230

On windy days, in one of those stray brooks,
 Ay, more than once I have seen him, mid-leg deep,
 Their two books lying both on a dry stone,
 Upon the hither side ; and once I said,
 As I remember, looking round these rocks
 And hills on which we all of us were born,
 That God who made the great book of the world
 Would bless such piety —

Leonard. It may be then —

Priest. Never did worthier lads break English bread ;
 The very brightest Sunday Autumn saw,
 With all its mealy clusters of ripe nuts, 270
 Could never keep those boys away from church,
 Or tempt them to an hour of Sabbath breach.
 Leonard and James ! I warrant, every corner
 Among these rocks, and every hollow place
 That venturous foot could reach, to one or both
 Was known as well as to the flowers that grow there.
 Like roe-bucks they went bounding o'er the hills ;
 They played like two young ravens on the crags :
 Then they could write, ay, and speak too, as well
 As many of their betters — and for Leonard ! 280
 The very night before he went away,
 In my own house I put into his hand
 A Bible, and I'd wager house and field
 That, if he be alive, he has it yet.

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

Priest. That they might
 Live to such end is what both old and young
 In this our valley all of us have wished,

And what, for my part, I have often prayed :
But Leonard —

Leonard. Then James still is left among you ! 290

Priest. 'T is of the elder brother I am speaking :

They had an uncle ; he was at that time
A thriving man, and trafficked on the seas ;
And, but for that same uncle, to this hour
Leonard had never handled rope or shroud ;
For the boy loved the life which we lead here ;
And though of unripe years, a stripling only,
His soul was knit to this his native soil.

But, as I said, old Walter was too weak
To strive with such a torrent ; when he died, 300

The estate and house were sold ; and all their sheep,
A pretty flock, and which, for aught I know,
Had clothed the Ewbanks for a thousand years.

Well — all was gone, and they were destitute ;
And Leonard, chiefly for his Brother's sake,
Resolved to try his fortune on the seas.

Twelve years are past since we had tidings from him.

If there were one among us who had heard

That Leonard Ewbank was come home again,
From the Great Gavel,¹ down by Leeza's banks, 310

And down the Enna, far as Egremont,

The day would be a joyous festival ;

And those two bells of ours, which there you see —

Hanging in the open air — But, O good Sir !

¹ The Great Gavel, so called, I imagine, from its resemblance to the gable end of a house, is one of the highest of the Cumberland mountains. The Leeza is a river which flows into the Lake of Ennerdale. — W. W.

This is sad talk ; they 'll never sound for him —
 Living or dead. When last we heard of him,
 He was in slavery among the Moors
 Upon the Barbary coast. 'T was not a little
 That would bring down his spirit ; and no doubt,
 Before it endeth in his death, the Youth 32°
 Was sadly crossed. Poor Leonard ! when we parted,
 He took me by the hand, and said to me,
 If e'er he should grow rich, he would return,
 To live in peace upon his father's land,
 And lay his bones among us.

Leonard. If that day
 Should come, 't would needs be a glad day for him ;
 He would himself, no doubt, be happy then
 As any that should meet him —

Priest. Happy ! Sir —

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

Priest. That is but 33°
 A fellow-tale of sorrow. From his youth
 James, though not sickly, yet was delicate ;
 And Leonard being always by his side
 Had done so many offices about him,
 That, though he was not of a timid nature,
 Yet still the spirit of a mountain-boy
 In him was somewhat checked ; and when his Brother
 Was gone to sea, and he was left alone,
 The little color that he had was soon
 Stolen from his cheek ; he drooped, and pined, and
 pined — 34°

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

Priest. Ay, Sir, that passed away : we took him to us ;
 He was the child of all the dale, — he lived
 Three months with one, and six months with another,
 And wanted neither food nor clothes nor love ;
 And many, many happy days were his.
 But, whether blithe or sad, 't is my belief
 His absent Brother still was at his heart.
 And when he dwelt beneath our roof, we found
 (A practice till this time unknown to him) 350
 That often, rising from his bed at night,
 He in his sleep would walk about, and sleeping
 He sought his brother Leonard. — You are moved !
 Forgive me, Sir : before I spoke to you,
 I judged you most unkindly.

Leonard. But this Youth,
 How did he die at last ?

Priest. One sweet May morning
 (It will be twelve years since when Spring returns)
 He had gone forth among the new-dropped lambs,
 With two or three companions, whom their course
 Of occupation led from height to height 360
 Under a cloudless sun — till he, at length,
 Through weariness, or, haply, to indulge
 The humor of the moment, lagged behind.
 You see yon precipice : it wears the shape
 Of a vast building made of many crags ;
 And in the midst is one particular rock
 That rises like a column from the vale,
 Whence by our shepherds it is called THE PILLAR.
 Upon its aëry summit crowned with heath,
 The loiterer, not unnoticed by his comrades, 370

Lay stretched at ease ; but passing by the place
 On their return, they found that he was gone.
 No ill was feared ; till one of them by chance
 Entering, when evening was far spent, the house
 Which at that time was James's home, there learned
 That nobody had seen him all that day ;
 The morning came, and still he was unheard of :
 The neighbors were alarmed, and to the brook
 Some hastened ; some ran to the lake ; ere noon
 They found him at the foot of that same rock 380
 Dead, and with mangled limbs. The third day after
 I buried him, poor Youth, and there he lies !

Leonard. And that then *is* his grave ! Before his death
 You say that he saw many happy years ?

Priest. Ay, that he did —

Leonard. And all went well with him ? —

Priest. If he had one, the youth had twenty homes.

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

Priest. Yes, long before he died, he found that time
 Is a true friend to sorrow ; and unless
 His thoughts were turned on Leonard's luckless fortune, 390
 He talked about him with a cheerful love.

Leonard. He could not come to an unhallowed end !

Priest. Nay, God forbid ! You recollect I mentioned
 A habit which disquietude and grief
 Had brought upon him ; and we all conjectured
 That, as the day was warm, he had lain down
 On the soft heath, and waiting for his comrades,
 He there had fallen asleep ; that in his sleep
 He to the margin of the precipice

Had walked, and from the summit had fallen headlong ; 400
 And so no doubt he perished. When the Youth
 Fell, in his hand he must have grasped, we think,
 His shepherd's staff ; for on that Pillar of rock
 It had been caught midway ; and there for years
 It hung ; — and mouldered there.

The Priest here ended.

The Stranger would have thanked him, but he felt
 A gushing from his heart, that took away
 The power of speech. Both left the spot in silence ;
 And Leonard, when they reached the church-yard gate,
 As the Priest lifted up the latch, turned round, 410
 And looking at the grave, he said, “ My Brother ! ”
 The Vicar did not hear the words ; and now
 He pointed towards his dwelling-place, entreating
 That Leonard would partake his homely fare :
 The other thanked him with an earnest voice ;
 But added, that, the evening being calm,
 He would pursue his journey. So they parted.

It was not long ere Leonard reached a grove
 That overhung the road : he there stopped short,
 And sitting down beneath the trees, reviewed 420
 All that the Priest had said : his early years
 Were with him, — his long absence, cherished hopes,
 And thoughts which had been his an hour before,
 All pressed on him with such a weight that now
 This vale, where he had been so happy, seemed
 A place in which he could not bear to live ;
 So he relinquished all his purposes.

He travelled back to Egremont ; and thence,
 That night, he wrote a letter to the Priest,
 Reminding him of what had passed between them ; 430
 And adding, with a hope to be forgiven,
 That it was from the weakness of his heart
 He had not dared to tell him who he was.
 This done, he went on shipboard, and is now
 A Seaman, a gray-headed Mariner.



“IT WAS AN APRIL MORNING : FRESH AND
 CLEAR.”

1800. — 1800.

It was an April morning : fresh and clear,
 The Rivulet, delighting in its strength,
 Ran with a young man's speed ; and yet the voice
 Of waters which the winter had supplied
 Was softened down into a vernal tone.
 The spirit of enjoyment and desire,
 And hopes and wishes, from all living things
 Went circling, like a multitude of sounds.
 The budding groves seemed eager to urge on
 The steps of June ; as if their various hues 10
 Were only hindrances that stood between
 Them and their object ; but, meanwhile, prevailed
 Such an entire contentment in the air
 That every naked ash, and tardy tree
 Yet leafless, showed as if the countenance
 With which it looked on this delightful day

Were native to the summer. Up the brook
 I roamed in the confusion of my heart,
 Alive to all things and forgetting all.
 At length I to a sudden turning came 20
 In this continuous glen, where down a rock
 The stream, so ardent in its course before,
 Sent forth such sallies of glad sound that all
 Which I till then had heard appeared the voice
 Of common pleasure : beast and bird, the lamb,
 The shepherd's dog, the linnet and the thrush
 Vied with this waterfall, and made a song
 Which, while I listened, seemed like the wild growth
 Or like some natural produce of the air,
 That could not cease to be. Green leaves were here ; 30
 But 't was the foliage of the rocks, — the birch,
 The yew, the holly, and the bright green thorn,
 With hanging islands of resplendent furze ;
 And on a summit distant a short space,
 By any who should look beyond the dell,
 A single mountain-cottage might be seen.
 I gazed and gazed, and to myself I said,
 " Our thoughts at least are ours ; and this wild nook,
 My EMMA, I will dedicate to thee."
 — Soon did the spot become my other home, 40
 My dwelling, and my out-of-doors abode.
 And of the shepherds who have seen me there,
 To whom I sometimes in our idle talk
 Have told this fancy, two or three perhaps,
 Years after we are gone and in our graves,
 When they have cause to speak of this wild place,
 May call it by the name of EMMA'S DELL.

TO JOANNA.

1800. — 1800.

AMID the smoke of cities did you pass
 The time of early youth ; and there you learned,
 From years of quiet industry, to love
 The living Beings by your own fireside,
 With such a strong devotion that your heart
 Is slow to meet the sympathies of them
 Who look upon the hills with tenderness,
 And make dear friendships with the streams and groves.
 Yet we who are transgressors in this kind,
 Dwelling retired in our simplicity 10
 Among the woods and fields, we love you well,
 Joanna ! and I guess, since you have been
 So distant from us now for two long years,
 That you will gladly listen to discourse,
 However trivial, if you thence be taught
 That they with whom you once were happy, talk
 Familiarly of you and of old times.

While I was seated, now some ten days past,
 Beneath those lofty firs, that overtop
 Their ancient neighbor, the old steeple-tower, 20
 The Vicar from his gloomy house hard by
 Came forth to greet me ; and when he had asked,
 “ How fares Joanna, that wild-hearted Maid !
 And when will she return to us ? ” he paused ;
 And after short exchange of village news,

He with grave looks demanded for what cause,
 Reviving obsolete idolatry,
 I, like a Runic Priest, in characters
 Of formidable size had chiselled out
 Some uncouth name upon the native rock, 30
 Above the Rotha, by the forest-side.
 — Now, by those dear immunities of heart
 Engendered between malice and true love,
 I was not loath to be so catechised,
 And this was my reply : — “ As it befell,
 One summer morning we had walked abroad
 At break of day, Joanna and myself.
 — ’T was that delightful season when the broom,
 Full-flowered, and visible in every steep,
 Along the copses runs in veins of gold. 40
 Our pathway led us on to Rotha’s banks ;
 And when we came in front of that tall rock
 That eastward looks, I there stopped short, and stood
 Tracing the lofty barrier with my eye
 From base to summit : such delight I found
 To note in shrub and tree, in stone and flower,
 That intermixture of delicious hues,
 Along so vast a surface, all at once,
 In one impression, by connecting force
 Of their own beauty, imaged in the heart. 50
 — When I had gazed perhaps two minutes’ space,
 Joanna, looking in my eyes, beheld
 That ravishment of mine, and laughed aloud.
 The Rock, like something starting from a sleep,
 Took up the Lady’s voice and laughed again ;
 That ancient Woman seated on Helm-crag,

Was ready with her cavern ; Hammar-scar
 And the tall Steep of Silver-how sent forth
 A noise of laughter ; southern Loughrigg heard,
 And Fairfield answered with a mountain tone ; 60
 Helvellyn far into the clear blue sky
 Carried the Lady's voice ; old Skiddaw blew
 His speaking trumpet ; back out of the clouds
 Of Glaramara southward come the voice ;
 And Kirkstone tossed it from his misty head.
 — Now whether (said I to our cordial Friend,
 Who in the hey-day of astonishment
 Smiled in my face) this were in simple truth
 A work accomplished by the brotherhood
 Of ancient mountains, or my ear was touched 70
 With dreams and visionary impulses
 To me alone imparted, sure I am
 That there was a loud uproar in the hills.
 And while we both were listening, to my side
 The fair Joanna drew, as if she wished
 To shelter from some object of her fear.
 — And hence, long afterwards, when eighteen moons
 Were wasted, as I chanced to walk alone
 Beneath this rock, at sunrise, on a calm
 And silent morning, I sat down, and there, 80
 In memory of affections old and true,
 I chiselled out in those rude characters
 Joanna's name deep in the living stone ;
 And I, and all who dwell by my fireside,
 Have called the lovely rock, JOANNA'S ROCK."

Your feet must struggle, in such bold ascent
The pastoral mountains front you, face to face.
But, courage! for around that boisterous brook
The mountains have all opened out themselves,
And made a hidden valley of their own.
No habitation can be seen; but they
Who journey thither find themselves alone 10
With a few sheep, with rocks and stones, and kites
That overhead are sailing in the sky.
It is in truth an utter solitude;
Nor should I have made mention of this Dell
But for one object which you might pass by,
Might see and notice not. Beside the brook
Appears a straggling heap of unhewn stones,
And to that simple object appertains
A story, — unenriched with strange events,
Yet not unfit, I deem, for the fireside, 20
Or for the summer shade. It was the first
Of those domestic tales that spake to me
Of Shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men
Whom I already loved: — not verily
For their own sakes, but for the fields and hills
Where was their occupation and abode.
And hence this Tale, while I was yet a Boy
Careless of books, yet having felt the power
Of Nature, by the gentle agency
Of natural objects, led me on to feel 30
For passions that were not my own, and think
(At random and imperfectly indeed)
On man, the heart of man, and human life.
Therefore, although it be a history

Homely and rude, I will relate the same
 For the delight of a few natural hearts ;
 And, with yet fonder feeling, for the sake
 Of youthful Poets, who among these hills
 Will be my second self when I am gone.

UPON the forest-side in Grasmere Vale 40
 There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his name ;
 An old man stout of heart and strong of limb.
 His bodily frame had been from youth to age
 Of an unusual strength ; his mind was keen,
 Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs ;
 And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt
 And watchful more than ordinary men.
 Hence had he learned the meaning of all winds,
 Of blasts of every tone ; and oftentimes,
 When others heeded not, he heard the South 50
 Make subterraneous music, like the noise
 Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.
 The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock
 Bethought him, and he to himself would say,
 " The winds are now devising work for me ! "
 And, truly, at all times the storm, that drives
 The traveller to a shelter, summoned him
 Up to the mountains : he had been alone
 Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
 That came to him, and left him, on the heights. 60
 So lived he till his eightieth year was past.
 And grossly that man errs, who should suppose
 That the green valleys, and the streams and rocks,
 Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's thoughts.

Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had breathed
 The common air ; hills, which with vigorous step
 He had so often climbed ; which had impressed
 So many incidents upon his mind
 Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear ;
 Which, like a book, preserved the memory 70
 Of the dumb animals whom he had saved,
 Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts
 The certainty of honorable gain ;
 Those fields, those hills — what could they less? — had laid
 Strong hold on his affections, were to him
 A pleasurable feeling of blind love,
 The pleasure which there is in life itself.

His days had not been passed in singleness.
 His Helpmate was a comely matron, old,
 Though younger than himself full twenty years. 80
 She was a woman of a stirring life,
 Whose heart was in her house : two wheels she had
 Of antique form ; this large, for spinning wool ;
 That small, for flax ; and if one wheel had rest,
 It was because the other was at work.
 The Pair had but one inmate in their house,
 An only Child, who had been born to them
 When Michael, telling o'er his years, began
 To deem that he was old, — in shepherd's phrase,
 With one foot in the grave. This only Son, 90
 With two brave sheep-dogs tried in many a storm,
 The one of an inestimable worth,
 Made all their household. I may truly say
 That they were as a proverb in the vale

For endless industry. When day was gone,
And from their occupations out of doors
The Son and Father were come home, even then
Their labor did not cease ; unless when all
Turned to the cleanly supper-board, and there,
Each with a mess of pottage and skimmed milk, 100
Sat round the basket piled with oaten cakes,
And their plain home-made cheese. Yet when the meal
Was ended, Luke (for so the Son was named)
And his old Father both betook themselves
To such convenient work as might employ
Their hands by the fireside ; perhaps to card
Wool for the Housewife's spindle, or repair
Some injury done to sickle, flail, or scythe,
Or other implement of house or field.

Down from the ceiling, by the chimney's edge, 110
That in our ancient uncouth country style,
With huge and black projection overbrowed
Large space beneath, as duly as the light
Of day grew dim the Housewife hung a lamp ;
An aged utensil, which had performed
Service beyond all others of its kind.
Early at evening did it burn, and late,
Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,
Which, going by from year to year, had found,
And left the couple neither gay perhaps 120
Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with hopes,
Living a life of eager industry.
And now, when Luke had reached his eighteenth year,
There by the light of this old lamp they sate,

Father and Son, while far into the night
 The Housewife plied her own peculiar work,
 Making the cottage through the silent hours
 Murmur as with the sound of summer flies.
 This light was famous in its neighborhood,
 And was a public symbol of the life 130
 That thrifty Pair had lived. For, as it chanced,
 Their cottage on a plot of rising ground
 Stood single, with large prospect, north and south,
 High into Easedale, up to Dunmail-Raise,
 And westward to the village near the lake ;
 And from this constant light, so regular
 And so far seen, the House itself, by all
 Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,
 Both old and young, was named THE EVENING STAR.

Thus living on through such a length of years, 140
 The Shepherd, if he loved himself, must needs
 Have loved his Helpmate ; but to Michael's heart
 This son of his old age was yet more dear —
 Less from instinctive tenderness, the same
 Fond spirit that blindly works in the blood of all —
 Than that a child, more than all other gifts
 That earth can offer to declining man,
 Brings hope with it, and forward-looking thoughts,
 And stirrings of inquietude, when they
 By tendency of nature needs must fail. 150
 Exceeding was the love he bare to him,
 His heart and his heart's joy ! For oftentimes
 Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms,
 Had done him female service, not alone

For pastime and delight, as is the use
 Of fathers, but with patient mind enforced
 To acts of tenderness ; and he had rocked
 His cradle as with a woman's gentle hand.

And in a later time, ere yet the Boy
 Had put on boy's attire, did Michael love, 160
 Albeit of a stern, unbending mind,
 To have the Young-one in his sight, when he
 Wrought in the field, or on his shepherd's stool
 Sat with a fettered sheep before him stretched
 Under the large old oak, that near his door
 Stood single, and, from matchless depth of shade,
 Chosen for the Shearer's covert from the sun,
 Thence in our rustic dialect was called
 The CLIPPING TREE, a name which yet it bears.
 There, while they two were sitting in the shade, 170
 With others round them, earnest all and blithe,
 Would Michael exercise his heart with looks
 Of fond correction and reproof bestowed
 Upon the Child, if he disturbed the sheep
 By catching at their legs, or with his shouts
 Scared them, while they lay still beneath the shears.

And when by Heaven's good grace the boy grew up
 A healthy Lad, and carried in his cheek
 Two steady roses that were five years old,
 Then Michael from a winter coppice cut 180
 With his own hand a sapling, which he hooped
 With iron, making it throughout in all
 Due requisites a perfect shepherd's staff,

And gave it to the Boy ; wherewith equipped,
 He as a watchman oftentimes was placed
 At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock ;
 And, to his office prematurely called,
 There stood the urchin, as you will divine,
 Something between a hindrance and a help ;
 And for this cause not always, I believe, 190
 Receiving from his Father hire of praise ;
 Though naught was left undone which staff, or voice,
 Or looks, or threatening gestures, could perform.

But soon as Luke, full ten years old, could stand
 Against the mountain blasts, and to the heights,
 Not fearing toil, nor length of weary ways,
 He with his Father daily went, and they
 Were as companions, why should I relate
 That objects which the Shepherd loved before
 Were dearer now ; that from the Boy there came 200
 Feelings and emanations, things which were
 Light to the sun and music to the wind ;
 And that the old Man's heart seemed born again ?

Thus in his Father's sight the Boy grew up ;
 And now, when he had reached his eighteenth year,
 He was his comfort and his daily hope.

While in this sort the simple household lived
 From day to day, to Michael's ear there came
 Distressful tidings. Long before the time
 Of which I speak, the Shepherd had been bound 210

In surety for his brother's son, a man
Of an industrious life, and ample means ;
But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly
Had pressed upon him ; and old Michael now
Was summoned to discharge the forfeiture,
A grievous penalty, but little less
Than half his substance. This unlooked-for claim,
At the first hearing, for a moment took
More hope out of his life than he supposed
That any old man ever could have lost. 220
As soon as he had armed himself with strength
To look his trouble in the face, it seemed
The Shepherd's sole resource to sell at once
A portion of his patrimonial fields.
Such was his first resolve ; he thought again,
And his heart failed him. " Isabel," said he,
Two evenings after he had heard the news,
" I have been toiling more than seventy years,
And in the open sunshine of God's love
Have we all lived ; yet if these fields of ours 230
Should pass into a stranger's hand, I think
That I could not lie quiet in my grave.
Our lot is a hard lot ; the sun himself
Has scarcely been more diligent than I ;
And I have lived to be a fool at last
To my own family. An evil man
That was, and made an evil choice, if he
Were false to us ; and if he were not false,
There are ten thousand to whom loss like this
Had been no sorrow. I forgive him — but 240
'T were better to be dumb than to talk thus.

When I began, my purpose was to speak
Of remedies and of a cheerful hope.
Our Luke shall leave us, Isabel ; the land
Shall not go from us, and it shall be free ;
He shall possess it, free as is the wind
That passes over it. We have, thou know'st,
Another kinsman ; he will be our friend
In this distress. He is a prosperous man,
Thriving in trade ; and Luke to him shall go, 250
And with his kinsman's help and his own thrift
He quickly will repair this loss, and then
He may return to us. If here he stay,
What can be done? Where every one is poor,
What can be gained? "

At this the old Man paused,
And Isabel sat silent, for her mind
Was busy, looking back into past times.
There's Richard Bateman, thought she to herself,
He was a parish-boy, — at the church-door
They made a gathering for him, shillings, pence, 260
And half-pennies, wherewith the neighbors bought
A basket, which they filled with pedler's wares ;
And, with his basket on his arm, the lad
Went up to London, found a master there,
Who, out of many, chose the trusty boy
To go and overlook his merchandise
Beyond the seas ; where he grew wondrous rich,
And left estates and moneys to the poor,
And at his birthplace built a chapel, floored
With marble, which he sent from foreign lands. 270
These thoughts, and many others of like sort,

Passed quickly through the mind of Isabel,
 And her face brightened. The old Man was glad,
 And thus resumed : “ Well, Isabel ! this scheme,
 These two days, has been meat and drink to me.
 Far more than we have lost is left us yet.
 — We have enough, — I wish indeed that I
 Were younger, — but this hope is a good hope.
 Make ready Luke’s best garments, of the best
 Buy for him more, and let us send him forth 280
 To-morrow, or the next day, or to-night :
 — If he *could* go, the Boy should go to-night.”

Here Michael ceased, and to the fields went forth
 With a light heart. The Housewife for five days
 Was restless morn and night, and all day long
 Wrought on with her best fingers to prepare
 Things needful for the journey of her son.
 But Isabel was glad when Sunday came
 To stop her in her work : for, when she lay
 By Michael’s side, she through the last two nights 290
 Heard him, how he was troubled in his sleep ;
 And when they rose at morning she could see
 That all his hopes were gone. That day at noon
 She said to Luke, while they two by themselves
 Were sitting at the door, “ Thou must not go :
 We have no other Child but thee to lose,
 None to remember, — do not go away,
 For if thou leave thy Father he will die.”
 The Youth made answer with a jocund voice ;
 And Isabel, when she had told her fears, 300
 Recovered heart. That evening her best fare

Did she bring forth ; and all together sat
Like happy people round a Christmas fire.

With daylight Isabel resumed her work ;
And all the ensuing week the house appeared
As cheerful as a grove in Spring : at length
The expected letter from their kinsman came,
With kind assurances that he would do
His utmost for the welfare of the Boy ;
To which requests were added, that forthwith 310
He might be sent to him. Ten times or more
The letter was read over ; Isabel
Went forth to show it to the neighbors round.
Nor was there at that time on English land
A prouder heart than Luke's. When Isabel
Had to her house returned, the old Man said,
" He shall depart to-morrow." To this word
The Housewife answered, talking much of things
Which, if at such short notice he should go,
Would surely be forgotten. But at length 320
She gave consent, and Michael was at ease.

Near the tumultuous brook of Green-head Ghyll,
In that deep valley, Michael had designed
To build a Sheep-fold ; and, before he heard
The tidings of his melancholy loss,
For this same purpose he had gathered up
A heap of stones, which by the streamlet's edge
Lay thrown together, ready for the work.
With Luke that evening thitherward he walked ;
And soon as they had reached the place he stopped, 330

And thus the old Man spake to him : “ My Son,
 To-morrow thou wilt leave me ; with full heart
 I look upon thee, for thou art the same
 That wert a promise to me ere thy birth,
 And all thy life hast been my daily joy.
 I will relate to thee some little part
 Of our two histories ; 't will do thee good
 When thou art from me, even if I should touch
 On things thou canst not know of. — After thou
 First cam'st into the world — as oft befalls 340
 The new-born infants — thou didst sleep away
 Two days, and blessings from thy Father's tongue
 Then fell upon thee. Day by day passed on,
 And still I loved thee with increasing love.
 Never to living ear came sweeter sounds
 Than when I heard thee by our own fireside
 First uttering, without words, a natural tune :
 While thou, a feeding babe, didst in thy joy
 Sing at thy Mother's breast. Month followed month,
 And in the open fields my life was passed 350
 And on the mountains ; else I think that thou
 Hadst been brought up upon thy Father's knees.
 But we were playmates, Luke : among these hills,
 As well thou knowest, in us the old and young
 Have played together, nor with me didst thou
 Lack any pleasure which a boy can know.”
 Luke had a manly heart ; but at these words
 He sobbed aloud. The old Man grasped his hand
 And said, “ Nay, do not take it so — I see
 That these are things of which I need not speak. 360
 — Even to the utmost I have been to thee

A kind and a good Father ; and herein
 I but repay a gift which I myself
 Received at other's hands ; for though now old
 Beyond the common life of man, I still
 Remember them who loved me in my youth.
 Both of them sleep together : here they lived,
 As all their Forefathers had done ; and when
 At length their time was come, they were not loath
 To give their bodies to the family mould. 370
 I wished that thou shouldst live the life they lived ;
 But 't is a long time to look back, my Son,
 And see so little gain from threescore years.
 These fields were burdened when they came to me ;
 Till I was forty years of age, not more
 Than half of my inheritance was mine.
 I toiled and toiled ; God blessed me in my work,
 And till these three weeks past the land was free.
 — It looks as if it never could endure
 Another Master. Heaven forgive me, Luke, 380
 If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good
 That thou shouldst go."

At this the old man paused ;
 Then, pointing to the stones near which they stood,
 Thus, after a short silence, he resumed :
 "This was a work for us ; and now, my Son,
 It is a work for me. But lay one stone, —
 Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine own hands.
 Nay, Boy, be of good hope ; we both may live
 To see a better day. At eighty-four
 I still am strong and hale ; do thou thy part ; 390
 I will do mine. I will begin again
 With many tasks that were resigned to thee :

Up to the heights, and in among the storms,
 Will I without thee go again, and do
 All works which I was wont to do alone,
 Before I knew thy face. Heaven bless thee, Boy !
 Thy heart these two weeks has been beating fast
 With many hopes ; it should be so — yes, yes, —
 I knew that thou couldst never have a wish
 To leave me, Luke : thou hast been bound to me 400
 Only by links of love : when thou art gone
 What will be left to us ! — But I forget
 My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone,
 As I requested ; and hereafter, Luke,
 When thou art gone away, should evil men
 Be thy companions, think of me, my Son,
 And of this moment ; hither turn thy thoughts,
 And God will strengthen thee. Amid all fear
 And all temptations, Luke, I pray that thou
 May'st bear in mind the life thy Fathers lived, 410
 Who, being innocent, did for that cause
 Bestir them in good deeds. Now fare thee well, —
 When thou return'st, thou in this place wilt see
 A work which is not here : a covenant
 'T will be between us ; but, whatever fate
 Befall thee, I shall love thee to the last,
 And bear thy memory with me to the grave."

The Shepherd ended here ; and Luke stooped down,
 And, as his Father had requested, laid
 The first stone of the Sheep-fold. At the sight 420
 The old Man's grief broke from him ; to his heart
 He pressed his son, he kissèd him and wept ;
 And to the house together they returned.

— Hushed was that House in peace, or seeming peace,
 Ere the night fell : with morrow's dawn the Boy
 Began his journey, and when he had reached
 The public way, he put on a bold face ;
 And all the neighbors, as he passed their doors,
 Came forth with wishes and with farewell prayers,
 That followed him till he was out of sight. 430

A good report did from their Kinsman come,
 Of Luke and his well-doing ; and the Boy
 Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous news,
 Which, as the Housewife phrased it, were throughout
 "The prettiest letters that were ever seen."
 Both parents read them with rejoicing hearts.
 So many months passed on ; and once again
 The Shepherd went about his daily work
 With confident and cheerful thoughts ; and now
 Sometimes when he could find a leisure hour 440
 He to that valley took his way, and there
 Wrought at the Sheep-fold. Meantime Luke began
 To slacken in his duty ; and at length
 He in the dissolute city gave himself
 To evil courses : ignominy and shame
 Fell on him, so that he was driven at last
 To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas.

There is a comfort in the strength of love ;
 'T will make a thing endurable, which else
 Would overset the brain, or break the heart : 450
 I have conversed with more than one who well
 Remember the old Man, and what he was

Years after he had heard this heavy news.
 His bodily frame had been from youth to age
 Of an unusual strength. Among the rocks
 He went, and still looked up to sun and cloud,
 And listened to the wind, and, as before,
 Performed all kinds of labor for his sheep,
 And for the land, his small inheritance.
 And to that hollow dell from time to time 460
 Did he repair, to build the Fold of which
 His flock had need. 'T is not forgotten yet,
 The pity which was then in every heart
 For the old Man ; and 't is believed by all
 That many and many a day he thither went,
 And never lifted up a single stone.

There by the Sheep-fold, sometimes was he seen
 Sitting alone, or with his faithful Dog,
 Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.
 The length of full seven years, from time to time, 470
 He at the building of this Sheep-fold wrought,
 And left the work unfinished when he died.
 Three years, or little more, did Isabel
 Survive her Husband : at her death the estate
 Was sold, and went into a stranger's hand.
 The Cottage which was named the EVENING STAR
 Is gone, — the ploughshare has been through the ground
 On which it stood. Great changes have been wrought
 In all the neighborhood ; yet the oak is left
 That grew beside their door ; and the remains 480
 Of the unfinished Sheep-fold may be seen
 Beside the boisterous brook of Green-head Ghyll.

THE WATERFALL AND THE EGLANTINE.

1800. — 1800.

“BEGONE, thou fond presumptuous Elf,”
Exclaimed an angry Voice,
“Nor dare to thrust thy foolish self
Between me and my choice !”
A small Cascade fresh swoln with snows
Thus threatened a poor Briar-rose,
That all bespattered with his foam,
And dancing high and dancing low,
Was living, as a child might know,
In an unhappy home.

10

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

20

“Ah!” said the Briar, “blame me not;
Why should we dwell in strife?
We who in this sequestered spot
Once lived a happy life!

You stirred me on my rocky bed, —
What pleasure through my veins you spread !
The summer long, from day to day,
My leaves you freshened and bedewed ;
Nor was it common gratitude
That did your cares repay.

30

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

40

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

50

What more he said I cannot tell.
The Torrent down the rocky dell

Came thundering loud and fast ;
I listened, nor aught else could hear ;
The Briar quaked — and much I fear
Those accents were his last.



THE OAK AND THE BROOM.

A PASTORAL.

1800. — 1800.

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

10

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

This Oak, a giant and a sage,
His neighbor thus addressed : —

20

‘ Eight weary weeks, through rock and clay,
Along this mountain’s edge,
The Frost hath wrought both night and day,
Wedge driving after wedge.
Look up ! and think, above your head
What trouble, surely, will be bred ;
Last night I heard a crash — ’t is true,
The splinters took another road, —
I see them yonder, — what a load
For such a Thing as you !

30

You are preparing as before
To deck your slender shape ;
And yet, just three years back — no more —
You had a strange escape :
Down from yon cliff a fragment broke ;
It thundered down with fire and smoke,
And hitherward pursued its way ;
This ponderous block was caught by me,
And o’er your head, as you may see,
’T is hanging to this day !

40

If breeze or bird to this rough steep
Your kind’s first seed did bear,
The breeze had better been asleep,
The bird caught in a snare ;
For you and your green twigs decoy
The little witless shepherd-boy

To come and slumber in your bower ;
And, trust me, on some sultry noon
Both you and he, Heaven knows how soon !
Will perish in one hour. 50

From me this friendly warning take.'
The Broom began to doze,
And thus to keep herself awake,
Did gently interpose :
' My thanks for your discourse are due ;
That more than what you say is true,
I know, and I have known it long ;
Frail is the bond by which we hold
Our being, whether young or old,
Wise, foolish, weak, or strong. 60

Disasters, do the best we can,
Will reach both great and small ;
And he is oft the wisest man
Who is not wise at all.
For me, why should I wish to roam ?
This spot is my paternal home,
It is my pleasant heritage ;
My father many a happy year
Spread here his careless blossoms, here
Attained a good old age. 70

Even such as his may be my lot.
What cause have I to haunt
My heart with terrors? Am I not
In truth a favored plant !

On me such bounty Summer pours,
That I am covered o'er with flowers ;
And, when the Frost is in the sky,
My branches are so fresh and gay
That you might look at me and say,
This Plant can never die.

80

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

90

Her voice was blithe, her heart was light ;
The Broom might have pursued
Her speech, until the stars of night
Their journey had renewed ;
But in the branches of the oak
Two ravens now began to croak
Their nuptial song, a gladsome air ;
And to her own green bower the breeze
That instant brought two stripling bees
To rest, or murmur there.

100

One night, my Children ! from the north
There came a furious blast ;

At break of day I ventured forth,
 And near the cliff I passed.
 The storm had fallen upon the Oak,
 And struck him with a mighty stroke,
 And whirled, and whirled him far away
 And, in one hospitable cleft,
 The little careless Broom was left
 To live for many a day."

110



THE SPARROW'S NEST.

1801. — 1807.

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

10

She looked at it and seemed to fear it ;
 Dreading, though wishing, to be near it :
 Such heart was in her, being then
 A little Prattler among men.
 The Blessing of my later years

Was with me when a boy :
 She gave me eyes, she gave me ears :
 And humble cares, and delicate fears ;
 A heart, the fountain of sweet tears ;
 And love, and thought, and joy.

20



ALICE FELL ;

OR, POVERTY.

1802. — 1807.

THE post-boy drove with fierce career,
 For threatening clouds the moon had drowned ;
 When, as we hurried on, my ear
 Was smitten with a startling sound.

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

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

10

The boy then smacked his whip, and fast
 The horses scampered through the rain ;
 But hearing soon upon the blast
 The cry, I bade him halt again.

Forthwith alighting on the ground,
"Whence comes," said I, "this piteous moan?"
And there a little Girl I found,
Sitting behind the chaise, alone. 20

"My cloak!" No other word she spake,
But loud and bitterly she wept,
As if her innocent heart would break;
And down from off her seat she leapt.

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

There, twisted between nave and spoke,
It hung, nor could at once be freed;
But our joint pains unloosed the cloak,
A miserable rag indeed! 30

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

Insensible to all relief
Sat the poor girl, and forth did send
Sob after sob, as if her grief
Could never, never have an end. 40

"My child, in Durham do you dwell?"
She checked herself in her distress,

And said, "My name is Alice Fell ;
I'm fatherless and motherless.

And I to Durham, Sir, belong."
Again, as if the thought would choke
Her very heart, her grief grew strong ;
And all was for her tattered cloak !

The chaise drove on ; our journey's end
Was nigh ; and sitting by my side, 50
As if she had lost her only friend
She wept, nor would be pacified.

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

"And let it be of duffil gray,
As warm a cloak as man can sell !"
Proud creature was she the next day,
The little orphan, Alice Fell ! 60



BEGGARS.

1802. — 1807.

SHE had a tall man's height or more ;
Her face from summer's noontide heat
No bonnet shaded, but she wore
A mantle, to her very feet
Descending with a graceful flow,
And on her head a cap as white as new-fallen snow.

Her skin was of Egyptian brown :
 Haughty, as if her eye had seen
 Its own light to a distance thrown,
 She towered, fit person for a Queen 10
 To lead those ancient Amazonian files ;
 Or ruling Bandit's wife among the Grecian isles.

Advancing, forth she stretched her hand
 And begged an alms with doleful plea
 That ceased not ; on our English land
 Such woes, I knew, could never be ;
 And yet a boon I gave her, for the creature
 Was beautiful to see — a weed of glorious feature.

I left her, and pursued my way ;
 And soon before me did espy 20
 A pair of little Boys at play,
 Chasing a crimson butterfly ;
 The taller followed with his hat in hand,
 Wreathed round with yellow flowers the gayest of the land.

The other wore a rimless crown
 With leaves of laurel stuck about ;
 And while both followed up and down,
 Each whooping with a merry shout,
 In their fraternal features I could trace
 Unquestionable lines of that wild Suppliant's face. 30

Yet *they*, so blithe of heart, seemed fit
 For finest tasks of earth or air :
 Wings let them have, and they might flit

Precursors to Aurora's car,
 Scattering fresh flowers ; though happier far, I ween,
 To hunt their fluttering game o'er rock and level green.

They dart across my path, — but lo,
 Each ready with a plaintive whine !
 Said I, “ Not half an hour ago
 Your Mother has had alms of mine.” 40
 “ That cannot be,” one answered, — “ she is dead ; ”
 I looked reproof ; they saw, but neither hung his head.

“ She has been dead, Sir, many a day.”
 “ Hush, boys ! you're telling me a lie ;
 It was your Mother, as I say ! ”
 And in the twinkling of an eye,
 “ Come ! come ! ” cried one, and without more ado,
 Off to some other play the joyous Vagrants flew !



WRITTEN IN MARCH,

WHILE RESTING ON THE BRIDGE AT THE FOOT OF BROTHER'S
 WATER.

1802. — 1807.

THE cock is crowing,
 The stream is flowing,
 The small birds twitter,
 The lake doth glitter,
 The green field sleeps in the sun ;

The oldest and youngest
Are at work with the strongest ;
The cattle are grazing,
Their heads never raising ;
There are forty feeding like one !

10

Like an army defeated
The snow hath retreated,
And now doth fare ill
On the top of the bare hill ;
The Ploughboy is whooping — anon — anon :
There 's joy in the mountains ;
There 's life in the fountains ;
Small clouds are sailing,
Blue sky prevailing ;
The rain is over and gone !

20



"MY HEART LEAPS UP."

1802. — 1807.

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

Beneath the summer sky
 From flower to flower let him fly ;
 'T is all that he wishes to do.
 The cheerer 'Thou of our indoor sadness, 30
 He is the friend of our summer gladness ;
 What hinders, then, that ye should be
 Playmates in the sunny weather,
 And fly about in the air together ?
 His beautiful wings in crimson are drest,
 A crimson as bright as thine own ;
 Would'st thou be happy in thy nest,
 O pious Bird ! whom man loves best,
 Love him, or leave him alone !



TO A BUTTERFLY.

1802. — 1807.

I 'VE watched you now a full half-hour,
 Self-poised upon that yellow flower ;
 And, little Butterfly, indeed
 I know not if you sleep or feed.
 How motionless ! — not frozen seas
 More motionless ! and then
 What joy awaits you, when the breeze
 Hath found you out among the trees,
 And calls you forth again !
 This plot of orchard-ground is ours ; 10
 My trees they are, my Sister's flowers.
 Here rest your wings when they are weary ;

Here lodge as in a sanctuary !
 Come often to us, fear no wrong ;
 Sit near us on the bough !
 We 'll talk of sunshine and of song,
 And summer days when we were young, —
 Sweet childish days, that were as long
 As twenty days are now.



TO A BUTTERFLY.

1802. — 1807.

STAY near me : do not take thy flight !
 A little longer stay in sight !
 Much converse do I find in thee,
 Historian of my infancy !
 Float near me : do not yet depart !
 Dead times revive in thee :
 Thou bring'st, gay creature as thou art !
 A solemn image to my heart,
 My father's family !

Oh ! pleasant, pleasant were the days,
 The time, when, in our childish plays,
 My sister Emmeline and I
 Together chased the butterfly !
 A very hunter did I rush
 Upon the prey : with leaps and springs
 I followed on from brake to bush ;
 But she, God love her ! feared to brush
 The dust from off its wings.

TO THE SMALL CELANDINE.

1802. — 1807.

PANSIES, lilies, kingcups, daisies,
 Let them live upon their praises ;
 Long as there 's a sun that sets,
 Primroses will have their glory ;
 Long as there are violets,
 They will have a place in story :
 There 's a flower that shall be mine,
 'T is the little Celandine.

Eyes of some men travel far
 For the finding of a star ; 10
 Up and down the heavens they go,
 Men that keep a mighty rout !
 I 'm as great as they, I trow,
 Since the day I found thee out,
 Little Flower ! — I 'll make a stir,
 Like a sage astronomer.

Modest, yet withal an Elf
 Bold, and lavish of thyself ;
 Since we needs must first have met,
 I have seen thee, high and low, 20
 Thirty years or more, and yet
 'T was a face I did not know ;
 Thou hast now, go where I may,
 Fifty greetings in a day.

Ere a leaf is on a bush,
In the time before the thrush
Has a thought about her nest,
Thou wilt come with half a call,
Spreading out thy glossy breast
Like a careless Prodigal ; 30
Telling tales about the sun,
When we 've little warmth or none

Poets — vain men in their mood ! —
Travel with the multitude :
Never heed them ; I aver
That they all are wanton wooers ;
But the thrifty cottager,
Who stirs little out of doors,
Joys to spy thee near her home :
Spring is coming, Thou art come 40

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

Ill befall the yellow Flowers,
Children of the flaring hours ! 50
Buttercups, that will be seen,
Whether we will see or no ;

Others, too, of lofty mien ;
 They have done as worldlings do,
 Taken praise that should be thine,
 Little, humble Celandine !

Prophet of delight and mirth,
 Ill-requited upon earth ;
 Herald of a mighty band,
 Of a joyous train ensuing,
 Serving at my heart's command,
 Tasks that are no tasks renewing,
 I will sing, as doth behove,
 Hymns in praise of what I love !

60



TO THE SAME FLOWER.

1802. — 1807.

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

I have not a doubt but he,
 Whosoe'er the man might be,
 Who the first with pointed rays
 (Workman worthy to be sainted)

10

Set the sign-board in a blaze,
When the rising sun he painted,
Took the fancy from a glance
At thy glittering countenance.

Soon as gentle breezes bring
News of winter's vanishing ;
And the children build their bowers,
Sticking 'kerchief-plots of mould 20
All about with full-blown flowers,
Thick as sheep in shepherd's fold !
With the proudest thou art there,
Mantling in the tiny square.

Often have I sighed to measure
By myself a lonely pleasure,
Sighed to think, I read a book,
Only read, perhaps, by me ;
Yet I long could overlook
Thy bright coronet and Thee, 30
And thy arch and wily ways,
And thy store of other praise.

Blithe of heart, from week to week
Thou dost play at hide-and-seek ;
While the patient primrose sits
Like a beggar in the cold,
Thou, a flower of wiser wits,
Slipp'st into thy sheltering hold ;
Liveliest of the vernal train
When we are all out again. 40

Drawn by what peculiar spell,
 By what charm of sight or smell,
 Does the dim-eyed curious Bee,
 Laboring for her waxen cells,
 Fondly settle upon Thee,
 Prized above all buds and bells
 Opening daily at thy side,
 By the season multiplied?

Thou art not beyond the moon,
 But a thing "beneath our shoon:" 50
 Let the bold Discoverer thrid
 In his bark the polar sea;
 Rear who will a pyramid;
 Praise it is enough for me,
 If there be but three or four
 Who will love my little Flower.



THE LEECH-GATHERER;

OR, RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE.

1802. — 1807.

THERE was a roaring in the wind all night;
 The rain came heavily and fell in floods;
 But now the sun is rising calm and bright;
 The birds are singing in the distant woods;
 Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove broods;
 The Jay makes answer as the Magpie chatters;
 And all the air is filled with pleasant noise of waters.

All things that love the sun are out of doors ;
 The sky rejoices in the morning's birth ;
 The grass is bright with rain-drops ; on the moors 10
 The hare is running races in her mirth ;
 And with her feet she from the plashy earth
 Raises a mist, that, glittering in the sun,
 Runs with her all the way, wherever she doth run.

I was a Traveller then upon the moor,
 I saw the hare that raced about with joy ;
 I heard the woods and distant waters roar,
 Or heard them not, as happy as a boy :
 The pleasant season did my heart employ :
 My old remembrances went from me wholly, 20
 And all the ways of men, so vain and melancholy.

But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the might
 Of joy in minds that can no further go,
 As high as we have mounted in delight
 In our dejection do we sink as low ;
 To me that morning did it happen so :
 And fears and fancies thick upon me came ;
 Dim sadness and blind thoughts, I knew not, nor could
 name.

I heard the skylark warbling in the sky ;
 And I bethought me of the playful hare ; 30
 Even such a happy Child of earth am I ;
 Even as these blissful creatures do I fare ;
 Far from the world I walk, and from all care ;
 But there may come another day to me, —
 Solitude, pain of heart, distress, and poverty.

My whole life I have lived in pleasant thought,
 As if life's business were a summer mood ;
 As if all needful things would come unsought
 'To genial faith, still rich in genial good ;
 But how can He expect that others should 40
 Build for him, sow for him, and at his call
 Love him, who for himself will take no heed at all ?

I thought of Chatterton, the marvellous Boy,
 The sleepless Soul that perished in his pride ;
 Of Him who walked in glory and in joy
 Following his plough, along the mountain-side ;
 By our own spirits are we deified :
 We Poets in our youth begin in gladness :
 But thereof come in the end despondency and madness.

Now, whether it were by peculiar grace, 50
 A leading from above, a something given,
 Yet it befell that in this lonely place,
 When I with these untoward thoughts had striven,
 Beside a pool bare to the eye of heaven
 I saw a Man before me unawares :
 The oldest man he seemed that ever wore gray hairs.

As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie
 Couched on the bald top of an eminence ;
 Wonder to all who do the same espy,
 By what means it could thither come, and whence ; 60
 So that it seems a thing endued with sense, —
 Like a sea-beast crawled forth, that on a shelf
 Of rock or sand reposes, there to sun itself ;

Such seemed this Man, not all alive nor dead,
 Nor all asleep, in his extreme old age :
 His body was bent double, feet and head
 Coming together in life's pilgrimage ;
 As if some dire constraint of pain, or rage
 Of sickness felt by him in times long past,
 A more than human weight upon his frame had cast. 70

Himself he propped, limbs, body, and pale face,
 Upon a long gray staff of shaven wood ;
 And, still as I drew near with gentle pace,
 Upon the margin of that moorish flood
 Motionless as a cloud the old Man stood,
 That heareth not the loud winds when they call,
 And moveth all together, if it move at all.

At length, himself unsettling, he the pond
 Stirred with his staff, and fixedly did look
 Upon the muddy water, which he conned, 80
 As if he had been reading in a book :
 And now a stranger's privilege I took,
 And drawing to his side, to him did say,
 " This morning gives us promise of a glorious day."

A gentle answer did the old Man make,
 In courteous speech which forth he slowly drew ;
 And him with further words I thus bespake,
 " What occupation do you there pursue ?
 This is a lonesome place for one like you."
 Ere he replied, a flash of mild surprise 90
 Broke from the sable orbs of his yet-vivid eyes.

His words came feebly, from a feeble chest,
 But each in solemn order followed each,
 With something of a lofty utterance drest, —
 Choïce word and measured phrase, above the reach
 Of ordinary men ; a stately speech ;
 Such as grave Livers do in Scotland use,
 Religious men, who give to God and man their dues.

He told, that to these waters he had come
 To gather leeches, being old and poor, — 100
 Employment hazardous and wearisome !
 And he had many hardships to endure ;
 From pond to pond he roamed, from moor to moor ;
 Housing, with God's good help, by choice or chance ;
 And in this way he gained an honest maintenance.

The old Man still stood talking by my side ;
 But now his voice to me was like a stream
 Scarce heard, nor word from word could I divide ;
 And the whole body of the Man did seem
 Like one whom I had met with in a dream, 110
 Or like a man from some far region sent,
 To give me human strength, by apt admonishment.

My former thoughts returned : the fear that kills ;
 And hope that is unwilling to be fed ;
 Cold, pain, and labor, and all fleshly ills ;
 And mighty Poets in their misery dead.
 — Perplexed, and longing to be comforted,
 My question eagerly did I renew,
 “ How is it that you live, and what is it you do ? ”

He with a smile did then his words repeat ; 120
 And said that, gathering leeches, far and wide
 He travelled ; stirring thus about his feet
 The waters of the pools where they abide.
 " Once I could meet with them on every side ;
 But they have dwindled long by slow decay ;
 Yet still I persevere, and find them where I may."

While he was talking thus, the lonely place,
 The old Man's shape, and speech, — all troubled me :
 In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace
 About the weary moors continually, 130
 Wandering about alone and silently.
 While I these thoughts within myself pursued,
 He, having made a pause, the same discourse renewed.

And soon with this he other matter blended,
 Cheerfully uttered, with demeanor kind,
 But stately in the main ; and when he ended,
 I could have laughed myself to scorn to find
 In that decrepit Man so firm a mind.
 " God," said I, " be my help and stay secure ;
 I'll think of the Leech-gatherer on the lonely moor !" 140

A FAREWELL.

1802. — 1815.

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

Our boat is safely anchored by the shore,
And there will safely ride when we are gone ; 10
The flowering shrubs that deck our humble door
Will prosper, though untended and alone :
Fields, goods, and far-off chattels we have none ;
These narrow bounds contain our private store
Of things earth makes, and sun doth shine upon ;
Here are they in our sight, — we have no more.

Sunshine and shower be with you, bud and bell !
For two months now in vain we shall be sought ;
We leave you here in solitude to dwell
With these our latest gifts of tender thought : 20
Thou, like the morning, in thy saffron coat,
Bright gowan, and marsh-marigold, farewell !
Whom from the borders of the Lake we brought,
And placed together near our rocky Well.

We go for One to whom ye will be dear ;
And she will prize this Bower, this Indian shed,
Our own contrivance, Building without peer !
— A gentle Maid, whose heart is lowly bred,
Whose pleasures are in wild fields gatherèd,
With joyousness, and with a thoughtful cheer, 30
Will come to you ; to you herself will wed,
And love the blessed life that we lead here.

Dear Spot ! which we have watched with tender heed,
Bringing the chosen plants and blossoms blown
Among the distant mountains, flower and weed,
Which thou hast taken to thee as thy own,
Making all kindness registered and known ; —
Thou for our sakes, though Nature's child indeed,
Fair in thyself and beautiful alone,
Hast taken gifts which thou dost little need. 40

And O most constant, yet most fickle Place,
That hast thy wayward mood's, as thou dost show
To them who look not daily on thy face ;
Who, being loved, in love no bounds dost know,
And say'st, when we forsake thee, " Let them go !"
Thou easy-hearted Thing, with thy wild race
Of weeds and flowers, till we return be slow,
And travel with the year at a soft pace.

Help us to tell Her tales of years gone by,
And this sweet spring, the best beloved and best ; 50
Joy will be flown in its mortality ;
Something must stay to tell us of the rest.

Here, thronged with primroses, the steep rock's breast
 Glittered at evening like a starry sky ;
 And in this bush our sparrow built her nest,
 Of which I sang one song that will not die.

O happy Garden ! whose seclusion deep
 Hath been so friendly to industrious hours ;
 And to soft slumbers, that did gently steep
 Our spirits, carrying with them dreams of flowers 60
 And wild notes warbled among leafy bowers,
 Two burning months let summer overleap,
 And coming back with Her who will be ours,
 Into thy bosom we again shall creep.



STANZAS.

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

1802. — 1815.

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

Thus often would he leave our peaceful home, 10
 And find elsewhere his business or delight ;
 Out of our Valley's limits did he roam :
 Full many a time, upon a stormy night,
 His voice came to us from the neighboring height :
 Oft could we see him driving full in view
 At mid-day when the sun was shining bright ;
 What ill was on him, what he had to do,
 A mighty wonder bred among our quiet crew.

Ah ! piteous sight it was to see this Man
 When he came back to us, a withered flower, — 20
 Or like a sinful creature, pale and wan.
 Down would he sit ; and without strength or power
 Look at the common grass from hour to hour :
 And oftentimes, how long I fear to say,
 Where apple-trees in blossom made a bower,
 Retired in that sunshiny shade he lay ;
 And, like a naked Indian, slept himself away.

Great wonder to our gentle tribe it was
 Whenever from our Valley he withdrew ;
 For happier soul no living creature has 30
 Than he had, being here the long day through.
 Some thought he was a lover, and did woo ;
 Some thought far worse of him, and judged him wrong ;
 But verse was what he had been wedded to ;
 And his own mind did like a tempest strong
 Come to him thus, and drove the weary Wight along.

With him there often walked in friendly guise,
 Or lay upon the moss by brook or tree,

A noticeable Man, with large gray eyes,
And a pale face that seemed undoubtedly 40
As if a blooming face it ought to be ;
Heavy his low-hung lip did oft appear,
Deprest by weight of musing Phantasy ;
Profound his forehead was, though not severe ;
Yet some did think that he had little business here :

Sweet heaven forefend ! his was a lawful right ;
Noisy he was, and gamesome as a boy ;
His limbs would toss about him with delight,
Like branches when strong winds the trees annoy.
Nor lacked his calmer hours device or toy 50
To banish listlessness and irksome care ;
He would have taught you how you might employ
Yourself ; and many did to him repair, —
And certes not in vain ; he had inventions rare.

Expedients, too, of simplest sort he tried :
Long blades of grass plucked round him as he lay,
Made, to his ear attentively applied,
A pipe on which the wind would deftly play ;
Glasses he had, that little things display, —
The beetle panoplied in gems of gold, 60
A mailèd angel on a battle-day ;
The mysteries that cups of flowers enfold,
And all the gorgeous sights which fairies do behold.

He would entice that other Man to hear
His music, and to view his imagery :
And sooth, these two were each to the other dear ;

No livelier love in such a place could be :
 There did they dwell, from earthly labor free,
 As happy spirits as were ever seen ;
 If but a bird, to keep them company, 70
 Or butterfly sate down, they were, I ween,
 As pleased as if the same had been a Maiden-queen.



“THE SUN HAS LONG BEEN SET.”

1802. — 1807.

THE sun has long been set,
 The stars are out by twos and threes,
 The little birds are piping yet
 Among the bushes and trees ;
 There 's a cuckoo, and one or two thrushes,
 And a far-off wind that rushes,
 And a sound of water that gushes,
 And the cuckoo's sovereign cry
 Fills all the hollow of the sky.
 Who would “ go parading ” 10
 In London, “ and masquerading,”
 On such a night of June
 With that beautiful soft half-moon,
 On all these innocent blisses ?
 On such a night as this is !

TO H. C.

SIX YEARS OLD.

1802. — 1807.

O THOU ! whose fancies from afar are brought ;
Who of thy words dost make a mock apparel,
And fittest to unutterable thought
The breeze-like motion and the self-born carol ;
Thou faery voyager ! that dost float
In such clear water, that thy boat
May rather seem
To brood on air than on an earthly stream ;
Suspended in a stream as clear as sky,
Where earth and heaven do make one imagery ; 10
O blessed vision ! happy child !
Thou art so exquisitely wild,
I think of thee with many fears
For what may be thy lot in future years.
I thought of times when Pain might be thy guest,
Lord of thy house and hospitality ;
And Grief, uneasy lover ! never rest
But when she sate within the touch of thee.
O too industrious folly !
O vain and causeless melancholy ! 20
Nature will either end thee quite ;
Or, lengthening out thy season of delight,
Preserve for thee, by individual right,
A young lamb's heart among the full-grown flocks.
What hast thou to do with sorrow,

Or the injuries of to-morrow?
 Thou art a dew-drop, which the morn brings forth,
 Ill fitted to sustain unkindly shocks,
 Or to be trailed along the soiling earth ;
 A gem that glitters while it lives, 30
 And no forewarning gives,
 But, at the touch of wrong, without a strife
 Slips in a moment out of life.



TO THE DAISY.

1802. — 1807.

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

Thee Winter in the garland wears
 That thinly decks his few gray hairs ; 10
 Spring parts the clouds with softest airs,
 That she may sun thee ;
 Whole Summer-fields are thine by right ;
 And Autumn, melancholy Wight !
 Doth in thy crimson head delight
 When rains are on thee.

In shoals and bands, a morrice train,
Thou greet'st the traveller in the lane ;
Pleased at his greeting thee again ;
 Yet nothing daunted,
Nor grieved if thou be set at naught ;
And oft alone in nooks remote
We meet thee, like a pleasant thought,
 When such are wanted.

20

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

30

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

40

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

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

If stately passions in me burn,
 And one chance look to Thee should turn, 50
 I drink out of an humbler urn
 A lowlier pleasure, —
 The homely sympathy that heeds
 The common life our nature breeds ;
 A wisdom fitted to the needs
 Of hearts at leisure.

Fresh-smitten by the morning ray,
 When thou art up, alert and gay,
 Then, cheerful Flower ! my spirits play
 With kindred gladness ; 60
 And when, at dusk, by dews opprest
 Thou sink'st, the image of thy rest
 Hath often eased my pensive breast
 Of careful sadness.

And all day long I number yet,
 All seasons through, another debt,
 Which I, wherever thou art met,
 To thee am owing ;
 An instinct call it, a blind sense,
 A happy, genial influence, 70
 Coming one knows not how, nor whence,
 Nor whither going.

Child of the Year ! that round dost run
 Thy pleasant course, — when day 's begun
 As ready to salute the sun
 As lark or leveret,
 Thy long-lost praise thou shalt regain ;
 Nor be less dear to future men
 Than in old time ; thou not in vain
 Art Nature's favorite.

80



ON THE SAME FLOWER.

1802. — 1807.

With little here to do or see
 Of things that in the great world be,
 Daisy ! again I talk to thee,
 For thou art worthy,
 Thou unassuming Common-place
 Of Nature, with that homely face,
 And yet with something of a grace
 Which love makes for thee !

Oft on the dappled turf at ease
 I sit, and play with similes,
 Loose types of things through all degrees,
 Thoughts of thy raising ;
 And many a fond and idle name
 I give to thee, for praise or blame
 As is the humor of the game,
 While I am gazing.

10

A nun demure of lowly port ;
 Or sprightly maiden of Love's court,

In thy simplicity the sport
 Of all temptations ; 20
 A queen in crown of rubies drest ;
 A starveling in a scanty vest, —
 Are all, as seems to suit thee best,
 Thy appellations.

A little cyclops, with one eye
 Staring to threaten and defy,
 That thought comes next, — and instantly
 The freak is over,
 The shape will vanish, — and behold
 A silver shield with boss of gold, 30
 That spreads itself some faery bold
 In fight to cover.

I see thee glittering from afar —
 And then thou art a pretty star ;
 Not quite so fair as many are
 In heaven above thee !
 Yet like a star, with glittering crest,
 Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest ;
 May peace come never to his nest
 Who shall reprove thee ! 40

Bright *Flower* ! for by that name at last,
 When all my reveries are past,
 I call thee, and to that cleave fast,
 Sweet silent creature !
 That breath'st with me in sun and air,
 Do thou, as thou art wont, repair
 My heart with gladness, and a share
 Of thy meek nature !

TO THE DAISY.

1802. — 1807.

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

Is it that Man is soon deprest, —
 A thoughtless thing ! who, once unblest, 10
 Does little on his memory rest,
 Or on his reason,
 And Thou would'st teach him how to find
 A shelter under every wind,
 A hope for times that are unkind
 And every season ?

Thou wander'st the wide world about,
 Uncheck'd by pride or scrupulous doubt,
 With friends to greet thee, or without,
 Yet pleased and willing ; 20
 Meek, yielding to the occasion's call,
 And all things suffering from all,
 Thy function apostolical
 In peace fulfilling.

THE GREEN LINNET.

1803. — 1807.

BENEATH these fruit-tree boughs that shed
 Their snow-white blossoms on my head,
 With brightest sunshine round me spread
 Of spring's unclouded weather,
 In this sequestered nook how sweet
 To sit upon my orchard-seat,
 And birds and flowers once more to greet,
 My last year's friends together !

One have I marked, the happiest guest
 In all this covert of the blest ;
 Hail to Thee, far above the rest
 In joy of voice and pinion !
 Thou, Linnet ! in thy green array,
 Presiding Spirit here to-day,
 Dost lead the revels of the May ;
 And this is thy dominion.

10

While birds and butterflies and flowers
 Make all one band of paramours,
 Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,
 Art sole in thy employment ;
 A Life, a Presence like the Air,
 Scattering thy gladness without care,
 Too blest with any one to pair ;
 Thyself thy own enjoyment.

20

Of vast circumference and gloom profound
This solitary Tree ! a living thing 10
Produced too slowly ever to decay ;
Of form and aspect too magnificent
To be destroyed. But worthier still of note
Are those fraternal Four of Borrowdale,
Joined in one solemn and capacious grove ;
Huge trunks ! and each particular trunk a growth
Of intertwined fibres serpentine
Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved ;
Nor uniformed with Phantasy, and looks
That threaten the profane, — a pillared shade, 20
Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown hue,
By sheddings from the pining umbrage tinged
Perennially, beneath whose sable roof
Of boughs, as if for festal purpose decked
With unrejoicing berries, ghostly Shapes
May meet at noontide, — Fear and trembling Hope,
Silence and Foresight ; Death the Skeleton
And Time the Shadow, — there to celebrate,
As in a natural temple scattered o'er
With altars undisturbed of mossy stone, 30
United worship ; or in mute repose
To lie, and listen to the mountain flood
Murmuring from Glaramara's inmost caves.

AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS.

SEVEN YEARS AFTER HIS DEATH.

1803. — 1845.

I SHIVER, Spirit fierce and bold,
 At thought of what I now behold ;
 As vapors breathed from dungeons cold
 Strike pleasure dead,
 So sadness comes from out the mould
 Where Burns is laid.

And have I then thy bones so near
 And thou forbidden to appear?
 As if it were thyself that 's here
 I shrink with pain ;
 And both my wishes and my fear
 Alike are vain.

10

Off weight — nor press on weight ! — away
 Dark thoughts ! — they came, but not to stay ;
 With chastened feelings would I pay
 The tribute due
 To him, and aught that hides his clay
 From mortal view.

Fresh as the flower, whose modest worth
 He sang, his genius " glinted " forth,

20

Rose like a star that touching earth,
 For so it seems,
 Doth glorify its humble birth
 With matchless beams.

The piercing eye, the thoughtful brow,
 The struggling heart, where be they now? —
 Full soon the Aspirant of the plough,
 The prompt, the brave,
 Slept, with the obscurest, in the low
 And silent grave.

30

I mourned with thousands, but as one
 More deeply grieved, for He was gone
 Whose light I hailed when first it shone,
 And showed my youth
 How Verse may build a princely throne
 On humble truth.

Alas ! where'er the current tends,
 Regret pursues and with it blends, —
 Huge Criffel's hoary top ascends
 By Skiddaw seen, —
 Neighbors we were, and loving friends
 We might have been ;

40

True friends though diversely inclined ;
 But heart with heart and mind with mind,
 Where the main fibres are entwined,
 Through Nature's skill,
 May even by contraries be joined
 More closely still.

The tear will start, and let it flow ;
 Thou "poor Inhabitant below," 50
 At this dread moment — even so —
 Might we together
 Have sate and talked where gowans blow,
 Or on wild heather.

What treasures would have then been placed
 Within my reach ; of knowledge graced
 By fancy, what a rich repast !
 But why go on? —
 Oh ! spare to sweep, thou mournful blast,
 His grave grass-grown. 60

There, too, a Son, his joy and pride,
 (Not three weeks past the Stripling died,)
 Lies gathered to his Father's side,
 Soul-moving sight !
 Yet one to which is not denied
 Some sad delight.

For *he* is safe, a quiet bed
 Hath early found among the dead,
 Harbored where none can be misled,
 Wronged, or distrest ; 70
 And surely here it may be said
 That such are blest.

And oh for Thee, by pitying grace
 Checked ofttimes in a devious race,

May He who halloweth the place
 Where Man is laid
 Receive thy Spirit in the embrace
 For which it prayed !

Sighing I turned away ; but ere
 Night fell I heard, or seemed to hear, 80
 Music that sorrow comes not near, —
 A ritual hymn,
 Chanted in love that casts out fear
 By Seraphim.



THOUGHTS

SUGGESTED THE DAY FOLLOWING, ON THE BANKS OF NITH,
 NEAR THE POET'S RESIDENCE.

1803. — 1845.

Too frail to keep the lofty vow
 That must have followed when his brow
 Was wreathed — “ The Vision ” tells us how —
 With holly spray,
 He faltered, drifted to and fro,
 And passed away.

Well might such thoughts, dear Sister, throng
 Our minds when, lingering all too long,
 Over the grave of Burns we hung
 In social grief — 10
 Indulged as if it were a wrong
 To seek relief.

But, leaving each unquiet theme
Where gentlest judgments may misdeem,
And prompt to welcome every gleam
 Of good and fair,
Let us beside this limpid Stream
 Breathe hopeful air.

Enough of sorrow, wreck, and blight ;
Think rather of those moments bright 20
When to the consciousness of right
 His course was true,
When Wisdom prospered in his sight,
 And virtue grew.

Yes, freely let our hearts expand,
Freely as in youth's season bland,
When side by side, his Book in hand,
 We wont to stray,
Our pleasure varying at command
 Of each sweet Lay. 30

How oft inspired must he have trode
These pathways, yon far-stretching road !
There lurks his home ; in that Abode,
 With mirth elate,
Or in his nobly-pensive mood,
 The Rustic sate.

Proud thoughts that Image overawes ;
Before it humbly let us pause,

And ask of Nature, from what cause
 And by what rules 40
 She trained her Burns to win applause
 That shames the Schools.

Through busiest street and loneliest glen
 Are felt the flashes of his pen ;
 He rules 'mid winter snows, and when
 Bees fill their hives ;
 Deep in the general heart of men
 His power survives.

What need of fields in some far clime
 Where Heroes, Sages, Bards sublime, 50
 And all that fetched the flowing rhyme
 From genuine springs,
 Shall dwell together till old Time
 Folds up his wings?

Sweet Mercy ! to the gates of Heaven
 This Minstrel lead, his sins forgiven ;
 The rueful conflict, the heart riven
 With vain endeavor,
 And memory of Earth's bitter leaven
 Effaced forever. 60

But why to Him confine the prayer,
 When kindred thoughts and yearnings bear
 On the frail heart the purest share
 With all that live ? —
 The best of what we do and are,
 Just God, forgive !

TO THE SONS OF BURNS,

AFTER VISITING THE GRAVE OF THEIR FATHER.

1803. — 1807.

'MID crowded obelisks and urns
I sought the untimely grave of Burns ;
Sons of the Bard, my heart still mourns
 With sorrow true ;
And more would grieve, but that it turns
 Trembling to you !

Through twilight shades of good and ill
Ye now are panting up life's hill,
And more than common strength and skill
 Must ye display,
If ye would give the better will
 Its lawful sway.

10

Hath Nature strung your nerves to bear
Intemperance with less harm, beware !
But if the Poet's wit ye share,
 Like him can speed
The social hour — of tenfold care
 There will be need ;

For honest men delight will take
To spare your failings for his sake,

20

Will flatter you, — and fool and rake
 Your steps pursue ;
 And of your Father's name will make
 A snare for you.

Far from their noisy haunts retire,
 And add your voices to the quire
 That sanctify the cottage fire
 With service meet ;
 There seek the genius of your Sire,
 His spirit greet ;

30

Or where, 'mid "lonely heights and hows,"
 He paid to Nature tuneful vows ;
 Or wiped his honorable brows
 Bedewed with toil,
 While reapers strove, or busy ploughs
 Upturned the soil ;

His judgment with benignant ray
 Shall guide, his fancy cheer, your way ;
 But ne'er to a seductive lay
 Let faith be given :
 Nor deem that "light which leads astray,
 Is light from Heaven."

40

Let no mean hope your souls enslave ;
 Be independent, generous, brave ;
 Your Father such example gave,
 And such revere ;
 But be admonished by his grave,
 And think, and fear !

TO A HIGHLAND GIRL.

(AT INVERSNEYDE, UPON LOCH LOMOND.)

1803. — 1807.

SWEET Highland Girl, a very shower
 Of beauty is thy earthly dower !
 Twice seven consenting years have shed
 Their utmost bounty on thy head :
 And these gray rocks ; that household lawn ;
 Those trees, a veil just half withdrawn ;
 This fall of water that doth make
 A murmur near the silent lake ;
 This little bay ; a quiet road
 That holds in shelter thy Abode — 10
 In truth together do ye seem
 Like something fashioned in a dream ;
 Such Forms as from their covert peep
 When earthly cares are laid asleep !
 But, O fair Creature ! in the light
 Of common day, so heavenly bright,
 I bless Thee, Vision as thou art,
 I bless thee with a human heart ;
 God shield thee to thy latest years !
 Thee neither know I, nor thy peers ; 20
 And yet my eyes are filled with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray
 For thee when I am far away ;

For never saw I mien, or face,
 In which more plainly I could trace
 Benignity and home-bred sense
 Ripening in perfect innocence.
 Here scattered, like a random seed,
 Remote from men, Thou dost not need
 The embarrassed look of shy distress, 30
 And maidenly shamefacedness ;
 Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear
 The freedom of a Mountaineer ;
 A face with gladness overspread !
 Soft smiles, by human kindness bred !
 And seemliness complete, that sways
 Thy courtesies, about thee plays ;
 With no restraint but such as springs
 From quick and eager visitings
 Of thoughts that lie beyond the reach 40
 Of thy few words of English speech :
 A bondage sweetly brooked, a strife
 That gives thy gestures grace and life !
 So have I, not unmoved in mind,
 Seen birds of tempest-loving kind
 Thus beating up against the wind.

What hand but would a garland cull
 For thee who art so beautiful?
 O happy pleasure ! here to dwell
 Beside thee in some heathy dell ; 50
 Adopt your homely ways and dress,
 A Shepherd, thou a Shepherdess !
 But I could frame a wish for thee

More like a grave reality :
Thou art to me but as a wave
Of the wild sea ; and I would have
Some claim upon thee, if I could,
Though but of common neighborhood.
What joy to hear thee, and to see !
Thy elder Brother I would be, 60
Thy Father — anything to thee !

Now thanks to Heaven ! that of its grace
Hath led me to this lonely place.
Joy have I had ; and going hence
I bear away my recompense.
In spots like these it is we prize
Our Memory, feel that she hath eyes :
Then, why should I be loath to stir ?
I feel this place was made for her ;
To give new pleasure like the past, 70
Continued long as life shall last.
Nor am I loath, though pleased at heart,
Sweet Highland Girl ! from thee to part ;
For I, methinks, till I grow old,
As fair before me shall behold
As I do now the cabin small,
The lake, the bay, the waterfall ;
And Thee, the Spirit of them all !

ADDRESS

TO KILCHURN CASTLE, UPON LOCH AWE.

From the top of the hill a most impressive scene opened upon our view,—a ruined Castle on an Island (for an Island the flood had made it) at some distance from the shore, backed by a Cove of the Mountain Cruachan, down which came a foaming stream. The Castle occupied every foot of the Island that was visible to us, appearing to rise out of the water,—mists rested upon the mountain side, with spots of sunshine; there was a mild desolation in the low grounds, a solemn grandeur in the mountains, and the Castle was wild, yet stately,—not dismantled of turrets, nor the walls broken down, though obviously a ruin.—*Extract from the Journal of my Companion.*

1803. — 1807.

CHILD of loud-throated War! the mountain Stream
 Roars in thy hearing; but thy hour of rest
 Is come, and thou art silent in thy age,
 Save when the wind sweeps by and sounds are caught
 Ambiguous, neither wholly thine nor theirs.
 Oh! there is life that breathes not; Powers there are
 That touch each other to the quick in modes
 Which the gross world no sense hath to perceive,
 No soul to dream of. What art Thou, from care
 Cast off — abandoned by thy rugged Sire,
 Nor by soft Peace adopted; though, in place
 And in dimension, such that thou might'st seem
 But a mere footstool to yon sovereign Lord,
 Huge Cruachan (a thing that meaner hills
 Might crush, nor know that it had suffered harm);

Yet he, not loath, in favor of thy claims
 To reverence, suspends his own ; submitting
 All that the God of Nature hath conferred,
 All that he holds in common with the stars,
 To the memorial majesty of Time 20
 Impersonated in thy calm decay !

Take, then, thy seat, Vicegerent unproved !
 Now, while a farewell gleam of evening light
 Is fondly lingering on thy shattered front,
 Do thou, in turn, be paramount ; and rule
 Over the pomp and beauty of a scene
 Whose mountains, torrents, lake, and woods unite
 To pay thee homage ; and with these are joined,
 In willing admiration and respect,
 Two Hearts, which in thy presence might be called 30
 Youthful as Spring. — Shade of departed Power,
 Skeleton of unfleshed humanity,
 The chronicle were welcome that should call
 Into the compass of distinct regard
 The toils and struggles of thy infant years !
 Yon foaming flood seems motionless as ice ;
 Its dizzy turbulence eludes the eye,
 Frozen by distance ; so, majestic Pile,
 To the perception of this Age, appear
 Thy fierce beginnings, softened and subdued 40
 And quieted in character, — the strife,
 The pride, the fury uncontrollable,
 Lost on the aerial heights of the Crusades !

GLEN-ALMAIN ;

OR, THE NARROW GLEN.

1803. — 1807.

IN this still place, remote from men,
 Sleeps Ossian, in the NARROW GLEN ;
 In this still place, where murmurs on
 But one meek streamlet, only one :
 He sang of battles, and the breath
 Of stormy war, and violent death ;
 And should, methinks, when all was past,
 Have rightfully been laid at last
 Where rocks were rudely heaped, and rent
 As by a spirit turbulent ; 10
 Where sights were rough, and sounds were wild,
 And everything unreconciled ;
 In some complaining, dim retreat,
 For fear and melancholy meet ;
 But this is calm ; there cannot be
 A more entire tranquillity.

Does then the Bard sleep here indeed,
 Or is it but a groundless creed?
 What matters it? I blame them not
 Whose Fancy in this lonely Spot 20
 Was moved, and in such way expressed
 Their notion of its perfect rest.
 A convent, even a hermit's cell,

Would break the silence of this Dell ;
 It is not quiet, is not ease ;
 But something deeper far than these :
 The separation that is here
 Is of the grave ; and of austere
 Yet happy feelings of the dead ;
 And therefore was it rightly said
 That Ossian, last of all his race !
 Lies buried in this lonely place.

30



STEPPING WESTWARD.

While my Fellow-traveller and I were walking by the side of Loch Ketterine, one fine evening after sunset, in our road to a Hut where, in the course of our Tour, we had been hospitably entertained some weeks before, we met, in one of the loneliest parts of that solitary region, two well-dressed Women, one of whom said to us, by way of greeting, "What, you are stepping westward?"

1803. — 1807.

"WHAT, *you are stepping westward?*" — "Yea."
 — 'T would be a *wildish* destiny,
 If we, who thus together roam
 In a strange Land, and far from home,
 Were in this place the guests of Chance ;
 Yet who would stop, or fear to advance,
 Though home or shelter he had none,
 With such a sky to lead him on?

The dewy ground was dark and cold ;
 Behind, all gloomy to behold ; 10
 And stepping westward seemed to be
 A kind of *heavenly* destiny :
 I liked the greeting ; 't was a sound
 Of something without place or bound :
 And seemed to give me spiritual right
 To travel through that region bright.

The voice was soft, and she who spake
 Was walking by her native lake ;
 The salutation had to me 20
 The very sound of courtesy ;
 Its power was felt ; and while my eye
 Was fixed upon the glowing Sky,
 The echo of the voice enwrought
 A human sweetness with the thought
 Of travelling through the world that lay
 Before me in my endless way.



THE SOLITARY REAPER.

1803. — 1807.

BEHOLD her, single in the field,
 Yon solitary Highland Lass !
 Reaping and singing by herself ;
 Stop here, or gently pass !
 Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
 And sings a melancholy strain ;

O listen ! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chant
More welcome notes to weary bands 10
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands :
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings? —
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago ; 20
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending ;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending ; —
I listened, motionless and still ;
And as I mounted up the hill, 30
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

YARROW UNVISITED.

(See the various Poems the scene of which is laid upon the banks of the Yarrow; in particular, the exquisite Ballad of Hamilton, beginning, —

“ Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny Bride,
Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome Marrow! ”)

1803. — 1807.

FROM Stirling Castle we had seen
The mazy Forth unravelled ;
Had trod the banks of Clyde and Tay,
And with the Tweed had travelled ;
And when we came to Clovenford,
Then said my “ *winsome Marrow,* ”
“ Whate’er betide, we ’ll turn aside,
And see the Braes of Yarrow.”

“ Let Yarrow folk, *frae* Selkirk town,
Who have been buying, selling, 10
Go back to Yarrow, ’t is their own ;
Each maiden to her dwelling !
On Yarrow’s banks let herons feed,
Hares couch, and rabbits burrow !
But we will downward with the Tweed,
Nor turn aside to Yarrow.

There ’s Galla Water, Leader Haughs,
Both lying right before us ;
And Dryborough, where with chiming Tweed
The lintwhites sing in chorus ; 20

There 's pleasant Tiviot-dale, a land
Made blithe with plough and harrow :
Why throw away a needful day
To go in search of Yarrow ?

What 's Yarrow but a river bare,
That glides the dark hills under ?
There are a thousand such elsewhere
As worthy of your wonder."

— Strange words they seemed of slight and scorn ;
My True-love sighed for sorrow ; 30
And looked me in the face, to think
I thus could speak of Yarrow !

" Oh ! green," said I, " are Yarrow's holms,
And sweet is Yarrow flowing !
Fair hangs the apple frae the rock,
But we will leave it growing.
O'er hilly path, and open Strath,
We 'll wander Scotland thorough ;
But, though so near, we will not turn
Into the dale of Yarrow. 40

Let beeves and home-bred kine partake
The sweets of Burn-mill meadow ;
The swan on still St. Mary's Lake
Float double, swan and shadow !
We will not see them ; will not go
To-day, nor yet to-morrow ;
Enough if in our hearts we know
There 's such a place as Yarrow.

Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown !
 It must, or we shall rue it : 50
 We have a vision of our own :
 Ah ! why should we undo it ?
 The treasured dreams of times long past,
 We 'll keep them, winsome Marrow !
 For when we 're there, although 't is fair,
 'T will be another Yarrow !

If Care with freezing years should come,
 And wandering seem but folly, —
 Should we be loath to stir from home,
 And yet be melancholy ; 60
 Should life be dull, and spirits low,
 'T will soothe us in our sorrow,
 That earth has something yet to show,
 The bonny holms of Yarrow !”



THE MATRON OF JEDBOROUGH AND HER HUSBAND.

At Jedborough, my companion and I went into private lodgings for a few days ; and the following Verses were called forth by the character and domestic situation of our Hostess.

1803. — 1807.

AGE ! twine thy brows with fresh spring flowers,
 And call a train of laughing Hours ;
 And bid them dance, and bid them sing ;
 And thou, too, mingle in the ring !

Take to thy heart a new delight ;
If not, make merry in despite
That there is One who scorns thy power :
But dance ! for under Jedborough Tower
A Matron dwells who, though she bears
The weight of more than seventy years, 10
Lives in the light of youthful glee,
And she will dance and sing with thee.

Nay ! start not at that Figure — there !
Him who is rooted to his chair !
Look at him — look again ! for he
Hath long been of thy family.
With legs that move not, if they can,
And useless arms, a trunk of man,
He sits, and with a vacant eye, —
A sight to make a stranger sigh ! 20
Deaf, drooping, that is now his doom ;
His world is in this single room :
Is this a place for mirthful cheer ?
Can merry-making enter here ?

The joyous Woman is the Mate
Of him in that forlorn estate !
He breathes a subterraneous damp ;
But bright as Vesper shines her lamp ;
He is as mute as Jedborough Tower ;
She jocund as it was of yore, 30
With all its bravery on ; in times
When all alive with merry chimes,
Upon a sun-bright morn of May,
It roused the Vale to holiday.

I praise thee, Matron ! and thy due
 Is praise, heroic praise, and true !
 With admiration I behold
 Thy gladness unsubdued and bold.
 Thy looks, thy gestures, all present
 The picture of a life well spent : 40
 This do I see ; and something more, —
 A strength unthought of heretofore !
 Delighted am I for thy sake ;
 And yet a higher joy partake ;
 Our Human-nature throws away
 Its second twilight, and looks gay ;
 A land of promise and of pride
 Unfolding, wide as life is wide.

Ah ! see her helpless Charge ! enclosed
 Within himself as seems, composed ; 50
 To fear of loss, and hope of gain,
 The strife of happiness and pain,
 Utterly dead ! yet in the guise
 Of little infants, when their eyes
 Begin to follow to and fro
 The persons that before them go,
 He tracks her motions, quick or slow.
 Her buoyant spirit can prevail
 Where common cheerfulness would fail ;
 She strikes upon him with the heat 60
 Of July suns ; he feels it sweet, —
 An animal delight, though dim !
 'T is all that now remains for him.

The more I looked, I wondered more —
 And while I scanned them o'er and o'er,
 Some inward trouble suddenly
 Broke from the Matron's strong black eye —
 A remnant of uneasy light,
 A flash of something over-bright !
 Nor long this mystery did detain 70
 My thoughts ; she told in pensive strain
 That she had borne a heavy yoke.
 Been stricken by a twofold stroke :
 Ill-health of body ; and had pined
 Beneath worse ailments of the mind.

So be it ! — but let praise ascend
 To Him who is our Lord and friend !
 Who from disease and suffering
 Hath called for thee a second spring ;
 Repaid thee for that sore distress 80
 By no untimely joyousness,
 Which makes of thine a blissful state,
 And cheers thy melancholy Mate !



ON APPROACHING HOME,

AFTER A TOUR IN SCOTLAND.

1803. — 1815.

FLY, some kind Harbinger, to Grasmere-dale !
 Say that we come, and come by this day's light ;
 Fly upon swiftest wing round field and height,

But chiefly let one Cottage hear the tale ;
 There let a mystery of joy prevail, —
 The kitten frolic, like a gamesome sprite ;
 And Rover whine, as at a second sight
 Of near-approaching good that shall not fail ;
 And from that Infant's face let joy appear ;
 Yea, let our Mary's one companion child — 10
 That hath her six weeks' solitude beguiled
 With intimations manifold and dear,
 While we have wandered over wood and wild —
 Smile on his Mother now with bolder cheer.



TO THE CUCKOO.

1804. — 1807.

O BLITHE New-comer ! I have heard,
 I hear thee and rejoice.
 O Cuckoo ! shall I call thee Bird,
 Or but a wandering Voice ?

While I am lying on the grass,
 Thy twofold shout I hear ;
 From hill to hill it seems to pass,
 At once far off, and near.

Though babbling only to the Vale,
 Of sunshine and of flowers,

Thou bringest unto me a tale
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring !
Even yet thou art to me
No bird, but an invisible thing,
A voice, a mystery ;

The same whom in my schoolboy days
I listened to ; that Cry
Which made me look a thousand ways
In bush, and tree, and sky.

20

To seek thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green ;
And thou wert still a hope, a love ;
Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet ;
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again.

O blessed Bird ! the earth we pace
Again appears to be
An unsubstantial, faery place :
That is fit home for Thee !

30

"SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT."

1804. — 1807.

SHE was a Phantom of delight
 When first she gleamed upon my sight ;
 A lovely Apparition, sent
 To be a moment's ornament ;
 Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair ;
 Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair ;
 But all things else about her drawn
 From May-time and the cheerful Dawn ;
 A dancing Shape, an Image gay,
 To haunt, to startle, and waylay. 10

I saw her upon nearer view,
 A Spirit, yet a Woman too !
 Her household motions light and free,
 And steps of virgin liberty ;
 A countenance in which did meet
 Sweet records, promises as sweet ;
 A Creature not too bright or good
 For human nature's daily food ;
 For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
 Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles. 20

And now I see with eye serene
 The very pulse of the machine ;
 A Being breathing thoughtful breath,
 A Traveller between life and death ;

The reason firm, the temperate will,
 Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill ;
 A perfect Woman, nobly planned,
 To warn, to comfort, and command ;
 And yet a Spirit still, and bright
 With something of angelic light.

30



THE DAFFODILS ;

OR, "I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD."

1804. — 1807.

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud
 That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
 When all at once I saw a crowd,
 A host, of golden daffodils ;
 Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
 Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
 And twinkle on the milky way,
 They stretched in never-ending line
 Along the margin of a bay :
 Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
 Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

10

The waves beside them danced ; but they
 Out-did the sparkling waves in glee :
 A poet could not but be gay,
 In such a jocund company :

I gazed — and gazed — but little thought
 What wealth the show to me had brought :

For oft, when on my couch I lie
 In vacant or in pensive mood,
 They flash upon that inward eye
 Which is the bliss of solitude ;
 And then my heart with pleasure fills,
 And dances with the daffodils.

20



THE AFFLICTION OF MARGARET ———.

1804. — 1807.

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

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

10

He was among the prime in worth,
An object beauteous to behold ;
Well born, well bred ; I sent him forth
Ingenuous, innocent, and bold :
If things ensued that wanted grace,
As hath been said, they were not base ; 20
And never blush was on my face.

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

Neglect me ! no, I suffered long
From that ill thought ; and being blind, 30
Said, " Pride shall help me in my wrong ;
Kind mother have I been, as kind
As ever breathed : " and that is true ;
I've wet my path with tears like dew,
Weeping for him when no one knew.

My Son, if thou be humbled, poor,
Hopeless of honor and of gain,
Oh ! do not dread thy mother's door ;
Think not of me with grief and pain :
I now can see with better eyes ; 40
And worldly grandeur I despise,
And fortune with her gifts and lies.

Alas ! the fowls of heaven have wings,
 And blasts of heaven will aid their flight ;
 They mount — how short a voyage brings
 The wanderers back to their delight !
 Chains tie us down by land and sea ;
 And wishes, vain as mine, may be
 All that is left to comfort thee.

Perhaps some dungeon hears thee groan, 50
 Maimed, mangled by inhuman men ;
 Or thou upon a desert thrown
 Inheritest the lion's den ;
 Or hast been summoned to the deep,
 Thou, thou and all thy mates, to keep
 An incommunicable sleep.

I look for ghosts ; but none will force
 Their way to me : 't is falsely said
 That there was ever intercourse 60
 Between the living and the dead ;
 For, surely, then I should have sight
 Of him I wait for day and night,
 With love and longings infinite.

My apprehensions come in crowds ;
 I dread the rustling of the grass ;
 The very shadows of the clouds
 Have power to shake me as they pass :
 I question things and do not find
 One that will answer to my mind ;
 And all the world appears unkind. 70

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



ADDRESS TO MY INFANT DAUGHTER DORA,

ON BEING REMINDED THAT SHE WAS A MONTH OLD THAT
 DAY, SEPTEMBER 16.

1804. — 1815.

————— HAST thou then survived —
 Mild Offspring of infirm humanity,
 Meek Infant! among all forlornest things
 The most forlorn — one life of that bright star,
 The second glory of the Heavens? — Thou hast;
 Already hast survived that great decay,
 That transformation through the wide earth felt,
 And by all nations. In that Being's sight
 From whom the Race of human kind proceed,
 A thousand years are but as yesterday;
 And one day's narrow circuit is to Him
 Not less capacious than a thousand years.
 But what is time? What outward glory? Neither
 A measure is of Thee, whose claims extend
 Through "heaven's eternal year." Yet hail to Thee,
 Frail, feeble Monthling! — by that name, methinks,

Thy scanty breathing-time is portioned out
Not idly. — Hadst thou been of Indian birth,
Couched on a casual bed of moss and leaves,
And rudely canopied by leafy boughs, 20
Or to the churlish elements exposed
On the blank plains, — the coldness of the night,
Or the night's darkness, or its cheerful face
Of beauty, by the changing moon adorned,
Would, with imperious admonition, then
Have scored thine age, and punctually timed
Thine infant history, on the minds of those
Who might have wandered with thee. — Mother's love,
Nor less than mother's love in other breasts,
Will, among us warm-clad and warmly housed, 30
Do for thee what the finger of the heavens
Doth all too often harshly execute
For thy unblest coevals, amid wilds
Where fancy hath small liberty to grace
The affections, to exalt them or refine ;
And the maternal sympathy itself,
Though strong, is, in the main, a joyless tie
Of naked instinct, wound about the heart.
Happier, far happier, is thy lot and ours !
Even now — to solemnize thy helpless state, 40
And to enliven in the mind's regard
Thy passive beauty — parallels have risen,
Resemblances, or contrasts, that connect,
Within the region of a father's thoughts,
Thee and thy mate and sister of the sky.
And first ; — thy sinless progress, through a world,
By sorrow darkened and by care disturbed,

Apt likeness bears to hers, through gathered clouds
Moving untouched in silver purity,
And cheering oft-times their reluctant gloom. 50
Fair are ye both, and both are free from stain :
But thou, how leisurely thou fill'st thy horn
With brightness ! leaving her to post along,
And range about, disquieted in change,
And still impatient of the shape she wears.
Once up, once down the hill, one journey, Babe,
That will suffice thee ; and it seems that now
Thou hast fore-knowledge that such task is thine ;
Thou travellest so contentedly, and sleep'st
In such a heedless peace. Alas ! full soon 60
Hath this conception, grateful to behold,
Changed countenance, like an object sullied o'er
By breathing mist ; and thine appears to be
A mournful labor, while to her is given
Hope, and a renovation without end.
— That smile forbids the thought ; for on thy face
Smiles are beginning, like the beams of dawn,
To shoot and circulate ; smiles have there been seen ;
Tranquil assurances that Heaven supports
The feeble motions of thy life, and cheers 70
Thy loneliness : or shall those smiles be called
Feelers of love, put forth as if to explore
This untried world, and to prepare thy way
Through a strait passage, intricate and dim ?
Such are they ; and the same are tokens, signs,
Which, when the appointed season hath arrived,
Joy, as her holiest language shall adopt ;
And Reason's godlike Power be proud to own.

THE SMALL CELANDINE.

1804. — 1807.

THERE is a Flower, the lesser Celandine,
 That shrinks, like many more, from cold and rain ;
 And, the first moment that the sun may shine,
 Bright as the sun himself, 't is out again !

When hailstones have been falling, swarm on swarm,
 Or blasts the green field and the trees distrest,
 Oft have I seen it muffled up from harm,
 In close self-shelter, like a Thing at rest.

But lately, one rough day, this Flower I passed
 And recognized it, though an altered form, 10
 Now standing forth an offering to the blast,
 And buffeted at will by rain and storm.

I stopped, and said with inly muttered voice,
 " It doth not love the shower, nor seek the cold :
 This neither is its courage nor its choice,
 But its necessity in being old.

The sunshine may not cheer it, nor the dew ;
 It cannot help itself in its decay ;
 Stiff in its members, withered, changed of hue."
 And, in my spleen, I smiled that it was grey. 20

To be a Prodigal's Favorite — then, worse truth,
 A Miser's Pensioner — behold our lot !
 O Man, that from thy fair and shining youth
 Age might but take the things Youth needed not !

ODE 'TO DUTY.

“Jam non consilio bonus, sed more eò perductus, ut non tantum rectè facere possim, sed nisi rectè facere non possim.”

1805. — 1807.

STERN Daughter of the Voice of God!
 O Duty! if that name thou love
 Who art a light to guide, a rod
 To check the erring, and reprove;
 Thou, who art victory and law
 When empty terrors overawe;
 From vain temptations dost set free;
 And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity!

There are who ask not if thine eye
 Be on them; who, in love and truth, 10
 Where no misgiving is, rely
 Upon the genial sense of youth:
 Glad Hearts! without reproach or blot;
 Who do thy work, and know it not:
 Oh! if through confidence misplaced
 They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power! around them cast.

Serene will be our days and bright,
 And happy will our nature be,
 When love is an unerring light,
 And joy its own security. 20
 And they a blissful course may hold
 Even now, who, not unwisely bold,
 Live in the spirit of this creed;
 Yet seek thy firm support, according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried ;
 No sport of every random gust,
 Yet being to myself a guide,
 Too blindly have reposed my trust :
 And oft, when in my heart was heard
 Thy timely mandate, I deferred 30
 The task, in smoother walks to stray ;
 But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,
 Or strong compunction in me wrought,
 I supplicate for thy control ;
 But in the quietness of thought :
 Me this unchartered freedom tires ;
 I feel the weight of chance-desires :
 My hopes no more must change their name,
 I long for a repose that ever is the same. 40

Stern Lawgiver ! yet thou dost wear
 The Godhead's most benignant grace ;
 Nor know we anything so fair
 As is the smile upon thy face :
 Flowers laugh before thee on their beds
 And fragrance in thy footing treads ;
 Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong ;
 And the most ancient heavens, through Thee, are fresh and
 strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power !
 I call thee : I myself commend 50
 Unto thy guidance from this hour ;
 Oh, let my weakness have an end !

Give unto me, made lowly wise,
 The spirit of self-sacrifice ;
 The confidence of reason give ;
 And in the light of truth thy Bondman let me live !



TO A SKYLARK.

1805. — 1807.

Up with me ! up with me into the clouds !
 For thy song, Lark, is strong ;
 Up with me, up with me into the clouds !
 Singing, singing,
 With clouds and sky about thee ringing,
 Lift me, guide me till I find
 That spot which seems so to thy mind !

I have walked through wildernesses dreary,
 And to-day my heart is weary ;
 Had I now the wings of a Faery,
 Up to thee would I fly. 10
 There is madness about thee, and joy divine
 In that song of thine ;
 Lift me, guide me high and high
 To thy banqueting-place in the sky.

Joyous as morning
 Thou art laughing and scorning ;
 Thou hast a nest for thy love and thy rest,
 And, though little troubled with sloth,

Drunken Lark ! thou would'st be loath 20
 To be such a traveller as I.
 Happy, happy Liver,
 With a soul as strong as a mountain river
 Pouring out praise to the almighty Giver,
 Joy and jollity be with us both !

Alas ! my journey, rugged and uneven,
 Through prickly moors or dusty ways must wind ;
 But hearing thee, or others of thy kind,
 As full of gladness and as free of heaven,
 I, with my fate contented, will plod on, 30
 And hope for higher raptures, when life's day is done.



FIDELITY.

1805. — 1807.

A BARKING sound the Shepherd hears, —
 A cry as of a dog or fox ;
 He halts — and searches with his eyes
 Among the scattered rocks :
 And now at distance can discern
 A stirring in a brake of fern ;
 And instantly a dog is seen,
 Glancing through that covert green.

The Dog is not of mountain breed ;
 Its motions, too, are wild and shy ; 10

With something, as the Shepherd thinks,
Unusual in its cry :
Nor is there any one in sight
All round, in hollow or on height ;
Nor shout, nor whistle strikes his ear ;
What is the creature doing here ?

It was a cove, a huge recess,
That keeps, till June, December's snow ;
A lofty precipice in front,
A silent tarn below !
Far in the bosom of Helvellyn,
Remote from public road or dwelling,
Pathway, or cultivated land ;
From trace of human foot or hand.

20

There sometimes doth a leaping fish
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer ;
The crags repeat the raven's croak,
In symphony austere ;
Thither the rainbow comes, — the cloud,
And mists that spread the flying shroud ;
And sunbeams ; and the sounding blast,
That, if it could, would hurry past ;
But that enormous barrier holds it fast.

30

Not free from boding thoughts, a while
The Shepherd stood ; then makes his way
O'er rocks and stones, following the Dog
As quickly as he may ;
Nor far had gone before he found
A human skeleton on the ground ;

The appalled Discoverer with a sigh
Looks round, to learn the history. 40

From those abrupt and perilous rocks
The Man had fallen, that place of fear !
At length upon the Shepherd's mind
It breaks, and all is clear :
He instantly recalled the name,
And who he was, and whence he came ;
Remembered, too, the very day
On which the Traveller passed this way.

But hear a wonder, for whose sake 50
This lamentable tale I tell !
A lasting monument of words
This wonder merits well.
The Dog, which still was hovering nigh,
Repeating the same timid cry,
This Dog had been through three months' space
A dweller in that savage place.

Yes, proof was plain that, since the day
When this ill-fated Traveller died,
The Dog had watched about the spot, 60
Or by his master's side :
How nourished here through such long time
He knows, who gave that love sublime ;
And gave that strength of feeling, great
Above all human estimate !

INCIDENT

CHARACTERISTIC OF A FAVORITE DOG.

1805. — 1807.

ON his morning rounds the Master
Goes to learn how all things fare ;
Searches pasture after pasture,
Sheep and cattle eyes with care ;
And, for silence or for talk,
He hath comrades in his walk ;
Four dogs, each pair of different breed,
Distinguished two for scent, and two for speed.

See a hare before him started !
— Off they fly in earnest chase ; 10
Every dog is eager-hearted,
All the four are in the race :
And the hare whom they pursue
Knows from instinct what to do ;
Her hope is near : no turn she makes ;
But, like an arrow, to the river takes.

Deep the river was and crusted
Thinly by a one night's frost ;
But the nimble Hare hath trusted
To the ice, and safely crost ; 20
She hath crost, and without heed
All are following at full speed,
When, lo ! the ice, so thinly spread,
Breaks — and the greyhound, DART, is overhead !

Better fate have PRINCE and SWALLOW —
 See them cleaving to the sport !
 MUSIC has no heart to follow,
 Little MUSIC, she stops short.
 She hath neither wish nor heart,
 Hers is now another part : 30
 A loving creature she, and brave !
 And fondly strives her struggling friend to save.

From the brink her paws she stretches,
 Very hands as you would say !
 And afflicting moans she fetches,
 As he breaks the ice away.
 For herself she hath no fears, —
 Him alone she sees and hears, —
 Makes efforts with complainings ; nor gives o'er
 Until her fellow sinks to reappear no more. 40



TRIBUTE

TO THE MEMORY OF THE SAME DOG.

1805. — 1807.

LIE here, without a record of thy worth,
 Beneath a covering of the common earth !
 It is not from unwillingness to praise,
 Or want of love, that here no Stone we raise ;
 More thou deserv'st ; but *this* man gives to man,
 Brother to brother, *this* is all we can.

Yet they to whom thy virtues made thee dear
Shall find thee through all changes of the year :
This Oak points out thy grave ; the silent tree
Will gladly stand a monument of thee.

We grieved for thee, and wished thy end were past :
And willingly have laid thee here at last :
For thou hadst lived till everything that cheers
In thee had yielded to the weight of years ;
Extreme old age had wasted thee away,
And left thee but a glimmering of the day ;
Thy ears were deaf, and feeble were thy knees, —
I saw thee stagger in the summer breeze,
Too weak to stand against its sportive breath,
And ready for the gentlest stroke of death. 20
It came, and we were glad ; yet tears were shed ;
Both man and woman wept when thou wert dead ;
Not only for a thousand thoughts that were,
Old household thoughts, in which thou hadst thy share ;
But for some precious boons vouchsafed to thee,
Found scarcely anywhere in like degree !
For love, that comes wherever life and sense
Are given by God, in thee was most intense ;
A chain of heart, a feeling of the mind,
A tender sympathy, which did thee bind 30
Not only to us Men, but to thy Kind :
Yea, for thy fellow-brutes in thee we saw
A soul of love, love's intellectual law : —
Hence, if we wept, it was not done in shame ;
Our tears from passion and from reason came,
And, therefore, shalt thou be an honored name.

“WHEN, TO THE ATTRACTIONS OF THE BUSY
WORLD.”

1805. — 1815.

WHEN, to the attractions of the busy world,
 Preferring studious leisure, I had chosen
 A habitation in this peaceful Vale,
 Sharp season followed of continual storm
 In deepest winter ; and, from week to week,
 Pathway, and lane, and public road were clogged
 With frequent showers of snow. Upon a hill
 At a short distance from my cottage, stands
 A stately Fir-grove, whither I was wont
 To hasten, for I found, beneath the roof 10
 Of that perennial shade, a cloistral place
 Of refuge, with an unencumbered floor.
 Here, in safe covert, on the shallow snow,
 And, sometimes, on a speck of visible earth,
 The redbreast near me hopped ; nor was I loath
 To sympathize with vulgar coppice birds
 That, for protection from the nipping blast,
 Hither repaired. — A single beech-tree grew
 Within this grove of firs ! and, on the fork
 Of that one beech, appeared a thrush’s nest ; 20
 A last year’s nest, conspicuously built
 At such small elevation from the ground
 As gave sure sign that they, who in that house
 Of nature and of love had made their home
 Amid the fir-trees, all the summer long

Dwelt in a tranquil spot. And oftentimes
A few sheep, stragglers from some mountain-flock,
Would watch my motions with suspicious stare,
From the remotest outskirts of the grove, —
Some nook where they had made their final stand, 30
Huddling together from two fears — the fear
Of me and of the storm. Full many an hour
Here did I lose. But in this grove the trees
Had been so thickly planted, and had thriven
In such perplexed and intricate array,
That vainly did I seek beneath their stems
A length of open space, where to and fro
My feet might move without concern or care ;
And, baffled thus, though earth from day to day
Was fettered, and the air by storm disturbed, 40
I ceased the shelter to frequent, — and prized,
Less than I wished to prize, that calm recess.

The snows dissolved, and genial Spring returned
To clothe the fields with verdure. Other haunts
Meanwhile were mine ; till, one bright April day,
By chance retiring from the glare of noon
To this forsaken covert, there I found
A hoary pathway traced between the trees,
And winding on with such an easy line
Along a natural opening, that I stood 50
Much wondering how I could have sought in vain
For what was now so obvious. To abide,
For an allotted interval of ease,
Under my cottage-roof, had gladly come
From the wild sea a cherished Visitant ;

And with the sight of this same path — begun,
 Begun and ended, in the shady grove,
 Pleasant conviction flashed upon my mind
 That, to this opportune recess allured,
 He had surveyed it with a finer eye, 60
 A heart more wakeful ; and had worn the track
 By pacing here, unwearied and alone,
 In that habitual restlessness of foot
 That haunts the Sailor measuring o'er and o'er
 His short domain upon the vessel's deck,
 While she pursues her course through the dreary sea.

When thou hadst quitted Esthwaite's pleasant shore,
 And taken thy first leave of those green hills
 And rocks that were the play-ground of thy youth,
 Year followed year, my Brother ! and we two, 70
 Conversing not, knew little in what mould
 Each other's mind was fashioned ; and at length,
 When once again we met in Grasmere Vale,
 Between us there was little other bond
 Than common feelings of fraternal love.
 But thou, a School-boy, to the sea hadst carried
 Undying recollections ; Nature there
 Was with thee ; she, who loved us both, she still
 Was with thee ; and even so didst thou become
 A *silent* Poet ; from the solitude 80
 Of the vast sea didst bring a watchful heart
 Still couchant, an inevitable ear,
 And an eye practised like a blind man's touch.
 — Back to the joyless Ocean thou art gone ;
 Nor from this vestige of thy musing hours

Could I withhold thy honored name, — and now
I love the fir-grove with a perfect love.
Thither do I withdraw when cloudless suns
Shine hot, or wind blows troublesome and strong ;
And there I sit at evening, when the steep 90
Of Silver-how, and Grasmere's peaceful lake,
And one green island, gleam between the stems
Of the dark firs, — a visionary scene !
And, while I gaze upon the spectacle
Of clouded splendor, on this dream-like sight
Of solemn loveliness, I think on thee,
My Brother, and on all which thou hast lost.
Nor seldom, if I rightly guess, while Thou,
Muttering the verses which I muttered first
Among the mountains, through the midnight watch 100
Art pacing thoughtfully the vessel's deck
In some far region, here, while o'er my head,
At every impulse of the moving breeze,
The fir-grove murmurs with a sea-like sound.
Alone I tread this path, — for aught I know,
Timing my steps to thine ; and, with a store
Of undistinguishable sympathies,
Mingling most earnest wishes for the day
When we, and others whom we love, shall meet
A second time, in Grasmere's happy Vale. 110

ELEGIAC STANZAS,

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF PEELE CASTLE, IN A STORM,
PAINTED BY SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT.

1805. — 1807.

I WAS thy neighbor once, thou rugged Pile !
Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of thee :
I saw thee every day ; and all the while
Thy Form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air !
So like, so very like, was day to day !
Whene'er I looked, thy Image still was there ;
It trembled, but it never passed away.

How perfect was the calm ! it seemed no sleep ;
No mood, which season takes away, or brings : 10
I could have fancied that the mighty Deep
Was even the gentlest of all gentle things.

Ah ! THEN, if mine had been the Painter's hand,
To express what then I saw ; and add the gleam,
The light that never was, on sea or land,
The consecration, and the Poet's dream ;

I would have planted thee, thou hoary Pile,
Amid a world how different from this !
Beside a sea that could not cease to smile ;
On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss. 20

Thou shouldst have seemed a treasure-house divine
 Of peaceful years ; a chronicle of heaven ; —
 Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine
 The very sweetest had to thee been given.

A Picture had it been of lasting ease,
 Elysian quiet, without toil or strife ;
 No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,
 Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,
 Such Picture would I at that time have made : 30
 And seen the soul of truth in every part,
 A steadfast peace that might not be betrayed.

So once it would have been, — 't is so no more ;
 I have submitted to a new control :
 A power is gone, which nothing can restore ;
 A deep distress hath humanized my Soul.

Not for a moment could I now behold
 A smiling sea, and be what I have been :
 The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old ;
 This, which I know, I speak with mind serene. 40

Then, Beaumont, Friend ! who would have been the Friend,
 If he had lived, of Him whom I deplore,
 This work of thine I blame not, but commend ;
 This sea in anger, and that dismal shore.

O 't is a passionate Work — yet wise and well,
 Well chosen is the spirit that is here ;
 That Hulk which labors in the deadly swell,
 This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear !

And this huge Castle, standing here sublime,
 I love to see the look with which it braves, 50
 Cased in the unfeeling armor of old time,
 The lightning, the fierce wind, and trampling waves.

Farewell, farewell the heart that lives alone,
 Housed in a dream, at distance from the Kind !
 Such happiness, wherever it be known,
 Is to be pitied ; for 't is surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer,
 And frequent sights of what is to be borne !
 Such sights, or worse, as are before me here. —
 Not without hope we suffer and we mourn. 60



TO THE DAISY.

1805. — 1815.

SWEET Flower ! belike one day to have
 A place upon thy Poet's grave,
 I welcome thee once more :
 But He, who was on land, at sea,
 My Brother, too, in loving thee,
 Although he loved more silently,
 Sleeps by his native shore.

Ah ! hopeful, hopeful was the day
 When to that ship he bent his way,
 To govern and to guide : 10
 His wish was gained : a little time
 Would bring him back, in manhood's prime

And free for life, these hills to climb ;
With all his wants supplied.

And full of hope day followed day
While that stout Ship at anchor lay
Beside the shores of Wight ;
The May had then made all things green ;
And, floating there, in pomp serene,
That Ship was goodly to be seen, 20
His pride and his delight !

Yet then, when called ashore, he sought
The tender peace of rural thought :
In more than happy mood
To your abodes, bright daisy Flowers !
He then would steal at leisure hours,
And loved you glittering in your bowers,
A starry multitude.

But hark the word ! — the Ship is gone ; —
Returns from her long course : — anon 30
Sets sail : — in season due
Once more on English earth they stand :
But, when a third time from the land
They parted, sorrow was at hand
For Him and for his crew.

Ill-fated Vessel ! — ghastly shock !
— At length delivered from the rock,
The deep she hath regained ;
And through the stormy night they steer,
Laboring for life, in hope and fear, 40
To reach a safer shore — how near,
Yet not to be attained !

“ Silence ! ” the brave Commander cried ;
 To that calm word a shriek replied :
 It was the last death-shriek.
 — A few (my soul oft sees that sight)
 Survive upon the tall mast’s height ;
 But one dear remnant of the night —
 For Him in vain I seek.

Six weeks beneath the moving sea 50
 He lay in slumber quietly ;
 Unforced by wind or wave
 To quit the Ship for which he died,
 (All claims of duty satisfied ;)
 And there they found him at her side,
 And bore him to the grave.

Vain service ! yet not vainly done
 For this, if other end were none,
 That He, who had been cast
 Upon a way of life unmeet 60
 For such a gentle Soul and sweet,
 Should find an undisturbed retreat
 Near what he loved, at last —

That neighborhood of grove and field
 To Him a resting-place should yield,
 A meek man and a brave !
 The birds shall sing and ocean make
 A mournful murmur for *his* sake ;
 And Thou, sweet Flower, shalt sleep and wake
 Upon his senseless grave. 70

TO A YOUNG LADY,

WHO HAD BEEN REPROACHED FOR TAKING LONG WALKS IN
THE COUNTRY.

1805. — 1807.

DEAR Child of Nature, let them rail !
— There is a nest in a green dale,
A harbor and a hold ;
Where thou, a Wife and Friend, shalt see
Thy own heart-stirring days, and be
A light to young and old.

There, healthy as a shepherd boy,
And treading among flowers of joy
Which at no season fade,
Thou, while thy babes around thee cling, 10
Shalt show us how divine a thing
A Woman may be made.

Thy thoughts and feelings shall not die,
Nor leave thee, when gray hairs are nigh,
A melancholy slave ;
But an old age serene and bright,
And lovely as a Lapland night,
Shall lead thee to thy grave.

CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR.

1806. — 1807.

WHO is the happy Warrior? Who is he
 That every man in arms should wish to be?
 — It is the generous Spirit, who, when brought
 Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought
 Upon the plan that pleased his boyish thought :
 Whose high endeavors are an inward light
 That makes the path before him always bright :
 Who, with a natural instinct to discern
 What knowledge can perform, is diligent to learn ;
 Abides by this resolve, and stops not there, 10
 But makes his moral being his prime care ;
 Who, doomed to go in company with Pain,
 And Fear, and Bloodshed, miserable train !
 Turns his necessity to glorious gain ;
 In face of these doth exercise a power
 Which is our human nature's highest dower ;
 Controls them and subdues, transmutes, bereaves
 Of their bad influence, and their good receives :
 By objects, which might force the soul to abate
 Her feeling, rendered more compassionate ; 20
 Is placable — because occasions rise
 So often that demand such sacrifice ;
 More skilful in self-knowledge, even more pure,
 As tempted more ; more able to endure
 As more exposed to suffering and distress ;
 Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.

— 'T is he whose law is reason ; who depends
Upon that law as on the best of friends ;
Whence, in a state where men are tempted still
To evil for a guard against worse ill, 30
And what in quality or act is best
Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,
He labors good on good to fix, and owes
To virtue every triumph that he knows :
— Who, if he rise to station of command,
Rises by open means ; and there will stand
On honorable terms, or else retire,
And in himself possess his own desire ;
Who comprehends his trust, and to the same
Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim ; 40
And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait
For wealth, or honors, or for worldly state ;
Whom they must follow ; on whose head must fall,
Like showers of manna, if they come at all :
Whose powers shed round him in the common strife,
Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
A constant influence, a peculiar grace ;
But who, if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined
Great issues, good or bad for human kind, 50
Is happy as a Lover ; and attired
With sudden brightness, like a Man inspired ;
And, through the heat of conflict, keeps the law
In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw ;
Or if an unexpected call succeed,
Come when it will, is equal to the need :
— He who, though thus endued as with a sense

And faculty for storm and turbulence,
Is yet a Soul whose master-bias leans
To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes ; 60
Sweet images ! which, wheresoe'er he be,
Are at his heart ; and such fidelity
It is his darling passion to approve ;
More brave for this, that he hath much to love : —
'T is, finally, the Man, who, lifted high,
Conspicuous object in a Nation's eye,
Or left unthought-of in obscurity, —
Who, with a toward or untoward lot,
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not —
Plays, in the many games of life, that one 70
Where what he most doth value must be won :
Whom neither shape of danger can dismay,
Nor thought of tender happiness betray ;
Who, not content that former worth stand fast,
Looks forward, persevering to the last,
From well to better, daily self-surpast :
Who, whether praise of him must walk the earth
Forever, and to noble deeds give birth,
Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame,
And leave a dead unprofitable name — 80
Finds comfort in himself and in his cause ;
And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
His breath in confidence of Heaven's applause :
This is the happy Warrior ; this is He
That every Man in arms should wish to be.

STRAY PLEASURES.

“ — Pleasure is spread through the earth
In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever shall find.”

1806. — 1807.

By their floating mill,
That lies dead and still,
Behold yon Prisoners three,
The Miller with two Dames, on the breast of the Thames !
The platform is small, but gives room for them all ;
And they 're dancing merrily.

From the shore come the notes
To their mill where it floats,
To their house and their mill tethered fast :
To the small wooden isle where, their work to beguile, 10
They from morning to even take whatever is given ; —
And many a blithe day they have past.

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

Man and Maidens wheel,
They themselves make the reel, 20
And their music's a prey which they seize ;
It plays not for them, — what matter? 't is theirs ;

And if they had care, it has scattered their cares ;
While they dance, crying, " Long as ye please ! "

They dance not for me,
Yet mine is their glee !

Thus pleasure is spread through the earth
In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever shall find ;
Thus a rich loving-kindness, redundantly kind,
Moves all Nature to gladness and mirth.

30

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



"YES, IT WAS THE MOUNTAIN ECHO."

1806. — 1807.

YES, it was the mountain Echo,
Solitary, clear, profound,
Answering to the shouting Cuckoo,
Giving to her sound for sound !

Unsolicited reply
To a babbling wanderer sent ;
Like her ordinary cry,
Like — but oh, how different !

Hears not also mortal Life?
 Hear not we, unthinking Creatures ! 10
 Slaves of folly, love, or strife —
 Voices of two different natures?

Have not *we* too? — yes, we have
 Answers, and we know not whence ;
 Echoes from beyond the grave,
 Recognized intelligence !

Such rebounds our inward ear
 Catches sometimes from afar —
 Listen, ponder, hold them dear ;
 For of God, — of God they are. 20



LINES

Composed at Grasmere, during a walk one Evening, after a stormy day, the Author having just read in a Newspaper that the dissolution of Mr. Fox was hourly expected.

1806. — 1807.

LOUD is the Vale ! the Voice is up
 With which she speaks when storms are gone,
 A mighty unison of streams !
 Of all her Voices, One !

Loud is the Vale ; — this inland Depth
 In peace is roaring like the Sea ;

Yon star upon the mountain-top
Is listening quietly.

Sad was I, even to pain deprest,
Importunate and heavy load !
The Comforter hath found me here,
Upon this lonely road ;

10

And many thousands now are sad —
Wait the fulfilment of their fear ;
For he must die who is their stay,
Their glory disappear.

A Power is passing from the earth
To breathless Nature's dark abyss ;
But when the great and good depart
What is it more than this —

20

That Man, who is from God sent forth,
Doth yet again to God return? —
Such ebb and flow must ever be,
Then wherefore should we mourn?

POWER OF MUSIC.

1806. — 1807.

AN Orpheus ! an Orpheus ! yes, Faith may grow bold,
And take to herself all the wonders of old, —
Near the stately Pantheon you 'll meet with the same
In the street that from Oxford hath borrowed its name.

His station is there ; and he works on the crowd,
He sways them with harmony merry and loud ;
He fills with his power all their hearts to the brim, —
Was aught ever heard like his fiddle and him ?

What an eager assembly ! what an empire is this !
The weary have life, and the hungry have bliss ; 10
The mourner is cheered, and the anxious have rest ;
And the guilt-burdened soul is no longer opprest.

As the Moon brightens round her the clouds of the night,
So He, where he stands, is a centre of light ;
It gleams on the face, there, of dusky-browed Jack,
And the pale-visaged Baker's, with basket on back.

That errand-bound 'Prentice was passing in haste —
What matter ! he 's caught, and his time runs to waste ;
The Newsman is stopped, though he stops on the fret ;
And the half-breathless Lamplighter — he 's in the net ! 20

The Porter sits down on the weight which he bore ;
The Lass with her barrow wheels hither her store, —
If a thief could be here he might pilfer at ease ;
She sees the Musician, 't is all that she sees !

He stands, backed by the wall ; he abates not his din ;
His hat gives him vigor, with boons dropping in,
From the old and the young, from the poorest : and there !
The one-pennied Boy has his penny to spare.

O blest are the hearers, and proud be the hand
Of the pleasure it spreads through so thankful a band ; 30
I am glad for him, blind as he is ! — all the while
If they speak 't is to praise, and they praise with a smile.

That tall Man, a giant in bulk and in height,
Not an inch of his body is free from delight ;
Can he keep himself still, if he would ? Oh, not he !
The music stirs in him like wind through a tree.

Mark that Cripple who leans on his crutch ; like a tower
That long has leaned forward, leans hour after hour ! —
That Mother, whose spirit in fetters is bound,
While she dandles the Babe in her arms to the sound. 40

Now, coaches and chariots ! roar on like a stream ;
Here are twenty souls happy as souls in a dream :
They are deaf to your murmurs, — they care not for you,
Nor what ye are flying, nor what ye pursue !

O D E

ON INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF
EARLY CHILDHOOD.

1803-6. — 1807.

I.

THERE was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
 To me did seem
 Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore :
 Turn whereso'er I may,
 By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

II.

The Rainbow comes and goes, 10
And lovely is the Rose ;
The Moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare ;
 Waters on a starry night
 Are beautiful and fair ;
The sunshine is a glorious birth ;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath passed away a glory from the earth.

III.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young lambs bound 20

As to the tabor's sound,
 To me alone there came a thought of grief :
 A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
 And I again am strong :
 The Cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep ;
 No more shall grief of mine the season wrong ;
 I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,
 The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
 And all the earth is gay ;
 Land and sea 30
 Give themselves up to jollity,
 And with the heart of May
 Doth every Beast keep holiday ; —
 Thou Child of Joy,
 Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy
 Shepherd-boy !

IV.

Ye blessèd Creatures, I have heard the call
 Ye to each other make : I see
 The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee ;
 My heart is at your festival,
 My head hath its coronal, 40
 The fulness of your bliss, I feel — I feel it all.
 Oh evil day ! if I were sullen
 While Earth herself is adorning,
 This sweet May-morning,
 And the Children are culling
 On every side,
 In a thousand valleys far and wide,
 Fresh flowers ; while the sun shines warm,

And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm : —

I hear, I hear, with joy I hear ! 50

— But there 's a Tree, of many, one,

A single Field which I have looked upon,

Both of them speak of something that is gone :

The Pansy at my feet

Doth the same tale repeat :

Whither is fled the visionary gleam ?

Where is it now, the glory and the dream ?

v.

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting :

The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,

Hath had elsewhere its setting, 60

And cometh from afar :

Not in entire forgetfulness,

And not in utter nakedness,

But trailing clouds of glory do we come

From God, who is our home :

Heaven lies about us in our infancy !

Shades of the prison-house begin to close

Upon the growing Boy,

But He beholds the light, and whence it flows

He sees it in his joy ; 70

The Youth, who daily farther from the east

Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,

And by the vision splendid

Is on his way attended ;

At length the Man perceives it die away,

And fade into the light of common day.

VI.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own ;
 Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
 And, even with something of a Mother's mind,
 And no unworthy aim, 80
 The homely Nurse doth all she can
 To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
 Forget the glories he hath known,
 And that imperial palace whence he came.

VII.

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
 A six years' Darling of a pygmy size !
 See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
 Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
 With light upon him from his father's eyes !
 See, at his feet, some little plan or chart, 90
 Some fragment from his dream of human life,
 Shaped by himself with newly-learned art !
 A wedding or a festival,
 A mourning or a funeral ;
 And this hath now his heart,
 And unto this he frames his song :
 Then will he fit his tongue
 To dialogues of business, love, or strife ;
 But it will not be long
 Ere this be thrown aside, 100
 And with new joy and pride

The little Actor cons another part ;
 Filling from time to time his "humorous stage"
 With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,
 That Life brings with her in her equipage ;
 As if his whole vocation
 Were endless imitation.

VIII.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
 Thy Soul's immensity ;
 Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep
 110
 Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,
 That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
 Haunted forever by the eternal mind, —
 Mighty Prophet ! Seer blest !
 On whom those truths do rest,
 Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
 In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave ;
 Thou, over whom thy Immortality
 Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,
 120
 A Presence which is not to be put by ;
 Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might
 Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
 Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
 The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
 Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife ?
 Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,
 And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
 Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life !

IX.

O joy ! that in our embers
 Is something that doth live, 130
 That Nature yet remembers
 What was so fugitive !

The thought of our past years in me doth breed
 Perpetual benediction : not indeed
 For that which is most worthy to be blest ;
 Delight and liberty, the simple creed
 Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
 With new-fledged hopes still fluttering in his breast : —

Not for these I raise
 The song of thanks and praise ; 140

But for those obstinate questionings
 Of sense and outward things,
 Fallings from us, vanishings ;
 Blank misgivings of a Creature

Moving about in worlds not realized,
 High instincts before which our mortal Nature
 Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised :

But for those first affections,
 Those shadowy recollections,

Which, be they what they may, 150

Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
 Are yet a master light of all our seeing ;

Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
 Our noisy years seem moments in the being
 Of the eternal Silence : truths that wake,

To perish never ;

Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavor,

Nor Man nor Boy,
 Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
 Can utterly abolish or destroy ! 160
 Hence in a season of calm weather
 Though inland far we be,
 Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
 Which brought us hither,
 Can in a moment travel thither,
 And see the Children sport upon the shore,
 And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

x.

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song !
 And let the young Lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound ! 170
 We in thought will join your throng,
 Ye that pipe and ye that play,
 Ye that through your hearts to-day
 Feel the gladness of the May !
 What though the radiance which was once so bright
 Be now forever taken from my sight,
 Though nothing can bring back the hour
 Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the flower ;
 We will grieve not, rather find
 Strength in what remains behind ; 180
 In the primal sympathy
 Which having been must ever be :
 In the soothing thoughts that spring
 Out of human suffering ;
 In the faith that looks through death,
 In years that bring the philosophic mind.

XI.

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
 Forebode not any severing of our loves !
 Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might ;
 I only have relinquished one delight 190
 To live beneath your more habitual sway.
 I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,
 Even more than when I tripped lightly as they ;
 The innocent brightness of a new-born Day
 Is lovely yet ;
 The Clouds that gather round the setting sun
 Do take a sober coloring from an eye
 That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality ;
 Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
 Thanks to the human heart by which we live, 200
 Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
 To me the meanest flower that blows can give
 Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.



“O NIGHTINGALE ! THOU SURELY ART.”

1807 (?).— 1807.

O NIGHTINGALE ! thou surely art
 A creature of a “fiery heart :” —
 These notes of thine — they pierce and pierce ;
 Tumultuous harmony and fierce !
 Thou sing'st as if the God of wine
 Had helped thee to a Valentine ;
 A song in mockery and despite
 Of shades, and dews, and silent night,

And steady bliss, and all the loves
Now sleeping in these peaceful groves. 10

I heard a Stock-dove sing or say
His homely tale, this very day ;
His voice was buried among trees,
Yet to be come-at by the breeze :
He did not cease, but cooed — and cooed,
And somewhat pensively he wooed :
He sang of love, with quiet blending,
Slow to begin, and never ending ;
Of serious faith, and inward glee :
That was the song — the song for me ! 20



SONG AT THE FEAST OF BROUGHAM CASTLE,
UPON THE RESTORATION OF LORD CLIFFORD, THE SHEPHERD,
TO THE ESTATES AND HONORS OF HIS ANCESTORS.

1807. — 1807.

HIGH in the breathless Hall the Minstrel sate,
And Emont's murmur mingled with the Song. —
The words of ancient time I thus translate,
A festal strain that hath been silent long : —

“ From town to town, from tower to tower,
The red rose is a gladsome flower.
Her thirty years of winter past,
The red rose is revived at last ;
She lifts her head for endless spring,
For everlasting blossoming : 10

Both roses flourish, red and white :
 In love and sisterly delight
 The two that were at strife are blended,
 And all old troubles now are ended. —
 Joy ! joy to both ! but most to her
 Who is the flower of Lancaster !
 Behold her how She smiles to-day
 On this great throng, this bright array !
 Fair greeting doth she send to all
 From every corner of the hall ;
 Both chiefly from above the board
 Where sits in state our rightful Lord,
 A Clifford to his own restored !

20

They came with banner, spear, and shield ;
 And it was proved in Bosworth-field
 Not long the Avenger was withstood —
 Earth helped him with the cry of blood :
 St. George was for us, and the might
 Of blessed Angels crowned the right.
 Loud voice the Land has uttered forth,
 We loudest in the faithful north :
 Our fields rejoice, our mountains ring,
 Our streams proclaim a welcoming ;
 Our strong abodes and castles see
 The glory of their loyalty.

30

How glad is Skipton at this hour, —
 Though lonely, a deserted Tower ;
 Knight, squire, and yeoman, page and groom,
 We have them at the feast of Brough'm.
 How glad Pendragon — though the sleep

40

Of years be on her ! — She shall reap
A taste of this great pleasure, viewing
As in a dream her own renewing.
Rejoiced is Brough, right glad I deem
Beside her little humble stream ;
And she that keepeth watch and ward
Her statelier Eden's course to guard ;
They both are happy at this hour,
Though each is but a lonely Tower : —
But here is perfect joy and pride
For one fair House by Emont's side,
This day, distinguished without peer
To see her Master and to cheer —
Him, and his Lady-mother dear !

50

Oh ! it was a time forlorn
When the fatherless was born —
Give her wings that she may fly,
Or she sees her infant die !
Swords that are with slaughter wild
Hunt the Mother and the Child.
Who will take them from the light ?
— Yonder is a man in sight —
Yonder is a house — but where ?
No, they must not enter there.
To the caves, and to the brooks,
To the clouds of heaven she looks :
She is speechless, but her eyes
Pray in ghostly agonies.
Blissful Mary, Mother mild,
Maid and Mother undefiled,
Save a Mother and her Child !

60

70

Now Who is he that bounds with joy
 On Carrock's side, a Shepherd-boy?
 No thoughts hath he but thoughts that pass
 Light as the wind along the grass.
 Can this be He who hither came
 In secret, like a smothered flame?
 O'er whom such thankful tears were shed
 For shelter, and a poor man's bread!
 God loves the Child; and God hath willed
 That those dear words should be fulfilled, 80
 The Lady's words, when forced away,
 The last she to her Babe did say:
 'My own, my own, thy Fellow-guest
 I may not be; but rest thee, rest,
 For lowly shepherd's life is best!'

Alas! when evil men are strong
 No life is good, no pleasure long.
 The Boy must part from Mosedale's groves,
 And leave Blencathara's rugged coves, 90
 And quit the flowers that summer brings
 To Glenderamakin's lofty springs;
 Must vanish, and his careless cheer
 Be turned to heaviness and fear.
 — Give Sir Lancelot Threlkeld praise!
 Hear it, good man, old in days!
 Thou tree of covert and of rest
 For this young Bird that is distrest;
 Among thy branches safe he lay,
 And he was free to sport and play, 100
 When falcons were abroad for prey.

A recreant harp, that sings of fear
And heaviness in Clifford's ear !
I said, when evil men are strong,
No life is good, no pleasure long, —
A weak and cowardly untruth !
Our Clifford was a happy Youth,
And thankful through a weary time,
That brought him up to manhood's prime.
— Again he wanders forth at will, 110
And tends a flock from hill to hill :
His garb is humble ; ne'er was seen
Such garb with such a noble mien ;
Among the shepherd grooms no mate
Hath he, a Child of strength and state !
Yet lacks not friends for simple glee,
Nor yet for higher sympathy.
To his side the fallow-deer
Came, and rested without fear ;
The eagle, lord of land and sea, 120
Stooped down to pay him fealty ;
And both the undying fish that swim
Through Bowscale-tarn did wait on him ;
The pair were servants of his eye
In their immortality ;
And glancing, gleaming, dark or bright,
Moved to and fro, for his delight.
He knew the rocks which Angels haunt
Upon the mountains visitant ;
He hath kenned them taking wing : 130
And into caves where Faeries sing
He hath entered ; and been told

By Voices how men lived of old.
 Among the heavens his eye can see
 The face of thing that is to be ;
 And, if that men report him right,
 His tongue could whisper words of might.
 — Now another day is come,
 Fitter hope, and nobler doom ;
 He hath thrown aside his crook, 140
 And hath buried deep his book ;
 Armor rusting in his halls
 On the blood of Clifford calls ; —
 ‘ Quell the Scot,’ exclaims the Lance —
 Bear me to the heart of France,
 Is the longing of the Shield —
 Tell thy name, thou trembling Field ;
 Field of death, where’er thou be,
 Groan thou with our victory !
 Happy day, and mighty hour, 150
 When our Shepherd, in his power,
 Mailed and horsed, with lance and sword,
 To his ancestors restored,
 Like a re-appearing Star,
 Like a glory from afar,
 First shall head the flock of war !”

Alas ! the impassioned minstrel did not know
 How, by Heaven’s grace, this Clifford’s heart was framed :
 How he, long forced in humble walks to go,
 Was softened into feeling, soothed and tamed. 160

Love had he found in huts where poor men lie ;
 His daily teachers had been woods and rills,

The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

In him the savage virtue of the Race,
Revenge, and all ferocious thoughts were dead :
Nor did he change ; but kept in lofty place
The wisdom which adversity had bred.

Glad were the vales, and every cottage-hearth ;
The Shepherd-lord was honored more and more ; 170
And, ages after he was laid in earth,
“The good Lord Clifford ” was the name he bore.



THE FORCE OF PRAYER ;

OR, THE FOUNDING OF BOLTON PRIORY. — A TRADITION.

1807. — 1815.

“*What is good for a bootless bene ?*”
With these dark words begins my Tale ;
And their meaning is, whence can comfort spring
When Prayer is of no avail ?

“*What is good for a bootless bene ?*”
The Falconer to the Lady said ;
And she made answer, “*ENDLESS SORROW !*”
For she knew that her Son was dead.

She knew it by the Falconer’s words,
And from the look of the Falconer’s eye ; 10
And from the love which was in her soul
For her youthful Romilly.

— Young Romilly through Barden woods
Is ranging high and low ;
And holds a greyhound in a leash,
To let slip upon buck or doe.

The pair have reached that fearful chasm,
How tempting to bestride !
For lordly Wharf is there pent in
With rocks on either side.

20

This striding-place is called THE STRID,
A name which it took of yore :
A thousand years hath it borne that name,
And shall a thousand more.

And hither is young Romilly come,
And what may now forbid
That he, perhaps for the hundredth time,
Shall bound across THE STRID?

He sprang in glee, — for what cared he
That the river was strong, and the rocks were steep? — 30
But the greyhound in the leash hung back,
And checked him in his leap.

The Boy is in the arms of Wharf,
And strangled by a merciless force ;
For never more was young Romilly seen
Till he rose a lifeless corse.

Now there is stillness in the vale,
And long, unspeaking sorrow :
Wharf shall be to pitying hearts
A name more sad than Yarrow.

40

If for a lover the Lady wept,
A solace she might borrow
From death, and from the passion of death ;—
Old Wharf might heal her sorrow.

She weeps not for the wedding-day
Which was to be to-morrow :
Her hope was a further-looking hope,
And hers is a mother's sorrow.

He was a tree that stood alone,
And proudly did its branches wave ;
And the root of this delightful tree
Was in her husband's grave !

50

Long, long in darkness did she sit,
And her first words were, " Let there be
In Bolton, on the field of Wharf,
A stately Priory ! "

The stately Priory was reared ;
And Wharf, as he moved along,
To matins joined a mournful voice,
Nor failed at even-song.

60

And the Lady prayed in heaviness
That looked not for relief !
But slowly did her succor come,
And a patience to her grief.

Oh ! there is never sorrow of heart
That shall lack a timely end,
If but to God we turn, and ask
Of Him to be our friend !

LAODAMIA.

1814. — 1815.

“ WITH sacrifice before the rising morn
 Vows have I made by fruitless hope inspired ;
 And from the infernal Gods, 'mid shades forlorn
 Of night, my slaughtered Lord have I required :
 Celestial pity I again implore : —
 Restore him to my sight — great Jove, restore ! ”

So speaking, and by fervent love endowed
 With faith, the Suppliant heavenward lifts her hands ;
 While, like the sun emerging from a cloud,
 Her countenance brightens, and her eye expands ; 10
 Her bosom heaves and spreads, her stature grows ;
 And she expects the issue in repose.

O terror ! what hath she perceived ? — O joy !
 What doth she look on ? — whom doth she behold ?
 Her Hero slain upon the beach of Troy ?
 His vital presence ? his corporeal mould ?
 It is — if sense deceive her not — 't is He !
 And a God leads him, wingèd Mercury !

Mild Hermes spake — and touched her with his wand
 That calms all fear ; “ Such grace hath crowned thy prayer, 20
 Laodamia ! that at Jove's command
 Thy Husband walks the paths of upper air :
 He comes to tarry with thee three hours' space ;
 Accept the gift, behold him face to face ! ”

Forth sprang the impassioned Queen her Lord to clasp :
Again that consummation she essayed :
But unsubstantial Form eludes her grasp
As often as that eager grasp was made.
The Phantom parts — but parts to re-unite,
And re-assume his place before her sight. 30

“ Protesiláus, lo ! thy guide is gone !
Confirm, I pray, the vision with thy voice ;
This is our palace, — yonder is thy throne :
Speak, and the floor thou tread’st on will rejoice.
Not to appall me have the Gods bestowed
This precious boon, and blest a sad abode.”

“ Great Jove, Laodamía ! doth not leave
His gifts imperfect : — Spectre though I be,
I am not sent to scare thee or deceive ;
But in reward of thy fidelity. 40
And something also did my worth obtain ;
For fearless virtue bringeth boundless gain.

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

“ Supreme of Heroes — bravest, noblest, best !
Thy matchless courage I bewail no more, 50
Which then, when tens of thousands were deprest

By doubt, propelled thee to the fatal shore ;
 Thou found'st — and I forgive thee — here thou art —
 A nobler counsellor than my poor heart.

But thou, though capable of sternest deed,
 Wert kind as resolute, and good as brave ;
 And he whose power restores thee hath decreed
 Thou shouldst elude the malice of the grave :
 Redundant are thy locks, thy lips as fair
 As when their breath enriched Thessalian air. 60

No Spectre greets me, — no vain Shadow this ;
 Come, blooming Hero, place thee by my side !
 Give, on this well-known couch, one nuptial kiss
 To me, this day, a second time thy bride ! ”
 Jove frowned in heaven : the conscious Parcæ threw
 Upon those roseate lips a Stygian hue.

“ This visage tells me that my doom is past :
 Nor should the change be mourned, even if the joys
 Of sense were able to return as fast
 And surely as they vanish. Earth destroys 70
 Those raptures duly — Erebus disdains :
 Calm pleasures there abide — majestic pains.

Be taught, O faithful Consort, to control
 Rebellious passion : for the Gods approve
 The depth, and not the tumult, of the soul ;
 A fervent, not ungovernable, love.
 Thy transports moderate ; and meekly mourn
 When I depart, for brief is my sojourn — ”

“ Ah, wherefore? — Did not Hercules by force
 Wrest from the guardian Monster of the tomb 80
 Alcestis, a reanimated corse,
 Given back to dwell on earth in vernal bloom?
 Medea’s spells dispersed the weight of years,
 And Æson stood a youth ’mid youthful peers.

‘The Gods to us are merciful — and they
 Yet further may relent : for mightier far
 Than strength of nerve and sinew, or the sway
 Of magic potent over sun and star,
 Is love, though oft to agony distrest,
 And though his favorite seat be feeble woman’s breast. 90

But if thou goest, I follow — ” “ Peace ! ” he said, —
 She looked upon him and was calmed and cheered ;
 The ghastly color from his lips had fled ;
 In his deportment, shape, and mien, appeared
 Elysian beauty, melancholy grace,
 Brought from a pensive though a happy place.

He spake of love, such love as Spirits feel
 In worlds whose course is equable and pure ;
 No fears to beat away, no strife to heal,
 The past unsighed for, and the future sure ; 100
 Spake of heroic arts in graver mood
 Revived, with finer harmony pursued ;

Of all that is most beauteous — imaged there
 In happier beauty ; more pellucid streams,
 An ampler ether, a diviner air,

And fields invested with purpureal gleams ;
 Climes which the sun, who sheds the brightest day
 Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey.

Yet there the Soul shall enter which hath earned
 That privilege by virtue. — “ Ill,” said he, 110
 “ The end of man’s existence I discerned,
 Who from ignoble games and revelry
 Could draw, when we had parted, vain delight,
 While tears were thy best pastime, day and night ;

And while my youthful peers before my eyes
 (Each hero following his peculiar bent)
 Prepared themselves for glorious enterprise
 By martial sports, — or, seated in the tent,
 Chieftains and kings in council were detained ;
 What time the fleet at Aulis lay enchained. 120

The wished-for wind was given : — I then revolved
 The oracle, upon the silent sea ;
 And, if no worthier led the way, resolved
 That, of a thousand vessels, mine should be
 The foremost prow in pressing to the strand, —
 Mine the first blood that tinged the Trojan sand.

Yet bitter, oft-times bitter, was the pang
 When of thy loss I thought, belovèd Wife !
 On thee too fondly did my memory hang,
 And on the joys we shared in mortal life, — 130
 The paths which we had trod ; these fountains, flowers ;
 My new-planned cities, and unfinished towers.

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

And Thou, though strong in love, art all too weak
 In reason, in self-government too slow ; 140
 I counsel thee by fortitude to seek
 Our blest re-union in the shades below.
 The invisible world with thee hath sympathized ;
 Be thy affection raised and solemnized.

Learn, by a mortal yearning, to ascend, —
 Seeking a higher object. Love was given,
 Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that end ;
 For this the passion to excess was driven, —
 That self might be annulled : her bondage prove
 The fetters of a dream, opposed to love." — 150

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

Thus, all in vain exhorted and reproved,
 She perished ; and, as for a wilful crime,
 By the just Gods whom no weak pity moved, 160

Was doomed to wear out her appointed time,
 Apart from happy Ghosts, that gather flowers
 Of blissful quiet 'mid unfading bowers.

— Yet tears to human suffering are due ;
 And mortal hopes defeated and o'erthrown
 Are mourned by man, and not by man alone,
 As fondly he believes. — Upon the side
 Of Hellespont (such faith was entertained)
 A knot of spiry trees for ages grew
 From out the tomb of him for whom she died ; 170
 And ever, when such stature they had gained
 That Ilium's walls were subject to their view,
 The trees' tall summits withered at the sight ;
 A constant interchange of growth and blight !



DION.

(SEE PLUTARCH.)

1814. — 1820.

I.

SERENE, and fitted to embrace,
 Where'er he turned, a swan-like grace
 Of haughtiness without pretence,
 And to unfold a still magnificence,
 Was princely Dion, in the power
 And beauty of his happier hour.
 And what pure homage *then* did wait
 On Dion's virtues ! while the lunar beam

Of Plato's genius, from its lofty sphere,
 Fell round him in the grove of Academe, 10
 Softening their inbred dignity austere —
 That he, not too elate
 With self-sufficing solitude,
 But with majestic lowliness endued,
 Might in the universal bosom reign,
 And from affectionate observance gain
 Help, under every change of adverse fate.

II.

Five thousand warriors, — O the rapturous day !
 Each crowned with flowers, and armed with spear and shield,
 Or ruder weapon which their course might yield, 20
 To Syracuse advance in bright array.
 Who leads them on? — The anxious people see
 Long-exiled Dion marching at their head,
 He also crowned with flowers of Sicily,
 And in a white, far-beaming corslet clad !
 Pure transport undisturbed by doubt or fear
 The gazers feel ; and rushing to the plain,
 Salute those strangers as a holy train
 Or blest procession (to the Immortals dear)
 That brought their precious liberty again. 30
 Lo ! when the gates are entered, on each hand,
 Down the long street, rich goblets filled with wine
 In seemly order stand,
 On tables set, as if for rites divine ;
 And as the great Deliverer marches by,
 He looks on festal ground with fruits bestrown ;
 And flowers are on his person thrown

In boundless prodigality ;
 Nor doth the general voice abstain from prayer,
 Invoking Dion's tutelary care, 40
 As if a very Deity he were !

III.

Mourn, hills and groves of Attica ! and mourn
 Ilissus, bending o'er thy classic urn !
 Mourn, and lament for him whose spirit dreads
 Your once sweet memory, studious walks and shades !
 For him who to divinity aspired,
 Not on the breath of popular applause,
 But through dependence on the sacred laws
 Framed in the schools where Wisdom dwells retired,
 Intent to trace the ideal path of right 50
 (More fair than heaven's broad causeway paved with stars)
 Which Dion learned to measure with sublime delight ; —
 But He hath overleaped the eternal bars ;
 And following guides whose craft holds no consent
 With aught that breathes the ethereal element,
 Hath stained the robes of civil power with blood,
 Unjustly shed, though for the public good.
 Whence doubts that came too late, and wishes vain,
 Hollow excuses, and triumphant pain ;
 And oft his cogitations sink as low 60
 As, through the abysses of a joyless heart,
 The heaviest plummet of despair can go.
 But whence that sudden check ? that fearful start ?
 He hears an uncouth sound, —
 Anon his lifted eyes
 Saw, at a long-drawn gallery's dusky bound,

A Shape of more than mortal size
And hideous aspect, stalking round and round.

A woman's garb the Phantom wore,
And fiercely swept the marble floor, — 70
Like Auster whirling to and fro,
His force on Caspian foam to try ;

Or Boreas when he scours the snow
That skims the plains of Thessaly,
Or when aloft on Mænalus he stops
His flight, 'mid eddying pine-tree tops !

IV.

So, but from toil less sign of profit reaping,
The sullen Spectre to her purpose bowed,
Sweeping — vehemently sweeping, —
No pause admitted, no design avowed ! 80
“Avaunt, inexplicable Guest ! — avaunt,”
Exclaimed the Chieftain, — “let me rather see
The coronal that coiling vipers make ;
The torch that flames with many a lurid flake,
And the long train of doleful pageantry
Which they behold whom vengeful Furies haunt ;
Who, while they struggle from the scourge to flee,
Move where the blasted soil is not unworn,
And, in their anguish, bear what other minds have borne !”

V.

But Shapes that come not at an earthly call 90
Will not depart when mortal voices bid ;
Lords of the visionary eye whose lid,
Once raised, remains aghast, and will not fall !
Ye Gods, thought He, that servile Implement

Obeys a mystical intent !
 Your Minister would brush away
 The spots that to my soul adhere ;
 But should she labor night and day,
 They will not, cannot disappear ;
 Whence angry perturbations, — and that look 100
 Which no Philosophy can brook !

VI.

Ill-fated Chief ! there are whose hopes are built
 Upon the ruins of thy glorious name ;
 Who, through the portal of one moment's guilt,
 Pursue thee with their deadly aim !
 O matchless perfidy ! portentous lust
 Of monstrous crime ! — that horror-striking blade,
 Drawn in defiance of the Gods, hath laid
 The noble Syracusan low in dust !
 Shuddered the walls — the marble city wept — 110
 And sylvan places heaved a pensive sigh ;
 But in calm peace the appointed Victim slept,
 As he had fallen in magnanimity ;
 Of spirit too capacious to require
 That Destiny her course should change ; too just
 To his own native greatness to desire
 That wretched boon, days lengthened by mistrust.
 So were the hopeless troubles, that involved
 The soul of Dion, instantly dissolved.
 Released from life and cares of princely state, 120
 He left this moral grafted on his Fate :
 “ Him only pleasure leads, and peace attends,
 Him, only him, the shield of Jove defends,
 Whose means are fair and spotless as his ends.”

COMPOSED AT CORA LINN,

IN SIGHT OF WALLACE'S TOWER.

1814. — 1820.

LORD of the vale ! astounding Flood ;
The dullest leaf in this thick wood
Quakes — conscious of thy power ;
The caves reply with hollow moan ;
And vibrates, to its central stone,
Yon time-cemented Tower !

And yet how fair the rural scene !
For thou, O Clyde, hast ever been
Beneficent as strong ;
Pleased in refreshing dews to steep
The little trembling flowers that peep
Thy shelving rocks among.

10

Hence all who love their country, love
To look on thee, — delight to rove
Where they thy voice can hear ;
And, to the patriot-warrior's Shade,
Lord of the vale ! to Heroes laid
In dust, that voice is dear !

Along thy banks, at dead of night
Sweeps visibly the Wallace Wight ;
Or stands, in warlike vest,
Aloft, beneath the moon's pale beam,

20

A Champion worthy of the stream,
Yon gray tower's living crest !

But clouds and envious darkness hide
A form not doubtfully descried : —
Their transient mission o'er,
O say to what blind region flee
These Shapes of awful phantasy?
To what untrodden shore ?

30

Less than divine command they spurn ;
But this we from the mountains learn,
And this the valleys show ;
That never will they deign to hold
Communion where the heart is cold
To human weal and woe.

The man of abject soul in vain
Shall walk the Marathonian plain ;
Or thrid the shadowy gloom
That still invests the guardian Pass
Where stood, sublime, Leonidas
Devoted to the tomb.

40

And let no Slave his head incline,
Or kneel, before the votive shrine
By Uri's lake, where Tell
Leapt, from his storm-vezt boat, to land,
Heaven's Instrument, for by his hand
That day the Tyrant fell.

YARROW VISITED,

SEPTEMBER, 1814.

1814. — 1820.

AND is this — Yarrow? — *This* the Stream
 Of which my fancy cherished,
 So faithfully, a waking dream?
 An image that hath perished!
 O that some Minstrel's harp were near,
 To utter notes of gladness,
 And chase this silence from the air,
 That fills my heart with sadness!

Yet why? — a silvery current flows
 With uncontrolled meanderings; 10
 Nor have these eyes by greener hills
 Been soothed, in all my wanderings.
 And, through her depths, Saint Mary's Lake
 Is visibly delighted;
 For not a feature of those hills
 Is in the mirror slighted.

A blue sky bends o'er Yarrow vale,
 Save where that pearly whiteness
 Is round the rising sun diffused,
 A tender hazy brightness; 20
 Mild dawn of promise! that excludes
 All profitless dejection;
 Though not unwilling here to admit
 A pensive recollection.

Where was it that the famous Flower
 Of Yarrow Vale lay bleeding?
 His bed perchance was yon smooth mound
 On which the herd is feeding :
 And haply from this crystal pool,
 Now peaceful as the morning, 30
 The Water-wraith ascended thrice,
 And gave his doleful warning.

Delicious is the Lay that sings
 The haunts of happy Lovers,
 The path that leads them to the grove,
 The leafy grove that covers ;
 And Pity sanctifies the Verse
 That paints, by strength of sorrow,
 The unconquerable strength of love ;
 Bear witness, rueful Yarrow ! 40

But thou, that didst appear so fair
 To fond imagination,
 Dost rival in the light of day
 Her delicate creation :
 Meek loveliness is round thee spread,
 A softness still and holy ;
 The grace of forest charms decayed,
 And pastoral melancholy.

That region left, the vale unfolds
 Rich groves of lofty stature, 50
 With Yarrow winding through the pomp
 Of cultivated nature ;

And rising from those lofty groves,
Behold a Ruin hoary !
The shattered front of Newark's Towers,
Renowned in Border story.

Fair scenes for childhood's opening bloom,
For sportive youth to stray in ;
For manhood to enjoy his strength ;
And age to wear away in ! 60
Yon cottage seems a bower of bliss,
A covert for protection
Of tender thoughts, that nestle there —
The brood of chaste affection.

How sweet on this autumnal day,
The wild-wood fruits to gather,
And on my True-love's forehead plant
A crest of blooming heather !
And what if I enwreathed my own !
'T were no offence to reason ; 70
The sober hills thus deck their brows
To meet the wintry season.

I see — but not by sight alone,
Loved Yarrow, have I won thee ;
A ray of fancy still survives —
Her sunshine plays upon thee !
Thy ever-youthful waters keep
A course of lively pleasure ;
And gladsome notes my lips can breathe,
Accordant to the measure. 80

The vapors linger round the Heights,
 They melt, and soon must vanish ;
 One hour is theirs, nor more is mine, —
 Sad thought, which I would banish,
 But that I know, where'er I go,
 Thy genuine image, Yarrow !
 Will dwell with me, — to heighten joy,
 And cheer my mind in sorrow.



TO —,

ON HER FIRST ASCENT TO THE SUMMIT OF HELVELLYN.

1816. — 1820.

INMATE of a mountain dwelling,
 Thou hast clomb aloft, and gazed
 From the watch-towers of Helvellyn ;
 Awed, delighted, and amazed !

Potent was the spell that bound thee,
 Not unwilling to obey ;
 For blue Ether's arms, flung round thee,
 Stilled the pantings of dismay.

Lo ! the dwindled woods and meadows ;
 What a vast abyss is there !
 Lo ! the clouds, the solemn shadows,
 And the glistenings — heavenly fair !

And a record of commotion
Which a thousand ridges yield :
Ridge, and gulf, and distant ocean
Gleaming like a silver shield !

Maiden ! now take flight ; — inherit
Alps or Andes, — they are thine !
With the morning's roseate Spirit,
Sweep their length of snowy line ;

20

Or survey their bright dominions
In the gorgeous colors drest
Flung from off the purple pinions,
Evening spreads throughout the west !

Thine are all the coral fountains
Warbling in each sparry vault
Of the untrodden lunar mountains ;
Listen to their songs ! — or halt,

To Niphates' top invited,
Whither spiteful Satan steered ;
Or descend where the ark alighted,
When the green earth re-appeared ;

30

For the power of hills is on thee,
As was witnessed through thine eye
Then, when old Helvellyn won thee,
To confess their majesty !

ODE TO LYCORIS.

1817. — 1820.

I.

AN age hath been when Earth was proud
 Of lustre too intense
 To be sustained ; and Mortals bowed
 The front in self-defence.
 Who *then*, if Dian's crescent gleamed,
 Or Cupid's sparkling arrow streamed
 While on the wing the Urchin played,
 Could fearlessly approach the shade?
 — Enough for one soft vernal day,
 If I, a bard of ebbing time,
 And nurtured in a fickle clime
 May haunt this hornèd bay ;
 Whose amorous water multiplies
 The flitting halcyon's vivid dyes ;
 And smooths her liquid breast — to show
 These swan-like specks of mountain snow,
 White as the pair that slid along the plains
 Of heaven, when Venus held the reins !

10

II.

In youth we love the darksome lawn
 Brushed by the owlet's wing ;
 Then, Twilight is preferred to Dawn,
 And Autumn to the Spring.
 Sad fancies do we then affect,
 In luxury of disrespect

20

To our own prodigal excess
 Of too familiar happiness.
 Lycoris (if such name befit
 Thee, thee my life's celestial sign!)
 When Nature marks the year's decline,
 Be ours to welcome it ; 30
 Pleased with the harvest hope that runs
 Before the path of milder suns ;
 Pleased while the sylvan world displays
 Its ripeness to the feeding gaze ;
 Pleased when the sullen winds resound the knell
 Of the resplendent miracle.

III.

But something whispers to my heart
 That, as we downward tend,
 Lycoris ! life requires an *art*
 To which our souls must bend ; 40
 A skill — to balance and supply ;
 And, ere the flowing fount be dry,
 As soon it must, a sense to sip,
 Or drink, with no fastidious lip.
 Then welcome, above all, the Guest
 Whose smiles, diffused o'er land and sea,
 Seem to recall the Deity
 Of youth into the breast :
 May pensive Autumn ne'er present
 A claim to her disparagement ! 50
 While blossoms and the budding spray
 Inspire us in our own decay ;
 Still, as we nearer draw to life's dark goal,
 Be hopeful Spring the favorite of the Soul !

THE PASS OF KIRKSTONE.

1817. — 1820.

I.

WITHIN the mind strong fancies work,
 A deep delight the bosom thrills,
 Oft as I pass along the fork
 Of these fraternal hills :
 Where, save the rugged road, we find
 No appanage of human kind,
 Nor hint of man : if stone or rock
 Seem not his handy-work to mock
 By something cognizably shaped :
 Mockery, — or model roughly hewn, 10
 And left as if by earthquake strewn,
 Or from the Flood escaped :
 Altars for Druid service fit ;
 (But where no fire was ever lit,
 Unless the glow-worm to the skies
 Thence offer nightly sacrifice)
 Wrinkled Egyptian monument ;
 Green moss-grown tower ; or hoary tent ;
 Tents of a camp that never shall be razed —
 On which four thousand years have gazed ! 20

II.

Ye plough-shares sparkling on the slopes !
 Ye snow-white lambs that trip
 Imprisoned 'mid the formal props

Of restless ownership !
 Ye trees, that may to-morrow fall
 To feed the insatiate Prodigal !
 Lawns, houses, chattels, groves and fields,
 All that the fertile valley shields ;
 Wages of folly — baits of crime,
 Of life's uneasy game the stake, 30
 Playthings that keep the eyes awake
 Of drowsy, dotard Time ; —
 O care ! O guilt ! — O vales and plains,
 Here, 'mid his own unvexed domains,
 A Genius dwells, that can subdue
 At once all memory of You, —
 Most potent when mists veil the sky,
 Mists that distort and magnify ;
 While the coarse rushes, to the sweeping breeze,
 Sigh forth their ancient melodies ! 40

III.

List to those shriller notes ! — *that* march
 Perchance was on the blast,
 When, through this Height's inverted arch,
 Rome's earliest legion passed !
 — They saw, adventurously impelled,
 And older eyes than theirs beheld,
 This block — and yon, whose church-like frame
 Gives to this savage Pass its name.
 Aspiring Road ! that lov'st to hide
 Thy daring in a vapory bourn, 50
 Not seldom may the hour return
 When thou shalt be my guide :

And I (as all men may find cause,
 When life is at a weary pause,
 And they have panted up the hill
 Of duty with reluctant will)
 Be thankful, even though tired and faint,
 For the rich bounties of constraint ;
 Whence oft invigorating transports flow
 That choice lacked courage to bestow !

60

IV.

My soul was grateful for delight
 That wore a threatening brow ;
 A veil is lifted — can she slight
 The scene that opens now ?
 Though habitation none appear,
 The greenness tells, man must be there ;
 The shelter — that the perspective
 Is of the clime in which we live ;
 Where Toil pursues his daily round ;
 Where Pity sheds sweet tears — and Love,
 In woodbine bower or birchen grove,
 Inflicts his tender wound.
 — Who comes not hither ne'er shall know
 How beautiful the world below ;
 Nor can he guess how lightly leaps
 The brook adown the rocky steeps.
 Farewell, thou desolate Domain !
 Hope, pointing to the cultured plain,
 Carols like a shepherd-boy ;
 And who is she ? — Can that be Joy !

70

80

Who, with a sunbeam for her guide,
 Smoothly skims the meadows wide ;
 While Faith, from yonder opening cloud,
 To hill and vale proclaims aloud,
 " Whate'er the weak may dread, the wicked dare,
 Thy lot, O Man, is good, thy portion fair ! "



SEQUEL TO "THE BEGGARS."

COMPOSED MANY YEARS AFTER.

1817. — 1827.

WHERE are they now, those wanton Boys?
 For whose free range the dædal earth
 Was filled with animated toys,
 And implements of frolic mirth ;
 With tools for ready wit to guide ;
 And ornaments of seemlier pride,
 More fresh, more bright, than princes wear ;
 For what one moment flung aside,
 Another could repair :
 What good or evil have they seen
 Since I their pastime witnessed here,
 Their daring wiles, their sportive cheer?
 I ask — but all is dark between !

10

They met me in a genial hour,
 When universal nature breathed

As with the breath of one sweet flower —
A time to overrule the power
Of discontent, and check the birth
Of thoughts with better thoughts at strife,
The most familiar bane of life 20
Since parting Innocence bequeathed
Mortality to Earth !
Soft clouds, the whitest of the year,
Sailed through the sky — the brooks ran clear ;
The lambs from rock to rock were bounding ;
With songs the budded groves resounding ;
And to my heart are still endeared
The thoughts with which it then was cheered ;
The faith which saw that gladsome pair
Walk through the fire with unsinged hair. 30
Or, if such faith must needs deceive —
Then, Spirits of beauty and of grace,
Associates in that eager chase ;
Ye, who within the blameless mind
Your favorite seat of empire find —
Kind Spirits ! may we not believe
That they, so happy and so fair
Through your sweet influence, and the care
Of pitying Heaven, at least were free
From touch of *deadly* injury? 40
Destined, whate'er their earthly doom,
For mercy and immortal bloom !

COMPOSED UPON AN EVENING OF EXTRAORDINARY SPLENDOR AND BEAUTY.

1818. — 1820.

I.

HAD this effulgence disappeared
 With flying haste, I might have sent,
 Among the speechless clouds, a look
 Of blank astonishment ;
 But 't is endued with power to stay,
 And sanctify one closing day,
 That frail Mortality may see —
 What is? — ah no, but what *can* be !
 Time was when field and watery cove
 With modulated echoes rang, 10
 While choirs of fervent Angels sang
 Their vespers in the grove ;
 Or, crowning, star-like, each some sovereign height,
 Warbled, for heaven above and earth below,
 Strains suitable to both. — Such holy rite,
 Methinks, if audibly repeated now
 From hill or valley, could not move
 Sublimier transport, purer love,
 Than doth this silent spectacle, — the gleam —
 The shadow, and the peace supreme ! 20

II.

No sound is uttered, — but a deep
 And solemn harmony pervades

The hollow vale from steep to steep,
 And penetrates the glades.
 Far-distant images draw nigh,
 Called forth by wondrous potency
 Of beamy radiance, that imbues
 Whate'er it strikes, with gem-like hues !
 In vision exquisitely clear,
 Herds range along the mountain-side ; 30
 And glistening antlers are descried ;
 And gilded flocks appear.
 Thine is the tranquil hour, purpureal Eve !
 But long as god-like wish, or hope divine,
 Informs my spirit, ne'er can I believe
 That this magnificence is wholly thine !
 — From worlds not quickened by the sun
 A portion of the gift is won ;
 An intermingling of Heaven's pomp is spread
 On ground which British shepherds tread ! 40

III.

And, if there be whom broken ties
 Afflict, or injuries assail,
 Yon hazy ridges to their eyes
 Present a glorious scale,
 Climbing suffused with sunny air,
 To stop — no record hath told where !
 And tempting Fancy to ascend,
 And with immortal Spirits blend !
 — Wings at my shoulders seem to play ;
 But, rooted here, I stand and gaze 50
 On those bright steps that heavenward raise

Their practicable way.

Come forth, ye drooping old men, look abroad,
 And see to what fair countries ye are bound !
 And if some traveller, weary of his road,
 Hath slept since noon-tide on the grassy ground,
 Ye Genii ! to his covert speed ;
 And wake him with such gentle heed
 As may attune his soul to meet the dower
 Bestowed on this transcendent hour !

60

IV.

Such hues from their celestial Urn
 Were wont to stream before mine eye,
 Where'er it wandered in the morn
 Of blissful infancy.
 This glimpse of glory, why renewed ?
 Nay, rather speak with gratitude ;
 For if a vestige of those gleams
 Survived, 't was only in my dreams.
 Dread Power ! whom peace and calmness serve
 No less than Nature's threatening voice,
 If aught unworthy be my choice,
 From THEE if I would swerve ;
 Oh, let thy grace remind me of the light
 Full early lost, and fruitlessly deplored ;
 Which, at this moment, on my waking sight
 Appears to shine, by miracle restored ;
 My soul, though yet confined to earth,
 Rejoices in a second birth !
 — 'T is past, the visionary splendor fades ;
 And night approaches with her shades.

70

80

NEAR THE SPRING OF THE HERMITAGE.

1818. — 1820.

TROUBLED long with warring notions,
Long impatient of thy rod,
I resign my soul's emotions
Unto Thee, mysterious God !

What avails the kindly shelter
Yielded by this craggy rent,
If my spirit toss and welter
On the waves of discontent ?

Parching Summer hath no warrant
To consume this crystal Well ;
Rains, that make each rill a torrent,
Neither sully it nor swell.

10

Thus, dishonoring not her station,
Would my Life present to Thee,
Gracious God, the pure oblation
Of divine tranquillity !

SEPTEMBER, 1819.

1819. — 1820.

DEPARTING summer hath assumed
An aspect tenderly illumed,
The gentlest look of spring ;
That calls from yonder leafy shade
Unfaded, yet prepared to fade,
A timely carolling.

No faint and hesitating trill —
Such tribute as to winter chill
The lonely redbreast pays !
Clear, loud, and lively is the din,
From social warblers gathering in
Their harvest of sweet lays.

10

Nor doth the example fail to cheer
Me, conscious that my leaf is sere,
And yellow on the bough : —
Fall, rosy garlands, from my head !
Ye myrtle wreaths, your fragrance shed
Around a younger brow !

Yet will I temperately rejoice ;
Wide is the range, and free the choice
Of undiscordant themes ;
Which, haply, kindred souls may prize

20

Not less than vernal ecstasies,
And passion's feverish dreams.

For deathless powers to verse belong,
And they like Demi-gods are strong
On whom the Muses smile ;
But some their function have disclaimed,
Best pleased with what is aptliest framed
To enervate and defile.

30

Not such the initiatory strains
Committed to the silent plains
In Britain's earliest dawn :
Trembled the groves, the stars grew pale,
While all-too-daringly the veil
Of nature was withdrawn !

Nor such the spirit-stirring note
When the live chords Alcæus smote,
Inflamed by sense of wrong ;
Woe ! woe to Tyrants ! from the lyre
Broke threateningly, in sparkles dire
Of fierce vindictive song.

40

And not unhallowed was the page
By wingèd Love inscribed, to assuage
The pangs of vain pursuit ;
Love listening while the Lesbian Maid
With finest touch of passion swayed
Her own Æolian lute.

O ye, who patiently explore
 The wreck of Herculean lore, 50
 What rapture ! could ye seize
 Some Theban fragment, or unroll
 One precious, tender-hearted scroll
 Of pure Simonides.

That were, indeed, a genuine birth
 Of poesy ; a bursting forth
 Of genius from the dust :
 What Horace gloried to behold,
 What Maro loved, shall we enfold?
 Can haughty Time be just ! 60



THE RIVER DUDDON.

TO THE REV. DR. WORDSWORTH. (WITH THE SONNETS TO
 THE RIVER DUDDON.)

1820. — 1820.

THE minstrels played their Christmas tune
 To-night beneath my cottage-eaves ;
 While, smitten by a lofty moon,
 The encircling laurels, thick with leaves,
 Gave back a rich and dazzling sheen,
 That overpowered their natural green.

Through hill and valley every breeze
 Had sunk to rest with folded wings :
 Keen was the air, but could not freeze,
 Nor check, the music of the strings ; 10

How touching, when, at midnight, sweep
Snow-muffled winds, and all is dark,
To hear — and sink again to sleep !
Or, at an earlier call, to mark,
By blazing fire, the still suspense
Of self-complacent innocence ;

40

The mutual nod, — the grave disguise
Of hearts with gladness brimming o'er ;
And some unbidden tears that rise
For names once heard, and heard no more ;
Tears brightened by the serenade
For infant in the cradle laid.

Ah ! not for emerald fields alone,
With ambient streams more pure and bright
Than fabled Cytherea's zone
Glittering before the Thunderer's sight,
Is to my heart of hearts endeared
The ground where we were born and reared !

50

Hail, ancient Manners ! sure defence,
Where they survive, of wholesome laws ;
Remnants of love whose modest sense
Thus into narrow room withdraws ;
Hail, Usages of pristine mould,
And ye that guard them, Mountains old !

60

Bear with me, Brother ! quench the thought
That slights this passion, or condemns ;
If thee fond Fancy ever brought
From the proud margin of the Thames,

And Lambeth's venerable towers,
To humbler streams, and greener bowers.

Yes, they can make, who fail to find,
Short leisure even in busiest days ;
Moments, to cast a look behind,
And profit by those kindly rays 70
That through the clouds do sometimes steal,
And all the far-off past reveal.

Hence, while the imperial City's din
Beats frequent on thy satiate ear,
A pleased attention I may win
To agitations less severe,
'That neither overwhelm nor cloy,
But fill the hollow vale with joy !



MEMORY.

1823. — 1827.

A PEN — to register ; a key —
That winds through secret wards ;
Are well assigned to Memory
By allegoric Bards.

As aptly, also, might be given
A Pencil to her hand ;
That, softening objects, sometimes even
Outstrips the heart's demand ;

That smooths foregone distress, the lines
Of lingering care subdued, 10
Long-vanished happiness refines,
And clothes in brighter hues ;

Yet, like a tool of Fancy, works
Those Spectres to dilate
That startle Conscience, as she lurks
Within her lonely seat.

O that our lives, which flee so fast,
In purity were such
That not an image of the past
Should fear that pencil's touch! 20

Retirement then might hourly look
Upon a soothing scene,
Age steal to his allotted nook
Contented and serene ;

With heart as calm as lakes that sleep,
In frosty moonlight glistening ;
Or mountain rivers, where they creep
Along a channel smooth and deep,
To their own far-off murmurs listening.

TO THE LADY FLEMING,

ON SEEING THE FOUNDATION PREPARING FOR THE ERECTION
OF RYDAL CHAPEL, WESTMORELAND.

1823. — 1827.

I.

BLEST is this Isle, — our native Land ;
Where battlement and moated gate
Are objects only for the hand
Of hoary Time to decorate ;
Where shady hamlet, town that breathes
Its busy smoke in social wreaths,
No rampart's stern defence require,
Naught but the heaven-directed spire,
And steeple tower (with pealing bells
Far heard) — our only citadels.

10

II.

O Lady ! from a noble line
Of chieftains sprung, who stoutly bore
The spear, yet gave to works divine
A bounteous help in days of yore
(As records mouldering in the Dell
Of Nightshade haply yet may tell) ;
Thee kindred aspirations moved
To build, within a vale beloved,
For Him upon whose high behests
All peace depends, all safety rests.

20

III.

How fondly will the woods embrace
This daughter of thy pious care,
Lifting her front with modest grace
To make a fair recess more fair ;
And to exalt the passing hour,
Or soothe it with a healing power
Drawn from the Sacrifice fulfilled
Before this rugged soil was tilled,
Or human habitation rose
To interrupt the deep repose !

30

IV.

Well may the villagers rejoice !
Nor heat, nor cold, nor weary ways,
Will be a hindrance to the voice
That would unite in prayer and praise ;
More duly shall wild wandering Youth
Receive the curb of sacred truth,
Shall tottering Age, bent earthward, hear
The Promise, with uplifted ear ;
And all shall welcome the new ray
Imparted to their Sabbath-day.

40

V.

Nor deem the Poet's hope misplaced,
His fancy cheated — that can see
A shade upon the future cast,
Of time's pathetic sanctity ;
Can hear the monitory clock
Sound o'er the lake with gentle shock

At evening, when the ground beneath
 Is ruffled o'er with cells of death ;
 Where happy generations lie,
 Here tutored for eternity. 50

VI.

Lives there a man whose sole delights
 Are trivial pomp and city noise,
 Hardening a heart that loathes or slights
 What every natural heart enjoys?
 Who never caught a noon-tide dream
 From murmur of a running stream ;
 Could strip, for aught the prospect yields
 To him, their verdure from the fields ;
 And take the radiance from the clouds
 In which the sun his setting shrouds? 60

VII.

A soul so pitiably forlorn,
 If such do on this earth abide,
 May season apathy with scorn,
 May turn indifference to pride ;
 And still be not unblest — compared
 With him who grovels, self-debarred
 From all that lies within the scope
 Of holy faith and Christian hope ;
 Or, shipwrecked, kindles on the coast
 False fires, that others may be lost. 70

VIII.

Alas ! that such perverted zeal
 Should spread on Britain's favored ground !

That public order, private weal,
 Should e'er have felt or feared a wound
 From champions of the desperate law
 Which from their own blind hearts they draw ;
 Who tempt their reason to deny
 God, whom their passions dare defy,
 And boast that they alone are free
 Who reach this dire extremity ! 80

IX.

But turn we from these " bold, bad " men ;
 The way, mild Lady ! that hath led
 Down to their " dark opprobrious den,"
 Is all too rough for Thee to tread.
 Softly as morning vapors glide
 Down Rydal-cove from Fairfield's side,
 Should move the tenor of *his* song
 Who means to charity no wrong ;
 Whose offering gladly would accord
 With this day's work, in thought and word. 90

X.

Heaven prosper it ! may peace, and love,
 And hope, and consolation fall,
 Through its meek influence, from above,
 And penetrate the hearts of all ;
 All who, around the hallowed Fane,
 Shall sojourn in this fair domain ;
 Grateful to Thee, while service pure,
 And ancient ordinance, shall endure,
 For opportunity bestowed
 To kneel together, and adore their God ! 100

“O DEARER FAR THAN LIGHT AND LIFE ARE
DEAR.”

1824. — 1827.

O DEARER far than light and life are dear,
Full oft our human foresight I deplore ;
Trembling, through my unworthiness, with fear
That friends, by death disjoined, may meet no more !

Misgivings, hard to vanquish or control,
Mix with the day, and cross the hour of rest ;
While all the future, for thy purer soul,
With “sober certainties” of love is blest.

That sigh of thine, not meant for human ear,
Tells that these words thy humbleness offend ; 10
Yet bear me up — else faltering in the rear
Of a steep march : support me to the end.

Peace settles where the intellect is meek,
And Love is dutiful in thought and deed ;
Through Thee communion with that Love I seek :
The faith Heaven strengthens where *he* moulds the Creed.

WRITTEN IN A BLANK LEAF OF MACPHERSON'S
OSSIAN.

1824. — 1827.

Oft have I caught, upon a fitful breeze,
 Fragments of far-off melodies,
 With ear not coveting the whole,
 A part so charmed the pensive soul :
 While a dark storm before my sight
 Was yielding, on a mountain height
 Loose vapors have I watched, that won
 Prismatic colors from the sun ;
 Nor felt a wish that heaven would show
 The image of its perfect bow. 10
 What need, then, of these finished Strains ?
 Away with counterfeit Remains !
 An abbey in its lone recess,
 A temple of the wilderness,
 Wrecks though they be, announce with feeling
 The majesty of honest dealing.
 Spirit of Ossian ! if imbound
 In language thou mayst yet be found,
 If aught (intrusted to the pen
 Or floating on the tongues of men, 20
 Albeit shattered and impaired)
 Subsist thy dignity to guard,
 In concert with memorial claim
 Of old gray stone, and high-born name
 That cleaves to rock or pillared cave

Where moans the blast, or beats the wave,
 Let Truth, stern arbitress of all,
 Interpret that Original,
 And for presumptuous wrongs atone ;
 Authentic words be given, or none !

30

Time is not blind ! — yet He, who spares
 Pyramid pointing to the stars,
 Hath preyed with ruthless appetite
 On all that marked the primal flight
 Of the poetic ecstasy
 Into the land of mystery.
 No tongue is able to rehearse
 One measure, Orpheus ! of thy verse ;
 Musæus, stationed with his lyre
 Supreme among the Elysian quire,

40

Is, for the dwellers upon earth,
 Mute as a lark ere morning's birth.
 Why grieve for these, though past away
 The music, and extinct the lay ?
 When thousands, by severer doom,
 Full early to the silent tomb
 Have sunk, at Nature's call ; or strayed
 From hope and promise, self-betrayed ;
 The garland withering on their brows,
 Stung with remorse for broken vows,

50

Frantic — else how might they rejoice ?
 And friendless, by their own sad choice !

Hail, Bards of mightier grasp ! on you
 I chiefly call, the chosen Few,

Who cast not off the acknowledged guide,
 Who faltered not, nor turned aside ;
 Whose lofty genius could survive
 Privation, under sorrow thrive ;
 In whom the fiery Muse revered
 The symbol of a snow-white beard, 60
 Bedewed with meditative tears
 Dropped from the lenient cloud of years.

Brothers in soul! though distant times
 Produced you nursed in various climes,
 Ye, when the orb of life had waned,
 A plenitude of love retained :
 Hence, while in you each sad regret
 By corresponding hope was met,
 Ye lingered among human kind,
 Sweet voices for the passing wind ; 70
 Departing sunbeams, loath to stop,
 Though smiling on the last hill-top !
 Such to the tender-hearted maid
 Even ere her joys begin to fade ;
 Such, haply, to the rugged chief
 By fortune crushed, or tamed by grief ;
 Appears, on Morven's lonely shore,
 Dim-gleaming through imperfect lore,
 The Son of Fingal ; such was blind
 Mæonides of ampler mind ; 80
 Such Milton, to the fountain-head
 Of glory by Urania led !

TO A SKY-LARK.

1825. — 1827.

ETHEREAL minstrel ! pilgrim of the sky !
 Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound ?
 Or, while the wings aspire, are heart and eye
 Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground ?
 Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will,
 Those quivering wings composed, that music still !

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood ;
 A privacy of glorious light is thine :
 Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood
 Of harmony, with instinct more divine : 10
 Type of the wise who soar, but never roam ;
 True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home !



TO MAY.

1826-34. — 1835.

THOUGH many suns have risen and set
 Since thou, blithe May, wert born,
 And Bards, who hailed thee, may forget
 Thy gifts, thy beauty scorn ;
 There are who to a birthday strain
 Confine not harp and voice,
 But evermore throughout thy reign
 Are grateful and rejoice !

Delicious odors ! music sweet,
 Too sweet to pass away !

Oh for a deathless song to meet
The soul's desire — a lay
That, when a thousand years are told,
Should praise thee, genial Power!
Through summer heat, autumnal cold,
And winter's dreariest hour.

Earth, sea, thy presence feel — nor less,
If yon ethereal blue
With its soft smile the truth express,
The heavens have felt it too. 20
The inmost heart of man if glad
Partakes a livelier cheer;
And eyes that cannot but be sad
Let fall a brightened tear.

Since thy return, through days and weeks
Of hope that grew by stealth,
How many wan and faded cheeks
Have kindled into health!
The Old, by thee revived, have said,
"Another year is ours;" 30
And wayworn Wanderers, poorly fed,
Have smiled upon thy flowers.

Who tripping lisps a merry song
Amid his playful peers?
The tender Infant who was long
A prisoner of fond fears;
But now, when every sharp-edged blast
Is quiet in its sheath,
His Mother leaves him free to taste
Earth's sweetness in thy breath. 40

Thy help is with the weed that creeps
 Along the humblest ground ;
 No cliff so bare but on its steeps
 Thy favors may be found ;
 But most on some peculiar nook
 That our own hands have drest,
 Thou and thy train are proud to look,
 And seem to love it best.

And yet how pleased we wander forth
 When May is whispering, " Come ! 50
 Choose from the bowers of virgin earth
 The happiest for your home ;
 Heaven's bounteous love through me is spread
 From sunshine, clouds, winds, waves,
 Drops on the mouldering turret's head
 And on your turf-clad graves ! "

Such greeting heard, away with sighs
 For lilies that must fade,
 Or ' the rathe primrose as it dies
 Forsaken ' in the shade ! 60
 Vernal fruitions and desires
 Are linked in endless chase ;
 While, as one kindly growth retires,
 Another takes its place.

And what if thou, sweet May, hast known
 Mishap by worm and blight ;
 If expectations newly blown
 Have perished in thy sight ;
 If loves and joys, while up they sprung,
 Were caught as in a snare, — 70

Such is the lot of all the young,
 However bright and fair.

Lo ! Streams that April could not check
 Are patient of thy rule ;
Gurgling in foamy water-break,
 Loitering in glassy pool :
By thee, thee only, could be sent
 Such gentle mists as glide,
Curling with unconfirmed intent,
 On that green mountain's side.

80

How delicate the leafy veil
 Through which yon house of God
Gleams 'mid the peace of this deep dale,
 By few but shepherds trod !
And lowly huts, near beaten ways,
 No sooner stand attired
In thy fresh wreaths, than they for praise
 Peep forth, and are admired.

Season of fancy and of hope,
 Permit not for one hour
A blossom from thy crown to drop,
 Nor add to it a flower !
Keep, lovely May, as if by touch
 Of self-restraining art,
This modest charm of not too much,
 Part seen, imagined part !

90

THE PILLAR OF TRAJAN.

1826. — 1827.

WHERE towers are crushed, and unforbidden weeds
 O'er mutilated arches shed their seeds ;
 And temples, doomed to milder change, unfold
 A new magnificence that vies with old ;
 Firm in its pristine majesty hath stood
 A votive Column, spared by fire and flood : —
 And, though the passions of man's fretful race
 Have never ceased to eddy round its base,
 Not injured more by touch of meddling hands
 Than a lone obelisk 'mid Nubian sands, 10
 Or aught in Syrian deserts left to save
 From death the memory of the good and brave.
 Historic figures round the shaft embost
 Ascend, with lineaments in air not lost :
 Still as he turns, the charmed spectator sees
 Group winding after group with dream-like ease,
 Triumphs in sunbright gratitude displayed,
 Or softly stealing into modest shade.
 — So, pleased with purple clusters to entwine
 Some lofty elm-tree, mounts the daring vine ; 20
 The woodbine so, with spiral grace, and breathes
 Wide-spreading odors from her flowery wreaths.

Borne by the Muse from rills in shepherds' ears,
 Murmuring but one smooth story for all years,
 I gladly commune with the mind and heart
 Of him who thus survives by classic art,

His actions witness, venerate his mien,
 And study Trajan as by Pliny seen ;
 Behold how fought the Chief whose conquering sword
 Stretched far as earth might own a single lord ; 30
 In the delight of moral prudence schooled,
 How feelingly at home the Sovereign ruled ;
 Best of the good — in Pagan faith allied
 To more than Man, by virtue deified.

Memorial Pillar ! 'mid the wrecks of Time
 Preserve thy charge with confidence sublime, —
 The exultations, pomps, and cares of Rome,
 Whence half the breathing world received its doom ;
 Things that recoil from language ; that, if shown
 By apter pencil, from the light had flown. 40
 A Pontiff, Trajan *here* the Gods implores,
There greets an Embassy from Indian shores ;
 Lo ! he harangues his cohorts — *there* the storm
 Of battle meets him in authentic form !
 Unharnessed, naked, troops of Moorish horse
 Sweep to the charge ; more high, the Dacian force
 To hoof and finger mailed : yet, high or low,
 None bleed, and none lie prostrate but the foe.
 In every Roman, through all turns of fate,
 Is Roman dignity inviolate ; 50
 Spirit in him pre-eminent, who guides,
 Supports, adorns, and over all presides ;
 Distinguished only by inherent state
 From honored Instruments that round him wait ;
 Rise as he may, his grandeur scorns the test
 Of outward symbol, nor will deign to rest

On aught by which another is deprest.
 — Alas ! that One thus disciplined could toil
 To enslave whole nations on their native soil ;
 So emulous of Macedonian fame, 60
 That, when his age was measured with his aim,
 He drooped, 'mid else unclouded victories,
 And turned his eagles back with deep-drawn sighs ;
 O weakness of the Great ! O folly of the Wise !

Where now the haughty Empire that was spread
 With such fond hope ? Her very speech is dead ;
 Yet glorious Art the power of Time defies,
 And Trajan still, through various enterprise,
 Mounts, in this fine illusion, toward the skies : 70
 Still are we present with the imperial Chief,
 Nor cease to gaze upon the bold Relief
 Till Rome, to silent marble unconfined,
 Becomes with all her years a vision of the Mind.



THE WISHING-GATE.

1828. — 1829.

In the vale of Grasmere, by the side of the old highway leading to Ambleside, is a gate, which, time out of mind, has been called the Wishing-gate, from a belief that wishes formed or indulged there have a favorable issue.

HOPE rules a land forever green :
 All powers that serve the bright-eyed Queen
 Are confident and gay ;
 Clouds at her bidding disappear ;
 Points she to aught ? — the bliss draws near,
 And Fancy smooths the way.

Not such the land of Wishes — there
Dwell fruitless day-dreams, lawless prayer,
 And thoughts with things at strife ;
Yet how forlorn, should *ye* depart, 10
Ye superstitions of the *heart*,
 How poor, were human life !

When magic lore abjured its might,
Ye did not forfeit one dear right,
 One tender claim abate ;
Witness this symbol of your sway,
Surviving near the public way,
 The rustic Wishing-gate !

Inquire not if the faery race
Shed kindly influence on the place, 20
 Ere northward they retired ;
If here a warrior left a spell,
Panting for glory as he fell ;
 Or here a saint expired.

Enough that all around is fair,
Composed with Nature's finest care,
 And in her fondest love —
Peace to embosom and content —
To overawe the turbulent,
 The selfish to reprove. 30

Yea ! even the Stranger from afar,
Reclining on this moss-grown bar,
 Unknowing and unknown,

The infection of the ground partakes,
 Longing for his Beloved — who makes
 All happiness her own.

Then why should conscious Spirits fear
 The mystic stirrings that are here,
 The ancient faith disclaim?
 The local Genius ne'er befriends
 Desires whose course in folly ends, 40
 Whose just reward is shame.

Smile if thou wilt, but not in scorn,
 If some, by ceaseless pains outworn,
 Here crave an easier lot;
 If some have thirsted to renew
 A broken vow, or bind a true,
 With firmer, holier knot.

And not in vain, when thoughts are cast
 Upon the irrevocable past, 50
 Some Penitent sincere
 May for a worthier future sigh,
 While trickles from his downcast eye
 No unavailing tear.

The Worldling, pining to be freed
 From turmoil, who would turn or speed
 The current of his fate,
 Might stop before this favored scene,
 At Nature's call, nor blush to lean
 Upon the Wishing-gate. 60

The Sage, who feels how blind, how weak
 Is man, though loath such help to *seek*,
 Yet, passing, here might pause,
 And thirst for insight to allay
 Misgiving, while the crimson day
 In quietness withdraws ;

Or when the church-clock's knell profound
 To Time's first step across the bound
 Of midnight makes reply ;
 Time pressing on with starry crest,
 To filial sleep upon the breast
 Of dread eternity.

70



THE WISHING-GATE DESTROYED.

1828. — 1842.

'T is gone, — with old belief and dream
 That round it clung, and tempting scheme
 Released from fear and doubt ;
 And the bright landscape too must lie,
 By this blank wall from every eye
 Relentlessly shut out.

Bear witness, ye who seldom passed
 That opening — but a look ye cast
 Upon the lake below,
 What spirit-stirring power it gained
 From faith which here was entertained,
 Though reason might say no.

10

Blest is that ground, where, o'er the springs
 Of history, Glory claps her wings,
 Fame sheds the exulting tear ;
 Yet earth is wide, and many a nook
 Unheard of is, like this, a book
 For modest meanings dear.

It was in sooth a happy thought
 That grafted, on so fair a spot, 20
 So confident a token
 Of coming good ; — the charm is fled ;
 Indulgent centuries spun a thread,
 Which one harsh day has broken.

Alas for him who gave the word !
 Could he no sympathy afford,
 Derived from earth or heaven,
 To hearts so oft by hope betrayed
 Their very wishes wanted aid
 Which here was freely given? 30

Where, for the love-lorn maiden's wound,
 Will now so readily be found
 A balm of expectation?
 Anxious for far-off children, where
 Shall mothers breathe a like sweet air
 Of home-felt consolation?

And not unfelt will prove the loss
 'Mid trivial care and petty cross
 And each day's shallow grief ;

Though the most easily beguiled
Were oft among the first that smiled
At their own fond belief. 40

If still the reckless change we mourn,
A reconciling thought may turn
To harm that might lurk here,
Ere judgment prompted from within
Fit aims, with courage to begin,
And strength to persevere.

Not Fortune's slave is Man : our state
Enjoins, while firm resolves await . 50
On wishes just and wise,
That strenuous action follow both,
And life be one perpetual growth
Of heavenward enterprise.

So taught, so trained, we boldly face
All accidents of time and place ;
Whatever props may fail,
Trust in that sovereign law can spread
New glory o'er the mountain's head,
Fresh beauty through the vale. 60

That truth informing mind and heart,
The simplest cottager may part,
Ungrieved, with charm and spell ;
And yet, lost Wishing-gate, to thee
The voice of grateful memory
Shall bid a kind farewell !

"IN THESE FAIR VALES HATH MANY A TREE."

1830. — 1835.

IN these fair vales hath many a Tree
 At Wordsworth's suit been spared ;
 And from the builder's hand this Stone,
 For some rude beauty of its own,
 Was rescued by the Bard :
 So let it rest ; and time will come
 When here the tender-hearted
 May heave a gentle sigh for him,
 As one of the departed.



THE PRIMROSE OF THE ROCK.

1831. — 1835.

A Rock there is whose homely front
 The passing traveller slights ;
 Yet there the glow-worms hang their lamps,
 Like stars, at various heights :
 And one coy Primrose to that Rock
 The vernal breeze invites.

What hideous warfare hath been waged,
 What kingdoms overthrown,
 Since first I spied that Primrose-tuft
 And marked it for my own ;
 A lasting link in Nature's chain
 From highest heaven let down !

The flowers, still faithful to the stems,
 Their fellowship renew :
 The stems are faithful to the root,
 That worketh out of view ;
 And to the rock the root adheres
 In every fibre true.

Close clings to earth the living rock,
 Though threatening still to fall ;
 The earth is constant to her sphere ;
 And God upholds them all :
 So blooms this lonely Plant, nor dreads
 Her annual funeral.

20

Here closed the meditative strain ;
 But air breathed soft that day,
 The hoary mountain-heights were cheered,
 The sunny vale looked gay,
 And to the Primrose of the Rock
 I gave this after-lay.

30

I sang — Let myriads of bright flowers,
 Like Thee, in field and grove
 Revive unenvied ; — mightier far,
 Than tremblings that reprove
 Our vernal tendencies to hope,
 Is God's redeeming love ;

That love which changed — for wan disease,
 For sorrow that had bent
 O'er hopeless dust, for withered age —
 Their moral element,
 And turned the thistles of a curse
 To types beneficent.

40

Sin-blighted though we are, we too,
 The reasoning Sons of Men,
 From one oblivious winter called
 Shall rise, and breathe again ;
 And in eternal summer lose
 Our threescore years and ten.

To humbleness of heart descends
 This prescience from on high,
 The faith that elevates the just,
 Before and when they die ;
 And makes each soul a separate heaven,
 A court for Deity.

50



YARROW REVISITED.

1831. — 1835.

THE gallant Youth, who may have gained,
 Or seeks, a “ winsome Marrow,”
 Was but an Infant in the lap
 When first I looked on Yarrow ;
 Once more, by Newark’s Castle-gate
 Long left without a warder,
 I stood, looked, listened, and with Thee,
 Great Minstrel of the Border !

Grave thoughts ruled wide on that sweet day,
 Their dignity installing
 In gentle bosoms, while sere leaves
 Were on the bough, or falling ;

10

But breezes played, and sunshine gleamed —
The forest to embolden ;
Reddened the fiery hues, and shot
Transparence through the golden.

For busy thoughts the stream flowed on
In foamy agitation ;
And slept in many a crystal pool
For quiet contemplation : 20
No public and no private care
The free-born mind entralling,
We made a day of happy hours,
Our happy days recalling.

Brisk Youth appeared, the morn of youth,
With freaks of graceful folly, —
Life's temperate Noon, her sober Eve,
Her Night not melancholy ;
Past, present, future, all appeared
In harmony united, 30
Like guests that meet, and some from far,
By cordial love invited.

And if, as Yarrow, through the woods
And down the meadow ranging,
Did meet us with unaltered face,
Though we were changed and changing ;
If, *then*, some natural shadows spread
Our inward prospect over,
The soul's deep valley was not slow
Its brightness to recover. 40

Eternal blessings on the Muse,
 And her divine employment !
 The blameless Muse, who trains her Sons
 For hope and calm enjoyment ;
 Albeit sickness, lingering yet,
 Has o'er their pillow brooded ;
 And Care waylays their steps, — a Sprite
 Not easily eluded.

For thee, O SCOTT ! compelled to change
 Green Eildon-hill and Cheviot 50
 For warm Vesuvio's vine-clad slopes ;
 And leave thy Tweed and Teviot
 For mild Sorrento's breezy waves ;
 May classic Fancy, linking
 With native Fancy her fresh aid,
 Preserve thy heart from sinking !

O ! while they minister to thee,
 Each vying with the other,
 May Health return to mellow Age
 With strength her venturous brother ; 60
 And Tiber, and each brook and rill
 Renowned in song and story,
 With unimagined beauty shine,
 Nor lose one ray of glory !

For Thou, upon a hundred streams,
 By tales of love and sorrow,
 Of faithful love, undaunted truth,
 Hast shed the power of Yarrow ;

And streams unknown, hills yet unseen,
Wherever they invite Thee, 70
At parent Nature's grateful call,
With gladness must requite Thee.

A gracious welcome shall be thine,
Such looks of love and honor
As thy own Yarrow gave to me
When first I gazed upon her ;
Beheld what I had feared to see,
Unwilling to surrender
Dreams treasured up from early days,
The holy and the tender. 80

And what, for this frail world, were all
That mortals do or suffer,
Did no responsive harp, no pen,
Memorial tribute offer ?
Yea, what were mighty Nature's self ?
Her features, could they win us,
Unhelped by the poetic voice
That hourly speaks within us ?

Nor deem that localized Romance
Plays false with our affections ; 90
Unsanctifies our tears — made sport
For fanciful dejections :
Ah, no ! the visions of the past
Sustain the heart in feeling
Life as she is — our changeful Life,
With friends and kindred dealing.

Bear witness, Ye, whose thoughts that day
 In Yarrow's groves were centred ;
 Who through the silent portal arch
 Of mouldering Newark entered ; 100
 And clomb the winding stair that once
 Too timidly was mounted
 By the "last Minstrel," (not the last !)
 Ere he his Tale recounted.

Flow on forever, Yarrow Stream !
 Fulfil thy pensive duty,
 Well pleased that future Bards should chant
 For simple hearts thy beauty ;
 To dream-light dear while yet unseen,
 Dear to the common sunshine, 110
 And dearer still, as now I feel,
 To memory's shadowy moonshine !



ON THE DEPARTURE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT
 FROM ABBOTSFORD, FOR NAPLES.

1831. — 1835.

A TROUBLE, not of clouds, or weeping rain,
 Nor of the setting sun's pathetic light
 Engendered, hangs o'er Eildon's triple height :
 Spirits of Power, assembled there, complain
 For kindred Power departing from their sight ;
 While Tweed, best pleased in chanting a blithe strain,
 Saddens his voice again, and yet again.
 Lift up your hearts, ye Mourners ! for the might

Of the whole world's good wishes with him goes ;
 Blessings and prayers, in nobler retinue 10
 Than sceptred king or laurelled conqueror knows,
 Follow this wondrous Potentate. Be true,
 Ye winds of ocean, and the midland sea,
 Wafting your Charge to soft Parthenope !



DEVOTIONAL INCITEMENTS.

“ Not to the earth confined,
 Ascend to heaven.”

1832. — 1835.

WHERE will they stop, those breathing Powers,
 The Spirits of the new-born flowers ?
 They wander with the breeze, they wind
 Where'er the streams a passage find ;
 Up from their native ground they rise
 In mute aërial harmonies ;
 From humble violet — modest thyme —
 Exhaled, the essential odors climb,
 As if no space below the sky
 Their subtle flight could satisfy : 10
 Heaven will not tax our thoughts with pride
 If like ambition be *their* guide.

Roused by this kindest of May-showers,
 The spirit-quickener of the flowers,
 That with moist virtue softly cleaves
 The buds, and freshens the young leaves,
 The birds pour forth their souls in notes
 Of rapture from a thousand throats —

Here checked by too impetuous haste,
 While there the music runs to waste, 20
 With bounty more and more enlarged,
 Till the whole air is overcharged ;
 Give ear, O Man ! to their appeal
 And thirst for no inferior zeal,
 Thou, who canst *think*, as well as feel.

Mount from the earth ; aspire ! aspire !
 So pleads the town's cathedral quire,
 In strains that from their solemn height
 Sink, to attain a loftier flight ;
 While incense from the altar breathes 30
 Rich fragrance in embodied wreaths ;
 Or, flung from swinging censer, shrouds
 The taper-lights, and curls in clouds
 Around angelic Forms, the still
 Creation of the painter's skill,
 That on the service wait concealed
 One moment, and the next revealed.
 — Cast off your bonds, awake, arise,
 And for no transient ecstasies !
 What else can mean the visual plea 40
 Of still or moving imagery, —
 The iterated summons loud,
 Not wasted on the attendant crowd,
 Nor wholly lost upon the throng
 Hurrying the busy streets along ?

Alas ! the sanctities combined
 By art to unsensualize the mind

Decay and languish ; or, as creeds
 And humors change, are spurned like weeds :
 The priests are from their altars thrust ; 50
 Temples are levelled with the dust ;
 And solemn rites and awful forms
 Founder amid fanatic storms.
 Yet evermore, through years renewed
 In undisturbed vicissitude
 Of seasons balancing their flight
 On the swift wings of day and night,
 Kind Nature keeps a heavenly door
 Wide open for the scattered Poor.
 Where flower-breathed incense to the skies 60
 Is wafted in mute harmonies ;
 And ground fresh-cloven by the plough
 Is fragrant with a humbler vow ;
 Where birds and brooks from leafy dells
 Chime forth unwearied canticles,
 And vapors magnify and spread
 The glory of the sun's bright head, —
 Still constant in her worship, still
 Conforming to the eternal Will,
 Whether men sow or reap the fields, 70
 Divine monition Nature yields,
 That not by bread alone we live,
 Or what a hand of flesh can give ;
 That every day should leave some part
 Free for a Sabbath of the heart :
 So shall the seventh be truly blest,
 From morn to eve, with hallowed rest.

"IF THOU INDEED."

? — 1832.

IF thou indeed derive thy light from Heaven,
 Then to the measure of that heaven-born light,
 Shine, Poet, in thy place, and be content.
 The stars pre-eminant in magnitude,
 And they that from the zenith dart their beams,
 (Visible though they be to half the earth,
 Though half a sphere be conscious of their brightness),
 Are yet of no diviner origin,
 No purer essence, than the one that burns,
 Like an untended watch-fire on the ridge 10
 Of some dark mountain ; or than those which seem
 Humbly to hang, like twinkling winter lamps,
 Among the branches of the leafless trees.
 Then to the measure of the light vouchsafed,
 Shine, Poet, in thy place, and be content.



"IF THIS GREAT WORLD OF JOY AND PAIN."

1833. — 1835.

IF this great world of joy and pain
 Revolve in one sure track ;
 If freedom, set, will rise again,
 And virtue, flown, come back ;
 Woe to the purblind crew who fill
 The heart with each day's care ;
 Nor gain, from past or future, skill
 To bear, and to forbear !

"NOT IN THE LUCID INTERVALS OF LIFE."

1834. — 1835.

Nor in the lucid intervals of life
 That come but as a curse to party strife ;
 Not in some hour when Pleasure with a sigh
 Of languor puts his rosy garland by ;
 Not in the breathing-times of that poor slave
 Who daily piles up wealth in Mammon's cave —
 Is Nature felt, or can be ; nor do words,
 Which practised talent readily affords,
 Prove that her hand has touched responsive chords ;
 Nor has her gentle beauty power to move 10
 With genuine rapture and with fervent love
 The soul of Genius, if he dare to take
 Life's rule from passion craved for passion's sake ;
 Untaught that meekness is the cherished bent
 Of all the truly great and all the innocent.

But who *is* innocent? By grace divine,
 Not otherwise, O Nature ! we are thine,
 Through good and evil thine, in just degree
 Of rational and manly sympathy.
 To all that Earth from pensive hearts is stealing, 20
 And Heaven is now to gladdened eyes revealing,
 Add every charm the Universe can show
 Through every change its aspects undergo —
 Care may be respited, but not repealed ;
 No perfect cure grows on that bounded field.

Vain is the pleasure, a false calm the peace,
 If He, through whom alone our conflicts cease,
 Our virtuous hopes without relapse advance,
 Come not to speed the Soul's deliverance ;
 To the distempered Intellect refuse
 His gracious help, or give what we abuse.

30



TO A CHILD.

WRITTEN IN HER ALBUM.

1834. — 1835.

SMALL service is true service while it lasts.
 Of humblest Friends, bright Creature ! scorn not one ;
 The Daisy, by the shadow that it casts,
 Protects the lingering dew-drop from the Sun.



WRITTEN AFTER THE DEATH OF CHARLES LAMB.

1835. — 1835.

To a good Man of most dear memory
 This Stone is sacred. Here he lies apart
 From the great city where he first drew breath,
 Was reared and taught ; and humbly earned his bread,
 To the strict labors of the merchant's desk
 By duty chained. Not seldom did those tasks
 Tease, and the thought of time so spent depress,
 His spirit, but the recompense was high ;
 Firm Independence, Bounty's rightful sire ;

Affections, warm as sunshine, free as air ; 10
And when the precious hours of leisure came,
Knowledge and wisdom, gained from converse sweet
With books, or while he ranged the crowded streets
With a keen eye, and overflowing heart :
So genius triumphed over seeming wrong,
And poured out truth in works by thoughtful love
Inspired — works potent over smiles and tears.
And as round mountain-tops the lightning plays,
Thus innocently sported, breaking forth
As from a cloud of some grave sympathy, 20
Humor and wild instinctive wit, and all
The vivid flashes of his spoken words.
From the most gentle creature nursed in fields
Had been derived the name he bore — a name,
Wherever Christian altars have been raised,
Hallowed to meekness and to innocence ;
And if in him meekness at times gave way,
Provoked out of herself by troubles strange,
Many and strange, that hung about his life ;
Still, at the centre of his being, lodged 30
A soul by resignation sanctified :
And if too often, self-reproached, he felt
That innocence belongs not to our kind,
A power that never ceased to abide in him,
Charity, 'mid the multitude of sins
That she can cover, left not his exposed
To an unforgiving judgment from just Heaven.
Oh, he was good, if e'er a good Man lived !
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From a reflecting mind and sorrowing heart
Those simple lines flowed with an earnest wish, 40

Though but a doubting hope, that they might serve
 Fitly to guard the precious dust of him
 Whose virtues called them forth. That aim is missed ;
 For much that truth most urgently required
 Had from a faltering pen been asked in vain :
 Yet, haply, on the printed page received,
 The imperfect record, there, may stand unblamed
 As long as verse of mine shall breathe the air
 Of memory, or see the light of love.

Thou wert a scorner of the fields, my Friend, 50
 But more in show than truth ; and from the fields,
 And from the mountains, to thy rural grave
 Transported, my soothed spirit hovers o'er
 Its green untrodden turf, and blowing flowers ;
 And taking up a voice, shall speak (tho' still
 Awed by the theme's peculiar sanctity
 Which words less free presumed not even to touch)
 Of that fraternal love, whose heaven-lit lamp
 From infancy, through manhood, to the last
 Of threescore years, and to thy latest hour, 60
 Burnt on with ever-strengthening light, enshrined
 Within thy bosom.

“Wonderful” hath been
 The love established between man and man,
 “Passing the love of women ;” and between
 Man and his help-mate in fast wedlock joined
 Through God, is raised a spirit and soul of love
 Without whose blissful influence Paradise
 Had been no Paradise ; and earth were now
 A waste where creatures bearing human form,
 Direst of savage beasts, would roam in fear, 70

Joyless and comfortless. Our days glide on ;
 And let him grieve who cannot choose but grieve
 That he hath been an Elm without his Vine,
 And her bright dower of clustering charities,
 That, round his trunk and branches, might have clung
 Enriching and adorning. Unto thee,
 Not so enriched, not so adorned, to thee
 Was given (say rather thou of later birth
 Wert given to her) a Sister — 't is a word
 Timidly uttered, for she *lives*, the meek,
 The self-restraining, and the ever-kind ;
 In whom thy reason and intelligent heart
 Found — for all interests, hopes, and tender cares,
 All softening, humanizing, hallowing powers,
 Whether withheld, or for her sake unsought —
 More than sufficient recompense !

Her love

(What weakness prompts the voice to tell it here ?)
 Was as the love of mothers ; and when years,
 Lifting the boy to man's estate, had called
 The long protected to assume the part 90
 Of a protector, the first filial tie
 Was undissolved ; and, in or out of sight,
 Remained imperishably interwoven
 With life itself. Thus, 'mid a shifting world,
 Did they together testify of time
 And season's difference — a double tree
 With two collateral stems sprung from one root ;
 Such were they — such through life they *might* have been
 In union, in partition only such ;
 Otherwise wrought the will of the Most High ; 100
 Yet through all visitations and all trials,

Still they were faithful ; like two vessels launched
 From the same beach one ocean to explore
 With mutual help, and sailing — to their league
 True, as inexorable winds, or bars
 Floating or fixed of polar ice, allow.

But turn we rather, let my spirit turn
 With thine, O silent and invisible Friend !
 To those dear intervals, nor rare nor brief,
 When reunited, and by choice withdrawn 110
 From miscellaneous converse, ye were taught
 That the remembrance of foregone distress,
 And the worse fear of future ill (which oft
 Doth hang around it, as a sickly child
 Upon its mother) may be both alike
 Disarmed of power to unsettle present good
 So prized, and things inward and outward held
 In such an even balance, that the heart
 Acknowledges God's grace, his mercy feels,
 And in its depth of gratitude is still. 120

O gift divine of quiet sequestration !
 The hermit, exercised in prayer and praise,
 And feeding daily on the hope of heaven,
 Is happy in his vow, and fondly cleaves
 To life-long singleness ; but happier far
 Was to your souls, and, to the thoughts of others,
 A thousand times more beautiful appeared,
 Your *dual* loneliness. The sacred tie
 Is broken ; yet why grieve ? for Time but holds
 His moiety in trust, till Joy shall lead 130
 To the blest world where parting is unknown.

EXTEMPORE EFFUSION UPON THE DEATH OF
JAMES HOGG.

1835. — 1836.

WHEN first, descending from the Moorlands,
I saw the Stream of Yarrow glide
Along a bare and open valley,
The Ettrick Shepherd was my guide.

When last along its banks I wandered,
Through groves that had begun to shed
Their golden leaves upon the pathways,
My steps the Border-minstrel led.

The Mighty Minstrel breathes no longer,
'Mid mouldering ruins low he lies ;
And death upon the braes of Yarrow
Has closed the Shepherd-poet's eyes :

10

Nor has the rolling year twice measured,
From sign to sign, its steadfast course,
Since every mortal power of Coleridge
Was frozen at its marvellous source ;

The rapt One, of the godlike forehead,
The heaven-eyed creature sleeps in earth :
And Lamb, the frolic and the gentle,
Has vanished from his lonely hearth.

20

Like clouds that rake the mountain-summits,
Or waves that own no curbing hand,
How fast has brother followed brother,
From sunshine to the sunless land !

Yet I, whose lids from infant slumber
Were earlier raised, remain to hear
A timid voice, that asks in whispers,
“ Who next will drop and disappear ? ”

Our haughty life is crowned with darkness,
Like London with its own black wreath, 30
On which with thee, O Crabbe ! forth-looking,
I gazed from Hampstead's breezy heath.

As if but yesterday departed,
Thou too art gone before ; but why,
O'er ripe fruit, seasonably gathered,
Should frail survivors heave a sigh ?

Mourn rather for that holy Spirit,
Sweet as the spring, as ocean deep ;
For Her who, ere her summer faded,
Has sunk into a breathless sleep. 40

No more of old romantic sorrows,
For slaughtered Youth or love-lorn Maid !
With sharper grief is Yarrow smitten,
And Ettrick mourns with her their Poet dead.

“SO FAIR, SO SWEET, WITHAL SO SENSITIVE.”

1845. — 1845.

So fair, so sweet, withal so sensitive,
Would that the little Flowers were born to live,
Conscious of half the pleasure which they give ;

That to this mountain-daisy's self were known
The beauty of its star-shaped shadow, thrown
On the smooth surface of this naked stone !

And what if hence a bold desire should mount
High as the Sun, that he could take account
Of all the issues from his glorious fount !

So might he ken how by his sovereign aid 10
These delicate companionships are made ;
And how he rules the pomp of light and shade ;

And were the Sister-power that shines by night
So privileged, what a countenance of delight
Would through the clouds break forth on human sight !

Fond fancies ! wheresoe'er shall turn thine eye
On earth, air, ocean, or the starry sky,
Converse with Nature in pure sympathy ;

All vain desires, all lawless wishes quelled, 20
Be Thou to love and praise alike impelled,
Whatever boon is granted or withheld.

THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN.

1797.—1800.

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

'T is a note of enchantment ; what ails her ? She sees
A mountain ascending, a vision of trees ;
Bright volumes of vapour through Lothbury glide,
And a river flows on through the vale of Cheapside.

Green pastures she views in the midst of the dale,
Down which she so often has tripped with her pail ;
And a single small Cottage, a nest like a dove's,
The one only dwelling on earth that she loves.

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

In the edition of 1800 the following stanza is added to the poem :

Poor Outcast ! return, to receive thee once more
The house of thy Father will open its door,
And then once again, in thy plain russet gown,
May 'st hear the thrush sing from a tree of its own.

SONNETS.

I.

1802. — 1807.

I GRIEVED for Buonaparté, with a vain
And an unthinking grief! The tenderest mood
Of that Man's mind — what can it be? what food
Fed his first hopes? what knowledge could *he* gain?
'Tis not in battles that from youth we train
The Governor who must be wise and good,
And temper with the sternness of the brain
Thoughts motherly, and meek as womanhood.
Wisdom doth live with children round her knees:
Books, leisure, perfect freedom, and the talk
Man holds with week-day man in the hourly walk
Of the mind's business; these are the degrees
By which true Sway doth mount; this is the stalk
True Power doth grow on; and her rights are these.

II. — COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE.

1802. — 1807.

EARTH has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendor, valley, rock, or hill.
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep.
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

III.—BY THE SEA-SIDE, NEAR CALAIS.

1802. — 1807.

FAIR Star of evening, Splendor of the west,
 Star of my Country! — on the horizon's brink
 Thou hangest, stooping, as might seem, to sink
 On England's bosom; yet well pleased to rest,
 Meanwhile, and be to her a glorious crest,
 Conspicuous to the Nations. Thou, I think,
 Should'st be my Country's emblem; and should'st wink,
 Bright Star, with laughter on her banners, drest
 In thy fresh beauty! There! that dusky spot
 Beneath thee, that is England; there she lies.
 Blessings be on you both! one hope, one lot,
 One life, one glory! — I, with many a fear
 For my dear Country, many heartfelt sighs,
 Among men who do not love her, linger here.

IV.—CALAIS, AUGUST, 1802.

1802. — 1807.

Is it a reed that's shaken by the wind,
 Or what is it that ye go forth to see?
 Lords, lawyers, statesmen, squires of low degree,
 Men known, and men unknown, sick, lame, and blind,
 Post forward all, like creatures of one kind,
 With first-fruit offerings crowd to bend the knee
 In France, before the new-born Majesty.
 'T is ever thus. Ye men of prostrate mind,
 A seemly reverence may be paid to power;
 But that's a loyal virtue, never sown
 In haste, nor springing with a transient shower:
 When truth, when sense, when liberty were flown,
 What hardship had it been to wait an hour?
 Shame on you, feeble Heads, to slavery prone!

V. — COMPOSED NEAR CALAIS.

1802. — 1807.

JONES! as from Calais southward you and I
 Went pacing, side by side, this public Way
 Streamed with the pomp of a too credulous day,
 When faith was pledged to new-born Liberty :
 A homeless sound of joy was in the sky :
 From hour to hour the antiquated Earth
 Beat like the heart of Man : songs, garlands, mirth,
 Banners, and happy faces, far and nigh !
 And now, sole register that these things were,
 Two solitary greetings have I heard,
 “*Good-morrow, Citizen!*” a hollow word,
 As if a dead man spake it ! Yet despair
 Touches me not, though pensive as a bird
 Whose vernal coverts winter hath laid bare.

VI. — CALAIS, AUGUST 15, 1802.

1802. — 1807.

FESTIVALS have I seen that were not names :
 This is young Bonaparté’s natal day,
 And his is henceforth an established sway —
 Consul for life. With worship France proclaims
 Her approbation, and with pomps and games.
 Heaven grant that other Cities may be gay !
 Calais is not : and I have bent my way
 To the sea-coast, noting that each man frames
 His business as he likes. Far other show
 My youth here witnessed, in a prouder time :
 The senselessness of Joy was then sublime !
 Happy is he, who, caring not for Pope,
 Consul, or King, can sound himself to know
 The destiny of Man, and live in hope.

VII.—COMPOSED ON THE BEACH NEAR CALAIS.

1802. — 1807.

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,
 The holy time is quiet as a Nun
 Breathless with adoration ; the broad sun
 Is sinking down in its tranquillity ;
 The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the Sea :
 Listen ! the mighty Being is awake,
 And doth with his eternal motion make
 A sound like thunder — everlastingly.
 Dear Child ! dear Girl ! that walkest with me here,
 If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,
 Thy nature is not therefore less divine :
 Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year ;
 And worship'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
 God being with thee when we know it not.

VIII.—EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC.

1802. — 1807.

ONCE did She hold the gorgeous east in fee,
 And was the safeguard of the west : the worth
 Of Venice did not fall below her birth, —
 Venice, the eldest Child of Liberty.
 She was a maiden City, bright and free ;
 No guile seduced, no force could violate ;
 And when she took unto herself a Mate,
 She must espouse the everlasting Sea.
 And what if she had seen those glories fade,
 Those titles vanish, and that strength decay :
 Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
 When her long life hath reached its final day :
 Men are we, and must grieve when even the Shade
 Of that which once was great is passed away.

IX.—TO TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE.

1802. — 1807.

TOUSSAINT, the most unhappy man of men !
 Whether the whistling Rustic tend his plough
 Within thy hearing, or thy head be now
 Pillowed in some deep dungeon's earless den ;
 O miserable Chieftain ! where and when
 Wilt thou find patience ? Yet die not ; do thou
 Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful brow :
 Though fallen thyself, never to rise again,
 Live, and take comfort. Thou hast left behind
 Powers that will work for thee, — air, earth, and skies ;
 There's not a breathing of the common wind
 That will forget thee ; thou hast great allies ;
 Thy friends are exultations, agonies,
 And love, and man's unconquerable mind.

X.—SEPTEMBER, 1802, NEAR DOVER.

1802. — 1807.

INLAND, within a hollow vale, I stood ;
 And saw, while sea was calm and air was clear,
 The coast of France — the coast of France how near !
 Drawn almost into frightful neighborhood.
 I shrunk ; for verily the barrier flood
 Was like a lake, or river bright and fair, —
 A span of waters ; yet what power is there !
 What mightiness for evil and for good !
 Even so doth God protect us if we be
 Virtuous and wise. Winds blow, and waters roll,
 Strength to the brave, and Power, and Deity ;
 Yet in themselves are nothing ! One decree
 Spake laws to *them*, and said that by the soul
 Only, the Nations shall be great and free.

XI.—WRITTEN IN LONDON, 1802.

1802. — 1807.

O FRIEND ! I know not which way I must look
 For comfort, being, as I am, opprest,
 To think that now our life is only drest
 For show ; mean handy-work of craftsman, cook,
 Or groom ! — We must run glittering like a brook
 In the open sunshine, or we are unblest :
 The wealthiest man among us is the best :
 No grandeur now in nature or in book
 Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
 This is idolatry : and these we adore :
 Plain living and high thinking are no more :
 The homely beauty of the good old cause
 Is gone ; our peace, our fearful innocence,
 And pure religion breathing household laws.

XII.—LONDON, 1802.

1802. — 1807.

MILTON ! thou should'st be living at this hour :
 England hath need of thee : she is a fen
 Of stagnant waters : altar, sword, and pen,
 Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
 Have forfeited their ancient English dower
 Of inward happiness. We are selfish men ;
 Oh ! raise us up, return to us again ;
 And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
 Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart :
 Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea :
 Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
 So didst thou travel on life's common way,
 In cheerful godliness ; and yet thy heart
 The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

XIII.

1802. — 1807.

GREAT men have been among us ; hands that penned
 And tongues that uttered wisdom — better none :
 The later Sidney, Marvel, Harrington,
 Young Vane, and others who called Milton friend.
 These moralists could act and comprehend :
 They knew how genuine glory was put on ;
 Taught us how rightfully a nation shone
 In splendor : what strength was that would not bend
 But in magnanimous meekness. France, 't is strange,
 Hath brought forth no such souls as we had then.
 Perpetual emptiness ! unceasing change !
 No single volume paramount, no code,
 No master spirit, no determined road ;
 But equally a want of books and men !

XIV.

1802. — 1807.

It is not to be thought of that the Flood
 Of British freedom, which, to the open sea
 Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity
 Hath flowed, "with pomp of waters unwithstood,"
 Roused though it be full often to a mood
 Which spurns the check of salutary bands,
 That this most famous Stream in bogs and sands
 Should perish ; and to evil and to good
 Be lost forever. In our halls is hung
 Armory of the invincible Knights of old :
 We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
 That Shakespeare spake ; the faith and morals hold
 Which Milton held. — In everything we are sprung
 Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

XV.

1802. — 1807.

WHEN I have borne in memory what has tamed
 Great Nations, how ennobling thoughts depart
 When men change swords for ledgers, and desert
 The student's bower for gold, some fears unnamed
 I had, my Country! — am I to be blamed?
 Now, when I think of thee, and what thou art,
 Verily, in the bottom of my heart,
 Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.
 For dearly must we prize thee; we who find
 In thee a bulwark for the cause of men;
 And I by my affection was beguiled:
 What wonder if a Poet now and then,
 Among the many movements of his mind,
 Felt for thee as a lover or a child!

XVI. — COMPOSED AT — CASTLE.

1803. — 1807.

DEGENERATE Douglas! oh, the unworthy Lord
 Whom mere despite of heart could so far please,
 And love of havoc (for with such disease
 Fame taxes him), that he could send forth word
 To level with the dust a noble horde,
 A brotherhood of venerable Trees,
 Leaving an ancient dome, and towers like these,
 Beggared and outraged! — Many hearts deplored
 The fate of those old Trees; and oft with pain
 The traveller, at this day, will stop and gaze
 On wrongs, which Nature scarcely seems to heed:
 For sheltered places, bosoms, nooks, and bays,
 And the pure mountains, and the gentle Tweed,
 And the green silent pastures, yet remain.

XVII.

1803. — 1807.

THERE is a bondage worse, far worse, to bear
 Than his who breathes, by roof, and floor, and wall,
 Pent in, a Tyrant's solitary Thrall :
 'T is his who walks about in the open air,
 One of a Nation who, henceforth, must wear
 Their fetters in their souls. For who could be,
 Who, even the best, in such condition, free
 From self-reproach, reproach that he must share
 With Human nature? Never be it ours
 To see the sun how brightly it will shine,
 And know that noble feelings, manly powers,
 Instead of gathering strength, must droop and pine ;
 And earth with all her pleasant fruits and flowers
 Fade, and participate in man's decline.

XVIII. — OCTOBER, 1803.

1803. — 1807.

THESE times strike monied worldlings with dismay :
 Even rich men, brave by nature, taint the air
 With words of apprehension and despair :
 While tens of thousands, thinking on the affray,
 Men unto whom sufficient for the day
 And minds not stinted or untilled are given,
 Sound, healthy, children of the God of heaven,
 Are cheerful as the rising sun in May.
 What do we gather hence but firmer faith
 That every gift of noble origin
 Is breathed upon by Hope's perpetual breath ;
 That virtue and the faculties within
 Are vital, — and that riches are akin
 To fear, to change, to cowardice, and death ?

XIX.

1803. — 1807.

ENGLAND ! the time is come when thou should'st wean
 Thy heart from its emasculating food ;
 The truth should now be better understood ;
 Old things have been unsettled ; we have seen
 Fair seed-time, better harvest might have been
 But for thy trespasses ; and, at this day,
 If for Greece, Egypt, India, Africa,
 Aught good were destined, thou would'st step between.
 England ! all nations in this charge agree :
 But worse, more ignorant in love and hate,
 Far — far more abject, is thine Enemy :
 Therefore the wise pray for thee, though the freight
 Of thy offences be a heavy weight :
 Oh, grief that Earth's best hopes rest all with Thee !

XX. — TO THE MEN OF KENT.

1803. — 1807.

VANGUARD of Liberty, ye men of Kent,
 Ye children of a Soil that doth advance
 Her haughty brow against the coast of France,
 Now is the time to prove your hardiment !
 To France be words of invitation sent !
 They from their fields can see the countenance
 Of your fierce war, may ken the glittering lance,
 And hear you shouting forth your brave intent.
 Left single, in bold parley, ye, of yore,
 Did from the Norman win a gallant wreath ;
 Confirmed the charters that were yours before ; —
 No parleying now ! In Britain is one breath ;
 We all are with you now from shore to shore : —
 Ye men of Kent, 't is victory or death !

XXI.—IN THE PASS OF KILLICRANKY.

1803.—1807.

Six thousand veterans practised in war's game,
 Tried men, at Killicranky were arrayed
 Against an equal host that wore the plaid,
 Shepherds and herdsmen. — Like a whirlwind came
 The Highlanders, the slaughter spread like flame ;
 And Garry, thundering down his mountain-road,
 Was stopped, and could not breathe beneath the load
 Of the dead bodies. — 'T was a day of shame
 For them whom precept and the pedantry
 Of cold mechanic battle do enslave.
 Oh for a single hour of that Dundee
 Who on that day the word of onset gave !
 Like conquest would the Men of England see ;
 And her Foes find a like inglorious grave.

XXII.

1806.—1807.

NUNS fret not at their convent's narrow room ;
 And hermits are contented with their cells ;
 And students with their pensive citadels ;
 Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his loom,
 Sit blithe and happy ; bees that soar for bloom,
 High as the highest Peak of Furness-fells,
 Will murmur by the hour in foxglove bells :
 In truth the prison, unto which we doom
 Ourselves, no prison is : and hence for me,
 In sundry moods, 't was pastime to be bound
 Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of ground ;
 Pleased if some Souls (for such there needs must be)
 Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,
 Should find brief solace there, as I have found.

XXIII.—BY THE SIDE OF GRASMERE LAKE.

1806. — 1819.

CLOUDS, lingering yet, extend in solid bars
 Through the gray west ; and lo ! these waters, steeled
 By breezeless air to smoothest polish, yield
 A vivid repetition of the stars ;
 Jove, Venus, and the ruddy crest of Mars
 Amid his fellows beautifully revealed
 At happy distance from earth's groaning field,
 Where ruthless mortals wage incessant wars.
 Is it a mirror ? — or the nether Sphere
 Opening to view the abyss in which she feeds
 Her own calm fires ? But list ! a voice is near ;
 Great Pan himself low-whispering through the reeds,
 " Be thankful, thou ; for, if unholy deeds
 Ravage the world, tranquillity is here ! "

XXIV.

1806. — 1807.

THE world is too much with us : late and soon,
 Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers :
 Little we see in Nature that is ours ;
 We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon !
 This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon ;
 The winds that will be howling at all hours,
 And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers ; —
 For this, for everything, we are out of tune ;
 It moves us not. — Great God ! I 'd rather be
 A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn ;
 So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
 Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn ;
 Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea ;
 Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

XXV. — PERSONAL TALK.

1806. — 1807.

I AM not One who much or oft delight
 To season my fireside with personal talk, —
 Of friends, who live within an easy walk,
 Or neighbors, daily, weekly, in my sight :
 And, for my chance-acquaintance, ladies bright,
 Sons, mothers, maidens withering on the stalk, —
 These all wear out of me, like Forms with chalk
 Painted on rich men's floors, for one feast-night.
 Better than such discourse doth silence long,
 Long, barren silence, square with my desire ;
 To sit without emotion, hope, or aim,
 In the loved presence of my cottage-fire,
 And listen to the flapping of the flame,
 Or kettle whispering its faint undersong.

XXVI. — CONTINUED.

1806. — 1807.

“YET life,” you say, “is life ; we have seen and see,
 And with a living pleasure we describe ;
 And fits of sprightly malice do but bribe
 The languid mind into activity.
 Sound sense, and love itself, and mirth and glee
 Are fostered by the comment and the gibe.”
 Even be it so : yet still among your tribe,
 Our daily world's true Worldlings, rank not me !
 Children are blest, and powerful ; their world lies
 More justly balanced ; partly at their feet,
 And part far from them : — Sweetest melodies
 Are those that are by distance made more sweet ;
 Whose mind is but the mind of his own eyes,
 He is a Slave ; the meanest we can meet !

XXVII. — CONTINUED.

1806. — 1807.

WINGS have we, — and as far as we can go
 We may find pleasure : wilderness and wood,
 Blank ocean and mere sky, support that mood
 Which with the lofty sanctifies the low.
 Dreams, books, are each a world ; and books, we know,
 Are a substantial world, both pure and good :
 Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
 Our pastime and our happiness will grow.
 There find I personal themes, a plenteous store,
 Matter wherein right voluble I am,
 To which I listen with a ready ear ;
 Two shall be named, pre-eminently dear, —
 The gentle Lady married to the Moor ;
 And heavenly Una, with her milk-white Lamb.

XXVIII. — CONCLUDED.

1806. — 1807.

NOR can I not believe but that hereby
 Great gains are mine ; for thus I live remote
 From evil-speaking ; rancor, never sought,
 Comes to me not ; malignant truth, or lie.
 Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I
 Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and joyous thought :
 And thus from day to day my little boat
 Rocks in its harbor, lodging peaceably.
 Blessings be with them, and eternal praise,
 Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler cares —
 The Poets who on earth have made us heirs
 Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays !
 Oh ! might my name be numbered among theirs,
 Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

XXIX.—TO SLEEP.

1806. — 1807.

O GENTLE SLEEP! do they belong to thee,
 These twinklings of oblivion? Thou dost love
 To sit in meekness, like the brooding Dove,
 A captive never wishing to be free.
 This tiresome night, O Sleep! thou art to me
 A Fly, that up and down himself doth shove
 Upon a fretful rivulet, now above,
 Now on the water vexed with mockery.
 I have no pain that calls for patience, no;
 Hence am I cross and peevish as a child:
 Am pleased by fits to have thee for my foe,
 Yet ever willing to be reconciled:
 O gentle Creature! do not use me so,
 But once and deeply let me be beguiled.

XXX.—CONTINUED.

1806. — 1807.

A FLOCK of sheep that leisurely pass by,
 One after one; the sound of rain, and bees
 Murmuring; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,
 Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky;—
 I have thought of all by turns, and yet do lie
 Sleepless! and soon the small birds' melodies
 Must hear, first uttered from my orchard trees;
 And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.
 Even thus last night, and two nights more, I lay,
 And could not win thee, Sleep! by any stealth:
 So do not let me wear to-night away:
 Without Thee what is all the morning's wealth?
 Come, blessed barrier between day and day,
 Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health!

XXXI.—CONCLUDED.

1806. — 1807.

FOND words have oft been spoken to thee, Sleep !
 And thou hast had thy store of tenderest names ;
 The very sweetest, Fancy culls or frames,
 When thankfulness of heart is strong and deep !
 Dear Bosom-child we call thee, that dost steep
 In rich reward all suffering ; Balm that tames
 All anguish ; Saint that evil thoughts and aims
 Takest away, and into souls dost creep,
 Like to a breeze from heaven. Shall I alone,
 I surely not a man ungently made,
 Call thee worst Tyrant by which Flesh is crost ?
 Perverse, self-willed to own and to disown,
 Mere slave of them who never for thee prayed,
 Still last to come where thou art wanted most !

XXXII.—TO THE MEMORY OF RAISLEY CALVERT.

1806. — 1807.

CALVERT ! it must not be unheard by them
 Who may respect my name, that I to thee
 Owed many years of early liberty.
 This care was thine when sickness did condemn
 Thy youth to hopeless wasting, root and stem —
 That I, if frugal and severe, might stray
 Where'er I liked ; and finally array
 My temples with the Muse's diadem.
 Hence, if in freedom I have loved the truth ;
 If there be aught of pure, or good, or great,
 In my past verse ; or shall be, in the lays
 Of higher mood which now I meditate,
 It gladdens me, O worthy, short-lived Youth !
 To think how much of this will be thy praise.

XXXIII. — NOVEMBER, 1806.

1806. — 1807.

ANOTHER year ! — another deadly blow !
 Another mighty Empire overthrown !
 And We are left, or shall be left, alone ;
 The last that dare to struggle with the Foe.
 'T is well ! from this day forward we shall know
 That in ourselves our safety must be sought ;
 That by our own right hands it must be wrought ;
 That we must stand unpropped, or be laid low.
 O dastard whom such foretaste doth not cheer !
 We shall exult, if they who rule the land
 Be men who hold its many blessings dear,
 Wise, upright, valiant ; not a servile band,
 Who are to judge of danger which they fear,
 And honor which they do not understand.

XXXIV. — ADMONITION.

1806. — 1807.

WELL mayst thou halt — and gaze with brightening eye !
 The lovely Cottage in the guardian nook
 Hath stirred thee deeply ; with its own dear brook,
 Its own small pasture, almost its own sky !
 But covet not the Abode ; — forbear to sigh,
 As many do, repining while they look ;
 Intruders — who would tear from Nature's book
 This precious leaf, with harsh impiety.
 Think what the home must be if it were thine,
 Even thine, though few thy wants ! — Roof, window, door,
 The very flowers are sacred to the Poor,
 The roses to the porch which they entwine :
 Yea, all, that now enchants thee, from the day
 On which it should be touched, would melt away.

XXXV.—ON THE SUBJUGATION OF SWITZERLAND.

1807. — 1807.

Two Voices are there ; one is of the sea,
 One of the mountains ; each a mighty Voice :
 In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,
 They were thy chosen music, Liberty !
 There came a Tyrant, and with holy glee
 Thou fought'st against him ; but hast vainly striven :
 Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven,
 Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.
 Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft :
 Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left ;
 For, high-souled Maid, what sorrow would it be
 That Mountain floods should thunder as before,
 And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
 And neither awful Voice be heard by thee !

XXXVI.—TO THOMAS CLARKSON.

1807. — 1807.

CLARKSON ! it was an obstinate hill to climb :
 How toilsome — nay, how dire — it was, by thee
 Is known ; by none, perhaps, so feelingly :
 But thou, who, starting in thy fervent prime,
 Didst first lead forth that enterprise sublime,
 Hast heard the constant Voice its charge repeat,
 Which, out of thy young heart's oracular seat,
 First roused thee. — O true yoke-fellow of Time,
 Duty's intrepid liegeman, see, the palm
 Is won, and by all Nations shall be worn !
 The blood-stained Writing is forever torn ;
 And thou henceforth wilt have a good man's calm,
 A great man's happiness ; thy zeal shall find
 Repose at length, firm friend of human kind !

XXXVII.

1811. — 1815.

HERE pause : the poet claims at least this praise,
 That virtuous Liberty hath been the scope
 Of his pure song, which did not shrink from hope
 In the worst moment of these evil days ;
 From hope, the paramount *duty* that Heaven lays,
 For its own honor, on man's suffering heart.
 Never may from our souls one truth depart —
 That an accursed thing it is to gaze
 On prosperous tyrants with a dazzled eye ;
 Nor — touched with due abhorrence of *their* guilt
 For whose dire ends tears flow, and blood is spilt,
 And justice labors in extremity —
 Forget thy weakness, upon which is built,
 O wretched man, the throne of tyranny !

XXXVIII. — TO B. R. HAYDON.

1815. — 1816.

HIGH is our calling, Friend ! — Creative Art
 (Whether the instrument of words she use,
 Or pencil pregnant with ethereal hues),
 Demands the service of a mind and heart,
 Though sensitive yet, in their weakest part,
 Heroically fashioned — to infuse
 Faith in the whispers of the lonely Muse,
 While the whole world seems adverse to desert.
 And, oh ! when Nature sinks, as oft she may,
 Through long-lived pressure of obscure distress,
 Still to be strenuous for the bright reward,
 And in the soul admit of no decay,
 Brook no continuance of weak-mindedness —
 Great is the glory, for the strife is hard !

XXXIX. — TO CATHERINE WORDSWORTH.

1815. — 1815.

SURPRISED by joy — impatient as the Wind
 I turned to share the transport — Oh! with whom
 But Thee, deep buried in the silent tomb,
 That spot which no vicissitude can find?
 Love, faithful love, recalled thee to my mind —
 But how could I forget thee? Through what power,
 Even for the least division of an hour,
 Have I been so beguiled as to be blind
 To my most grievous loss? — That thought's return
 Was the worst pang that sorrow ever bore,
 Save one, one only, when I stood forlorn,
 Knowing my heart's best treasure was no more;
 That neither present time, nor years unborn,
 Could to my sight that heavenly face restore.

XL. — OXFORD, MAY 30, 1820.

1820. — 1820.

YE sacred Nurseries of blooming Youth!
 In whose collegiate shelter England's Flowers
 Expand, enjoying through their vernal hours
 The air of liberty, the light of truth;
 Much have ye suffered from Time's gnawing tooth:
 Yet, O ye spires of Oxford! domes and towers!
 Gardens and groves! your presence overpowers
 The soberness of reason; till, in sooth,
 Transformed, and rushing on a bold exchange,
 I slight my own beloved Cam, to range
 Where silver Isis leads my stripling feet;
 Pace the long avenue, or glide adown
 The stream-like windings of that glorious street —
 An eager Novice robed in fluttering gown!

XLI.

1820. — 1820.

SOLE listener, Duddon ! to the breeze that played
 With thy clear voice, I caught the fitful sound
 Wafted o'er sullen moss and craggy mound —
 Unfruitful solitudes, that seemed to upbraid
 The sun in heaven ! — but now, to form a shade
 For Thee, green alders have together wound
 Their foliage ; ashes flung their arms around ;
 And birch-trees risen in silver colonnade.
 And thou hast also tempted here to rise,
 'Mid sheltering pines, this Cottage rude and gray ;
 Whose ruddy children, by the mother's eyes
 Carelessly watched, sport through the summer day,
 Thy pleased associates : — light as endless May
 On infant bosoms lonely Nature lies.

XLII. — SEATHWAITE CHAPEL.

1820. — 1820.

SACRED Religion ! “ mother of form and fear,”
 Dread arbitress of mutable respect,
 New rites ordaining when the old are wrecked,
 Or cease to please the fickle worshipper :
 Mother of Love ! (that name best suits thee here)
 Mother of Love ! for this deep vale, protect
 Truth's holy lamp, pure source of bright effect,
 Gifted to purge the vapory atmosphere
 That seeks to stifle it ; — as in those days
 When this low Pile a Gospel Teacher knew
 Whose good works formed an endless retinue :
 A Pastor such as Chaucer's verse portrays ;
 Such as the heaven-taught skill of Herbert drew ;
 And tender Goldsmith crowned with deathless praise !

XLIII.

1820. — 1820.

RETURN, Content ! for fondly I pursued,
 Even when a child, the Streams — unheard, unseen ;
 Through tangled woods, impending rocks between ;
 Or, free as air, with flying inquest viewed
 The sullen reservoirs whence their bold brood —
 Pure as the morning, fretful, boisterous, keen,
 Green as the salt-sea billows, white and green —
 Poured down the hills, a choral multitude !
 Nor have I tracked their course for scanty gains ;
 They taught me random cares and truant joys,
 That shield from mischief and preserve from stains
 Vague minds, while men are growing out of boys ;
 Maturer Fancy owes to their rough noise
 Impetuous thoughts that brook not servile reins.

XLIV.

1820. — 1820.

WHO swerves from innocence, who makes divorce
 Of that serene companion — a good name,
 Recovers not his loss : but walks with shame,
 With doubt, with fear, and haply with remorse :
 And oft-times he, who, yielding to the force
 Of chance-temptation, ere his journey end,
 From chosen comrade turns, or faithful friend —
 In vain shall rue the broken intercourse.
 Not so with such as loosely wear the chain
 That binds them, pleasant River ! to thy side : —
 Through the rough copse wheel thou with hasty stride ;
 I choose to saunter o'er the grassy plain,
 Sure, when the separation has been tried,
 That we, who part in love, shall meet again.

XLV.—AFTERTHOUGHT.

1820. — 1820.

I THOUGHT of Thee, my partner and my guide,
 As being past away. — Vain sympathies !
 For, backward, Duddon ! as I cast my eyes,
 I see what was, and is, and will abide ;
 Still glides the Stream, and shall forever glide ;
 The Form remains, the Function never dies ;
 While we, the brave, the mighty, and the wise,
 We Men, who in our morn of youth defied
 The elements, must vanish ; — be it so !
 Enough, if something from our hands have power
 To live, and act, and serve the future hour ;
 And if, as toward the silent tomb we go,
 Through love, through hope, and faith's transcendent dower,
 We feel that we are greater than we know.

XLVI.—INTRODUCTION TO ECCLESIASTICAL SONNETS.

1821. — 1822.

I, WHO accompanied with faithful pace
 Cerulean Duddon from his cloud-fed spring,
 And loved with spirit ruled by his to sing
 Of mountain-quiet and boon nature's grace ;
 I, who essayed the nobler Stream to trace
 Of Liberty, and smote the plausive string
 Till the checked torrent, proudly triumphing,
 Won for herself a lasting resting-place ;
 Now seek upon the heights of Time the source
 Of a HOLY RIVER, on whose banks are found
 Sweet pastoral flowers, and laurels that have crowned
 Full oft the unworthy brow of lawless force ;
 And, for delight of him who tracks its course,
 Immortal amaranth and palms abound.

XLVII. — SECLUSION.

1821. — 1822.

LANCE, shield, and sword relinquished, at his side
 A bead-roll, in his hand a clasped book,
 Or staff more harmless than a shepherd's crook,
 The war-worn Chieftain quits the world — to hide
 His thin autumnal locks where Monks abide
 In cloistered privacy. But not to dwell
 In soft repose he comes. Within his cell,
 Round the decaying trunk of human pride,
 At morn, and eve, and midnight's silent hour,
 Do penitential cogitations cling ;
 Like ivy, round some ancient elm, they twine
 In grisly folds and strictures serpentine ;
 Yet, while they strangle, a fair growth they bring,
 For recompense — their own perennial bower.

XLVIII. — MUTABILITY.

1821. — 1822.

FROM low to high doth dissolution climb,
 And sink from high to low, along a scale
 Of awful notes, whose concord shall not fail ;
 A musical but melancholy chime,
 Which they can hear who meddle not with crime,
 Nor avarice, nor over-anxious care.
 Truth fails not ; but her outward forms that bear
 The longest date do melt like frosty rime,
 That in the morning whitened hill and plain
 And is no more ; drop like the tower sublime
 Of yesterday, which royally did wear
 His crown of weeds, but could not even sustain
 Some casual shout that broke the silent air,
 Or the unimaginable touch of Time.

XLIX. — INSIDE KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE.

1821. — 1822.

TAX not the royal Saint with vain expense,
 With ill-matched aims the Architect who planned —
 Albeit laboring for a scanty band
 Of white-robed Scholars only — this immense
 And glorious Work of fine intelligence !
 Give all thou canst ; high Heaven rejects the lore
 Of nicely-calculated less or more ;
 So deemed the man who fashioned for the sense
 These lofty pillars, spread that branching roof
 Self-poised, and scooped into ten thousand cells,
 Where light and shade repose, where music dwells
 Lingering, and wandering on as loath to die ;
 Like thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth proof
 That they were born for immortality.

L. — CONTINUED.

1821. — 1822.

WHAT awful perspective ! while from our sight
 With gradual stealth the lateral windows hide
 Their Portraitures, their stone-work glimmers, dyed
 In the soft checkerings of a sleepy light.
 Martyr, or King, or sainted Eremite,
 Whoe'er ye be, that thus, yourselves unseen,
 Imbue your prison-bars with solemn sheen,
 Shine on, until ye fade with coming Night ! —
 But, from the arms of silence — list ! O list !
 The music bursteth into second life ;
 The notes luxuriate, every stone is kissed
 By sound, or ghost of sound, in mazy strife ;
 Heart-thrilling strains, that cast, before the eye
 Of the devout, a veil of ecstasy !

LI. — CONCLUDED.

1821. — 1822.

THEY dreamt not of a perishable home
 Who thus could build. Be mine, in hours of fear
 Or grovelling thought, to seek a refuge here ;
 Or through the aisles of Westminster to roam ;
 Where bubbles burst, and folly's dancing foam
 Melts, if it cross the threshold ; where the wreath
 Of awe-struck wisdom droops : or let my path
 Lead to that younger Pile, whose sky-like dome
 Hath typified by reach of daring art
 Infinity's embrace ; whose guardian crest,
 The silent Cross, among the stars shall spread
 As now, when She hath also seen her breast
 Filled with mementos, satiate with its part
 Of grateful England's overflowing Dead.

LII.

1823. — 1827.

NOR Love, not War, nor the tumultuous swell
 Of civil conflict, nor the wrecks of change,
 Nor Duty struggling with afflictions strange —
 Not these *alone* inspire the tuneful shell ;
 But where untroubled peace and concord dwell,
 There also is the Muse not loath to range,
 Watching the twilight smoke of cot or grange,
 Skyward ascending from a woody dell.
 Meek aspirations please her, lone endeavor,
 And sage content, and placid melancholy ;
 She loves to gaze upon a crystal river —
 Diaphanous because it travels slowly ;
 Soft is the music that would charm forever ;
 The flower of sweetest smell is shy and lowly.

LIII. — TO ROTH A Q.

1827. — 1827.

ROTHA, my Spiritual Child ! this head was grey
When at the sacred font for thee I stood :
Pledged till thou reach the verge of womanhood,
And shalt become thy own sufficient stay :
Too late, I feel, sweet Orphan ! was the day
For steadfast hope the contract to fulfil ;
Yet shall my blessing hover o'er thee still,
Embodied in the music of this Lay,
Breathed forth beside the peaceful mountain Stream
Whose murmur soothed thy languid Mother's ear
After her throes, this Stream of name more dear
Since thou dost bear it, — a memorial theme
For others : for thy future self, a spell
To summon fancies out of Time's dark cell.

LIV. — TO — IN HER SEVENTIETH YEAR.

1827. — 1827.

SUCH age how beautiful ! O Lady bright,
Whose mortal lineaments seem all refined
By favoring Nature and a saintly Mind
To something purer and more exquisite
Than flesh and blood ; where'er thou meet'st my sight,
When I behold thy blanched unwithered cheek,
Thy temples fringed with locks of gleaming white,
And head that droops because the soul is meek,
Thee with the welcome Snowdrop I compare ;
That child of winter, prompting thoughts that climb
From desolation toward the genial prime ;
Or with the Moon conquering earth's misty air,
And filling more and more with crystal light
As pensive Evening deepens into night.

LV.

1827. — 1827.

SCORN not the Sonnet ; Critic, you have frowned,
 Mindless of its just honors ; with this key
 Shakspeare unlocked his heart ; the melody
 Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's wound ;
 A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound ;
 With it Camöens soothed an exile's grief ;
 The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf
 Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned
 His visionary brow ; a glow-worm lamp,
 It cheered mild Spenser, called from Faery-land,
 To struggle through dark ways ; and, when a damp
 Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand
 The Thing became a trumpet ; whence he blew
 Soul-animating strains. — alas, too few !

LVI.—TO THE AUTHOR'S PORTRAIT.

1830. — 1835.

Go, faithful Portrait ! and where long hath knelt
 Margaret, the saintly Foundress, take thy place ;
 And, if Time spare the colors for the grace
 Which to the work surpassing skill hath dealt,
 Thou, on thy rock reclined, though kingdoms melt
 And states be torn up by the roots, wilt seem
 To breathe in rural peace, to hear the stream,
 And think and feel as once the Poet felt.
 Whate'er thy fate, those features have not grown
 Unrecognized through many a household tear
 More prompt, more glad, to fall than drops of dew
 By morning shed around a flower half-blown ;
 Tears of delight, that testified how true
 To life thou art, and, in thy truth, how dear !

LVII. — THE TROSSACHS.

1831. — 1835.

THERE'S not a nook within this solemn Pass,
 But were an apt confessional for One
 Taught by his summer spent, his autumn gone,
 That Life is but a tale of morning grass
 Withered at Eve. From scenes of art which chase
 That thought away, turn, and with watchful eyes
 Feed it 'mid Nature's old felicities,
 Rocks, rivers, and smooth lakes more clear than glass
 Untouched, unbreathed upon. Thrice happy quest,
 If from a golden perch of aspen spray
 (October's workmanship to rival May)
 The pensive warbler of the ruddy breast
 That moral sweeten by a heaven-taught lay,
 Lulling the year, with all its cares, to rest.

LVIII. — THE PIBROCH'S NOTE.

1831. — 1835.

THE pibroch's note, discountenanced or mute ;
 The Roman kilt, degraded to a toy
 Of quaint apparel for a half-spoilt boy ;
 The target mouldering like ungathered fruit ;
 The smoking steam-boat eager in pursuit,
 As eagerly pursued ; the umbrella spread
 To weather-fend the Celtic herdsman's head —
 All speak of manners withering to the root,
 And of old honors, too, and passions high :
 Then may we ask, though pleased that thought should range
 Among the conquests of civility,
 Survives imagination — to the change
 Superior? Help to virtue does she give?
 If not, O Mortals, better cease to live !

LIX.—HIGHLAND HUT.

1831. — 1835.

SEE what gay wild-flowers deck this earth-built Cot,
 Whose smoke, forth-issuing whence and how it may,
 Shines in the greeting of the sun's first ray
 Like wreaths of vapor without stain or blot.
 The limpid mountain rill avoids it not ;
 And why shouldst thou ? — If rightly trained and bred,
 Humanity is humble, finds no spot
 Which her Heaven-guided feet refuse to tread.
 The walls are cracked, sunk is the flowery roof,
 Undressed the pathway leading to the door ;
 But love, as Nature loves, the lonely Poor ;
 Search, for their worth, some gentle heart wrong-proof,
 Meek, patient, kind, and, were its trials fewer,
 Belike less happy. — Stand no more aloof !

LX.—TO THE RIVER DERWENT.

1819. — 1819-35.

AMONG the mountains were we nursed, loved Stream !
 Thou near the eagle's nest, — within brief sail,
 I, of his bold wing floating on the gale,
 Where thy deep voice could lull me ! Faint the beam
 Of human life when first allowed to gleam
 On mortal notice. — Glory of the vale,
 Such thy meek outset, with a crown, though frail,
 Kept in perpetual verdure by the steam
 Of thy soft breath ! — Less vivid wreath entwined
 Nemæan victor's brow ; less bright was worn,
 Meed of some Roman chief — in triumph borne
 With captives chained ; and shedding from his car
 The sunset splendors of a finished war
 Upon the proud enslavers of mankind !

LXI. — IN SIGHT OF THE TOWN OF COCKERMOUTH.

1833. — 1835.

A POINT of life between my Parents' dust,
 And yours, my buried Little-ones ! am I ;
 And to those graves looking habitually,
 In kindred quiet I repose my trust.
 Death to the innocent is more than just,
 And, to the sinner, mercifully bent ;
 So may I hope, if truly I repent
 And meekly bear the ills which bear I must :
 And You, my Offspring ! that do still remain,
 Yet may outstrip me in the appointed race,
 If e'er, through fault of mine, in mutual pain
 We breathed together for a moment's space,
 The wrong, by love provoked, let love arraign,
 And only love keep in your hearts a place.

LXII. — FROM THE SPIRIT OF COCKERMOUTH CASTLE.

1833. — 1835.

“ THOU look'st upon me, and dost fondly think,
 Poet ! that, stricken as both are by years,
 We, differing once so much, are now Compeers,
 Prepared, when each has stood his time, to sink
 Into the dust. Erewhile a sterner link
 United us ; when thou, in boyish play,
 Entering my dungeon, didst become a prey
 To soul-appalling darkness. Not a blink
 Of light was there ; and thus did I, thy Tutor,
 Make thy young thoughts acquainted with the grave ;
 While thou wert chasing the winged butterfly
 Through my green courts ; or climbing, a bold suitor,
 Up to the flowers whose golden progeny
 Still round my shattered brow in beauty wave.”

LXIII. — MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

1833. — 1835.

DEAR to the Loves, and to the Graces vowed,
 The Queen drew back the wimple that she wore ;
 And to the throng that on the Cumbrian shore
 Her landing hailed, how touchingly she bowed !
 And like a Star (that, from a heavy cloud
 Of pine-tree foliage poised in air, forth darts,
 When a soft summer gale at evening parts
 The gloom that did its loveliness enshroud)
 She smiled ; but Time, the old Saturnian seer,
 Sighed on the wing as her foot pressed the strand,
 With step preclusive to a long array
 Of woes and degradations hand in hand —
 Weeping captivity, and shuddering fear
 Stilled by the ensanguined block of Fotheringay !

LXIV.

1833. — 1835.

“ THERE ! ” said a Stripling, pointing with meet pride
 Towards a low roof with green trees half concealed,
 “ Is Mosgiel Farm ; and that ’s the very field
 Where Burns ploughed up the Daisy.” Far and wide
 A plain below stretched seaward, while, descried
 Above sea-clouds, the Peaks of Arran rose ;
 And, by that simple notice, the repose
 Of earth, sky, sea, and air, was vivified.
 Beneath “ the random *bield* of clod or stone ”
 Myriads of daisies have shone forth in flower
 Near the lark’s nest, and in their natural hour
 Have passed away ; less happy than the One
 That, by the unwilling ploughshare, died to prove
 The tender charm of poetry and love.

LXV.

1833. — 1835.

MOST sweet it is with unuplifted eyes
 To pace the ground, if path be there or none,
 While a fair region round the traveller lies
 Which he forbears again to look upon ;
 Pleased rather with some soft ideal scene,
 The work of Fancy, or some happy tone
 Of meditation, slipping in between
 The beauty coming and the beauty gone.
 If Thought and Love desert us, from that day
 Let us break off all commerce with the Muse :
 With Thought and Love companions of our way,
 Whate'er the senses take or may refuse,
 The Mind's internal heaven shall shed her dews
 Of inspiration on the humblest lay.

LXVI. — THE PINE OF MONTE MARIO.

1837. — 1842.

I SAW far off the dark top of a Pine
 Look like a cloud — a slender stem the tie
 That bound it to its native earth — poised high
 'Mid evening hues, along the horizon line,
 Striving in peace each other to outshine.
 But when I learned the Tree was living there,
 Saved from the sordid axe by Beaumont's care,
 Oh, what a gush of tenderness was mine !
 The rescued Pine-tree, with its sky so bright
 And cloud-like beauty, rich in thoughts of home,
 Death-parted friends, and days too swift in flight,
 Supplanted the whole majesty of Rome
 (Then first apparent from the Pincian Height)
 Crowned with St. Peter's everlasting Dome.

LXVII. — COMPOSED ON A MAY MORNING.

1838. — 1838.

LIFE with yon Lambs, like day, is just begun,
 Yet Nature seems to them a heavenly guide.
 Does joy approach? they meet the coming tide ;
 And sullenness avoid, as now they shun
 Pale twilight's lingering glooms, — and in the sun
 Couch near their dams, with quiet satisfied ;
 Or gambol, — each with his shadow at his side,
 Varying its shape wherever he may run.
 As they from turf yet hoar with sleepy dew
 All turn, and court the shining and the green,
 Where herbs look up, and opening flowers are seen ;
 Why to God's goodness cannot We be true?
 And so, His gifts and promises between,
 Feed to the last on pleasures ever new?

LXVIII.

1838. — 1838.

BLEST Statesman He, whose Mind's unselfish will
 Leaves him at ease among grand thoughts : whose eye
 Sees that, apart from magnanimity,
 Wisdom exists not ; nor the humbler skill
 Of Prudence, disentangling good and ill
 With patient care. What tho' assaults run high,
 They daunt not him who holds his ministry,
 Resolute, at all hazards, to fulfil
 Its duties ; prompt to move, but firm to wait ;
 Knowing, things rashly sought are rarely found ;
 That, for the functions of an ancient State —
 Strong by her charters, free because imbound,
 Servant of Providence, not slave of Fate —
 Perilous is sweeping change, all chance unsound.

LXIX. — TO A PAINTER.

1841. — 1842.

ALL praise the Likeness by thy skill portrayed ;
But 't is a fruitless task to paint for me,
Who, yielding not to changes Time has made,
By the habitual light of memory see
Eyes unbedimmed, see bloom that cannot fade,
And smiles that from their birthplace ne'er shall flee
Into the land where ghosts and phantoms be ;
And, seeing this, own nothing in its stead.
Could'st thou go back into far-distant years,
Or share with me, fond thought ! that inward eye,
Then, and then only, Painter ! could thy Art
The visual powers of Nature satisfy,
Which hold, whate'er to common sight appears,
Their sovereign empire in a faithful heart.

LXX. — TO THE SAME.

1841. — 1842.

THOUGH I beheld at first with blank surprise
This Work, I now have gazed on it so long
I see its truth with unreluctant eyes ;
O, my Belovèd ! I have done thee wrong,
Conscious of blessedness, but, whence it sprung
Ever too heedless, as I now perceive :
Morn into noon did pass, noon into eve,
And the old day was welcome as the young,
As welcome, and as beautiful, — in sooth
More beautiful, as being a thing more holy :
Thanks to thy virtues, to the eternal youth
Of all thy goodness, never melancholy ;
To thy large heart and humble mind, that cast
Into one vision, future, present, past.

LXXI.

1842. — 1842.

A POET ! — He hath put his heart to school,
Nor dares to move unpropped upon the staff
Which Art hath lodged within his hand ; must laugh
By precept only, and shed tears by rule.
Thy Art be Nature ; the live current quaff,
And let the groveller sip his stagnant pool,
In fear that else, when Critics grave and cool
Have killed him, Scorn should write his epitaph.
How does the Meadow-flower its bloom unfold?
Because the lovely little flower is free
Down to its root, and, in that freedom, bold ;
And so the grandeur of the Forest-tree
Comes not by casting in a formal mould,
But from its *own* divine vitality.

NOTES.

CHRONOLOGICAL AND ITINERARY.

- 1770 . . . Birth.
1778 . . . At Hawkshead School.
1787 . . . At Cambridge.
1790 . . . Vacation Tour through France, Switzerland, and Italy.
1791 . . . Graduation; visits London, Wales, and France.
1792 . . . Return to London.
1793 . . . At Isle of Wight.
1794 . . . At Penrith, with Calvert.
1795 . . . Settles at Racedown.
1797 . . . Removes to Alfoxden.
1798 . . . Visits Germany (Goslar).
1799 . . . Leaves Goslar; begins *Prelude*; settles at Dove Cottage,
Town-End, Grasmere.
1802 . . . Marriage.
1803 . . . Tour in Scotland.
1805 . . . Death of John Wordsworth.
1808 . . . Removes to Allan Bank, Grasmere; *The Excursion*.
1811 . . . Removes to the Parsonage, Grasmere.
1813 . . . Removes to Rydal Mount.
1814 . . . Second Visit to Scotland.
1820 . . . Visits the Continent.
1831 . . . Visits Abbotsford.
1833 . . . Last Visit to Scotland.
1837 . . . Italian Tour.
1839 . . . Oxford Degree.
1842 . . . Poet Laureate.
1850 . . . Death.

NOTES.

—◆—
1785-1797.

Extract from the Conclusion of a Poem.

Written at Hawkshead during Wordsworth's school-days. The image with which the poem concludes suggested itself to the Poet while he was resting in a boat on Coniston Lake under the shadow of the sycamores which stood on the promontory near Coniston Hall.

"The first verses I wrote were a task imposed by my master. I was called upon to write verses upon the completion of the second centenary of the school (1785). These were much admired—far more than they deserved—for they were but a tame imitation of Pope's versification, and a little in his style." Cf. *Prelude*, v. 553-577.

The Poet was thy nursling; here he drank
His first boy thoughts of Nature and her will:
How often fresh from school he clomb this hill,
And stretched in sun upon the heathy bank,
Endowed with life the mountains, rank on rank,
Or, in the time of earliest daffodil,
Watched April storm the valley fill.

From Sonnet on Hawkshead by H. D. Rawnsley.

Lines left upon a Seat in a Yew-tree.

Written in part as a school exercise at Hawkshead. — W. W.

Wordsworth and his sister began house-keeping at Racedown Lodge, near Crewkerne, Dorsetshire, in the autumn of 1795. Coleridge, then living at Nether Stowey in Somersetshire, first met Wordsworth at Racedown in June, 1797. The pleasure of this meeting and succeeding ones made the poets desirous of being nearer each other; and in July the Wordsworths removed to Alfoxden, within a few miles of Nether Stowey. Here was formed the idea of a joint literary production, which gave us the *Ancient Marinère* and the *Lyrical Ballads*. See *Prelude*, Prefatory Note, and xiv. 388-407.

Alfoxden was a large mansion, beautifully located on a slope of the Quantock Hills, in sight of Bristol Channel. Woods of old oaks and large hollies, with abundant fern and foxglove, stretch in every direction, broken here and there by pleasant downs and valleys through which the brooks run singing to the sea. Dorothy wrote: "The deer dwell here, and the sheep, so that we have a lively prospect; walks extend for miles over the hill-tops." This was the Poet's spring-time of energy and imaginative insight.

1. The yew-tree stood on the eastern side of the lake about ten minutes' walk from Hawkshead. At the present time a yew-tree misnamed "Wordsworth's yew" stands near the spot.

12. The individual spoken of was educated at the University and was a man of talent and learning.— W. W.

31, 32. Wordsworth never finds the gloom of Nature a reflection of his own. She is never to him,—

"Calm as to suit a calmer grief."

She exerts herself to cure the chronic disease of egotism, despondency, and misanthropy. Cf. *Tintern Abbey* and *Prelude*, xii. 88-151.

50-64. Wordsworth's sympathy for men was so deep and sincere that while he had an uncompromising hatred of evil, he did not extend the hatred to the doer of evil; he could see the "soul of goodness in all things," and thus distinguish between weakness and wickedness. The moral teaching of this poem would seem to be the voice of age, and yet the Poet was but twenty-five at this time. Aubrey De Vere says that the passion of the poem is not personal, but intellectual and imaginative, and thence derives its power to arouse emotion; the moral was not thought out beforehand, but was produced by the quickening of thought during composition. In few poets do we find such tenderness and delicacy of feeling united with such strength and independence.

For an exceedingly interesting account of the Alfoxden and Stowey days, see Mrs. Sandford's *Thomas Poole and His Friends*.

1798.

We are Seven.

Composed while walking in the grove at Alfoxden in the spring of 1798. Five years before, Wordsworth had met the little girl in the area of Goodrich Castle. When the poem was completed, with the exception of the introductory stanza, and the fact mentioned to Coleridge, he immediately threw off,—

"A simple child, dear brother *Jem*,"

and this verse stood at the head of the poem until 1815. Popular as this little poem has become in virtue of its unwithering beauty, it cannot be fully appreciated until it is placed in its proper relation to the great Ode.

Wherever Wordsworth deals with the subject of Death it is with calmness and childlike simplicity. Wisely does he rest the solution of the great question of Immortality, not upon the dicta of the wise and prudent, but upon the heaven-taught wisdom of the child, before its ideas are corrupted by the senses, and the "trailing clouds of glory" disappear. The necessity of possessing the child-spirit in order to enter the kingdom of truth lies at the root of Wordsworth's philosophy, while its revelations constitute for him the Intimations of Immortality. In this ballad we have, in the simplest language, the "contemplative contrast" between the buoyant health, the joyous beauty of the child-life, and what we call Death; this contrast is maintained by that form of art the perfection of which is self-concealment.

Simon Lee.

The incident which suggested this poem occurred at Alfoxden; the old man had been huntsman to the squires of Alfoxden. — W. W.

24. The expression, "I dearly love their voice," was word for word from the old man's lips. — W. W.

Wordsworth's lack of dramatic power has often been insisted upon, and not without reason, for he frequently fails when dealing with a variety of incidents; hence he uses for the most part the simplest narratives, as in this poem, and treats them "with a plain, first-hand, almost austere naturalness." This peculiarity is eminently characteristic of him, whether he is dealing with landscape or anecdote.

65, 66. The result of such "silent thought" is to stimulate our sympathy so that it may be called forth by every common incident of pleasure or of pain, and thus build up our moral being.

93-96. In this power of opening up rich veins of feeling by the simplest incident, Wordsworth is unsurpassed. This is what Matthew Arnold means when he says: "The greatness of Wordsworth lies in his powerful and beautiful application of ideas to life."

Lines Written in Early Spring.

A chosen resort of the two poets and Dorothy, while at Alfoxden, was a grove, and a pool made by a brook which ran down from the Comb.

8. Cf. *Prelude*, xi. 206-209.

9, 10. Across the pool a tree had fallen; and the leaves, for want of sun-light, were almost white, while from this sylvan bridge depended beautiful tresses of ivy. — W. W.

13-24. Wordsworth has shown us in the *Prelude* the steps by which he rose to the idea of Divine Life in Nature. While viewing Nature as a personality, having thoughts, plans, emotions, and pleasures, he avoids the extreme of idealism, for he never robs Nature of her qualities by making them depend upon the thought of man; nor, on the other hand, does he give aid to the materialist by making man a creature of necessity. This view of Nature, as ever expressing the joy and pleasure of God in his own work, fills his poetry with *sweetness* and *light*, and gives it the power to heal and cleanse.

It was through this little poem that Wordsworth won the love and admiration of the late Dr. Hudson.

To My Sister.

Composed in front of the house at Alfoxden, where, between two large elms overlooking the park and the sea, the Poet used to read and compose.

9-16. This picture of happy rural life does one good. The Poet, sauntering on the lawn while the "gladsome choristers" are singing, is thrilled with the life and the joy of Nature, but cannot enjoy it to the full except the Sister be sharer, and so he sends her these lines ere her morning task be done.

Of the relation of Wordsworth to his sister much will be said in connection with the poems descriptive of her.

The following is from Mr. E. Paxton Hood: "Not Laura with Petrarch, nor Beatrice with Dante, nor the fair Geraldine with Surrey, are more really connected than is Wordsworth with his sister Dorothy."

25-28. Nature refuses to reveal her secrets to those who "pore and dwindle as they pore," lacking the spirit of reverence. To those who approach her in the spirit of humility she reveals her beauty and her majesty; of all our seeing this is the *Master Light*.

It seems the duty of the naturalist to be a poet in his severest analysis to make the naturalist subordinate to the man. — EMERSON.

Expostulation and Reply.

This poem and the following were composed in front of the house at Alfoxden.

15. The "Matthew" of this poem and other poems was William Taylor, Wordsworth's schoolmaster at Hawkshead.

21-32. Wordsworth, when making "rigorous inquisition" to ascertain his qualifications for a poet, found that he possessed the first great gift, *a vital soul*: this he can develop in us so that by it the products of the senses and the intellect will be transmuted into moral and spiritual power. In the periods of "wise passiveness," those thoughts and emotions which in our busy hours have almost escaped from our consciousness, are collected, brought home, and become truths which perish never.

To a mind fretted with analysis and a heart breaking against the hard problems of existence, this "divine philosophy" comes with healing power.

The Tables Turned.

21-28. The Poet does not here teach a life of emotion rather than a life of action, but he insists upon a truth which all moral teachers inculcate,—that the mind requires periods of repose in which to gather up the crumbs of thought which otherwise in the whirl of our life would be lost.

Though his poetry reads so transcendental, and is so meditative, there never was a poet so little of a dreamer as Wordsworth.—HUTTON.

28-32. If a narrow interpretation finds here a hatred of science, it is of that form of science which insists that the intellect is the only organ of truth: the Poet has no words of condemnation for that larger science represented by Newton, Faraday, and Agassiz,—a science which recognized the truths of the imagination as well as those of experiment. He everywhere condemns the tendency to consider animal comforts the end of being.

Mr. Myers says: "It is hardly too much to say that if these two poems, to the careless eye so slight and trifling, were all that had remained from Wordsworth's hand, they would have 'spoken to the comprehending' of a new individuality as distinct and unmistakable in its way as that which Sappho has left engraven on the world forever in words even fewer than these."

Tintern Abbey.

No poem of mine was composed under circumstances more pleasant for me to remember than this. I began it upon leaving Tintern after crossing the Wye, and concluded it just as I was entering Bristol during the evening, after a ramble of four or five days with my sister.

Not a line of it was altered, and not any part of it written down till I reached Bristol.—LYRICAL BALLADS.

This was the last poem of that remarkable volume of 1798.

22-65. That spiritualization of Nature which was noticed in the former poems is here carried to its highest point of sublimity. In the Poet's idea of human life those instincts, impulses, and emotions of youth—those momentary visions—have a divine origin; he teaches that the mature reason, instead of treating these as illusions, should regulate and cherish them as means of ennobling the character. The poetry of our advancing years will be derived from these "emotions recollected in tranquillity."

65-110. The three periods in the Poet's experience up to this time were—

(1) When the love of Nature was supreme. (2) When the love of Nature was secondary to the love of Man. (3) When the marriage of Man and Nature had taken place through the strength of spiritual vision.

Cf. *Prelude*, ii. 419-451; ix. 501-552; xi. 321-369. These "authentic tidings of invisible things" which fortify us to do or to endure can be perceived only by spiritual contemplation.

111-159. The tribute which the Poet paid to his sister is the highest which one soul can pay to another: he was never weary of singing her praise, nor was she ever tired of trying to make herself worthy of his praise. Endowed with faculties capable of gaining distinction in the same sphere of work, she nevertheless chose to let him sing of what she felt and saw. To those familiar with the close of her life these words seem prophetic; for she lingered a few years after her brother's death, and her chief solace seemed to be the remembrance of days passed in his companionship. More has been written of this poem than of any other of his unless it be the "Platonic Ode."

It is the seed-thought of all the poetry of the first half of the eighteenth century.—E. P. WHIPPLE.

The soul of the poet here comes in contact with Him who is the author and upholder of Nature and of man.—PROF. SHAIRP.

His imagination was of too spiritual an order to shape itself into material divinities, and his conscience bore witness to a Personal God, the Creator of all things. . . . Had he lost his hold of Religion he would have lost Nature also,—for to him she would have been Nature no longer.—DE VERE.

This poem has become the *locus classicus*, or consecrated formulary of Wordsworthian faith.—MYERS.

To those who are strangers to this state of impassioned contemplation, Wordsworth's poetry, or all that is highest in it, is a sealed book. — DOWDEN.

Cf. Bryant's *Thanatopsis*.

The Old Cumberland Beggar.

Observed, and with great benefit to my own heart, when I was a child. Written at Racedown and Alfoxden. The Political Economists were about that time beginning their war upon mendicity in all its forms, and by implication, if not directly, upon alms-giving also. — W. W.

The "Growth of a Poet's Mind" as Wordsworth has revealed it to us in the *Prelude* shows the means which Nature used to educate him into the poet of humanity. Humble men and women, the village dames, the thrifty dalesmen, and the hardy shepherds —

"Of these, said I, shall be my song, of these
Will I record the praises,
That justice may be done, obeisance paid
Where it is due."

For this work his early associations and the inspiration of the great Peasant Poet of Scotland had predisposed him.

In order to see what a giant stride these poems took in advance of the age, we need to compare them with the poems which preceded. Of man as found in the abodes of wealth and refinement, preceding poetry had been mindful; and Wordsworth was too broad not to recognize that from hence had proceeded much that was pure and unworldly, yet he believed that rich veins of poetic feeling lay hidden in the lives of homely men and women. This was, as Robertson says, a "high and holy work," and for it both the rich and the poor praise him.

1-66. Plain imagination and severe could hardly produce a more distinct picture of one who, to the eye of the economist, had outlived all usefulness.

His is the poetry of intellect and of feeling — of humanity in the abstract chiefly; and yet what is more human than *The Old Cumberland Beggar*? — AUTHOR OF "RAB AND HIS FRIENDS."

67-87. See notes on *Lines Left upon a Seat in a Yew-Tree*.

87-170. While the apparent usefulness of the old man has ceased, the Poet, by his penetrative insight, reaches essential elements and recognizes a sphere of *passive* usefulness. Those who are unable to enter into any of the more elaborate schemes of philanthropy find here a field for the exercise of that form of charity which sounds no

trumpet before it; here the poor dame learns that "it is more blessed to give than to receive," and that unselfishness dignifies life. It is in such lessons as this that the manifold wisdom and truth of Wordsworth's poetry consists, — a wisdom not of demonstration and the schools, but of those "sweet counsels of head and heart."

Wordsworth's genius did not grasp many things, but it grasped much; like one of his own bees, he can murmur by the hour in fox-glove bells. — R. H. HUTTON.

Aubrey de Vere has done the student of Wordsworth signal service in showing that he is pre-eminently the poet of *Passion*, and in reference to the exhibition of it in this poem he says: "Before a poet can afford such sympathy as this . . . he requires to possess not only a happy temperament but a strong one. The weak sympathize but with the weak, and weaken them more by such sympathy. . . . Wordsworth's poetry delights to graft the softer virtues on the harder stock."

In the treatment of characters like "The Old Cumberland Beggar" Wordsworth's art resembles that of Turner: the central idea in the work of each is its healing power, while their plainness of style is due to contempt for artifice.

Animal Tranquillity and Decay.

If I recollect right these verses were an overflow from *The Old Cumberland Beggar*. — W. W.

1799.

Having completed the *Lyrical Ballads*, which secured for them the necessary funds, the three friends, in September, 1798, set out for Germany with the intention of studying the language. At Hamburg they met the aged Klopstock, — the "German Milton," — and here Coleridge left them and passed on to Göttingen, where he studied metaphysics. Wordsworth and his sister settled for the winter at Goslar, an old imperial town in Hanover, and it was here that the following poems were written. They show that although the Poet was in a strange land his heart was with the scenes of his youth. Of the poems written in Germany Wordsworth says: —

"A bitter winter it was when these verses were composed by the side of my sister in our lodgings, at a draper's house, in the romantic imperial town of Goslar, on the edge of the Hartz forest. . . . With the protection of a pelisse lined with fur and a dogskin bonnet such as was worn by the peasants, I walked daily on the ramparts."

Nutting.

Written in Germany; intended as a part of a poem on my own life, but struck out as not being wanted there. Like most of my school-fellows I was an impassioned nutter. For this pleasure the vale of Esthwaite, abounding in coppice wood, furnished a very wide range. These verses arose out of the remembrance of feelings I had often had when a boy. — W. W. See *Prelude*, i. 301-339.

In but few instances does Wordsworth deal with Nature alone; as a rule Nature is but the setting for the subject *Man*, and has its significance in relation to him. In this poem, so largely descriptive, we have an illustration of the subtle connection of Nature with the mind of man, — a connection which is not easy for some minds to grasp; by them the attitude of mind in which we here see the Poet is brusquely labelled *Pantheism*. Yet Wisdom is justified of her children, and every work of art, in so far as it is appreciated by us, must appeal to the artist in us.

This form of impassioned imagination views Nature as a manifestation of the life of God, and is unlike any which had before appeared in poetry. The classic or ideal imagination which we find in the Greeks and in the poetry which followed, viewed Nature under the aspect of several wills working through Nymphs, Dryads, and Satyrs; to recognize to what an extent these ideas governed English poetry we have but to consult any characteristic poems of Pope, Dryden, Shelley, or Keats. Wordsworth expunged all these stock words from his poetical vocabulary; and although he was at times too stern in his realism, and needlessly incurred the anathemas of the critics, yet here natural good taste and sense prevailed over the foibles of false æstheticism. In this method of viewing Nature the Poet makes common cause with modern science, which teaches that all the forms of force are varieties of one primal force; and if it does not affirm personality of this, yet it does not deny it.

“Strange Fits of Passion Have I Known.”

It is fortunate for us that Wordsworth was not absorbed in German philosophy, else we never would have possessed these exquisite poems on Lucy, — pearls gathered upon a golden thread. Five short poems are all we have of her whom we know not, save as she is here enshrined with an “artlessness which only art can know.” In these poems the artist has risen to the highest and completest realization of that creed in which is written, —

“Thy art be nature.”

To analyze such poems as these is almost a sin; as well might one attempt to ascertain by the microscope the source of beauty in the flower.

They are genuine love-poems, and yet how far removed from that species of love-poetry which encourages vulgar curiosity, or the parade of the inmost sanctuary of the heart. All that is given us is that Lucy once lived, is now no more.

The pathos in this record of anxious foreboding, profound sorrow, and calm despair, is holy. Of it Mrs. Oliphant says: "Never were words more simple, more every-day; and yet it is hard to read them without tears; impossible if the reader's life has ever held a Lucy of its own." Many have wondered why one who could write such love-poems as these wrote so few. Aubrey de Vere says: "This question was once put to the Poet by myself; and a part of the reply was this, — 'Had I been a writer of love-poetry it would have been natural to me to write it with a degree of warmth which could hardly have been approved by my principles.'" In his stanzas *The Poet and the Caged Turtle Dove* we find this additional answer, —

"Love, blessed love, is everywhere
The SPIRIT of my song."

A Poet's Epitaph.

During these walks (about Goslar) I composed the poem that follows. — W. W.

37-56. In this portrait of Wordsworth's ideal poet we find clearly marked those characteristics which he himself possessed, and which rendered it impossible for the world to listen to him until it had learned that the sphere of poetry was not limited to the extraordinary in the life of man and Nature.

In the use of Wordsworth as a text-book in school we find that his poetry makes no sudden conquests, — it is too homely in its nature for that; it is only as the pupil comes to love it, that it seems worthy of his love. Again, its deepest truths do not reach the pupil by being made the subject of *recitation*, but in that afterthought which every exercise with poetry ought to produce. The highest lesson of his poetry is learned when we find that enjoyment is not a product of the understanding, but that the truest understanding comes from enjoyment, — from sympathy.

F. W. Robertson says: "And here lies the great difficulty of our age; that it is an age of cant without love, of criticism without reverence. . . . What we want is the old spirit of our forefathers; the

firm conviction that not by criticism, but by sympathy, we must understand: what we want is more reverence, more love, more humanity."

Cf. Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*, Canto ii. 33.

Address to the Scholars of the Village School of —.

The school was that of Hawkshead, where the Poet spent nine years, the "Friend and Father" (the "Matthew" of the three following poems) was Rev. William Taylor, the third of the four masters during those years. Not long before his death he summoned the upper boys of the school (Wordsworth being one) and gave them his parting blessing. He was buried in Cartmell church-yard. See *Prelude*, x 532.

Matthew.

Hawkshead school was founded by Archbishop Sandys in 1585, and is now very much as it was in the Poet's time. Cut in one of the oaken benches is the name, *William Wordsworth*, which is covered with glass to protect it from the vandalism of tourists. A tablet on the wall of the room contains the names of the masters.

The Two April Mornings, and The Fountain.

The sketch given in these four Matthew poems is worthy of a place beside that other of the unknown Lucy. If these are not poems in a style at once unique and perfect, our language has no such poems. — PROF. SHAIRP.

Lucy Gray.

Written at Goslar, in Germany, in 1799. It was founded on a circumstance told me by my sister, of a little girl who not far from Halifax, in Yorkshire, was bewildered in a snow-storm. Her footsteps were tracked by her parents to the middle of a lock of a canal, and no other vestige of her, backward or forward, could be traced. — W. W.

1800.

In the spring of 1799 the Wordsworths left Goslar and visited their relatives, the Hutchinsons, at Sockburn-on-Tees, County Durham; there they remained until autumn. In September Wordsworth, his brother John, and Coleridge made an excursion through the Lake District. They were greatly pleased with the vale of Grasmere and the cottage at Town-End which bore the sign of *The Dove and Olive Bough*. Wordsworth took up his abode here in December, 1799.

See *Prelude* i. 1-131. These poems of 1800-1805 seem to have been written as recreations while the Poet was at work upon the *Prelude*.

"On Nature's Invitation do I Come."

The date of composition of this and the following poem is not known, — they are fragments from the *Recluse*. Compare this description of the vale with that of Gray. —

"Not a single red tile, no flaring gentleman's house, or garden walls break in upon the repose of this little unsuspected paradise; but all is peace, rusticity, and happy poverty in its neatest and most becoming attire."

"Bleak Season was it, Turbulent and Wild."

Wordsworth and his sister left Sockburn on the 19th of December, 1799, and after a journey of three days over snow and ice, turning aside to see the frozen waterfalls and watch the changing aspect of cloud and sunshine, they reached Dove Cottage on the 21st. During the years of residence here, by dint of "plain living and high thinking," was produced that poetry which placed Wordsworth among the Immortals. Dove Cottage is perhaps more often thought of in connection with the Poet than is Rydal, the home of his later years.

The situation was beautiful for prospect, being on the right of the road over White Moss Common as you approach Grasmere from Ambleside. The garden, so often alluded to in his poetry, slopes upward to the wooded heights, and has not suffered much alteration since 1800. Here still bloom the primroses and daffodils. From the terrace, approached by stone steps cut by Wordsworth himself, one gets a beautiful view across the lake to Silver How, Red Bank, and Loughrigg, on the west and south: while to the east and north the eye ranges from Fairfield, Helvellyn, and Dunmail Raise, to Helm Crag and Easdale. The view from the front of the house has become obstructed by cottages and a pretentious modern hotel. The description given in the following poem refers to this abode.

Hart-Leap Well.

Written at Town-End, Grasmere. The first eight stanzas were composed extempore one winter evening in the cottage. When Wordsworth and his sister were making the memorable journey from Sockburn to Gr. smere, they met a peasant who told them the

story of the Hart. In 1887 I visited the scene here described and found a desolate spot indeed.

“ More doleful place did never eye survey.”

The aspens and stone pillars are no more, but the stone basin still remains. A wall has been built where it is possible that the “ pillars ” stood. Rev. Mr. Hutchinson, who visited the place in 1883, thinks the stone in the wall, which shows signs of having been hammered, may be one of the “ pillars.”

99, 100. I never list presume on Parnasse hill,
But piping low in shade of lowly grove,
I play to please myself, all be it ill.

SPENSER.

161-168. Here we have an illustration of what Mr. Matthew Arnold calls Wordsworth's chief excellence, — the way in which he deals with the question *How to live*.

“ In common things that round us lie,
Some random truths he can impart.”

We are sharers not only of animal but of vegetable life ; sharers with the higher brute animals in common instincts and feelings and affections. . . . I fancy that human beings may be more humane when they realize that, as their dependent associates live a life in which man has a share, so they have rights which man is bound to respect. —

PROF. ASA GRAY, *Natural Science and Religion*.

See notes on *Lines Left upon a Seat in a Yew-Tree*.

The Brothers.

This poem was composed in a grove at the northeastern end of Grasmere Lake, which grove was in a great measure destroyed by turning the highroad along the side of the water. The few trees that are left were spared at my intercession. The poem arose out of the fact, mentioned to me at Ennerdale, that a shepherd had fallen asleep upon the top of the rock called the Pillar, and perished as here described. The abruptness with which the poem begins is accounted for by the fact that it was intended to be a concluding poem of a series of pastorals, the scene of which is laid among the mountains of Cumberland and Westmoreland. — W. W.

This exquisite idyl — the most dramatic of the Poet's works — possesses all the beauty and grandeur of the grand and beautiful vale in which the scene is laid. Ennerdale surpasses, in its chaotic gran-

deur, any other vale in the district; it is guarded by steep and lofty mountains which seem to force the little community of dalesmen into closer unity and affection. It is a fitting framework for a healthy social order.

The localizations are exact, save when allusion is made to the "Pillar Rock" as the point from which James had fallen. Pillar Mountain evidently is meant, since *Pillar Rock* is the most difficult bit of climbing in the district.

The little hamlet, in its solemnity and peacefulness, is especially attractive to one whose life during most of the year is passed in the rush and roar of the city. Reading Wordsworth with this prospect before one renders the poem and the scene almost sacred.

" Full many a spot
Of hidden beauty have I chanced to espy
Among the mountains; never one like this,
So lonesome and so perfectly secure;
Peace is here or nowhere."

In the conception and execution of this poem Wordsworth is at his best. It was a subject characteristic of him as a man and a poet. In it the two great interests, Man and Nature, — the sphere of which he contributed so much to enlarge in literature, — find especial development. The picture with which the poem begins is one native to the soil of Cumberland and Westmoreland, and had peculiar charm for the Poet of "plain living and high thinking;" he delighted in this world of equality and ancient homeliness, where attention and respect rested not upon claims of wealth or blood, but upon worth and strenuous industry. The congratulations which the Vicar says would meet the returning sailor lad show to what an extent a Christian socialism prevailed in the happy vale. The process by which the Vicar is made at one time to alarm, at another to encourage, the stranger in his timid questionings, and to persist in talking about Leonard as of more interest now to the little community than is the dead brother, until at last the solemn truth is grasped, disproves all assertions that Wordsworth had no dramatic power.

The part, too, which the aspect of Nature is made to play by the narration of the sudden disappearance of one of the becks on the hillside, is consummate; for Leonard is about to conclude that the apparent change is due to himself rather than to Nature. By this revelation that he is not deceived, he first enters the shadows. The terrible blow is however delayed, and the faintest gleams of hope are revived by that exquisitely beautiful picture of the adoption of James

as "the child of all the dale," at the time when, on the departure of his brother, "the little color that he had" was stealing from his cheek. The quiet and measured tones of the concluding words of the Vicar linger with us; while the pathos of the exclamation "My Brother!" and the feeling of Leonard that the place is one in which he can no longer bear to live, is almost tragic.

46-48. For a discussion of Wordsworth's use of sound see the notes to *Yew-Trees*, 1803.

"It was an April Morning: Fresh and Clear."

This and the two following poems belong to a class, *On the Naming of Places*, written to record incidents which happened in connection with some of the Poet's friends. To one familiar with the Lake-land the evidence of attachments for localities where little incidents have taken place is seen in the names there preserved. All lovers of the Poet delight in identifying places especially dear to him.

The scene of this poem is in Easdale, a half-hour's walk from Dove Cottage. Leaving Grasmere village we soon cross Goody Bridge and Easdale beck, by the side of which the Poet said he had composed thousands of verses. Following this beck from the bridge, we soon come to a deep pool, with a "single mountain cottage" not far distant. Dr. Cradock and Professor Knight conclude that this is the scene of the poem; yet there are other places along the beck which answer the description equally well. It is certain that the winding path along this beck to the tarn was a chosen resort of Wordsworth and his sister. On the opposite side of the valley is the mountain terrace, Lancrigg, where the *Prelude* was composed.

The Poet's sister is frequently referred to as "Emma," or "Emmeline."

Cf. Bryant's *Evening Reverie*.

To Joanna (Hutchinson).

The scene is laid on the Rother, the river which flows by the Grasmere churchyard (where the Poet is buried), and empties into the lake; thence it flows into Rydal Water.

Keep fresh the grass upon his grave,
O Rother, with thy living wave.
Sing him thy best! for few or none
Hear thy voice right now he is gone.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

The "lofty firs" are those in the churchyard by the Lich gate. The tall rock is probably on the side of Helm Crag which overlooks the Vale from the north. Hammar-scar, Silver-How, Loughrigg, Fairfield, and Helvellyn are the mountains which surround the Vale; while Skiddaw, Glaramara, and Kirkstone are at a considerable distance on the north and east.

"There is an Eminence."

The "eminence" is Stone-Arthur, on the east of the road leading over Dunmail Raise, and is between Green Head Ghyll and Tongue Ghyll. It is not, however, visible from the "orchard seat."

Father of English Heroes, Knight of Knights,
Here Arthur sat, Pendragon newly-made.

H. D. RAWNSLEY.

The last verses refer to his sister.

See *Tintern Abbey*, *The Sparrow's Nest*, and *Prelude*, xi. 333.

One of the most interesting memorials of the Poet and his friends is the *Rock of Names*, which is on the right of the road to Keswick, by Thirlmere; it is .

"An upright mural block of stone
Moist with pure water trickling down."

Being about half-way between Grasmere and Keswick, it was the favorite meeting-place of Wordsworth and Coleridge. On it are carved the initials of Wordsworth, Mary Hutchinson, Dorothy, Coleridge, John Wordsworth, and Sara Hutchinson. Thanks to Rev. Mr. Rawnsley, Crosthwaite, Keswick, the rock is to be removed to higher ground. This is necessitated by the fact that the City of Manchester is about to convert Thirlmere into a reservoir.

"Rock of Names !

.
We worked until the Pinnacles took
Shapes that defied a scornful look. —
Long as for us a genial feeling
Survives, or one in need of healing,
The power, dear Rock, around thee cast,
Thy monumental power, shall last
For me and mine ! O thought of pain,
That would impair it or profane !
And fail not Thou, loved Rock ! to keep
Thy charge when we are laid asleep."

Michael.

Written at Town-End, Grasmere, about the same time as *The Brothers*. . . . (The character and circumstances of Luke were taken from a family to whom had belonged, many years before, the house we lived in at Town-End, along with some fields and woodlands on the eastern shore of Grasmere. — W. W.

Your teachers are wisest when they make you content in quiet virtue; and that literature and art are best for you which point out, in common life and familiar things, the objects for hopeful labor and for humble love. — RUSKIN.

To one familiar with the youth and education of Wordsworth it seems but natural that he should become the poet of humble life. The lives of such men as composed the peasantry of the district were dear to him, because in them he found (instead of smooth precepts of morality) robust dignity, loyalty to truth, devotion to duty, and genial human-heartedness, together with a spirit of independence and stern liberty; hence every such life had a profound lesson for him.

“Love he had found in huts where poor men lie.”

The incident upon which this robust northern pastoral is built forms an important chapter in the history of the settlement of the region; in the *Antiquities of Furness* it is related that when the Abbots of Furness enfranchised their villains they allowed the land to be divided into tenements, each of which was to furnish, in addition to the rent, one man armed for the king's service. By degrees the population crept toward the north. Later, when the Border Wars ceased, and the quota of armed men was no longer needed, the land passed into absolute ownership; hence the attachment of these dalesmen, or *statesmen*, as they are called, to these hereditary estates, and the sacrifices which they would undergo to avoid parting with them. Mr. Myers says of them that “they have afforded as near a realization as human fates would allow of the rural society which statesmen desire for their country's welfare.” In “Michael” we have a portrait of one of these Westmoreland *statesmen*.

The scene of this pastoral is Green-Head Ghyll, not far from Dove Cottage. Turning to the right from the highway by the “Swan Inn,” and following the beck, one will, without much difficulty, find where the “Evening Star” was situated; and a little farther up the beck sheepfolds, which are now used. Probably Michael's fold was still higher up; on the right of the beck there is a large oak-tree which may be the “Clipping tree.” A visit to the Ghyll and the pasture

land on the side of Fairfield is of great assistance to the appreciation of the spirit of the poem.

It has been said that Wordsworth was an optimist, and this is true if by it is meant that he teaches us to transmute even an "agonizing sorrow" into a source of strength; this is an optimism which never attempts to solve the problem of suffering that is in no sense retributive, but endeavors to present to us

"Soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering."

In the matter of style this is the most perfect of all Wordsworth's narrative poems; perhaps in no poem of his is there such complete subordination of language to the thought; the two are related in such a way as to illustrate a style which conserves the mental economy of the reader. The theme and the language are equally simple; there is no attempt to heighten the effect by artifices of "poetic diction." This being so, what is there in the poem that renders it the delight of all who are familiar with it? It is its sympathy, its sincerity, its vigor — that tone which comes from living and thinking close to the heart of things.

Nature herself seems to take the pen out of his hand and to write for him with her bare, sheer, penetrating power. — MATTHEW ARNOLD.

Emerson warns us against acquiring the false doctrine that there is anything else in style than the "transparent medium through which we should see new and good thoughts."

See Wordsworth's letter to Thomas Poole, in vol. ii. of *Thomas Poole and his Friends*; also Scott's *Marmion*, introduction to Canto iv. 55-105.

The Waterfall and the Eglantine.

There are three roads from Grasmere to Rydal: one, a footpath under Nab Scar, which Dr. Arnold called "Old Corruption;" a second over White-moss Common, which he called "Bit by Bit Reform;" and a third, the coach-road by the lake-side, "Radical Reform." It is by the first of these roads that the scene of this poem is laid. Eglantines still grow there, though not abundantly.

The Oak and the Broom.

Suggested on the mountain pathway [*Bit by Bit Reform*]. The ponderous block of stone which is mentioned in the poem remains, I believe, to this day, a good way up Nab Scar. — W. W.

The above note helps us to determine the locality. There is still a large stone far up on the side of the mountain, and it may be the "lofty stone" of this poem.

1801.

This year the *Excursion* was begun.

The Sparrow's Nest.

Written in the orchard, Town-End, Grasmere. At the end of the garden of my father's house at Cockermouth was a high terrace that commanded a fine view of the river Derwent and Cockermouth Castle. This was my favorite playground. The terrace wall, a low one, was covered with closely-clipt privet and roses, which gave an almost impervious shelter to birds who built their nests there. The latter of these stanzas alludes to one of these nests. — W. W.

Cockermouth, the birthplace of the Poet, is situated at the junction of the Cocker and the Derwent. It is an old market town and parliamentary borough of Cumberland. The old manor house, with its garden and terrace in the rear, remains very much as it was in the Poet's time. The present owner, R. Mitchell, Jr., Esq., shows great kindness to all those who visit the place.

Wordsworth lived at Cockermouth until the family was broken up by the death of his mother in 1778, when he and his brother went to Hawkshead to school, and Dorothy went to live with maternal relatives at Penrith. William and Dorothy were together but little after this, until that *crisis* of his life, and then by her ministrations she led him back —

“To those sweet counsels between head and heart
Whence grew that genuine knowledge fraught with peace.”

Cf. *Prelude*, i. 269; xi. 333.

1802.

Alice Fell.

Written to gratify Mr. Graham, of Glasgow, brother of the author of *The Sabbath*. He was a zealous coadjutor of Mr. Clarkson, and a man of ardent humanity. The incident had happened to himself, and he urged me to put it into verse. — W. W.

This was one of the poems which was *game* for the critics. It well illustrates Wordsworth's poetic creed. However far below his best work it may be, it is a great advance upon that of the artificial school. All lovers of Wordsworth can afford to acknowledge that at times he worked his theory too hard, and that in his attempts to avoid artifi-

ciality he fell into versifying; his instincts were correct, but his deductions from them were at times faulty. We should not forget, however, that these lapses are a necessary feature of the man Wordsworth.

See Preface to Matthew Arnold's *Selections from Wordsworth*.

Beggars.

Written at Town-End, Grasmere. Met and described to me by my sister near the quarry at the head of Rydal Lake—a place still a chosen resort of vagrants travelling with their families.—W. W.

In this poem we have a realization of—

“She gave me eyes, — she gave me ears.”

It was a singular coincidence when, in August, 1888, on passing the quarry and discussing this poem, we met a party of beggars.—ED.

Cf. *Sequel*, 1817.

Written in March.

Extempore. This little poem was a favorite of Joanna Baillie.—W. W.

In Dorothy Wordsworth's diary is a beautiful description of the occasion of this poem; it was a walk from Patterdale, over Kirkstone Pass to Ambleside:—

“When we came to the foot of Brother's Water I left William sitting on the bridge, and went along the path on the right side of the lake through the wood. When I returned I found him writing a poem. . . . William finished his poem before we got to the foot of Kirkstone.”

“My Heart Leaps Up.”

Written at Town-End, Grasmere.—W. W.

This poem is the key-note of all Wordsworth's poetry: it is the *Prelude* condensed into a lyric.

The Redbreast Chasing the Butterfly.

This and the two poems following were written in the orchard, Town-End, Grasmere.

The second refers to Cockermouth, where the Poet and Emmeline (Dorothy) spent their childhood.

See note to *The Sparrow's Nest*.

To the Small Celandine.¹

Written at Town-End, Grasmere. It is remarkable that this flower, coming out so early in the spring as it does, and so bright and beautiful, and in such profusion, should not have been noticed earlier in English verse. What adds much to the interest that attends it is its habit of shutting itself up and opening out according to the degree of light and temperature of the air.— W. W.

In Dorothy's Journal we have the following:—

"We came into the orchard directly after breakfast, and sat there. The lake was calm, the sky cloudy. W. began to write the poem of the Celandine. . . . I walked backward and forward with William. He repeated his poem to me."

To the Same Flower.

In Dorothy's Journal, May 1, 1802, is the following:—

"Wm. wrote the Celandine, second part."

The buoyancy and vivacity, the spontaneity, grace, and harmony resulting from a perfect adaptation of the language to the idea, render these poems the delight of all who joy in the life of Nature. Nature—

"Which never was the friend of *one*,
Nor promised love it could not give,
But lit for all its generous sun,
And lived itself and made us live."

The Leech-Gatherer.

Written at Town-End, Grasmere. This old man I met a few hundred yards from my cottage; and the account of him is taken from his own mouth. I was in the state of feeling described in the beginning of the poem, while crossing over Barton Fell from Mr. Clarkson's at the foot of Ullswater, towards Askham. The image of the hare I then observed on the ridge of the Fell.— W. W.

When Wm. and I returned from accompanying Jones, we met an old man almost double. . . . His trade was to gather leeches. . . . It was late in the evening.— *Journal*.

We see from these notes that the elements which were gathered together in this poem were from various sources. The mental mood and the "hare running races in her mirth" are brought from the walk

¹ Common Pile-wort. See Bryant's *Fringed Gentian*, Emerson's *Rhodora*, and Tennyson's *Flower in the Crannied Wall*.

over Barton Fell. The "lonely moor" with the "pool" is White Moss Common, which one crosses by the middle road to Rydal.

After the storm and the tumult of Nature—"the roaring of the wind," and the driving of the floods—there came the calm, the singing of the birds, the music of the becks, the fresh, clear atmosphere, and "the hare running races." One would think that—

"A poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company."

A kindred mood is awakened in the Poet, but it is soon beclouded with "fears and fancies" which arise from the contrast existing between the free, happy, careless life of all the unoffending creatures of God's love, and the life of man, burdened with care for the morrow, obliged to sow before he can reap, "looking before and after." Strong as he is, he is nevertheless made weak by such dejection; and in this weakness there appears the figure of an old man, by conversation with whom strength is imparted, power is given, a new motive for living is supplied, life is made a happier and a diviner thing.

As to style, we might almost say there is none. By the simplest language, in the absence of all color, with no complexity of incident, we have one of the most harmonious and determined of sketches,—the beauty and the strength of repose.

In its ethical bearing the poem makes common cause with all of the Poet's best work, the message of which is—"Waste not!" That Wordsworth's philosophy in this respect is not theoretical but practical, we will let one who has made trial of it testify.

John Stuart Mill, in a time of disappointment at the failure of cherished hopes, and when life seemed nothing but a struggle against cruel necessity, went to Wordsworth's poetry, and of the result says:—

"What made Wordsworth's poems a medicine for my state of mind, was that they expressed, not mere outward beauty, but states of feeling, under the excitement of beauty. They seemed to be the very culture of the feelings which I was in quest of. In them I seemed to draw from a source of inward joy, of sympathetic and imaginative pleasure, which could be shared in by all human beings, which had no connection with struggle or imperfection, but would be made richer by every improvement in the physical or social condition of mankind. From them I seemed to learn what would be the perennial sources of happiness, when all the greater evils of life shall have been removed. And I felt myself at once better and happier as I came under their influence."

A Farewell.

Composed just before my sister and I went to fetch Mrs. Wordsworth from Gallow-hill, near Scarborough. — W. W.

The local allusions in this poem are to Dove Cottage and its surroundings. See *On Nature's Invitation do I Come*.

In 1802 the Earl of Lonsdale died. He had refused to repay the Wordsworth family the money which had been borrowed from their father; his successor at once discharged the debt with interest. By this Wordsworth and his sister received £1,800 each. With this addition to the Poet's income, he was enabled to marry Mary Hutchinson, with whom he had been at school at Penrith, and who had been the long-time friend of himself and his sister Dorothy. He was married on Oct. 4, 1802, at Brompton Church near Scarborough, and they returned to Grasmere on the evening of the 6th. See *She Was a Phantom of Delight, To Mary Wordsworth, Afterthought, Prelude*, xiv. 266-275.

55, 56. Cf. *The Sparrow's Nest*.

Stanzas Written in Thomson's Castle of Indolence.

Composed in the orchard, Town-End, Grasmere, Coleridge living with us much at this time; his son Hartley has said that his father's character and habits are here preserved in a livelier way than in anything that has been written about him. — W. W.

The characters alluded to in the poem are Wordsworth and Coleridge; there is some difficulty, however, in assigning the stanzas. The editor of the *Memoirs* concludes that the allusions in the first four stanzas are to Wordsworth, and those in the last three to Coleridge. Professor Dowden thinks that Coleridge is referred to in the first, and William Calvert in the last verses. There is much to sustain this idea. Mr. Ainger says that Wordsworth here describes Coleridge and Thomas Poole.

"The Sun has Long been Set."

This *impromptu* appeared many years ago, among the author's poems, from which, in subsequent editions, it was excluded. It is reprinted at the request of the *Friend* in whose presence the lines were thrown off. — W. W.

The *Friend* alluded to was his sister.

TO H. C.

Hartley Coleridge, the eldest son of Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

This poem was singularly prophetic of that life of dreamy waywardness, of lonely wanderings, of lofty hopes and deep despair.

The gift of continuous conversation which distinguished his father was his no less, and it won for him hosts of friends. The following sonnet of his supplements Wordsworth's poem:—

“Long time a child, and still a child when years
Had painted manhood on my cheek, was I:
For yet I lived like one not born to die,
A thriftless prodigal of smiles and tears;
No hope I needed, and I knew no fears.
But sleep, though sweet, is only sleep; and waking,
I waked to sleep no more, at once o’ertaking
The vanguard of my age, with all arrears
Of duty on my back. Nor child, nor man,
Nor youth, nor sage, I find my head is gray,
For I have lost the race I never ran;
A rathe December blights my lagging May;
And still I am a child, tho’ I be old;
Time is my debtor for my years untold.”

His body lies in Grasmere Church-yard, near that of his friend and benefactor, Wordsworth.

Nab Cottage, where Hartley lived and died, is on the coachroad from Rydal to Grasmere, and faces Rydal Water. It is now a favorite lodging house in the Lake District. The following lines on Nab Cottage are from a sonnet by H. D. Rawnsley:—

“Unchanged the scene, and still the sycamore
Flutters its seed-wings to the Poet’s door;
But those gay flowers, whose garden home he planned,
Have strayed abroad to please the wand’rer’s hand:
How like himself, the Muse’s delicate child,
Whose life was of the wind, rejoicing to be wild.”

See Hartley Coleridge’s Sonnet on Wordsworth.

TO THE DAISY.

This and the other poems addressed to the same flower were composed at Town-End, Grasmere, during the earlier part of my residence there. . . . The last two were overflowings of the same mood.—W. W.

The product of Wordsworth’s impassioned and illumined gaze which we have in these three poems shows us in what special sense he was

the poet of Nature. His imagination is both creative and perceptive, and is the result of habitual communion with Nature, and constant reflection upon her impressions. He comes to her as a priest to whom she would confide her secrets; his communion is holy, and hence he inspires his disciples with an enthusiasm which is calm and deep, rather than tumultuous.

Although English literature is not wanting in admirable descriptions of Nature, yet the idea of Nature as having "a function apostolical," as ministering both to moral and to spiritual power — to console, inspire, reward, and recreate — does not appear in poetry prior to this time; not even in Scotland, where the love of Nature was wellnigh universal. The view of Nature as organically agreeable and as tending to physical comfort was then prevalent; the idea of Nature as furnishing helps to a pure contemplative pleasure which is above mere sensation was almost unknown. Wordsworth's method does not further the spirit that would "peep and botanize," but that which would "see into the life of things."

The maxims of Wordsworth's form of natural religion were uttered before Wordsworth only in the sense in which the maxims of Christianity were uttered before Christ. — F. W. MYERS.

To Shelley a flower is a thing of light and of love, — bright with its yearning, pale with its passion. To Thomson a flower is an object which has a certain shape and color. To Wordsworth a flower is a living partaker of the common spiritual life and joy of being. — DOWDEN.

1803.

The Green Linnet.

Composed in the orchard, Town-End, Grasmere, where the bird was often seen as here described. — W. W.

The "orchard seat" was upon the terrace at the rear of the garden, and was reached by stone steps cut by the Poet himself. At the present time an arbor stands there.

In none of the Lyrics is there to be found such natural magic, such felicity of interpretation, such complete abandonment of all the faculties in the thrill of the soul entering into the life of Nature. In all respects this exquisite poem conforms to Milton's canon —

"Simple, sensuous, impassioned."

When a poet can interpret by "natural magic," as here, and by "moral profundity," as in *Tintern Abbey*, he performs for us the high-

est and holiest service which is ever in the power of man to perform.
For —

“With an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.”

Coleridge, in his *Biographia Literaria*, chap. xxii., cites this poem as an illustration of “The perfect truth of Nature in his [Wordsworth’s] images and descriptions as taken immediately from Nature, and proving a long and genial intimacy with the very spirit which gives the physiognomic expression to all the works of Nature.”

Yew-Trees.

Written at Grasmere. In no part of England, or of Europe, have I ever seen a yew-tree at all approaching this in magnitude. — W. W.

At this time Wordsworth was at work upon the *Prelude* and the *Excursion*. The one —

“An Orphic song indeed, —
A song divine, of high and passionate thoughts,
To their own music chanted.”

The other the spousal hymn for the

“Discerning intellect of man
When wedded to this goodly universe
In love and holy passion.”

The result of this union, this commerce of the mind of man and the external world, was such an ideal creation as we have here: ideal and yet true, for the outcome of the “light” and the “gleam” of poetic imagination is not fancy, but truth. Its revelation is of essential, not of accidental, relations.

Professor Shairp, in alluding to the natural idealism of Wordsworth, says: “In this, I conceive, lies his transcendent power, that the ideal light he sheds is a true light; and the more ideal it is, the more true.”

Coleridge, in challenging for Wordsworth the gift of imagination (and citing this poem), says: “In imaginative power he stands nearest of all modern writers to Shakespeare and Milton, and yet in kind perfectly unborrowed and his own.”

Ruskin, alluding to this poem, in *Modern Painters*, says: “I consider it the most vigorous and solemn bit of forest landscape ever painted.”

The “Pride of Lorton Vale” has lost its beauty and its grandeur, and in 1883 the “Fraternal Four” were visited by a whirlwind

which uprooted and despoiled them. The largest yews in the district are now those of Yewdale. See *Prelude*, i. 306.

The following sonnet by H. D. Rawnsley is the third in his trilogy on the Yews of Borrowdale:—

“ Ill could we spare the tree St. Patrick knew.¹
 When first for Christ to these rude vales he spoke;
 And better far had fallen the Rydal Oak,²
 Or — Time’s vast hollow monument — the Yew³
 Which stands in sight of Wetherlam: Ah, few
 The souls who then had felt that tempest’s stroke,
 So many bonds about the heart had broke,
 And breaking, swept old memories from view.
 For to this grove, by storm in ruins hurled,
 Had Glaramara down the centuries seen
 Hope and mute Prayer and Love and Mystery throng;
 And since our Wordsworth murmured out his song,
 Its dark four-pillared vault of evergreen
 Was Temple for the music of the world.”

One of the most marked features of Wordsworth’s poetry shown in the closing verses of this poem, is due to his exquisite sensibility to sound: he seems to have possessed, together with “an eye practised like a blind man’s touch,” the “inevitable ear.” Those recollections in tranquillity which are the fundamental processes of his mind are as often directed to the reproduction of sounds as of sights; and in his study of Nature “to lie and listen” was as essential as to look abroad and gaze. One of the most touching of these allusions is in the *Brothers*:—

“ Oft in the piping shrouds had Leonard heard
 The tones of waterfalls, and inland sounds
 Of caves and trees.”

Memorials of a Tour in Scotland.

The year 1803 was made memorable by the visit of the Poet, his sister, and Coleridge, to Scotland. He had been born and reared in sight of “the land of song,” yet not until this year had he set foot upon her soil. Dorothy’s Journal is a record of this journey, and is hardly less poetical than the immortal poems. In visiting Scotland in 1887, I found the Journal the best guide to these localities.

¹ The Patterdale Yew, — destroyed in the same storm.

² In the grounds of Rydal are some of the oldest forest-trees.

³ The Great Yew of Yewdale.

At the Grave of Burns.

The party left Keswick on Monday morning, August 15, and reached Dumfries on the evening of the 17th. Under date of Thursday, the 18th, Dorothy wrote: "Went to the churchyard where Burns is buried. . . . He lies at a corner of the churchyard, and his son Francis Wallace beside him. . . . We looked at the grave with melancholy and painful reflections, repeating to each other his own verses: —

'Is there a man whose judgment clear
Can others teach the course to steer,
Yet runs himself life's mad career
Wild as the wave? —
Here let him pause and through a tear
Survey this grave.' "

Thoughts suggested the Day Following On the Banks of the Nith.

The Journal continues: —

"We were glad to leave Dumfries, which is no agreeable place to them who do not love the bustle of a town which seems to be rising up to wealth. In our road to Brownhill we passed Ellisland at a little distance on our right. . . . Travelled through the vale of Nith, here little like a vale it is so broad, with irregular hills rising up on each side. . . . Left the Nith about a mile and a half and reached Brownhill, a lonely inn."

To the Sons of Burns.

"I cannot take leave of the country which we passed through to-day (18th) without mentioning that we saw the Cumberland Mountains. . . . Drayton has prettily described the connection which this neighborhood has with ours when he makes Skiddaw say: —

'Scurfree,¹ from the sky,
That Anadale² doth crown with a most amorous eye,
Salutes me every day.'

These lines occurred to William's memory, and we talked of Burns and of the prospect he must have had, perhaps from his own door, of Skiddaw and his companions. . . . We talked of Coleridge's children and family, then at the foot of Skiddaw, and our own new-born John a few miles behind it, while at the grave of Burns's son, which we had just seen by the side of his father; and some stories heard at

¹ Criffel.

² Annandale.

Dumfries respecting the dangers his surviving children were exposed to filled us with a melancholy concern which had a kind of connection with ourselves. In recollection of this William long afterwards wrote the following address to the sons of the ill-fated poet. — *Journal*.

What could be more fitting than that the first-fruits of this visit to Scotland should be dedicated to the memory of that poet who had taught Wordsworth

“ How verse may build a princely throne
On humble truth ” ?

These poems written in Burns's favorite metre are the finest tribute ever paid to that “ darling of the Muses.”

To a Highland Girl.

The tourists had the usual experience with Scottish weather, and when they left Loch Kettrine for Loch Lomond it rained almost continually; the *Journal* for the 28th has the following : —

“ When beginning to descend the hill toward Loch Lomond we overtook two girls, who told us we could not cross the ferry until evening, for the boat was gone with a number of people to church. One of the girls was exceedingly beautiful: and the figures of both of them, in gray plaids falling to their feet, their faces only being uncovered, excited our attention before we spoke to them. I think I never heard the English language sound more sweetly than from the mouth of the elder of these girls, as she stood at the gate answering our inquiries, her face flushed with the rain.” They waited at the ferry-house until the return of the boat in the afternoon, when they crossed and walked to Tarbet. Long after his return Wordsworth wrote this poem in recollection of the experience at the ferry-house.

In the Fenwick note to this poem Wordsworth says: “ The sort of prophecy with which the verses conclude has, through God's goodness, been realized; and now approaching the close of my seventy-third year I have a most vivid remembrance of her and the beautiful objects with which she was surrounded.”

It is in such poems as this that we see illustrated what Mr. Bagehot calls the *pure*, as distinguished from the *ornate*, in poetic style. The pure style depends for its efficacy upon penetrating at once to the heart of scene or character, and using only such accessories of imagery and dress as are essential to a grasp of the spirit of the whole; while the ornate depends upon the number of striking allusions, the wealth of figure, and abundance of drapery. By most readers, per-

haps, the ornate style is preferred, because it ministers to their love of mannerism, artificiality, and display; so that, as Mr. Bagehot says, "A dressy literature, an exaggerated literature, seem to be fated to us. These are our curses, as other times had theirs."

That the influence of Wordsworth, wherever it has free course, is powerful in eliminating this vicious tendency, is the testimony of all who come under his power. To intrust the young to the guardianship of this "Friend of the wise and teacher of the good" is to put them in possession of a source of health and happiness which will prove inexhaustible. See Hudson's *Studies in Wordsworth*, p. 22.

"The first step towards a revolution in our state of society," says Emerson, "would be to impress men's minds with the fact that the purest pleasures of life are at hand unknown to them."

See *Emerson in Concord*.

Address to Kilchurn Castle.

Not long after leaving Loch Lomond, Coleridge parted with the Wordsworths, and they passed on to Inverary and by Loch Awe to Dalmally.

The first three lines were *impromptu*, and the rest written a long time after. Not far from the spot where Wordsworth poured out these verses is now to be seen a monument of rude unhewn stones cemented together. This monument has been erected to the memory of Duncan MacIntyre, the Bard of Glenorchy — Fair Duncan of the Songs. He lived on the lands of the Earl of Breadalbane, by whose family Kilchurn Castle had been built.

See Shairp's *Aspects of Poetry*, chap. x.

43. The tradition is that the Castle was built by a Lady during the absence of her Lord in Palestine.

This piece is, to me, one of the author's grandest displays of imaginative power; hardly inferior to the *Yew-trees*. — HUDSON.

Glen-Almain.

On leaving Dunkeld for Callander they concluded to go by Crieff, as the "Sma' Glen" would be on their way.

September 9. We entered the glen at a small hamlet at some distance from the head, and turning aside a few steps ascended a hillock which commanded a view to the top of it, — a very sweet scene, a green valley, not very narrow, with a few scattered trees and huts, almost invisible in a misty gleam of afternoon light. At this hamlet we crossed a bridge, and a road led us down the glen, which had become

exceedingly narrow, and so continued to the end: the hills on both sides heathy and rocky, very steep, but continuous; there are no trees, no houses, no traces of civilization, not one outstanding object. It is truly a solitude. The following poem was written by William on hearing a tradition relating to it. — *Journal*.

Dorothy gives us the physical features of the place, while in the poem we have the moral emotion which the scene awakens: each is the counterpart of the other. A close study of the work of the "Sister" will reveal the truth of the lines, —

"She gave me eyes, she gave me ears."

Stepping Westward.

From Callander they went to Loch Ketrine, revisiting the Trossachs, of which Dorothy writes: "I can add nothing to my former description of the Trossachs, except that we departed with our old delightful remembrances endeared, and many new ones." Passing on to the head of Loch Ketrine, she continues: "We have never had a more delightful walk than this evening. Ben Lomond and the three pointed-topped mountains of Loch Lomond were very majestic under the clear sky, the lake perfectly calm, and the air sweet and mild. The sun had been set for some time, when our path having led us close to the shore of the calm lake, we met two neatly dressed women, without hats, who had probably been taking their Sunday evening's walk. One of them said to me in a friendly, soft tone of voice, 'What! are you stepping westward?' I cannot describe how affecting this simple expression was in that remote place, with the western sky in front, yet glowing with the departing sun. William wrote the following poem long after, in remembrance of his feelings and mine."

In making the accidental interrogation reveal the soul of the scene, while being itself exalted by it, Wordsworth transfigures the whole. By his wonderful aptness in selecting the points of vantage, and by his conciseness, he produces the maximum of power.

The Solitary Reaper.

Having crossed Loch Lomond they continued their journey through Glenfalloch and Glengyle, along the side of Loch Voil between the braes of Balquidder and Stratheyer, and returned to Callander. Of the scenery by Loch Voil Dorothy says: "As we descended, the scene became more fertile, our way being pleasantly varied, — through cop-

pice or open fields, and passing farm-houses, though always with an intermixture of uncultivated ground. It was harvest-time, and the fields were quietly — might I say pensively? — enlivened by small companies of reapers. It is not uncommon in the more lonely parts of the Highlands to see a single person so employed. The following poem was suggested to William by a beautiful sentence in Thomas Wilkinson's *Tour in Scotland*."

What poet ever produced such beauty and power with so simple materials! The maiden, the latest lingerer in the field, is the medium through which the romance of Highland scenery, and the soul of solitary Highland life is revealed to us; even her voice seems a part of Nature, so mysteriously does it blend with the beauty of the scene. It is to such influences as this that the Poet refers in the lines, —

"And impulses of deeper birth
Have come to him in solitude."

In solitude were these poems conceived, and in solitude only can they be fully appreciated.

Yarrow Unvisited.

On returning from the Highlands they spent a day in Edinburgh and then went to Roslin. On the morning of September 17 they walked to Lasswade, and met, for the first time, Walter Scott, who was living there. In the afternoon Scott accompanied them to Roslin and left them with the promise to meet them at Melrose two days after. Passing on to Peebles they travelled down the Tweed, past Neidpath Castle. (See Sonnet, *Degenerate Douglas*.)

The Journal has the following: "September 18. We left the Tweed when we were within about a mile and a half or two miles of Clovenford, where we were to lodge. Turned up the side of a hill and went along the sheep-grounds till we reached the spot, — a single stone house. On our mentioning Mr. Scott's name the woman of the house showed us all possible civility. Mr. Scott is respected everywhere; I believe that by favor of his name one might be hospitably entertained throughout all the borders of Scotland.

"At Clovenford, being so near to Yarrow, we could not but think of the possibility of going thither, but came to the conclusion of reserving the pleasure for some future time, in consequence of which, after our return, William wrote the poem which I shall here transcribe."

The three poems upon the Yarrow, written in the metre of the old

Yarrow ballads, should be read as a trilogy, and the Poet's earlier and later styles compared.

In the blending of thought with sensation and emotion Wordsworth resembles Shakespeare; while in respect of spiritual thrift, as when in the apparent indifference to the wishes of his companion he prefers to abide in the wealth of anticipation, we have a trait which is distinctly Wordsworthian.

He hoarded his joys and lived upon the interest which they paid in the form of hope and expectation. — R. H. HUTTON.

35. Cf. Hamilton's Ballad, *The Braes of Yarrow*, l. 50.

The Matron of Jedborough and Her Husband.

After leaving Clovenford they proceeded to Gala Water and on to Melrose, where they were met by Scott, who conducted them to the Abbey. The next day they went to Jedborough, where Scott, as "Shirra," was attending the Assizes. The inns being full, they secured lodgings in a private house. The Journal continues: "We were received with hearty welcome by a good woman who though above seventy years old moved about as briskly as if she were only seventeen. The alacrity with which she guessed at and strove to prevent our wants was surprising. Her husband was deaf and infirm, and sat in a chair with scarcely the power to move a limb, — an affecting contrast! The old woman said they had been a very hard-working pair; they had wrought like slaves at their trade, — her husband had been a currier; she told me they had portioned off their daughters with money, and each a feather bed.

"Mr. Scott sat with us an hour or two, and repeated a part of the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*. When he was gone, our hostess came to see if we wanted anything, and to wish us good-night. William long afterward thought it worth while to express in verse the sensations which she had excited."

This poem exhibits Wordsworth's habit of finding

"Tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

On Approaching Home.

This was composed the last day of our Tour, between Dalston and Grasmere. — W. W.

The next day, Scott being busy at the courts, William Laidlaw, who lived in the dale of Yarrow, and who had been delighted with some

of Wordsworth's poems, accompanied them to the vale of Jed. Dorothy says of him: "At first meeting he was as shy as any of our Grasmere lads, and not less rustic." On the following day Scott was glad to leave the Judge and his retinue and travel with them through the vale of Teviot to Hawick, from which place they had an extensive view of the Cheviot Hills. Here they were obliged to part, as Scott had to return to his duties. Two days later the Journal has the following: "Arrived home between eight and nine o'clock, where we found Mary in perfect health, Joanna Hutchinson with her, and little John asleep in the clothes-basket by the fire."

1804.

This year much of the *Prelude* was written.

To the Cuckoo.

Composed in the orchard at Town-End, Grasmere, 1804. — W. W.

Of all Wordsworth's illustrations of the effect of sound upon the spiritual nature this is the finest. "Of all his poems," Mr. Hutton says, "the Cuckoo is Wordsworth's own darling." Early in life he had a firm assurance that the life of the soul was more real than the external world; in the *Prelude*, Bk. ii., referring to his school-days he says —

"How shall I seek the origin? Where find
Faith in the marvellous things which then I felt?
Oft in these moments such a holy calm
Would overspread my soul, that bodily eyes
Were utterly forgotten, and what I saw
Appeared like something in myself, a dream,
A prospect in the mind."

It is this which makes Wordsworth, as Dr. Hudson says, the most spiritual and spiritualizing of all the English poets.

"She Was a Phantom of Delight."

Written at Town-End, Grasmere. The germ of this poem was four lines composed as a part of the verses on the Highland Girl. Though beginning in this way, it was written from my heart, as is sufficiently obvious. — W. W.

That so trivial an incident as the meeting of this Highland maid should have been thus cherished by the Poet, and reproduced here, and in the *Three Cottage Girls*, written nearly twenty years after, shows

us how he valued his experiences, and what use he made of them. "The portraiture of woman," said Coleridge, "should be characterless," meaning that the chief excellence is a well-balanced nature.

In this exquisite portrait of womanly beauty we have, not that which is the speciality of any one, but that which is the characteristic of all true womanly nature. "*Exquisite* rightness," Ruskin says, "distinguished the author of this poem." It is hardly necessary to say that the subject of the poem is Mrs. Wordsworth. Allusions are also made to her in the *Prelude*, Bk. vi. 224; xii. 151; xiv. 266; and in *O dearer far than light and life are dear* (1824).

The Daffodils.

Town-End, 1804. The two best lines in it are by Mary.—W. W.

The incident upon which this poem was founded occurred during a walk in Patterdale. Miss Wordsworth's Journal says: "When we were in the woods beyond Gowbarrow Park we saw a few daffodils close to the water-side. We fancied that the sea had floated the seeds ashore, and that the little colony had so sprung up. But as we went along there were more, and yet more; and at last under the boughs of the trees we saw that there was a long belt of them along the shore. . . . I never saw daffodils so beautiful . . . they tossed and reeled and danced as if they verily laughed with the wind that blew upon them over the lake."

How truly does Wordsworth here illustrate his doctrine that the origin of poetry is emotion recollected in tranquillity! He is continually opening to us hidden springs of joy, and teaching that life will be serene and bright if kept pure by the holy forms of young imagination.

The violet by its mossy stone,
The primrose by the river's brim,
And chance-sown daffodils have found
Immortal life through him.

Wordsworth, by J. G. WHITTIER.

21, 22. These lines were suggested by Mrs. Wordsworth. Daffodils still grow abundantly about Ullswater.

The Affliction of Margaret.

Written at Town-End, Grasmere. This was taken from the case of a poor widow who lived in the town of Penrith. Her sorrow was

well known to Mrs. Wordsworth, to my sister, and, I believe, to the whole town. She kept a shop, and when she saw a stranger passing by, she was in the habit of going out into the street to inquire of him after her son. — W. W.

No poet could have drawn this portrait until he had lived close to the realities of the humblest lives. As an old dalesman has said, "He was a kind mon, there's no two words about that; if any one was sick i' the place he wad be off to see til 'em." Thus it was that he entered into the mystery of suffering, and became —

"Convinced at heart, how vain
A correspondence with the *talking* world
Proves to the most."

This is a companion picture to the *Story of Margaret* in the *Excursion*, the purpose of both being to awaken in us a responsive chord to the sufferings of those about us, — in a word, to further the culture of the finer feelings.

"Others will teach us how to dare
And against fear our breast to steel;
Others will strengthen us to bear;
But who, ah! who will make us *feel*?"

See Mr. Myers's analysis of this poem in *Wordsworth, English Men of Letters*.

Address to My Infant Daughter Dora.

Of Wordsworth's strong and deep love for his children we have frequent evidence in his poems. For Dora he seems to have had the most intense affection, loving her as his own soul. *The Longest Day*, written in 1817, is addressed to her. After the sad illness of the Dear Sister, Dora became his comforter and stay, and occupied in his later life the same position which Dorothy had in his earlier. So dependent upon her did he become, that her marriage was a severe trial for him; and when, in 1847, death came to her, Sir Henry Taylor says: "A silence as of death fell upon him. . . . I believe his genius never again broke into song."

The Small Celandine.

See pp. 115-119 and notes.

1805.

This year the *Prelude* was completed.

Ode to Duty.

This Ode is on the model of Gray's *Ode to Adversity*, which is copied from Horace's *Ode to Fortune*. Many and many a time have I been twitted by my wife and sister for having forgotten this dedication of myself to the stern law-giver. Transgressor indeed I have been from hour to hour, from day to day; I would fain hope, however, not more flagrantly, or in a worse way than most of my tuneful brethren. But these last words are in a wrong strain. We would be rigorous to ourselves, and forbearing, if not indulgent, to others; and if we make comparison at all, it ought to be with those who have morally excelled us. — W. W.

We have here the essential and eternal distinction between the ethics of cold abstinence and of warm sympathy. "Thou shalt not" gives place to the "Thou shalt;" love, not fear, is the impelling motive to righteousness. A man's worth to God measures his real worth, "there is no shuffling there; there offence's gilded hand" *cannot* "shove by justice."

In Wordsworth's ideal of human life the "genial sense of youth" is strengthened and confirmed by mature reason; the truths of early intuitions become the fixed principles of later life. Says Dr. Hudson: "Man's ripest wisdom does its best, when it draws him back to the purity and whiteness of the nursery."

Wordsworth teaches that there is a noble bondage — a "manly dependence;" that freedom rightly understood is unlimited license — *to do good*, and that duty dignifies and ennobles life. It is at this point that the influence of his poetry makes common cause with the spirit of Christianity; the work of the true poet and the true preacher is one, as seen in the history of the nineteenth century; men have gone to Wordsworth and Newman, Coleridge and Robertson, Carlyle and Maurice, Stanley and Browning, for moral quickening.

I would rather a child of mine should know and feel the high, imaginative teachings of Wordsworth's *Ode to Duty*, than any piece of uninspired prose morality in the language. — PROF. HENRY REED.

Cf. Clough's *Hope Evermore and Believe*.

To a Skylark.

Of all Wordsworth's poems this seems the most inevitable; it is as spontaneous as the lark's own song. The idea that the life of Nature

is one of enjoyment, of love and praise to the Almighty Giver, characterizes that spirit of religious awe in which the Poet always walked with Nature. The beauty of all such work as this consists in its deep poetic rapture, and its high moral purpose, yet free from any taint of didacticism. He looks upon Nature with the eye of the Psalmist and sings his Master's praise.

"Only that is poetry," says Emerson, "which cleanses and mans me."

See Shelley's *To a Skylark*.

Fidelity.

"The young man whose death gave occasion to this poem was named Charles Gough, and had come early in the spring to Patterdale for the sake of angling. While attempting to cross over Helvellyn to Grasmere, he slipped from a steep part of the rock where the ice was not thawed, and perished. His body was discovered as described in this poem. Walter Scott heard of the accident, and both he and I, without either of us knowing that the other had taken up the subject, each wrote a poem in admiration of the dog's fidelity. His contains a most beautiful stanza:—

"How long didst thou think that his silence was slumber?

When the wind waved his garment, how oft didst thou start?" — W. W.

The traveller who ascends Helvellyn and wishes to go to Patterdale, by passing along *Striding Edge* will see the monument erected there to commemorate this act.

See Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, ed. 1871.

Incident Characteristic of a Favorite Dog.

This dog I knew well. It belonged to Mrs. Wordsworth's brother. — W. W.

Tribute to the Memory of the Same Dog.

The dog "Music" died, aged and blind, by falling into a draw-well at Gallow Hill. — W. W.

"When to the Attractions of a Busy World."

The grove was a favorite haunt with us all, while we lived at Town-End. — W. W.

In the year 1800 the brothers spent eight months together at the Grasmere home; they had seen but little of each other since childhood, and at this time the Poet found in his brother an intense and

delicate appreciation of his poetry. In the *Fir Grove*, now called *John's Grove*, they spent many hours discussing what would be the future of the *Lyrical Ballads*; John Wordsworth confidently believed that they would in time become appreciated, and hence he determined to assist his brother in all possible ways. As captain of a merchant vessel he had acquired some means, and he looked forward to the time when he could settle at Grasmere, and enjoy the home in company with Dorothy and William.

The fir-grove is not far from the Wishing-Gate on the road over White Moss Common toward Rydal. It is one of the most interesting of the localities connected with the Poet and his brother.

Cf. *Prelude*, vii. 43.

Stanzas on Peele Castle.

When in September, 1800, John left Grasmere, the brother and sister accompanied him as far as Grisedale Tarn, on the way to Patterdale. They then little thought it was to be his farewell to Grasmere, but so it proved. Soon he was appointed captain of the "Abergavenny," an East Indiaman; and on Feb. 5, 1805, when setting sail from Portsmouth, through the incompetence of the pilot, she struck the reefs of the *Bill of Portland*, and was lost. Wordsworth says:—

"A few minutes before the ship went down my brother was seen talking to the first mate with apparent cheerfulness; he was standing at a point where he could overlook the whole ship the moment she went down,—dying, as he had lived, in the very place and point where his duty called him."

The Poet soon after composed the following verses near the parting place at the foot of Grisedale Tarn:—

"The Sheep-boy whistled loud, and lo!
That instant, startled by the shock,
The Buzzard mounted from the rock
Deliberate and slow:
Lord of the air, he took his flight;
Oh! could he on that woeful night
Have lent his wing, my Brother dear,
For one poor moment's space to Thee,
And all who struggled with the Sea,
When safety was so near!

10

"Thus in the weakness of my heart
I spoke (but let that pang be still)
When rising from the rock at will,
I saw the Bird depart.

And let me calmly bless the Power
 That meets me in this unknown Flower,
 Affecting type of him I mourn !
 With calmness suffer and believe,
 And grieve, and know that I must grieve,
 Not cheerless, though forlorn.

20

“ Here did we stop ; and here looked round
 While each into himself descends,
 For that last thought of parting Friends
 That is not to be found.
 Hidden was Grasmere Vale from sight,
 Our home and his, his heart's delight,
 His quiet heart's selected home.
 But time before him melts away,
 And he hath feeling of a day
 Of blessedness to come.

30

“ Full soon in sorrow did I weep,
 Taught that the mutual hope was dust,
 In sorrow, but for higher trust,
 How miserably deep !
 All vanished in a single word,
 A breath, a sound, and scarcely heard ;
 Sea — Ship — drowned — Shipwreck — so it came,
 The meek, the brave, the good, was gone ;
 He who had been our living John
 Was nothing but a name.

40

“ That was indeed a parting ! oh,
 Glad am I, glad that it is past ;
 For there were some on whom it cast
 Unutterable woe.
 But they as well as I have gains ; —
 From many a humble source, to pains
 Like these, there comes a mild release ;
 Even here I feel it, even this Plant
 Is in its beauty ministrant
 To comfort and to peace.

50

“ He would have loved thy modest grace,
 Meek Flower ! To Him I would have said,
 ‘ It grows upon its native bed
 Beside our Parting-place ;
 There, cleaving to the ground it lies,
 With multitude of purple eyes,

Spangling a cushion green like moss ;
 But we will see it, joyful tide !
 Some day, to see it in its pride,
 The mountain will we cross.'

60

“ — Brother and friend, if verse of mine
 Have power to make thy virtues known,
 Here let a Monumental Stone
 Stand — sacred as a Shrine ;
 And to the few who pass this way,
 Traveller or Shepherd, let it say,
 Long as these mighty rocks endure, —
 Oh, do not thou too fondly brood,
 Although deserving of all good,
 On any earthly hope, however pure !”

70

In execution of the Poet's wish, —

“ Here let a Monumental Stone
 Stand — sacred as a Shrine,” —

the Wordsworth Society has caused lines 21-24, 61-64 of this poem to be engraved upon a stone near the tarn.

In 1887 I found the Meek Flower, *Moss Campion*, still growing “upon its native bed.” Cf. *Prelude*, xiv. 414.

Wordsworth in the letter from which I have quoted above continues: “I never wrote a line without the thought of giving *him* pleasure; my writings were his delight, and one of the chief solaces of his long voyages. But let me stop. I will not be cast down; were it only for his sake I will not be dejected.”

Some have found, or think they have found, in this poem an illustration of *pathetic fallacy*, as Ruskin calls it, — the imposition upon Nature of the Poet's own feeling. Let us see; in the first part of the poem the Poet sees the Sea at rest, not as a reflection of his own calm, but because he has been familiar with it, not in storm but in *calm*; he knows its nature as manifested in repose, and hence cannot appreciate the work of art which is at variance with his strongest impression. In the closing part of the poem, he does not violate his philosophy, for now having experienced what the storm at sea can do, the impression of calm is replaced by that of *storm*, and hence he can supply what before was wanting, and appreciate the artist's work. The truth which is here brought out is one which lies at the foundation of all creation, as well as of all criticism — *sympathy*. This refining influence of sorrow helps us to the solution of one of the deepest problems of human existence.

"Perhaps," says Mr. Myers, "in computing the fortune of any one whom we hold dear, it may seem more needful to inquire, not whether he has had enough of joy, but whether he has had enough of sorrow."

Peele Castle is on the Isle of Man, and was once a residence of the Princes of Mona.

One of the two pictures of "Peele Castle in a Storm" is now in the gallery of Sir George Beaumont at Coleorton Hall. — PROFESSOR KNIGHT.

See the succeeding poem.

To A Young Lady.

This poem was addressed to Dorothy Wordsworth. Also the following, which was written at the same time: —

Louisa.—After accompanying her on a Mountain Excursion.

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

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

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

The following is from a letter by Dorothy: —

"He was never tired of comforting his sister; he never left her in anger; he always met her with joy; he preferred her society to every other pleasure."

See *Dorothy Wordsworth*, by Edmund Lee.

1806.

Character of the Happy Warrior.

Wordsworth's experience in connection with the French Revolution made him a close observer of the effect of war upon character. In the ninth book of the *Prelude* we have his description of the patriot Beauvais; while in the *Sonnets to Liberty* we have a gallery of illustrious portraits. Wordsworth's poetry is a great store-house of political and patriotic eloquence, for although the homely Poet was as "retired as noontide dew" he had a nature which was capable of manifesting a Roman fortitude. The devotion which he paid to his ideal, in morals, in poetry, and in politics, finds few parallels.

The death of Nelson, at the moment of victory, touched the whole English nation. Occurring as it did so soon after the death of the Poet's brother, in giving voice to his emotion he weaves together their memories in a eulogy which for simplicity and power has no equal in the language.

In this poem we have the purest and noblest manifestation of that faith in God and Immortality which characterized Wordsworth as a man and a poet. It is this truth, revealed not so much to the eye of reason, as to the eye of the soul, which renders the life of men and of nations divine.

"Perhaps he alone," says Mr. Hutton, "of all the great men of that day, had seen the light of the countenance of God shining clear in the face of Duty."

"Other poetry becomes trifling," says Leslie Stephen, "when we are making our inevitable passages through the Valley of the Shadow of Death."

See Whittier's poem on the Washington Centennial, April 30, 1889.

Stray Pleasures.

Suggested on the Thames, by the sight of one of those floating mills that used to be seen there. This I noticed on the Surrey side between Somerset House and Blackfriar's Bridge. Charles Lamb was with me at the time; and I thought it remarkable that I should have to point out to *him*, an idolatrous Londoner, a sight so interesting as the happy group dancing on the platform. — W. W.

"Yes, it was the Mountain Echo."

Written at Town-End, Grasmere. The echo came from Nab-Scar, when I was walking on the opposite side of Rydal Mere. I will here

mention for my dear sister's sake, that, while she was sitting alone one day high up on this part of Loughrigg Fell, she was so affected by the voice of the Cuckoo heard from the crags at some distance that she could not suppress a wish to have a stone inscribed with her name among the rocks from which the sound proceeded. On my return from my walk I recited these verses to Mrs. Wordsworth. — W. W.

Often while on the Fells have I heard the voice of the Cuckoo from across Rydal Mere. The terrace along the side of Loughrigg is one of the favorite walks. No stone is to be found bearing Dorothy's name, and it is well that it is safe from the hand of the Philistine who has marred so many of these memorials. The relative position of the mountains in the district renders the production of echoes a common one. To one rowing upon Grasmere or Rydal Lake the voice is repeated with great variety; while the echoes from the blasting at the quarries remind one of the cannonading effect of thunder in our own Catskills.

Lines on the Death of Mr. Fox.

The fact that Fox had sympathized with Wordsworth in the position which he took in regard to the principles of the French Revolution, doubtless increased the Poet's sadness at his death.

The description in the first stanza is extremely accurate, for in any of the vales of the district the effect of a sudden shower even, is such as to produce a unison of voices from the becks, while the position of the mountains causes the sounds to be reverberated, as mentioned in a previous note.

See Scott's *Marmion*, Introduction to Canto I. 126-165.

Power of Music.

Taken from life. — W. W.

In the seventh book of the *Prelude* the Poet gives us a view of London as it appeared to him in 1791. In the spring of 1806 he spent two months in the same city; and if this poem was suggested by scenes in this visit we see that he still carried with him the "watchful eye." We have in this poem a refutation of the oft-repeated assertion that Wordsworth had no appreciation of humor. See *Reminiscences of Wordsworth*, in volume second of *Essays on Poetry*, by Aubrey de Vere.

Ode on Intimations of Immortality.

Two years, the Poet tells us, elapsed between the writing of the first four stanzas and the remainder of the poem; "and," he continues,

"nothing was more difficult for me in childhood than to admit the notion of death as a state applicable to my own being. But it was not so much from feelings of animal vivacity that my difficulty came, as from a sense of the indomitableness of the spirit within me. I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence. Many times while going to school I have grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality. In later periods of my life I have deplored, as we have all reason to do, the subjugation of an opposite character." In regard to the belief in a prior state of existence, he says: "I think it right to protest against a conclusion which has given pain to some good and pious persons, that I meant to inculcate such a belief. It is far too shadowy a notion to be recommended to faith, as more than an element in our instincts of immortality. A pre-existent state has entered into the popular creeds of many nations, and it is known as an ingredient in Platonic philosophy. . . . When I was impelled to write this poem I took hold of the notion of pre-existence as having sufficient foundation in humanity for authorizing me to make for my purpose the best use of it I could as a poet."

To those familiar with Wordsworth's work before this date, the philosophy of this Ode will seem what in truth it is, — "the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge." The two moods in which the Poet is represented are but a reflection of what we have so often seen in his poetry, — the relation of the soul to sense, and the possibility that the former may forget its celestial birth. The subject of the poem — the origin, development, and destiny of the human soul — has seldom been absent from his poetry, while in treatment we find the same gathering from his former methods. The total effect is perhaps the grandest in the literature of the century, so that the term "inspired" is not forced when applied to the Poet who could produce such a result.

Emerson says: "I am a better believer, and all serious souls are better believers, in immortality than we can give grounds for. The real evidence is too subtle, or is higher than we can write down in propositions, and therefore Wordsworth's *Ode* is the best modern essay on the subject."

The chief value of the poem arises from the fact that it never descends to the plane of mere argument; it ever keeps on the high ground of the essential identity of our childish instincts and our enlightened reason. The deepest truths of the soul cannot be argued, they must be *lived*. In the first four stanzas we have the experi-

ence of our common humanity. Doomed as we are to go in company with fear and sorrow, — “miserable train,” — how are we to prevent ourselves from “wronging” the joy of the life that is about us? The Poet, in the next four stanzas, answers the question by reviewing the history of the soul, and tracing the steps by which it reached that stage. He finds that it is because the soul has become centred in the seen and the temporal, and has thus lost its glory and its beauty; it has wellnigh destroyed its spiritual vision. In the concluding stanzas he shows us that this may be regained, and that the melancholy fear may be subdued by a return to those simple ways in which our childhood walked. We must become as little children in this life of the soul, and by blending early intuition and mature reason we shall be able to see into the life of things. Thus it is that the Poet teaches better science than the Scientist, better philosophy than the Philosopher, and better religion than the Priest. Every line of the poem is worthy of the closest study.

See Browning's *Rabbi Ben Ezra*; *Theism of Wordsworth*, by Professor Veitch, in *Wordsworth Society Transactions*, viii.

1807.

“O Nightingale! thou surely art—”

Written at Town-End, Grasmere. (Mrs. W. says in a note — “At Coleorton.”)

In 1803 Wordsworth's friendship for Sir George Beaumont, of Coleorton Hill, Leicestershire, began. Beaumont was a descendant of the dramatist of that name, and was distinguished for his ability as an artist. This friendship was advantageous for both the painter and the poet. Wordsworth's quick discernment of the beauty of Nature made him a critic of the art of landscape gardening, and when Beaumont was laying out the grounds of Coleorton Hall the Poet was of great assistance to him.

In 1806 the Wordsworths went to Coleorton to spend the winter, and it is probable that this poem was written there.

The following is from an inscription written by Wordsworth and engraved on a stone in the grounds at Coleorton: —

“The embowering rose, the acacia, and the pine
Will not unwillingly their place resign,
If but the Cedar thrive that near them stands,
Planted by Beaumont's and by Wordsworth's hands.

One wooed the silent art with studious pains ;
 These groves have heard the other's pensive strains ;
 Devoted thus their spirits did unite
 By interchange of knowledge and delight."

Wordsworth was pre-eminently the poet of the home ; his interests clustered around the cottage hearth.

" To pipe a simple song for thinking hearts "

was his delight. Into the region of romance he seldom ventured, preferring to deal with " Nature's unambitious underwood." Can it be that in the contrast which he here draws between the nightingale and the stock-dove he intends to indicate the difference between his sphere and that of some other poets ?

See Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale*. For details in regard to Coleorton, see *Memories of Coleorton, Knight*.

Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle.

This poem was composed at Coleorton while I was walking to and fro along the path which led from Sir George Beaumont's farmhouse, where we resided, to the Hall, which was building at that time. — W. W.

The Saxon kingdom of Deira (Northumberland) included what is now Lancashire, Yorkshire, Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Durham. The division into counties was made by Egbert (825) when he appointed for each a *Comes* to rule in temporal, and a *Bishop* to rule in spiritual, things. Lonkeshire was named from Lancaster, the castle on the Lone. Alfred had allowed the Danes to settle in these regions, and they were a source of great trouble until William subdued them. He built the stronghold, *Lancaster Castle*, and appointed Ivo Taillebois, of the house of Anjou, Baron of Kendal. This is the beginning of the House of Lancaster.

The history of Westmereland — the country of the Western lakes — is closely connected with that long and illustrious line which began in Roger de Clifford. The eighth in the line was John Lord Clifford, who espoused the cause of the Lancastrians. After the battle of Wakefield he slew the son of the Duke of York, in revenge for the death of his father at the hands of the Yorkists, and was himself slain at Ferrybridge the day before the battle of Towton (1461). The family were deprived of their estates, and Henry, the subject of the poem, was obliged to live in concealment for twenty-four years, during which time he lived the life of a shepherd. After the battle of Bosworth Field the Shepherd Lord was restored to his own by

Henry VII. He spent his time in peaceful pursuits until 1513, when, at the age of sixty, he was appointed to a command over the army which fought at Flodden. He died at the age of seventy, and was buried at Bolton Priory.

1-4. Brougham Castle is situated on the river Emont, about one mile and a half from Penrith. It is now in ruins. During the last half of the sixteenth century the castle was neglected, and it suffered much as Furness Abbey has suffered, — the stone of which has been used for dwellings. "Brave and bonny" Cumberland during the Border Wars and the Wars of the Roses erected castle after castle, many ruins of which now stand, grim historians of the political life of those days. See *Prelude*, vi. 190-220.

7. From first battle of St. Albans, 1455, to battle of Bosworth, 1485.

13. The marriage of Henry VII. with Elizabeth of York.

27. From *Battle of Bosworth Field*, by Sir John Beaumont, and alludes to the many murders committed by Richard III.

36. Castle in Yorkshire comprised in the estates of the Cliffords, deserted while the Peasant Lord was attainted. When the dissolution of the Monasteries was followed by insurrection the dispossessed Heads were finally repulsed at Skipton by the Earl of Northumberland.

40. Another of the castles of the Cliffords, near the source of the river Eden, Cumberland, destroyed in 1685. Its origin is ascribed to Uther Pendragon, the mighty Briton who withstood so long the ravages of the ruthless Saxons. Tradition says he tried to alter the course of the river to better fortify this castle, but failed.

" Let Uther Pendragon do what he can,
The river Eden will run as it ran."

44, 45. Brough Castle, on the Hillbeck stream, which flows into the Eden, and is probably older than the Norman Conquest.

46, 47. Appleby Castle, a ruin since 1565.

54. The mother of Henry Lord Clifford was Margaret, daughter of Lord Vesci.

73. Carrock-fell, not far from Castle Sowerby, Cumberland.

89-92. The vale of Mosedale is north of Blencathara (Saddleback), a mountain not far from Keswick. Glenderamakin rises on the high ground not far from Saddleback.

94-100. Sir Lancelot Threlkeld concealed the boy on his estates in Cumberland.

In the *Waggoner* we have:—

“ And see beyond that hamlet small
The ruined towers of Threlkeld Hall.
There at Blencathara’s rugged feet,
Sir Lancelot gave a safe retreat
To noble Clifford.”

The hall is now a ruin, save one portion used as a farmhouse.

123. It was a belief, in the olden time, that there were two immortal fish in this tarn. It is not far from Blencathara.

142-145. These lines have a genuine epic ring, and reflect the life of the time—a time filled with the prejudices, the passions, and the pomp of war. The Northern Heights seem to have contributed their full share toward all these. In 1584 we find that Cumberland and Westmoreland furnished “Eight thousand three hundred and fifty horsemen, archers, and billmen.” The Kendal men are mentioned with honor at the battle of Flodden—

“ There are the bows of Kentdale bold
Who fierce will fight and never flee.”

Wordsworth’s Muse loves to range

“ Where untroubled peace and concord dwells,”

and seldom does she lead him into the fields of chivalry and romance. In but two instances do we have subjects which would permit of the full epic treatment.

In this poem he does not dwell, as Scott would have done, upon the mustering of the forces, the description of the leaders, the shock of battle, and the deeds of prowess, but upon those qualities of the Shepherd Lord which distinguish him as a man and by which he was endeared to all. The treatment is subjective rather than objective, and in its rapid movement from the *jubilate* at the opening, through the various phases of family fortune, to the slowly moving, meditative stanzas at the close, the poem is representative of the variety of form and feeling of which Wordsworth was master. This is, I take it, what Coleridge means when he says:—

“ From no contemporary writer could so many lines be quoted, without reference to the poem in which they are to be found, for their own independent weight and beauty.”

The Force of Prayer.

Written as an appendage to the *White Doe of Rylstone*, and in the advertisement to that poem Wordsworth says that in 1807 he visited

for the first time the beautiful country that surrounds Bolton Priory in Yorkshire. It was with the Canons of Bolton that the good Lord Clifford is said to have followed the pursuit of astronomy and alchemy. Bolton Priory is situated in the picturesque valley of the Wharf. About half a mile above the Priory the valley narrows and the jutting rocks almost meet above the river. This chasm is called the *Strid*. The teaching of this poem is to be found expanded in the *Excursion*:

“The darts of anguish *fix* not where the seat
Of suffering hath been thoroughly fortified
By acquiescence in the Will supreme
For time and for eternity.”

Of this poem Lamb says:—

“Young Romilly is divine; the reasons of the mother’s grief being remediless. I never saw parental love carried up so high, towering above the other loves. Shakespeare had done something for the filial in Cordelia, and by implication for the fatherly too, in Lear’s resentment; he left it for you to explore the depths of the maternal grief.”

1814.

Most of the poems written between 1807 and 1814 were sonnets, while at the same time the *Excursion* was being written. In 1808, Dove Cottage being too small for the family, they removed to Allan Bank, on the western side of the lake, where they lived for three years; then they moved to the Parsonage near the Church. In 1813 Rydal Mount became their home.

Laodamia.

1814 marks an era in the poetical life of Wordsworth. In the preparation of his eldest son for the University, he was drawn more closely to the classic writers, especially Virgil, and this Country-loving Poet had new delights for him. The picture in the sixth *Æneid* suggested to him this loftiest and most pathetic of his poems.

The hero and heroine are taken from Homer and Ovid, and the whole tone of the poem is the finest and richest expression of classic beauty and finish. It is in marked contrast to the severe ruggedness of *Michael*, and the magical smoothness of the *Solitary Reaper*, yet it is like them in the perfect harmony of theme and the expression. Thus it may be said that the Poet had as many styles as the nature of his subjects required.

Sacrifice is the crowning attribute of that “blessed love” which

had always been the subject of his song, and this poem is the amplest of his utterances upon this divine quality in man. It is the favorite of the critics. Hazlitt wrote: "It breathes the pure spirit of the finest fragments of antiquity. It is a poem that might be read aloud in Elysium, and the spirits of departed heroes and sages would gather round to listen to it." Landor pronounced *Laodamia* to be "a composition such as Sophocles might have exulted to own."

Aubrey de Vere says: "After I had read *Laodamia* (which was his introduction to Wordsworth), some strong calm hand seemed to have been laid on my head; a new world opened itself out. I was translated into another planet of song."

Dion.

Another product of this revival of interest in the classics was *Dion*. In language as majestic as it is transparent he weaves a wreath for the dead philosopher, and teaches that the only real failure for a man is the retreat from his high ideals. This is the lesson of *Cedipus*, of *Hamlet*, and of *Brutus* — the failure of the idealist in a positive world. For those who measure success by our present standards of materialism such lives present but little of interest, while for those who believe that nothing but real worth can succeed in the end, they bring consolation and strength; for —

"Right is right, since God is God,
And Right the day must win."

Lamb wrote: "The story of *Dion* is divine — the genius of *Plato* falling on him like moonlight, the finest thing ever expressed."

See *Plutarch*.

Composed at Cora Linn.¹

On the 18th of July, 1814, Wordsworth, in company with his wife and Sara Hutchinson, left Rydal for a tour in Scotland. Only four poems were the product of this visit.

In the first book of the *Prelude*, Wordsworth tells us that "when an earnest longing rose to brace himself to some determined aim," among the various subjects which suggested themselves was the following:

"How Wallace died for Scotland; left the name
Of Wallace, to be found, like a wild flower,
All over his dear country; left the deeds

¹ *Water-fall*.

Of Wallace, like a family of Ghosts
To people the steep rocks and river banks."

See Burns's *Scots wha hae wi' Wallace Bled*.

6. The Castle of Corra, near the water-fall.

Yarrow Visited.

In his first visit to Scotland Wordsworth was fortunate in having made the acquaintance of Walter Scott; now he meets him whom Scott, while gathering the Border Minstrelsy, had discovered on the hills of Ettrick — James Hogg. Having spent the night at Traquair, on the following morning the Ettrick Shepherd met them and became their guide to the "bonny holms of Yarrow." They were now in the one spot of all that "singing country" toward which they had looked with the fondest anticipation. The spontaneous interrogation, mingled with surprise and perhaps disappointment, bursts forth, —

"And is this — Yarrow?"

There is no place in the Highlands so rich in tender associations and natural beauty as the vale of Yarrow. It has been the subject of those nameless singers whose ballads were first caught and given to the world by Scott in his Border Minstrelsy. One who visits this scene should be familiar with such ballads as *The Douglas Tragedy*, *The Dowie Dens of Yarrow*, *Lament of the Border Widow*, *The Song of Outlaw Murray*, and *Auld Maitland*, all of which belong to Yarrow and Ettrick. On an early morning in August, 1887, I went alone on my first visit to these vales. The sun was just beginning to scatter the clothing of mist and reveal the braes and bens with their graceful flowing outline, the clear streams winding through the fern and heather, the mouldering towers of Dryhope, where the Border chieftains came to woo the lovely Mary Scott, the Flower of Yarrow, and clear St. Mary's Loch visibly delighted with her exquisite setting of emerald and purple. Then it was that I appreciated these lines —

"Meek loveliness is round thee spread,
A softness still and holy" —

such was the pensive loveliness of the scene.

In purity, sweetness, and pathos; in inimitable ease and grace of metre; in intense realization of the secret of Nature, — these Yarrow poems are simply perfect. It is no wonder that with such weapons Wordsworth could put to flight the literary gladiators who could not distinguish poetry from verse.

Cf. Introduction to Canto i. of Scott's *Marmion*, 1-36.

1816.

To —.

Written at Rydal Mount. The lady was Miss Blackett, then residing with Mr. Montagu Burgoyne at Fox-Ghyll. We were tempted to remain too long upon the mountain; and I, imprudently, with the hope of shortening the way, led her among the crags and down a steep slope which entangled us in difficulties that were met by her with much spirit and courage. — W. W.

29. Cf. *Paradise Lost*, Book iii. 736-742.

1817.

Ode to Lycoris.

This poem was written in front of Rydal Mount, and in connection with it Wordsworth says: "Surely one who has written so much in verse as I have done may be allowed to retrace his steps in the regions of fancy which delighted him in his boyhood, when he first became acquainted with the Greek and Roman poets. Before I read Virgil I was strongly attached to Ovid. As to Homer, I was never weary of the scenes through which he led me." The following lines of the poem *To the Same* show that these poems were addressed to his wife or his sister: —

"Dearest Friend!

We too have known such happy hours together
That, were power granted to replace them (fetched
From out the pensive shadows where they lie)
In the first warmth of their original sunshine,
Loath should I be to use it: passing sweet
Are the domains of tender memory!"

Pass of Kirkstone.

Written at Rydal Mount. Thoughts and feelings of many walks in all weathers, by day and night, over this Pass, alone and with beloved friends. — W. W.

If one is staying at Grasmere a pleasant tramp of two days may be made by crossing Helvellyn by Grisdale Tarn to Patterdale, and returning by way of Kirkstone Pass and Ambleside. From Patterdale one passes Brother's Water, the scene of the *Daffodils*, and near the summit of the Pass on the right the Kirk stones. The famous inn is said to be the highest inhabited house in England. The views on

the route are of surpassing beauty, although all is so desolate there. From the inn to Ambleside the scenery is in marked contrast to the ruggedness and desolation of the ascent. Wansfell and Red Screes are near at hand as guardians of the Vale, while below lies Windermere, her islands and her gleaming bays beautiful in the dark framework of wooded hills,

“Magnificent and beautiful and gay.”

Wordsworth's inspiration in the closing lines of this poem is indicative of those spiritual heights from which at times this “Prophet of the moral depths of the human soul” viewed the world.

41-48. Among the evidences of Roman occupation in these regions are the roads. In Hodgson's *History of Northumberland* Kirkstone Pass is mentioned as one of the roads by which Agricola led his two columns into Westmoreland.

Sequel to the *Beggars*.

See note to the *Beggars*, 1802.

1818.

Composed upon an Evening of Extraordinary Splendor and Beauty.

Felt and in great part composed upon the little mount in front of our abode at Rydal. — W. W.

61-80. Cf. *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*.

After the production of the immortal Ode (1806) Wordsworth's inspiration did not again reach that lofty height, unless upon this occasion, when the glory and splendor, the “intermingling of heaven's pomp,” was witnessed during a sunset among the Westmoreland hills. Surely the purity, the sublimity, the grace, and simplicity of the Ode are here reproduced with an element of “peace supreme” which is the product of Christian faith. Cf. Bryant's *Rivulet*.

Near the Spring of the Hermitage.

This poem is one of a series of *Inscriptions supposed to be found in or near a Hermit's Cell*. Written at Rydal.

Cf. *My Heart Leaps Up*, 1802.

1819.

September, 1819.

Composed in front of Rydal Mount and during my walks in the neighborhood. — W. W.

In the *Ode to Lycoris* we have : —

“When Nature marks the year’s decline
Be ours to welcome it.”

It is true that Wordsworth when young wrote with a seriousness which was almost premature. Now the experiences of sorrow have brought the “philosophic mind,” and a mood more serene, more “sweetly gracious,” succeeds. The optimism of the first four stanzas is a reflection from the *Ode to Duty*.

“Serene will be our days and bright ”

when love has been the motive of our lives, for then “the least of things seem infinite.”

29, 30. “He serves the Muses erringly and ill
Whose aim is pleasure, light and fugitive.”

36. Cf. Horace, *Ode Ad Lolium*.

40. Sappho, *Ode to Aphrodite*.

1820.

The River Duddon.

To the Rev. Dr. Wordsworth.

At this time Dr. Christopher Wordsworth was rector of Lambeth parish; he afterward became Master of Trinity.

49-54. Cf. Sonnet, *Spirit of Cockermouth Castle*, also *Prelude*, i. 269 *et seq.*

55-60. Cf. Sonnets XI., XII.

1823.

Memory.

Wordsworth, in the note to *Lines Written in Macpherson’s Ossian*, says that these lines on Memory were suggested by some apprehensions of the fate of Hartley Coleridge.

The even and tranquil course in which the Poet’s last years flowed on, notwithstanding the “immeasurable loss” of Dora, is fitly repre-

sented in the closing stanzas of this poem. Mr. Myers asks: "What touch has given to these lines their impress of unfathomable peace? There speaks from them a tranquillity which seems to overcome our souls; which makes us feel that we are travelling to a region where 'immoderate fear shall leave us, and inordinate love shall die.'"

To the Lady Fleming.

The Flemings are descended from Sir Michael le Fleming, brother-in-law of William the Conqueror. He came over with William, and in reward for services against the Scots received manors in Lancashire and Cumberland, Coningstone Hall being one. See note to *Conclusion of a Poem*, 1795.

In the grant to Furness Abbey given by Stephen, nephew of Henry I., in 1127, we find "with all the lands thereof, with sac and soc, tol and team, infangtheof, and everything within Furness, except the lands of Michael le Fleming."

Rydal estate came to Thomas le Fleming of Coningstone by his marriage with Isabella, co-heir with Sir John de Lancastre, to whose ancestors it had been granted by Margaret, widow of Robert de Ros, 1274. Grasmere Church, formerly a chapelry under the mother church of Kendal, was in the time of Elizabeth sold to the Le Flemings of Rydal.

Rydal Mount, more frequently described than any English poet's home except Shakespeare's, belonged to Rydal Hall.

1824.

"O dearer far than light and life are dear."

Written at Rydal Mount. To Mrs. W. — W. W.

The picture of Wordsworth's wedded life is a delight. Every allusion that he makes to his wife is full of the deepest love and reverence. When processes of logic bring him doubt, her love with its "sober certainties" comes to his relief. She thus, "not too bright or good for human nature's daily food," was able to "cherish and uphold" him.

The following poem to Mrs. Wordsworth was written this year: —

Let other bards of angels sing,
Bright suns without a spot;
But thou art no such perfect thing:
Rejoice that thou art not!

Heed not tho' none should call thee fair:
 So, Mary, let it be
 If naught in loveliness compare
 With what thou art to me.

True beauty dwells in deep retreats,
 Whose veil is unremoved
 Till heart with heart in concord beats,
 And the lover is beloved.

See Harriet Martineau's *Biographical Essays*.

Written on a Blank Leaf of Macpherson's *Ossian*.

The verses —

“or strayed
 From hope and promise, self-betrayed” —

were, I am sorry to say, suggested from apprehensions of the fate of my friend H. C.,¹ the subject of the verses addressed *To H. C. when six years old*. The piece to Memory arose out of similar feelings. — W. W.

See Modern Gaelic Bards in Professor Shairp's *Aspects of Poetry*.

1825.

To a Skylark.

Written at Rydal Mount. — W. W.

Cf. the earlier (1805) poem on the same subject; also Shelley's *Skylark*.

1826.

The Pillar of Trajan.

This was given* as the subject for the Newdigate prize poem at Oxford, and Wordsworth wished his son John, who was then an undergraduate there, to try for it. On his declining to do so, the Poet wrote this to show him what could be done with the subject.

The column was set up by the Senate and people in commemoration of the conquest of Dacia by Trajan. It was 132 feet high and surmounted by a colossal statue of the Emperor; it stood in the centre of the Forum Trajanum. The sculptures which covered it picture the Dacian wars. See Merivale's *Romans under the Emperors*.

55-60. Cf. *Character of the Happy Warrior*.

¹ Hartley Coleridge.

1828.

The Wishing Gate.

Written at Rydal. See also *Wishing-gate Destroyed*. — W. W.

A gate still stands in the old place, and from the inscriptions cut upon it one would judge that "Hope" still rules there.

Beside the wishing gate which so they name,
Mid northern hills to me this fancy came,
A wish I formed, my wish I thus expressed:
Would I could wish my wishes all to rest
And know to wish the wish that were the best.

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH.

The Wishing-Gate Destroyed.

In regard to the occasion of the second poem Wordsworth says: "Having been told that this gate had been destroyed, and the opening where it hung walled up, I gave vent immediately to my feelings in these stanzas. But going to the place some time after, I found with much delight my old favorite unmolested."

"In these Fair Vales hath Many a Tree."

Inscription for a Stone in the Grounds at Rydal Mount.

Engraven during my absence in Italy, upon a brass plate inserted in the stone. — W. W.

The inscription still remains upon the stone. Rev. Mr. Rawnsley, in his *Reminiscences of Wordsworth among the Peasantry*, gives the following from a dalesman: "He 'ud never pass folks draining, or ditching, or walling a cottage but what he 'd stop and say, 'Eh dear, but it's a pity to move that stoan, and doant ya think ya might leave that tree?' I 'member there was a walling chap just going to shoot a girt stoan to bits wi' powder in the grounds at Rydal, and 'he came up and saaved it, and wrote summat on it."

1831.

The Primrose of the Rock.

Written at Rydal Mount. The rock stands on the right hand, a little way leading up the middle road from Rydal to Grasmere. We have been in the habit of calling it the Glow-worm Rock, from the

number of glow-worms we have often seen hanging on it as described. — W. W.

We walked in the evening to Rydal. Coleridge and I lingered behind. We all stood to look at the Glow-worm Rock — a primrose that grew there, and just looked out on the road from its own sheltered bower. — DOROTHY WORDSWORTH, 1802.

The rock still remains.

No one can fail to notice the contrast between the buoyant charm and natural magic of the *Daffodils*, and the slower, sweeter, and more reserved style of this poem. Here symbol is everything, reality next to nothing. We must admit that the later style is more in keeping with the truth of human life, for to most of us it is, if not sad, at least a serious thing, and we need such poetry as this, with its "sweet reasonableness," to keep us from becoming disheartened.

"*The Primrose of the Rock*," says Aubrey de Vere, "is as distinctly Wordsworthian in its inspiration as it is Christian in its doctrine."

Yarrow Revisited.

In the autumn of 1831 Wordsworth and his daughter set out for Scotland to visit once again the old friend, Sir Walter Scott, then in declining health. At Abbotsford they met many of Scott's family and friends — Major Scott, Anne Scott, Mr. and Mrs. Lockhart, and William Laidlaw.

On the next morning Scott accompanied them to Newark Castle on the Yarrow. The events of this day are commemorated in the poem. There seems to be a deep significance in the fact that this time the two poets did not linger on the braes and bens, but about the mouldering ruin of Newark; we can see in it the effect of the thought that this was probably the last meeting of the two. The fear that Scott would not be able to revive his strength, even upon "Warm Vesuvio's vine-clad slopes," oppresses Wordsworth and colors the whole poem. These forebodings proved too true. This was not only their last meeting, but it was Scott's last visit to the Vale of Yarrow and the scenes he loved so dearly. The poem, although in many respects unequal to the others upon the same subject, is nevertheless a tender and affectionate memorial of the love of two poets differing widely in character and methods.

"On the 22d," says Mr. Lockhart, "these two great poets, who had through life loved each other and appreciated each other's genius more than infirm spirits ever did either of them, spent the morning together in a visit to Newark. Hence the last of the three poems by

which Wordsworth has connected his name to all time with the most romantic of Scottish streams."

Cf. *Remembrance of the Braes of Yarrow*, by Professor Shairp.

On the Departure of Sir Walter Scott from Abbotsford, for Naples.

On their return from Newark in the afternoon they crossed the Tweed just above Abbotsford; as the wheels grated upon the pebbles of the stream Wordsworth noticed the sad light which settled upon the Eildon Hills, and thinking it might be the last time Sir Walter would cross the stream, he was moved to express his feelings, which he did in this sonnet. It is the finest tribute ever paid by one poet to another.

On the morning of the day upon which Wordsworth left Abbotsford Sir Walter had written in Dora's album, and on putting the book into her hand he said, "I should not have done anything of this kind but for your father's sake: they are probably the last verses I shall ever write." They were his last. One stanza is as follows:—

"And meet it is that he who saw
The first faint rays of genius burn
Should mark their latest light with awe,
Low glimmering from their funeral urn."

When Wordsworth on parting expressed the hope that he would be restored to health by this visit to Italy, Sir Walter replied in words from *Yarrow Unvisited*. This incident is recalled in Wordsworth's *Musings in Aquapendente*:—

"He said, 'When I am there, although 't is fair,
'T will be another Yarrow.' Prophecy
More than fulfilled, as gay Campania's shores
Soon witnessed and the city of the seven hills."

Wordsworth after his return sent these two poems to Scott.

1832.

Devotional Incitements.

Written at Rydal Mount. — W. W.

This poem gives conclusive evidence that in old age Wordsworth still preserved his young love for Nature, and his magical interpretive power. The keenness of insight, the lyric rapture, the soothing effect of this poem written at the age of sixty-two, indicate that the

prayer he uttered for another had been answered for him, and an old age serene and bright had been granted. This Vesper Hymn, instinct with that "grace divine," without which there can be no Sabbath of the heart, should be read in connection with the matins in the *Excursion*: —

"Descend, prophetic Spirit! that inspir'st
The human Soul. Upon me bestow
A gift of genuine insight; that my song
With star-like virtue in its place may shine,
Shedding benignant influence."

"If thou Indeed."

These verses were written some time after we had become residents of Rydal Mount, and I will take occasion from them to observe upon the beauty of that situation, as being backed and flanked by lofty fells which bring the heavenly bodies to touch, as it were, the earth upon the mountain tops, while the prospect in front lies open to a length of level valley, the extended lake, and a terminating ridge of low hills; so that it gives an opportunity to the inhabitants of the place of noticing the stars in both positions here alluded to, namely, on the tops of the mountains and as winter lamps at a distance among the leafless trees. — W. W.

We see from the above what a realist Wordsworth was as regards the origin of his poems, and this makes them exceedingly interesting to a visitor in the Country of the Lakes.

Cf. Sonnet, *To B. R. Haydon*, 1815.

1833.

"If this Great World."

This poem has reference to the excitement caused by the Reform Bill.

1834.

"Not in the Lucid Intervals of Life."

The lines following "nor do words" were written with Lord Byron's character, as a poet, before me, and that of others, his contemporaries, who wrote under like influences. — W. W.

Compare sonnet, *The world is too much with us*, 1806.

There is no whining, no cynicism here, but the manly utterance of one who knew that better things were near if one had the inclination to reach forth and appropriate them.

To a Child.

This quatrain was extempore on observing this image, as I had often done, on the lawn of Rydal Mount. It was first written down in the album of my god-daughter, Rotha Quillinan. — W. W.

1835.

Written after the Death of Charles Lamb.

Mary Lamb was ten years older than her brother, and has survived him as long a time. Were I to give way to my own feelings, I should dwell not only on her genius and intellectual powers, but upon the delicacy and refinement of her manners, which she maintained inviolable under most trying circumstances. She was loved and honored by all her brother's friends. The death of Charles Lamb was hastened by his sorrow for that of Coleridge. — W. W.

The story of the lives of Charles and Mary Lamb is one which, while sad and touching, reveals a sweetness and fraternal fidelity unparalleled in history. What a contrast is the companion picture of Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy in their happy lives of health and strength! Lamb was buried in Edmonton church-yard in a spot selected by himself.

23. Cf. Lamb's sonnet addressed to his own name.

See Talfourd's *Life of Charles Lamb*; also *Wordsworth and Charles Lamb*, in Transactions of the Wordsworth Society.

Extempore Effusion upon the Death of James Hogg.

These lines were written extempore immediately after reading a notice of the Ettrick Shepherd's death, in a Newcastle paper, to the editor of which Wordsworth sent a copy for publication. In Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, an account is given of their first meeting, in 1803. Crabbe he had met in London at Mr. Rogers's, and in rambles upon Hampstead Heath. Mrs. Hemans, who lived at Dovenest on Windermere, he knew intimately and loved for her amiable qualities, and her irreproachable conduct during her long separation from an unfeeling husband. Of his friendship for Coleridge and Scott his poems

are a sufficient history. With the exception of Crabbe these poets were younger than Wordsworth. They all died between 1832 and 1835.

1845.

“So Fair, So Sweet.”

The circumstance which gave rise to this poem was a walk in July, 1844, from Windermere, by Rydal and Grasmere, to Loughrigg Tarn, made by Wordsworth in company with J. C. Hare, Sir William Hamilton, Professor Butler, and others. One of the party writes of it as follows:—

When we reached the side of Loughrigg Tarn the loveliness of the scene arrested our steps and fixed our gaze. When the Poet's eyes were satisfied with their feast on the beauties familiar to them, they sought relief in search, to them a happy vital habit, for new beauty in the flower-enamelled turf at his feet. There his attention was arrested by a fair smooth stone, of the size of an ostrich's egg, seeming to imbed at its centre, and at the same time to display a dark star-shaped fossil of most distinct outline. Upon closer inspection this proved to be the shadow of a daisy projected upon it. The Poet drew the attention of the rest of the party to the minute but beautiful phenomenon, and gave expression at the time to thoughts suggested by it, which so interested Professor Butler that he plucked the tiny flower, and, saying that “it should be not only the theme but the memorial of the thought they had heard,” bestowed it somewhere for preservation.—PROFESSOR KNIGHT.

Ruskin says of the poem:—

“That is a bit of good, downright, foreground painting,—no mistake about it; daisy, shadow, and stone texture and all. Our painters must come to this before they have done their duty.”

“The child is father of the man,”

for here, at the age of seventy-five, we have the intense love, the clear vision, the rich coloring, of the earlier poems.

See Aubrey de Vere, *Literature in its Social Aspects*.

1797.

The Reverie of Poor Susan.

This arose out of my observations of the affecting music of these birds hanging in this way in the London streets during the freshness and stillness of the spring mornings.—W. W.

See Myers' Wordsworth (English Men of Letters Series), page 16.

THE SONNET.

Among the Italians there originated a form of verse combination in which a special rime arrangement prevailed; the name "sonnet" was given to this. It was a short poem limited to the expression of a single idea; soon fourteen lines became the fixed length, and later these lines were combined according to fixed and intricate rules. According to these rules the ideal sonnet should conform to the following conditions: It must consist of fourteen lines divided into two systems — the major system, consisting of the first eight lines, complete in themselves; and then the minor system, with six concluding lines. The major system should contain but two rimes: 1, 4, 5, 8, and 2, 3, 6, 7, concluding with a pause in the sense. In the minor system there should be only two rimes: 9, 11, 13, and 10, 12, 14. Other rules were laid down, many of which were merely capricious, but these were insisted upon.

The earliest forms of the sonnet belong to the thirteenth century. Fra Guittone d'Arrezzo furnished the model for Dante and Petrarch, who perfected this form of writing, the one giving it strength, the other beauty.

"A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound;
With it Camöens soothed an exile's grief."

That period of English literature which was the prelude to the age of Spenser and Shakespeare received its main impulse from Italy. The influence of Chaucer had declined, and intellectual life disappeared with religious liberty. There remained only a few puerile chroniclers, and imitators of inane French romance.

Toward the end of the fifteenth century the nobility, possibly shamed by the contrast to the Scottish court, began to give some thought to the education of their children. The literary centre of Europe was at the brilliant court of Lorenzo de Medici, and hither flocked the scholars of all countries. When Englishmen returned filled with enthusiasm, and became tutors, they stimulated their pupils with a desire to visit Italy, the "land of promise."

It was to this secondary influence of the revival of learning that the new movement in literature was due. The heralds of the dawn were Sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, "who had tasted the sweet and stately measures and style of Italian poesy." To them belongs the honor of reforming the literature and introducing the sonnet into our language. Petrarch was their model, and love

their theme. Wyatt followed the Italian model very closely, and his work is characterized by strength and dignity. Surrey introduced some changes into the form of the sonnet: he divided it into three independent quatrains, and closed with a couplet. His work was distinguished for grace and beauty.

During the last ten years of the sixteenth century and the first ten of the seventeenth there was the most remarkable production of sonnets. The list, headed by Sidney, contains the names of Daniel, Constable, Lodge, Watson, Drayton, Spenser, and Shakespeare. With Shakespeare ends the first form of the English sonnet, composed of three quatrains and a concluding couplet, —

ab ab cd cd ef eg.

Milton's sonnets, although few in number, are of the finest quality; in their structure they follow Petrarch's rule, which divides the sonnet into two unequal parts, the major and the minor. This is the second form of the English sonnet, —

1, 4, 5, 8, 2, 3, 6, 7, || 9, 11, 13, 10, 12, 14, or
ab ba ab ba || cd cd cd.

After Milton we see no more of the sonnet in its power until we come to Cowper; following him is that illustrious company of singers contemporary with the French Revolution, — Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Byron, and Keats, each of whom made substantial contributions to the sonnet literature. Among these Wordsworth's work is by far the most significant, not only in the nature and variety of the subjects treated, but also in the manner of composition. He restored the sonnet to the place it held in Milton's time. The style of the sonnet was at the farthest remove from the style of the *Prelude* and the *Excursion*, and it is not a little remarkable that one who possessed such wealth of thought and such fluency of language should have been satisfied

“Within the sonnet's scanty plot of ground.”

But Wordsworth “had the tonic of a wholesome pride;” he was a most careful writer and was exceedingly frugal in his literary economy; these were the prerequisites for success with the sonnet. The care which he exercised in pruning, recasting, and correcting his workmanship is seen in the frequent alterations of the text; many of them cover the period of a lifetime, and preserve for us the changing moods of the Poet's mind. While nearly every poet since Wordsworth has occasionally dignified the sonnet, with only two — Elizabeth

Barrett Browning and Dante Gabriel Rossetti — has it been a favorite form of expression. Browning, who is master of so many varieties of verse, has, I think, never used the sonnet form.

1802.

I.

“I Grieved for Buonaparté.”

We are fortunate in knowing the birthday of the Wordsworthian sonnet. On May 21, 1802, while his sister was reading to him some of Milton's sonnets, his genius was kindled and immediately produced three sonnets: this sonnet is the only one of the three which has been preserved. With this trumpet-call to “a few strong instincts and a few plain rules,” opens that magnificent series of *Sonnets to Liberty*, which Mr. Myers says are worthy of comparison with the noblest passages of patriotic verse or prose which history has inspired.

The *Prelude* gives us the character of Wordsworth's early patriotism; the *Sonnets to Liberty*, his later; the aims and principles are the same in both — the enfranchisement of the individual from the tyranny of a low ideal. His change of opinion as to methods was entirely consistent, and he had a much truer democratic sense of the dignity of man than did those who hastened to pronounce him a deserter of the cause.

In this sonnet one hardly knows which to praise the most — the practical wisdom, the lofty conception, or the grave and solemn harmony. Can one confidently affirm that in these respects even Shakespeare's sonnets are superior?

II.

Composed upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802.

Wordsworth and his sister left Town-End for the Continent in July, 1802. Under date of July 30, we have the following record in his sister's diary: “Left London between five and six o'clock of the morning, outside the Dover coach. A beautiful morning. The city, St. Paul's, the river — a multitude of boats — made a beautiful sight as we crossed Westminster Bridge; the houses not overhung by their clouds of smoke, and were spread out endlessly; yet the sun shone so brightly, with such a pure light, that there was something like the purity of one of Nature's own grand spectacles.” It was on

the way to Dover that this sonnet was written, hence the date of the heading is incorrect. This is perhaps the best known of Wordsworth's sonnets, as it is certainly one of the noblest. In simplicity and grace of language, in dignity and purity of sentiment, in unity and compactness of form, it has no superior. In reference to it Walter Bagehot says: "A better instance of pure style cannot be found. Not a single expression can be spared, yet not a single expression rivets the attention." The full beauty of this sonnet was revealed to me when in July, 1887, after I had spent the night in the House of Commons listening to Gladstone, Harcourt, and Balfour, I crossed Westminster Bridge at early dawn. The contrast between the boisterous scenes of the House of Commons and the beauty and serenity of that July morning was indescribable.

III.

Composed by the Sea-side near Calais, 1802.

This sonnet and the six that follow it were composed at Calais in August, 1802. The following is from Dorothy's Journal: "Arrived at Calais at four o'clock in the morning of July 31st. Delightful walks in the evening, seeing far off in the west the coast of England like a cloud, crested with Dover Castle, the evening star, and the glory of the sky. The reflections in the water were more beautiful than the sky itself, — purple waves brighter than precious stones forever melting far away upon the sands."

IV.

Calais, August, 1802.

Cf. *Prelude*, vi. 339-341.

V.

Composed near Calais, on the Road leading to Andres.

Robert Jones was a college mate of Wordsworth, and accompanied him upon the pedestrian tour in Switzerland, 1790. Cf. *Prelude*, vi. 342 *et seq.*, with notes.

4. July 14, 1790, when the King swore fidelity to the new constitution.

VI.

Calais, August 15, 1802.

3, 11. Cf. *Prelude*, xi. 358-364, and note to previous sonnet.

VII.

Composed on the Beach near Calais.

The spirit of adoration, so restful, so calm, so intense, pervading this sonnet, is eminently Wordsworthian. The concluding lines express that belief in the divinity of childish intuition, which is so prominent in *We are Seven* and the *Ode*.

VIII.

On the Extinction of the Venetian Republic.

1. The result of the fourth crusade, in which only French and Venetians took part, was that the Cyclades, a part of Thessaly, some of the Byzantine cities, and about one half of the city of Constantinople fell to Venice. — KNIGHT.

2. Venice, in virtue of her naval power, was once mistress of the Mediterranean. The spoils and trade of the East enriched the city.

4, 5. See Ruskin, *Stones of Venice*.

In 452 Attila invaded Venetia and destroyed its capital, Aquileia; the fugitives from the cities fled to the islands in the lagoons and the Gulf of Venice; they soon became independent and chose their own consuls; in 697 they chose their first doge.

7, 8 In 1177 she gained a great victory over Otho, son of Frederick Barbarossa; in gratitude for this the Pope Alexander III. gave the Doge Ziani a ring, and instituted the ceremony of "marrying the Adriatic," by which was signified the supremacy of Venice. In May, 1797, the French troops took possession of the city, which no hostile force had ever before entered, and Venice lost her independence.

Cf. Mrs. Oliphant's *Makers of Venice*.

IX.

To Toussaint L'Ouverture.

The life of the Hero of St. Domingo is one of the most thrilling in the annals of history. Born of slave parents, having learned to read and write from a fellow slave, he joined the negro army in maintaining

their rights, and rose to be brigadier-general; in 1793 Hayti declared for France, and slaves were freed. In 1796 he was made commander of the French army of St. Domingo, and conquered the English and Spanish armies. When Napoleon attempted to reinstate slavery Toussaint resisted, and in 1802 he was declared an outlaw and captured by treachery; without trial he was cast into the dungeon at the Castle of Joux and left to die of starvation.

See *Toussaint L'Ouverture*, by Whittier.

In this "soul-animating strain" passion, with a step as stately as that of Milton, rises into an outburst of noble exultation. A divine sympathy, overleaping the narrow limits of nationality, breathes from every line.

X.

September, 1802, near Dover.

In Dorothy's Journal we have the following: "On 29th August left Calais at twelve o'clock in the morning for Dover. . . . Bathed and sat on the Dover cliffs, and looked upon France; we could see the shores almost as plain as if it were but an English lake."

No man of his time, statesman, philosopher, or poet, saw with such unerring insight into the great moral forces that determine the currents of history. — HON. GEORGE F. HOAR.

XI.

Written in London, September, 1802.

Wordsworth had a high ideal of his art, because he had a high ideal of man. Perhaps in none of his sonnets are there so many lessons for us in this mechanical and utilitarian age.

See Shakespeare, Sonnet CXLVI.

There tiny pleasures occupy the place
Of glories and of duties, as the feet
Of fabled fairies, when the sun goes down,
Trip o'er the grass where wrestlers strove by day.

LANDOR.

The work Wordsworth did — and I say it in all reverence — was the work which the Baptist did when he came to the pleasure-laden citizens of Jerusalem to work a reformation. — REV. F. W. ROBERTSON.

XII.

London, 1802.

The procession of the verse in this noble sonnet is easy and graceful, rising throughout the major part into the full organ tone; then in the minor falling gently away, calming, regulating, and restraining, with "artlessness which only art commands." For splendor of thought, vigor of style, and beauty of purpose it is unsurpassed.

XIII.

"Great men have been among us."

Goethe says that the theme of all human history is the contest between belief and unbelief; that periods in which belief prevails are inspiring, while periods in which unbelief predominates furnish but little food for the spirit of man.

Cf. *Prelude*, vii. 512-543.

XIV.

"It is not to be thought of that the Flood."

In this time of an expected invasion by Napoleon, when the heart of England was beating high, and signal beacons were flashing the summons to arms, this calm, clear, triumphant faith in freedom was uttered.

Cf. Coleridge's *Ode on France*.

XV.

"When I have borne in Memory."

In the history of Wordsworthian criticism there are to be found three sets of charges against him — Simplicity and Transcendentalism; Pantheism and High Churchism; Liberalism and Conservatism; now the truth of the matter is that none of these were well founded. In this sonnet we have a mingling of the aristocratic and democratic, resulting in intense and lofty love of country.

Cf. *Prelude*, xi. 105, — "Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive," etc.

1803.

XVI.

Composed at — Castle.

The town of Peebles is on the banks of the Tweed. After breakfast walked up the river to Neidpath Castle, about a mile and a half from the town. The castle stands upon a green hill overlooking the Tweed — a strong, square-towered edifice, neglected and desolate though not in ruin, the garden overgrown with grass, and the high wall that fenced it broken down; but I need not describe the scene, for William has done it better than I could do in a sonnet which he wrote the same day. — *Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal*, Sept. 18, 1803.

See *Memorials of a Tour in Scotland*, 1803, and notes; also Introduction to Canto I. of Scott's *Marmion*, 1-36.

XVII.

“There is a Bondage worse, far worse to bear.”

Napoleon had been elected Consul for life, and was making rapid strides toward absolute power; by his interference in the affairs of Switzerland, England claimed that he had violated the treaty of Amiens, and in May, 1803, war was declared.

Wordsworth's moral earnestness never encourages one to break with the world and live in the seclusion of the cloister. He strove to serve his country and mankind by teaching that life is the workshop in which is fashioned the armor of the soul.

Cf. Horace, Ode XXII., — “Integer vitæ scelerisque purus.”

. XVIII.

October, 1803.

What a country longs for is personalities, grand persons to counteract its materialities. — EMERSON.

XIX.

“England! the Time is come when thou shouldst wean.”

What moral courage was required to utter the “odious truth” contained in the major part of this sonnet! He was equally undaunted in his *Tract on the Convention of Cintra*, which Canning declared to be the finest piece of political eloquence since Burke.

XX.

To the Men of Kent, October, 1803.

The “men of Kent” were the inhabitants of that part of the country nearest France. On this coast the Romans landed, and “Cantium” was the recipient of many privileges at their hands. Later the Saxons fought their first battles there. These people could not be conquered by the Normans. The Saxon law of gavelkind is peculiar to this county; by it the estates are inherited equally by all the sons.

It does the heart good to read these fine and pure and true and manly words, from a man whose every word and every thought and every act were the words and thoughts and acts of manly, true-spirited, high-minded Englishmen. — REV. F. W. ROBERTSON.

XXI.

In the Pass of Killicranky.

An invasion being expected, October, 1803.

Thursday, September 8. — Before breakfast we walked to the Pass of Killicranky. . . . Every one knows that this Pass is famous in military history. When we were travelling in Scotland an invasion was hourly looked for, and one could not but think with some regret of the times when from the now depopulated Highlands forty or fifty thousand men might have been poured down for the defence of the country. . . . I will transcribe a sonnet suggested to William by this place and written in October, 1803. — *Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal.*

Professor Shairp, alluding to the depopulation of the Highlands which began early in this century, says: “The old native Gael who used to live grouped in hamlets in the glens . . . were dispossessed of their holdings to make way for Lowland farmers. One question only was asked — What shall grow the largest amount of mutton for

the Glasgow and Liverpool markets? In the glens which formerly sent forth whole regiments you could not now get a single man to wear her Majesty's uniform."

See Professor Blackie, *The Highlander's Lament*.

The following is from *Last Leave-taking of the Mountains*, by Duncan MacIntyre, the Bard of Glenorchy: —

"Yestreen as I walked the mountain,
O the thoughts that arose in me;
For the people I loved that used to be there
In the desert, no more could I see.
Ah! little I dreamed that Ben
Such changes could undergo,
That I should see it covered with sheep,
And the world would deceive me so!"

See note to *Address to Kilchurn Castle*.

1806.

XXII.

"Nuns fret not at their Convent's Narrow Room."

Wordsworth felt that there existed prejudices against the sonnet, and that it lay under a slight that was undeserved: he therefore determined to reinstate it in its former place of dignity and power.

See note on *Personal Talk*.

This is one of those doctrinal poems, abounding in Mr. Wordsworth's works, which some persons complain that they cannot understand, having read them probably as rapidly as they would any erotic effusion of any glowing gentleman who writes verses. — SIR HENRY TAYLOR.

Cf. *Scorn not the Sonnet*, 1827.

XXIII.

Composed by the side of Grasmere Lake.

Cf. Matthew Arnold's *Quiet Work*.

XXIV.

"The World is too much with us."

Wordsworth does not condemn commercial activity in general, but seeing clearly that an inordinate greed for gain often led to speculation which was little short of gambling, and in which the entire life was engrossed — man entering into slavery to his passions, — he uttered these solemn truths, "to free, arouse, dilate."

Nature will not have us fret or fume. When we come out of the caucus, or the bank, or the Abolition convention, or the Transcendental Club, into the fields and woods, she says to us, "So hot, my little sir." — EMERSON.

See Browning's *Grammarians' Funeral*.

14. Cf. Spenser, *Colin Clouts Come Home Again*, l. 245. — Prof. A. S. COOK.

XXV.-XXVIII.

Personal Talk.

Wordsworth found a new use for the sonnet, and turned its force into fresh channels. While others had addressed several sonnets to the same person, no one until his time had so united a series that, while each sonnet was complete in itself, it at the same time formed a stanza of a larger poem. The four following, entitled *Personal Talk*, illustrate this unity, evolution, and completeness.

The picture of Wordsworth's domestic life is one of the brightest in the history of literary genius. Free, joyous, and contented in their cottage home — which was even less pretentious than that of many of the humble dalesmen — they gave to the world an example of "plain living and high thinking." Living in communion with her who was dearer to him than life and light; cheered by the loved presence of the "dear, dear sister," with an occasional visit from the sailor brother or Coleridge, what need had he to enter the society of "the world's true Worldlings!" One whose companions are Spenser and Shakespeare will have no time to make the acquaintance of scandal-mongers, those assassins of character. While the Poet recognizes the necessity of themes which are concrete rather than abstract, he would select such as do not foster the "comment and the gibe," but such as conduct the mind from the "seen and the temporal, to the unseen and the eternal." Who can believe but that "great gains" result from such a life!

Lines 9, 10, 11, and 12 of Sonnet XXVIII. are cut upon the pedestal of the Poet's statue in Westminster Abbey.

XXIX.—XXXI.

To Sleep.

“The three sonnets to Sleep,” says Sara Coleridge, “are very beautiful and peculiar; not Miltonic, or Shakespearean, or Petrarchian, nor like the productions of any later sonnetteers, but entirely Wordsworthian and inimitable.”

Cf. *Macbeth*, ii. 2; *Midsummer Night's Dream*, iii. 2; *Henry IV.*, Part II., iii. 1; Archbishop Trench, *Ode to Sleep*.

XXXII.

To the Memory of Raisley Calvert.

In 1794, when Wordsworth was unsettled in his plans for the future, his friend Calvert was taken ill, and he went to care for him. Calvert was steward to the Duke of Norfolk, and although “himself no poet,” he could appreciate genius in others; Wordsworth remained with him until his death, and on opening his will it was found that £900 had been bequeathed him; this was a turning-point in the Poet's career, and the gift, in its importance, was second only to that earlier “gift of God,” *Dorothea*. It enabled him to have a home, and in 1795 he settled with his sister at Racedown.

See note to *Lines Left upon a Seat in a Yew-tree*, 1795.

In the *Prelude* (xiv. 355-369) Wordsworth has recorded his gratitude to Calvert for thus “clearing a passage for him.”

XXXIII.

November, 1806.

Napoleon's victory at Jena, October 14, had completely shattered the power of Prussia, England's sole ally on the Continent; and in November Napoleon issued his declaration of war against this only remaining fortress of liberty. When many, considering the cause to be hopeless, were ready to yield a base submission, from the solitude of the North there came a voice, clear, loud, and strong, exulting in a sublime faith in the might of right, calling upon England to arouse herself.

XXXIV.

Admonition.

Intended more particularly for the perusal of those who may have happened to be enamoured of some beautiful place of retreat in the country of the Lakes. — W. W.

Cf. *Highland Hut*, 1831.

The light which shone and the voice which called from heaven on Saul of Tarsus were not more distinctly influences which unconditionally seized and swayed the apostle, than was the Power in the outward world which surrounded, revealed itself, and made the poet-seer its own, its daily vassal and its impassioned voice. — PROFESSOR VEITCH.

1807.

XXXV.

Thought of a Briton on the Subjugation of Switzerland.

This was composed while pacing to and fro between the Hall of Coleorton, then rebuilding, and the principal farm-house of the estate, in which we lived for nine or ten months. — W. W.

See notes to *The Nightingale*, 1807.

In 1802 Napoleon crushed out the liberties of Switzerland: in 1807 he was master of Europe, and was making gigantic preparations to invade England.

Here is passion of a great thought taken up in stillness into a great imagination. Passion must indeed burn strongly in the heart before it can fling its glow thus high into the loftier regions of the intelligence. That is the reason why such poetry seems cold to readers whose narrower sympathies can recognize passion only in its interjectional form. Its *white* heat is to them snow. — AUBREY DE VERE.

This is what I call perfect workmanship, . . . not an image, not a word, but what helps the vision of the idea. — DR. HUDSON.

XXXVI.

To Thomas Clarkson, on the Final Passing of the Bill for the Abolition of the Slave Trade.

Clarkson's work began when he selected his subject for his Latin essay at St. John's College, Cambridge: "Anne liceat invitos in

servitum dare?" From that time he devoted himself to the abolition of the slave trade. The most powerful opposition arose against him, and not until the accession of Fox, in 1806, did the cause gain advantage in Parliament; in March, 1807, the Government declared the slave trade illegal.

When Wordsworth's soul was stirred with the greater passions of humanity he rises to a height of majestic passion, his words have the stately step of the gods — they burn like the bush on Sinai, white, but unconsumed. — REV. STOPFORD BROOKE.

1811.

XXXVII.

"Here Pause: the Poet claims at least this Praise."

Napoleon's grand march through Europe dazzled the eyes of weak men everywhere, and many seemed to lose the power to discriminate between right and wrong, between greatness and power; the scales of conscience were tampered with, and admiration for that Enemy of virtue became weightier than virtue itself. Wordsworth felt that such a condition of political morality merited the severest indignation of all true men. The true poet is the true man.

"The poet in a golden clime was born,
With golden stars above;
Dowered with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,
The love of love."

1815.

XXXVIII.

To B. R. Haydon.

No artist ever had a higher ideal of his calling, or pursued it with more unswerving devotion, than Wordsworth. "It was the main, the serious, the solemn business of his being." He believed that a poet was both *born* and *made*; that poetry was a divine gift, "not to be acquired by labor and learning, but adorned with both." Possessing powers which — had he chosen to use them for that end — would have secured for him immediate popularity, through long years of contempt

and ridicule Wordsworth resolutely withstood all temptation. When his few admirers were troubled by the coldness with which his work was received, he replied: "Make yourselves at rest respecting me; I speak the truths the world must feel at last." Wordsworth's idea of the call and mission of the poet should be contrasted with that of Pope. "Poetry and criticism," says Pope, "are by no means the universal concern of the world, but only the affair of idle men who write in their closets, and of idle men who read there. . . . All the advantages I can think of accruing from a genius for Poetry, are an agreeable power of self-amusement, when a man is idle or alone, — the privilege of being admitted into the best company."

A more brilliant or a more pathetic career than that of Haydon is hardly to be found. Confessedly a genius of the highest order; with a love for his art which has never been surpassed; sublimely courageous in his devotion to what he considered to be his duty as a leader of "Historic Painting;" surrounded by the most steadfast friends and the most subtle enemies; now upon the highest wave of favor, now lodging in a debtor's jail, and at last driven to despair at being cheated of his deserts; repeating the wail of Lear —

"Stretch me no longer on this tough world," —

he takes his own life.

At the time this sonnet was sent him he was suffering a cruel persecution at the hands of some members of the Royal Academy because he had discomfited them in their attempts to cast doubt upon the genuineness of the Elgin marbles, and had said, "No more *sign painting* now." The petty spite and jealousy which were exhibited by the authorities in refusing to give his work a fair showing before the public seem hardly credible. Cowper wrote: "I blush for a state of society in which talents and genius such as yours meet with such a reward."

That Haydon was often indiscreet his friends acknowledge, but even his indiscretions were "born of high-mindedness and a jealousy for good."

"His singleness of aim
Ought to have frightened into brooded shame
A money-mong'ring, pitiable brood."

What the sympathy of a man like Wordsworth meant to him is shown in his correspondence. On receiving this sonnet he wrote: "It is the highest honor that ever was paid or ever can be paid to me. You are the first English poet who has ever done complete justice to

my delightful art." Again, when he was so successfully advancing his great object by his lectures on art, which were received with such enthusiasm at Oxford, he wrote: "To whom shall I dedicate them? To William Wordsworth, who raised up their author into the eye of his country when he was oppressed and persecuted." Again, when alluding to the honors of his life, he said. "The first and the last are the greatest—the sonnets of Wordsworth and my reception at the University of Oxford; but the first is the *first* and will ever remain so."

Besides Wordsworth, Keats manfully supported the great painter. See his sonnets addressed to Haydon

The *Judgment of Solomon* and *Christ's Entry into Jerusalem* showed conclusively that Haydon was the first historical painter that England had produced. The latter is now the property of the Catholic Cathedral in Cincinnati. "The original study of Wordsworth (whom Haydon introduced into the picture in the character of a devout believer) is in the possession of Mr. J. S. Pearce, of London, on it in the artist's writing is—

" ' WORDSWORTH,
For Entry into Jerusalem, 1817.' " — KNIGHT.

See Browning's *Popularity*, and Carlyle's *The Hero as Poet*.

This sonnet, the title of which in the early editions of Wordsworth's works was *To R. B. Haydon*, is alluded to by Haydon, in a letter to Moxon the publisher, as follows: "He [Wordsworth] dedicates his sonnets to *R. B. Haydon*. My name is *B. R. Haydon*."

XXXIX.

Catherine Wordsworth.

Wordsworth had already tasted of the cup of affliction in the death of his brother; in 1812 he was made to drink deep draughts, for in that year his little daughter Catherine, and his second son, Thomas, a lad of but six years, died. They were buried in the church-yard at Grasmere. In the epitaph we find these lines:—

" O blessed Lord!
Support us! teach us calmly to resign
What we possessed, and now is wholly Thine."

Wordsworth at this time was living at the Parsonage, opposite the Church, and the proximity to the graves of his little ones continually recalled to him his losses: he accordingly removed to Rydal Mount.

1820.

XL.

Oxford, May 30, 1820.

Although Wordsworth was loyal to his own University, yet he could sing the praises of her rival.

See Boase's excellent history of Oxford, in *Historic Towns*.

XLI.

"Sole Listener, Duddon."

The remarkable series entitled *The River Duddon* includes thirty-four sonnets. The local allusions in these can be easily identified. Wordsworth fixed the rise of the Duddon near three shire-stones — the meeting-point of the counties Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Lancashire. In 1887 I explored the "birthplace" of this stream, with the aid of the excellent notes of Mr. Herbert Rix, to whom I am indebted for many of the following notes.

Wrynose Bottom, the scene of this sonnet, is wild and lonely, yet everywhere you meet the "tripping lambs," — better scalers of the crags than you are likely to prove. At Cockey Beck there is a farmhouse, possibly the "cottage rude and gray."

XLII.

Seathwaite Chapel.

With the Poet as our guide, we leave the springs of the Duddon and pass the first of the three sets of "Stepping Stones," the "Faery Chasm," and come to a crag known to the dalesmen as *The Pen*, from which Mr. Rix thinks Wordsworth's "Open Prospect" was had. From it we get views of the rich sylvan beauty of the Duddon Valley; Hardknott, with its remains of a Roman camp, Stoneside, with its Druid Circle, and Seathwaite, with its venerable yews and old gray chapel, are in sight.

At Seathwaite, in 1709, was born Robert Walker, better known in the Lake-land as Wonderful Walker. He was the youngest of twelve children, and being of delicate frame was bred a scholar and took holy orders; he was appointed to the cure of Seathwaite, the value of which was £5 a year. Besides ministering to the spiritual needs of his people he taught school in the chapel, and Wordsworth says that when in the winter the pupils suffered from the cold he sent them

to the parsonage or for a run on the mountain-side. In the evening he was busy teasing, spinning, and weaving wool. His pew in the chapel is still to be seen upholstered with the cloth woven at the parsonage. He assisted the dalesmen in their husbandry, and at clipping time plied the shears. On Sundays broth was served at the parsonage to those of the congregation who had come from a distance. He pursued his studies by a light made of rushes dipped in tallow; and Wordsworth, who was no mean critic, says that his style was "correct, simple, and animated."

His wife died in January, 1802, aged ninety-three; and in June of the same year he passed away, in the ninety-third year of his age and the sixty-seventh of his curacy.

See Wordsworth's Prose Works, vol. iii.; also the *Excursion*, book vii.

12-14. See Chaucer, *Prologue to Canterbury Tales*; Herbert, *Priest to the Temple*, and Goldsmith, *Deserted Village*.—KNIGHT.

XLIII.

"Return, Content."

Wordsworth says that he first became acquainted with the Duddon by accompanying a friend from Hawkshead on a fishing excursion.

Cf. *Prelude*, i. 269-300.

XLIV.

"Who swerves from Innocence."

5-8. In regard to these lines, Wordsworth says that oddly enough this imagination was realized in 1840, when he visited this district with his wife and daughter and others. On leaving Seathwaite the party separated, and Mrs. Wordsworth, taking an opposite direction, was tempted to an eminence, expecting there to await them on their return; they, however, did not find her until well into the evening.

XLV.

Afterthought.

It is not possible to ascertain from what point the Poet took this view of the Duddon. Rev. H. D. Rawnsley thinks that it may have been the summit of a hill just above Broughton, and that the sight of the little Broughton church would give rise to the thought that the "elements must vanish."

The last stanza of Whittier's poem on Wordsworth strikes the same note as this sonnet:—

“ Art builds on sand ; the works of pride
And human passion change and fall ;
But that which shares the life of God,
With Him surviveth all.”

It was in this faith that he quietly reposed in his domestic life, and by it enhanced all the faithful affection for wife and sister, children and brother, that nowhere in English poetry burns with a lovelier or a purer light. — REV. STOPFORD BROOKE.

1821.

XLVI.

Introduction to Ecclesiastical Sonnets.

While the ecclesiastical sonnets, begun in 1821 and continued through the Poet's later life, do not often rise to the height of his best work, yet there are among them a few, which for charm of diction, united with depth and delicacy of sentiment, are unsurpassed.

XLVII.

Seclusion.

See *Legends of Saxon Saints*, Aubrey de Vere.

XLVIII.

Mutability.

Cf. Browning, *Prospice*.

XLIX.—LI.

Inside King's College Chapel, Cambridge.

Unless one has passed some time in the presence of England's noble castles and inspiring cathedrals, he is apt to wonder at the place they occupy in the literature and the life of her people. In the seclusion of the cloisters and quadrangles of Oxford and Cambridge the human past, consecrated by the memories of kings and queens, of saints and sages, of poets and scholars, fills the soul with awe. Wordsworth, in reverencing King's College Chapel—the noblest and most inspiring

structure ever erected for collegiate worship — has yielded to the spell of this human past. The history of this magnificent chapel — the last of the thoroughly mediæval structures erected at Cambridge — is so remarkable that I cannot refrain from giving it somewhat in detail.

On the 10th of February, 1441, about one year after his founding of Eton College, Henry VI. signed the charter for the first foundation of the Royal College of St. Nicholas, but the site chosen was so limited that in 1443 he granted a charter to King's College, in order that poor scholars from Eton might be maintained at Cambridge free of expense. At the present time a certain number of Etonians are annually sent to King's College. The provisions as seen in the will of Henry VI. are the result of an examination of William Wykeham's College at Winchester: this document is remarkable for the accuracy and detail of the King's plans, even specifying the planting of trees and flowers. The first stone of the building was laid by the King himself on July 28, 1446. The designer of the structure is unknown; it is conjectured, from the personal supervision and alterations made by him at Eton, that Henry himself was the architect. The chapel, 288 feet long and 40 feet wide, was to form the north of the quadrangle, the east and west sides of which were to join it, while the south was to be occupied by chambers. The material, quarried from the same place as that used for Eton, is white limestone, and marks the limit of Henry's work, which ceased at his deposition. Little was done to the building for nearly half a century, until, at the close of his reign, Henry VII. determined to do honor to his uncle by completing it. In 1508 the work was resumed, and carried on by the executors of his will; the walls, the great vault, the battlements, and pinnacles were completed. On entering the city from Girton in 1887, these towers were the first to greet my sight. I saw —

“The long-roofed chapel of King's College lift
Turrets and pinnacles in answering files.”

Henry VIII. was now solicited by the college to complete the work, and the interior was finished. Of the twenty-six windows, twenty-five contain four pictures, each in “Oryent colours and Imagery of the Story of the olde lawe and the newe lawe after the fourme of the glasse windowes of the Kinge's newe chapell at Westmynster.” The windows are the most important specimen of English glass-painting in existence. These glorious paintings are in two series around the chapel — the upper illustrating scenes from the Old Testament, the

lower, scenes from the New Testament. Such is the delicacy of tint and the graceful blending of colors, that while the brighter hues prevail, there is the most perfect harmony, the shading is so exceptional as to be transparent, and the fretted roof and arches glimmer,

“ dyed

In the soft checkerings of a sleepy light.”

The figures are larger than life, and the expression is strong and beautiful —

“ A glorious work of fine intelligence.”

That these windows should have escaped the fanaticism of the Puritan soldiers quartered in the city is almost a miracle. The work of Henry VII. can be detected by the presence of the red rose, the hawthorn bush, and the crown, in the tracery of the windows; while the weaving together of the initials of Henry VIII. and Anne Boleyn on the organ screen and stalls tells its own tale.

8. *St. Paul's Cathedral.*

1823.

LII.

“ Not Love, not War.”

It may well be set down to the credit of Wordsworth's Muse that she does not affect “the perfumed chambers of the great;” that she lets the sumptuous chariots and equipages wheel by unnoticed; and that she rather shuns than seeks “the canopies of costly state,” the proud saloons of fashion and high life, preferring the lowly cottage where modest worth and “honorable brows bedewed with toil” have their abode, and eat their bread in purity and gentleness of heart. — DR. HUDSON.

Cf. Highland Hut, 1831.

1827.

LIII.

To Rotha Q—.

Rotha was the daughter of Mr. Edward Quillinan, who, in 1841, married the Poet's daughter Dora.

See *Address to my Infant Daughter Dora, 1804.*

10. Rotha is the river that unites the three sister-lakes, — Grasmere, Rydal, and Windermere.

LIV.

To —, in her Seventieth Year.

Lady Fitzgerald, as described to me by Lady Beaumont. — W. W.

This sonnet answers admirably Aubrey de Vere's definition: "It is in poetry what the Collect is in devotion;" within its compass there is "meditation and observation, imagination and passion."

LV.

"Scorn not the Sonnet."

Composed almost extempore in a short walk on the western side of Rydal Lake.

It is not often that criticism is presented to us in the form of the highest poetry and condensed into fourteen lines. This sonnet alone is sufficient to vindicate Wordsworth's claim to mastery in this form of poetry; for in it we have history enriched with the finest touches of the imagination, and transmitted in diction pure and strong, while the music varies from the most powerful animation to the softest cadences of metrical harmony —

"Rising loudly
Up to its climax, and then dying proudly."

1830.

LVI.

To the Author's Portrait.

The portrait here alluded to was painted by H. W. Pickersgill, R. A., at the request of the Master and Fellows of St. John's College, Cambridge. It represents the Poet seated under a high bank, with Lake scenery in the background; he is clad in a black cloak lined with red, while the left hand, holding a pencil, rests on some papers. The features are sharp profile, as the face is turned to the right. The picture hangs in the Dining Hall.

The last six lines of this sonnet are not written for poetical effect, but as a matter of fact, which, in more than one instance, could not escape my notice in the servants of the house. — W W

1831.

LVII.

The Trossachs.

For an account of this visit to Scotland, see note to *Yarrow Revisited*, and *On the Departure of Sir Walter Scott*. Wordsworth says that the remembrance of his recent farewell to Sir Walter Scott colored this and the two following sonnets. Wordsworth first saw the Trossachs in company with his sister and Coleridge. See *Memorials of a Tour in Scotland*, 1803.

In Sonnet LIV. we had the critical and the descriptive; here we have the moral and the descriptive.

Mr. Walter Bagehot cites this poem as an illustration of Wordsworth's purity of style.

See *Stepping Westward*, written on the same ground in 1803.

LVIII.

The Pibroch's Note.

The following is from Duncan MacIntyre's poem, *Ben Doran*; it is fitted to the pibroch's tune:—

Honor o'er all Bens
 On Bendoran be!
 Of all hills the sun kens,
 Beautifullest he;
 Mountain long and sweeping,
 Nooks the red deer keeping,
 Light on braesides sleeping;
 There I've watched delightedly.

Translated by PROFESSOR SHAIRP.

LIX.

Highland Hut.

Wordsworth, the great poet of our times, has gone to common life, to the feelings of our universal nature, to the obscure and neglected portions of society, for beautiful and touching themes. The grand truth which pervades his poetry is that the beautiful is not confined to the rare, the new, the distant — to scenery and modes of life open only to the few. He is the poet of humanity; he teaches reverence

for our universal nature ; he breaks down the factitious barriers between human hearts. — WM. E. CHANNING, D. D.

1833.

LX.

To the River Derwent.

Although this sonnet was written in 1819, Wordsworth republished it as introductory to the following tour.

In the summer of 1833 Wordsworth, accompanied by his son, the Rev. John Wordsworth, and Henry Crabb Robinson, made a short tour in Scotland. His course was down the Derwent to Whitehaven and the Isle of Man, thence to Staffa and Iona, returning to England by Loch Awe, through Ayrshire to Carlisle, and by the river Eden and Ullswater. This and the following four sonnets mark his route. The Derwent, the river of his youth, rises in Borrowdale near the Eagle's Crag.

See *Prelude*, i. 269-300; also note to *The Sparrow's Nest*, 1801.

LXI.

In Sight of the Town of Cockermouth.

Wordsworth's mother died in 1778 and his father in 1783; they were buried at Cockermouth.

See Sonnet LX. and references.

LXII.

Address from the Spirit of Cockermouth Castle.

Cockermouth Castle stands on an eminence not far from the manor-house in which Wordsworth was born. It was built by the first lord of Allerdale, in the reign of William I., as a Border defence against Cumberland's old enemies, the Scots. It was captured by Douglas in 1387, and in 1568 was the prison of Mary Queen of Scots. It is one of the finest castle ruins in England.

See Sonnet LX., references; also *Prelude*, i. 269-287, and *Historic Towns, Carlisle*, chap. v. Cf. *To a Butterfly*.

LXIII.

Mary Queen of Scots.

Landing at the mouth of the Derwent, Workington.

Mary, in making her escape from Scotland after the battle at Langside, 1568, made a fruitless effort to reach Dumbarton, and then sought refuge in Galloway. After a ride of ninety miles she reached the Solway; then jumping into a fishing boat, with a handful of attendants she landed at Workington, and under escort of the Warden and gentry of Cockermouth before evening was safe in the Castle of Carlisle.

See *Historic Towns, Carlisle*, chap. vii.

LXIV.

“‘There!’ said the Stripling.

“It is remarkable,” says Wordsworth, “that though Burns lived some time here, he nowhere adverts to the splendid prospects stretching towards the sea, and bounded by the peaks of Arran, which he must have had daily before his eyes. Soon after we had passed Moss-giel farm we crossed the Ayr murmuring and winding through a narrow woody hollow.”

See Burns’s *Daisy*.

LXV.

“Most Sweet it is.”

This sonnet reveals to us the method of the Poet’s work, and if rightly understood will show us the grounds of his criticism upon Scott’s method, which he considered as too conscious approaching Nature with pencil and note-book and jotting down an inventory of her charms. “In every scene,” says Wordsworth, “many of the most brilliant details are but accidental; a true eye for Nature does not note them, or at least does not dwell on them.” Matthew Arnold says: “This sonnet cannot be matched from Milton.”

See *Essays on Poetry*, vol. ii. chap. xv., by Aubrey de Vere.

1837.

LXVI.

The Pine of Monte Mario, at Rome.

In March, 1837, Wordsworth, in company with his friend, Henry Crabb Robinson, visited Italy.

This pine had been bought by Sir George Beaumont to save it from the axe. Wordsworth says that he could not resist the temptation to embrace the trunk of this interesting monument of his friend's feelings for the beauties of Nature.

See *Memoirs of Wordsworth*.

1838.

LXVII.

Composed on a May morning, 1838.

This sonnet was composed upon the "Far Terrace" at Rydal Mount, "where," says Wordsworth, "I have murmured out many thousands of verses."

Wordsworth's soul, "wedded to this goodly universe in love and holy passion," could find no sphere from which the divine life was excluded, no sphere where joy was not "in widest commonalty spread." It is this element in Wordsworth's work that makes it so uplifting.

LXVIII.

"Blest Statesman He."

Cf. *Character of the Happy Warrior*.

The earth waits for exalted manhood.

EMERSON.

1841.

LXIX., LXX.

To a Painter.

Miss Margaret Gillies, the accomplished artist, was a friend of the Wordsworths, and often visited in the family. She painted several portraits of the Poet; the first was at the suggestion of Moon, the publisher, for the purpose of engraving. Wordsworth was so much pleased with it that he requested that it be reproduced, and Mrs. Wordsworth's added. It was to this portrait that these sonnets refer.

See *She was a Phantom of Delight*.

1842.

LXXI.

"A Poet!"

He would be a very bold man who would assert that Wordsworth, when at his best, was not an artist in a very high degree, and yet in the writings of no other poet do we find so clearly illustrated the limits between poetry and verse. In both of his long poems we have poetry of as lofty character as our language can boast, and in the same poems we also meet passages of the plainest verse.

The subtle relation existing between the conscious and the unconscious elements in Art is a mystery; it is generally true, however, that as the one increases the other diminishes. Thus the prevalence of the one or the other of these tendencies — conscious effect or lofty inspiration, spiritual disease or spiritual health, reason or faith — constitutes the ebb and flow in English poetry.

In the first part of this sonnet Wordsworth gives us something of the method of the poets of the Restoration, who, as Keats says, taught that to write poetry was

"to smooth, inlay, and clip and fit.
 easy was the task,
 A hundred handicraftsmen wore the mask
 Of Poesy."¹

Of these writers Mr. Gosse says that for the direct appeal to Nature they substituted generalities and second-hand allusions, and the result of coining these conventional counters for groups of ideas was that the personal, the exact, was lost in literature.

It was against such a perversion of Art that Wordsworth did battle; he insisted that true Art was the product of the whole nature, intellect, sensibility, and will, aglow with a lofty spiritual imagination where "form is lost in the effulgence of the soul breathing through it." In that battle there was needed "the service of a mind and heart heroically fashioned."

Mr. Gosse again says that the poetry of these classical versemen received blow upon blow from the naturalistic poets, until by Wordsworth and Coleridge it was destroyed altogether.

¹ *Sleep and Poetry.*

In the valedictory sonnet to the edition of 1838 we have the method and the aim of Wordsworth's work :—

“ If in this book Fancy and Truth agree ;
 If simple Nature trained by careful Art
 Through it have won a passage to thy heart ;
 Grant me thy love, I crave no other fee.”

Dr. Moir, the Scottish author and critic, says : “ Never, perhaps, in the whole range of literary history, from Homer downwards, did any individual, throughout the course of a long life, dedicate himself to poetry with a devotion so pure, so perfect, and so uninterrupted as he did.”

Consult *Wordsworth as an Artist*, in Hudson's *Studies in Wordsworth*, Corson's *Introduction to the Study of Browning*, Dowden's *Interpretation of Literature*, in *Transcripts and Studies*, and Preface to my edition of the *Prelude*.

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