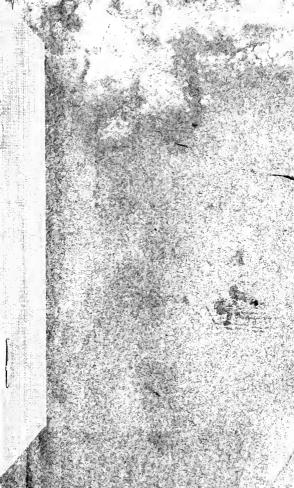




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TROUBLES OF CHAOS

A POEM IN THREE PARTS

ΒY

THOMAS GORDON HAKE, M. D.

Author of "La Beatrice Cenci."



BADEN

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PREFACE.

The original intention was to affix a series of philosophical notes to this work, on some points which have only been obscurely hinted at in the poem; but, as a deeper research and reflection, is necessary to perfect the authors views on a subject which has occupied his unceasing enquiry and wonder, - the Origin of our Being, - he defers his disguisition to a future day. It is an easier, and more satisfactory task, to give the poetry than the inductions of science; and it is to be hoped that the principles contained in this composition, may inspire the reader with the feeling of how the more noble it is, and how much no worthy of the human intellect, to found its belief on reason, than on undisputed authority.

The orders of poetry are as various as those of nature, but the highest is, decidedly, that which can apply itself to those cravings of the mind which philosophy has hitherto been unable to appease. While the following poem celebrates the obsure workings of nature, it may appear to some as an allegory of this

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eventful century; a display of ideas whose tendency is to excite in the minds of men, of whatever nation, a sense of their own natural greatness, and a horror of their submissive degradation. Of all our sufferings, none is so painful as that which arises from giving a moments pang to the mind of a sensitive fellow-creature. But the age has arrived in which it is a duty to assert the foundations of nature, as pre-eminent over the sublime doctrines of men of ruling genius; in which philosophy is to supplant the various artificial religions which influence the minds of nations.

However severely he may have criticised certain habits, the writer has never acted through a contempt of popular intelligence; but has used strong expressions, only for the purpose of inducing an examination into our motives of action; and the probable result of all that we sanction, assert, or undertake.

To the lady, at whose request "La Beatrice Cenci" was written, the author begs permission also to inscribe this poem, in gratitude of the repose which his mind has found, during leisure hours, in the society of herself, and of her family.

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Baden, in the Grand-Duchy, June 25, 1832.

THE TROUBLES OF CHAOS.

PART. I.

O Reason! loveliest of material things; Unfolder of the simple sciences! The deity, whose revelations stand Writ on the brains of babes! of all mankind The golden anchor, and the only hope! I call thee sacred, and make sacrifice, Of offerings, at the muses' holy shrine, — A song on this great world's antiquity. Oft I've descended the deep precipice, And open'd there my book, to study well The earth's foundations, and have watch'd the hours

My spirit to enlist in nature's ways: Nor, ever yet, have found the night too long To ponder o'er the evidence of things, Which thou hast offer'd to Humanity!

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(6)

Time was, when no bright worlds at evening came,

Returning to each others arms, to show How love produces mental harmony : For, ere intelligence arose, the whole Was gloom, and coldness, and wide solitude! Darkness was space, and space was infinite! Mind, had from all the past, in slumbers, mov'd Among the chaos of the elements, Existing thoughtless, senseless, passionless: When, in the deep, a transitory ray Of some strange orb, was bright, and closing, hid Its beauty in the multitudinous void. In shudder, mov'd, from the intrusive beam, The crudes of embryon nature; and, the Spirit Of Vision, starting from his sable bed, Trac'd various colors o'er the airy shapes Which shar'd the vast expanse, and then was dark !

Hills murmur'd that event; and echo stirr'd Those sleeping spirits, charmers of the ear, — Those SEVEN, who hold the powers of harmony. Unlink'd, they charm not now the silent sense, But, all in discord moving, from one mass Into another mass, — each other jar! And to express her horrors, of the scene Scarce variegated by it's misery, In their clash'd union, Cusos found a tongue!

In time to such uproar, the elements Arise; their uncouth atoms disarrange, And cause new ruin, and confusion: Whilst Vision, wondring at his being, stares On darkness, and expects a second beam. His eyes unseal'd, and clear experience found Of life; with dismal sights, form'd into dreams, And restless sleep, henceforward is his task To rouse all dormant sensibility. So Essences, excited by the scenes, -Within their dire deformity, perceive A mental chaos, void of sympathy! In darkness mantled each uplifts his soul : And by the working passions, all great space ls peopled; and her farthest oceans, cross'd By pilgrims, searching out a better doom.

Now are there struggles of all elements! Strange natures interfere, and clashing, cause Signals of insurrection, civil wars With revolutionary hymns and tears, For order, life, and blessed liberty! Sometimes th' instinctive germs associate To plant a stately forest on the rise Of hills; but, from the verdant top, decay Sinks down, and soon is all disorganiz'd In need of new support! Whence comes, alas! Scenes piteous, worse than barren! mountains lin'd

With wither'd trees, no fresh green leaf to hide Their naked forms! while, from their central hold

The mountains split in twain, such precipice Present, as from the brink the human mind O'erlooks with dread, tho' death, who habits there,

Beckons, with tempting witchcraft, to the limbs To spring into the deep sublimity,

Which seems to offer wings, and light descent! Now, winding down a valley, one slight turn Unveils of rocks the wounded surfaces:

Mind looks above, and with their torrent, falls From mountain, down to mountain, while the

depths

Of precipice, in expectation lay! The madden'd floods, descending to support The ocean's sovreignty against the soil, Crush, with their liquid wheels, the rocky way. Tho' born among such utter miseries, —

Tenacious still of life, the herb and tree Such home prefer, to wither out their hour, To absolute decay; and try to screen The worm within their crevice! Awfully, The giant corpse of some tall pine, ascends The gulph, and is his own companion! In bord'ring parts, th' imperishable wrecks Of hills, produce an aspect which recals The high wall of some amphitheatre; And o'er th' abyss below, whose valley holds Deep waters, hugest granites are pil'd up, Projectile, and descend not; every hour Threat'ning the timid rivers with their fall. Beyond, a frightful gap it's mouth reveals, Mutt'ring sepulchral hopes, to one day hold A lost creation! and the rocks around, In massive flights ascending, none could climb But the gigantic stature of a god.

To pass the frontiers of such scenery, The rivers, shudder by with swift attempt, And, with impeded course, the valleys gain. The vales of sands and waters; either side By mountains narrow'd, on whose mystic base The mists condense; while snowy tops are left, Like floating hills, in balance with the air,

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And silver'd, as by art! A cloud, oftimes, Hangs on the mountain's neck; or, where the scenes

Are hid in mists, the spreading sheets above Appear like snow, dropp'd on the skies of heaven!

That element in virgin whiteness shining, — There, as a sun, illumes the sulky clime Of scenes made various by chaotic laws To suit the shatter'd mind; thron'd on those hills

Which stamp, where once they fix, a tyranny O'er the aspiring search of sciences;

Then reaching heaven, seem to suspend the globe!

There grottoes, thro' the solid bor'd, are hung With icicles, which have for ever been, — But, once which by the lightest finger touch'd, Snap off! and these, to the idea, recal Chambers of bayonets, array'd for war By some great general, whose genius doubts Whether to blast the mountain, and so hurl The ruins in the gulph, or form this pass, Carv'd thro' by nicer art; so well he feels His own omnipotence, tho' mortal born.

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(11)

These scenes precede the lakes : the lakes and isles,

Which, most of all the world, are counted fair. For, should one sunny gleam but chance to stray, Fluttering a moment round, it there alights, And bursting into colors of the bow, Soon, in fantastic play, the forms of flow'rs, And shrubs assumes, — even of the richest dye. On these delicious isles, the Vices dwell. Here, SACRED MUSIC, dreams her origin To feed the pleasures, and with mystery The mobs enlighten in exchange for gold, While the enthusiastic strain, inspires The dramas of religion, whose first cause Even shadows NATURE o'er with miracles! And, with a voice which only moves the air In sonorous waves, turns the immutable!

We leave them in disgust, and gain a waste Of lesser hill and vale; but whose ascent Into diminish'd focus brings the sky. Such hills, the eye may compass, and behold Arrang'd on better soil; a colony Escap'd from their first place, in search of peace. For peace, they stray'd in vain from other clime! For winds, from many a sea, their heights molest, (12)

And bring their cold, and savage misery, To howl, in plaintive thunder, a complain. Heights, whence the wide expanse of hills, suggests

A shadow of the glorious rise and fall, Of TIME's creative hand!

Scenes terrible, And dubious of the future! cast astray, To wrestle with the furious elements, They urge creative influence on the birth Of Spirits, to endure their agony! For all combining atoms, organize A sense of their own state. New Spirits rise, To people such wild worlds with sympathy: Fresh terror spreading, from their horrid souls; And cursing those who plann'd their destiny, Each, from the parent bosom, falls, and wreathes To calm, or change, the nature of the pain! They find no rest, to soothe the suffering Of the raw heart, whose ever during pangs Reduce their minds to imbecility! And now they lift their idiot eyes, and pray For mercy; but of mercy none obtain! These troubles tending to assist the laws

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Dri Wi With freedom, next behold a forest form'd Of pines, which reach the everlasting snow! The hills, so cover'd, stand as porcupines, Which, with erected quills, seem to await The threats of revolutionary time.

While spirits came, each with resembling thoughts,

To aid the works of the eventful age; There was an era, dated from the hour Wherein the GOD of ANGER first beheld His outward world. Then, how his wrathful soul Foam'd at the vision, and his ancestry Curs'd in their listless generations! At first, he sees on subterraneous fire, A tottering mount, on which with all his might He rushes, tho' its outer magnitude Was such as to astound philosophy. The mountain, backward falling on the plain, Is smash'd with its prostrated cataracts, Which mingling, as a river still rush on Their habits of descent to reassume, O'er the next fracture ! He, at his own deeds, Almost alarm'd, new courage thro' his limbs Drives forcibly, to crush the venom'd fear! With vivid features frowning, like the night

(14)

Which holds the plots of ripe conspiracy. Then forward striding thro' the mists of space, He seeks if void, or solid, terminates The awful mysteries of chaotic time.

Born on the huge descent of avalanche, Came DANGER, as a warning to arrest Less daring gods. He rush'd, without a pause, Under the place where agitation blends The gush of waters, with the deep ravine. And rapid as the motion of those floods, His daring fall!

With slow, and careful tread, Moves CAUTION towr'ds the edge of precipice. Safely her limbs transfiv'd above, with head And hands she gazes o'er, till vision drops, In dizziness, into the gulph whose depths Shrink minified! Within her trembling view, A gentle river, gliding heedlessly Runs o'er the other precipice: below, She sees the GOD of ANGER, stretch'd across, Suspending its new course; with either hand Driving the liquid on its swelling spring, And hushing, many a league below, the roar Of waters, till the thirsty lakes are dry. Along new paths, the mountain cataract Jets graceful breaths of water, which incline Most slowly down the perpendicular, Yet certain is the fall! From sight they pass Away, and re-appear: a simple task Of reason, to infer how midst the craggs They wander'd, and forgot their guileless way. These streams glide in the torrent which runs thro'

The fallen rocks, whose masses, anciently Hurl'd to the base by devastating time, There still remain, proud of their ancestry; And as obliterated monuments, Assert the glory of departed years!

The great entire, which form'd the boundary, As if beneath the influence of the pole, Trembled within itself, with strong desire To yield up orbs, which might for ever roll In one magnetic chain. There, in the crude, Silent, and deedless they exist, nor know, Themselves, the wonders of their origin. Within this sphere, is many a desolate sight! Fresh forests now uprooted, in their age Of vigour, and strewn out, as soldiers lie The battle o'er. A tempest had rush'd thro',

(16)

In hurricane, just as their first born seed Was ripening into sensibility,

T'embrace the willing surface of the soil : But now, the leaves are scatter'd, like the locks

Of some lone wanderer, in the ruthless gale ! The spirits who so far had ventur'd, there Might rise above, and in a joyful hour See thro' the subterranean of an arch, A glorious azure beam, which promise gave Of the success of day! This was the work Of the volcano, toiling, to disperse The solid, and give place to numerous worlds. There, we behold a fiery mountain, lift It's rolling lightnings, which descend below To torture death; releasing liberty To every atom, liberty to mix In blest concordance! and the lava rests, At last, in masses like the stones of tombs, That represent some deed, which is no more.

Thus, Causes finding their inherent laws, Mingled, in birth of the pervading soul, Who, in the form of spirits, aids the end Of an advancing scene. (17)

Mean while, the SPIRITS Of SOUND, had wander'd far astray, with voice Still pouring forth the fond desire, to meet On hills of concord! Tow'rds that happy place, The lightest child, on rising melody, Took wing: thereby inspir'd, the rest ascend Thro' all the ways of concert, or below, In deeper balance sink, to poise midway Th' ecstatic symphony! The music spreads; And pouring motion into things, in spheres, The elemental masses dance to song. Spheres over spheres, express themselves, to time.

Such as Mozart, or Hayden, but in part Have gather'd out of ancient memory. Each, in the anthem joins, and utters prayer.

"O save us, save us, greatest King! the father of our woe.

We pray to one, who, by the side of death, has set us low

In this unhappy place ! Oh! when shall we this gloom escape, this world of pain, and sorrow? We never feel the light of day, nor see the change of morrow!

(18)

Support our falling race! Into thy presence our spirits upraise, That we may give thee praise!"

This melancholy bliss of music, charm'd Their minds, and held in rapture, all the seven, Who ceas'd, to listen if the spheres had drank The gifts of song, inspir'd by melody, So sweet, so new! but on a sudden, rose, Such discord, that the faltering spirits, fell! A breathless Silesce swiftly spreads; it quells The foreign charmers of her peace! they see, With fear, how they have spell'd the wilderness, And fly with piercing screams; and, once again, The universal frown of chaos, rules. As from a band, which plays the funeral dirge Of battle, rising thro' the silence, came A thin, attenuated sound, which thrill'd The heart of ruin; and, in swelling vein, Was join'd, again, by deep wrought harmony.

"Spirits! who once were fast asleep, Lost in the silence of the deep! No dream of midnight, to declare That we had being in the air! Let us assemble; on the wing, (19)

Again, in meditation sing. Ours, is an art to enchant this scene, Where we, in dreadful death, have been, — Into soft harmony! Chaos, her numbers must enroll; Her fragments, mingle with our soul Of intellectual melody! Chaos, shall vanish from our eyes; Into the void, shall order rise. Then raise the harp, into the wire Strike thought; — draw out the gentle fire!"

(As long as sounds prevail, the spheres return, And rise, in revolution, from the deeps. Their surface, peopling, with the shadowy forms

Of life, while the creative western sun, Tempts vegetation to respire his beam.)

"Where was our dream, that things so fair, With us, could breathe the vital air! Were they before, or can things receive As we inspire, a soul to live?

What lovely creatures these worlds pervade! Rejoice, rejoice at the scenes we've made! But our vision, alone, scarce illumes the night. Then flash! then flash! a beam of light."

(An orb ascends, sweeping the concave arch Of a blue ether; while the GOD OF TIME Hangs to its side, and in his hand, holds forth A wheel. They rise, over the heads afar Of wandering spirits, who look up, in awe, And trace the glory to the central spheres. But soon, the force of airy music, fails: Its harmony too light, to bear the weight Of worlds, suspended in its labyrinth. The transitory fabric disappears, And nature calls for the funereal strain:

"O sorrow, born of sorrow! We mourn this ruin'd day! The life, the light, midst the horror Of darkness, is hush'd away!

Chaos, again has sway! Our offspring is dead; the sleep Of the grave, has no voice in the deep; They have lost, and for ever, their way!"

All spirits, heard the solemn hymn: from gloom,

(20)

Sweet MELANCHOLY rose, to meditate The misery of her birth; nor hope of change She cherish'd, but despair, that all the worlds Must rest, for ever, in vacuity! Yet sorrow, more then death, she lov'd, and heard :

The sounds with grand emotion; sweeter gloom, Her torpor chang'd, altho' the voices sang A funeral hymn, and chaos but a tomb! While the arrested thoughts, of those, who sang Their losses, watch'd her modest sympathy To tears; effectual consolation, came From the mild SPIRIT of BENEVOLENCE! Over her charms a graceful veil descends Of meekness, and of beauty; and her form, Humble, and delicate, and merciful, Clings to a virgin mantle! With a look Of joy, she smil'd, to soothe their bitter woe! They, pleased, scarce knew such pity; yet their lyres

- Rais'd to their eyes, to hide the grief, whose tears
- Fell thro', and caus'd the strings a sadden'd strain.

Discord was charm'd away; she ne'er before Had wept: but at the smiles of pity, stones Are soften'd, and the rivers' courses stay'd. SPIRITS, before unseen, came from afar, To join their centre of society.

The first, whose simple reveries were mov'd, Was Love, a tender girl, symmetrical In stature, thro' the thousand attitudes. Sometimes, as if administ'ring to the sick, She mov'd in lightest pace, and then, she press'd

Her lips, to soothe the sufferer's pain! Or seen At happier time, she keeps her lover off From frequent intercourse, and thus maintains Her chastity immortal! When she heard The melody advance, conceal'd she stood, And o'er her treasur'd bosom, plac'd her arm. Of her light nakedness asham'd, her eyes In modest agony were turn'd aside! The sculptor, void of perfect beauty here, From Chaos, to Creation brought her form: Now nam'd, LA VENERE DE' MEDICI. When, in enamouring strains, this goddess heard

The music; with bewitching slight of hand, Her golden locks she motion'd from her (23)

And lov'd the heavenly song! and hop'd to love The authors of the strain!

Still, on the rocks Was ANGER, at his toils: a savage, loos'd Against the famine, and the wilderness! For now, with tumult in his hand, he burns For empire, and he smiles on tyranny! The rocks, he oftimes to his bosom fits, And rooting, with endeavour, up their hold, Off the stiff centre, — drops the masses down The gulph, whose depths are not! for mind and time

By thinking, never trac'd them to an end. Sometimes, he pitch'd volcanoes towr'ds the vault,

And laugh'd, as he beheld the fragile womb Disburse a spreading fire; or, walk'd abroad To watch the growling earthquake, under foot In time to crush the monster, or escape Uninjur'd as it rose! At times, he rode The neighing tempests, o'er the wild abyss, To agitate the credulous elements, In fresh rebellion, and internal war! And into torrents, when his passions flag, He plunges, as the floods glide o'er therock,

(24)

With fatal hope his essence to disperse. Thus, CHAOS, in his nature, found a son. As her, his eyes were sable, and in rags His hair, was, by the breezes, comb'd behind. His hand, half clench'd, was ever ready set, For mischief; when his whim was idleness, He gnash'd his teeth! not proof, his untam'd ire, —

The swelling harmonies which touch'd his ear, Fell thro' into his soul! At first, he tried To dash to atoms, those enchanted sounds! But finding how his murderous efforts, serv'd Their sweetness to extend, far over space On the swift winds; a conquest held Ilis arm with gentleness, and won his heart. Himself subdued, the rocks, which downwards sank,

Caught sympathy, and stopp'd their headlong race;

And CHAOS, wonder'd what was harmony! Order, approach'd so near, that there arose To life, a SPIRIT gently feminine, Whose mild demeanour seem'd, and modesty, Half MOTHER, VIRGIN half: her sanctity, O'ershadow'd by her cares! Her chief delight, Was o'er a garden, where she planted seeds, And watch'd them, till their leaves surrounded flow'rs;

She dreams, meanwhile, that in her panting womb

A baby weeps, and tow'rds the joyful seat Her heart inclines, to take away the tear! For mother, when she hears the infants voice, Feels, how its little being rests on her, For raiment, for affection, and for food! And with her naked bosom, longs to clothe Its nakedness, and hush it into sleep! The way which science tends, or seek the cause, 'Tis not the mother's province, to enquire. Nor, did she marvel at the secret works Of Chaos, or desire to know their ways: But oft would wonder, how the infant grows; The sexes how determin'd; love the same, And sweet conception!

Following in her tract, As if desiring to infect her child, — Came Superstitions the sole power, whose mind Is shallow, yet acute at reasoning. His second - sight was of the ghostly kind, Familiar with the fate of things, which pass'd From Chaos into life; and thence the grave. The last, which was, still living on, to die! For, in his dreams of faith, and phantasy, — To die, the body seem'd, and to disperse, Limb quitting limb, yet absent sense of pain, And horror, at the thought of self decay. While from the corpse, the stately spirit fled

To take his station in eternity! Of this, the genius had prophetic view: So awful to behold, wrapp'd up in shades Of tombs, that both his eyes dissolved in tears Of terror, and his trembling limbs sank down, Pow'rless, the pallid lip repeating prayer.

The changes , breath'd alarm to ancient PRIDE,

Who, from the anarchy emerging, wore The frown of armies, to annihilate The spirit of advance, and, cast the works Of beauty, on the darkness of despair! He came to claim his crown, with many a smile

Of meekness, and self-gratulation, On birth, gifts, and estates! a common lot Of spirits! but he alone, to pique himself Was doom'd, on gifts, estates, or long descent.

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None hoped to question, with success, his claim.

A noble stature, bas'd on confidence. With mind, and the appended countenance, Proof to the blush! nor even susceptible To understand, to hear, to feel, to see!

So, leaving PRIDE to meditate, at large, His inward scene; the glorious BEING, came, Of CONSCIENCE, deck'd in a supernal light. Around the beauty of her mind, diverg'd The ray, an emblem of divinity! And, to her standard flock'd the spirits of life, And hail'd the justice of her royal claim. In her bright presence, was a charm, to turn The mental tide of error, and subdue, Beneath a sense of truth, all living soul!

But, sad was still the morrow's prospect! sad,

The thoughts which fell on every hope! Behold The MISERIES prostrate, midst their bleeding wounds;

WOE, flying from herself, as she pursues Her screams, along the comfortless abyss! AFFECTION, like a female in distress, Pines o'er the solitary hours, no home No friend! or wildly clasps into her arms, DESPAIR for want of a companion! There, the cold hearted MISER, makes his way Among the caves, and secret galleries, And toils for vain possession! Precious stones, And ores to gain, his industry the mines Has robb'd, and with a knife, has trac'd the veins

Thro' hill, and valley! Where an ocean ran, He strove to turn its course; or failing, div'd Beneath the deepest waves, to have access To stones, whose crystal light and luscious hue,

Made them delicious to his greedy eye! All that he found, he number'd; and he wrote, By heart, their value in his Mental Book. Alone on him, the music lost her charm. For, at his dismal ear, no melody An answer got, except the tinkling sounds Of metals! Near him sneak'd, the GENIUS Of SECRECY, who heard the lyrists voice, And tow'rds it cross'd, the shortest way, to pry!

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When erst he rose from Chaos, up he crept, To see what there was else; and what he learn'd,

(29)

He never told again. Expertly, moved The listener, without noise, and, now, he fain

Would hush the sounds, least any other ear Should hear the curious strain! At such display Of degradation, wept BENEVOLENCE, As she, with dewy fingers, partly veil'd The fountain of the tear!

Now o'er the world, Roams SATIRE, seeking incongruities. On MELANCHOLY, first, the spirit sneer'd And stabbed her morbid spirit! at his glance, Soon, from her misty sight, fled every shape Of dving spirits, of shrouds, of monuments Carv'd out of dreams, and universal sleep! And, now, a lively, cautious spirit, she seeks, The scene, whence flows the pensive melody. SATIRE, a spirit, dreaded worse than pain ! His comprehensive tact, at once would strike At secret error; glorying in revenge On all things inconsistent! While the rest Of spirits, thro' their living veins, receiv'd Warm essence, to renew their faculties; The cold blood of the viper, SATIRE fed! Whence, he delighted in the mockery

(30)

Of solemn farce: with such severity, That PIETY, and ROYAL POUP, shrauk back, As if their melted crowns, and mitres, ran Their poison, back on the impostors' brains! His conscience was his guide, and, in his task

He never slept, save in deep sorrows hour, ----To pillow on the grave!

Along the hills, Above the east, on tip-toe, PLEASURE came In lightest dance, with AIRY FORMS, in time To waltz, mazurka, or cotillion! Her lively paces, made the music seem, To issue from her fect; her gracefulness Inspir'd with latent forms, the marble mine! Each quickly breathing smile, to outward woe, Reveal'd the mental source of happiness. Of those, who first arose from gloomy sleep, HOPE poises over all: a spirit born On spreading wing, as in the act to scale The highest spaces of the infinite! Her mind so venturous, and so light her form, -Not rocks, or falling oceans, stay'd her course. And where she moved, her thoughts were visible,

(31)

Resembling airy cities, to the view Wonderous, but by the slightest touch, decay'd!

The GODDESS of IMAGINATION Sat glancing over meditations page, While vast, and wandering thoughts of Poetry, Which she had gather'd, secretly escap'd Her face, and hurried thro' the ascending way!

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THE TROUBLES OF CHAOS.

PART. II.

Silence, contains the night; and Chaos, lull'd By the bewitching stillness, falls asleep. The Spirits of young NATURE'S DRAMA, lean Their bosoms on the deep; and, in repose Of their wild thoughts, are sweetly slumbering. Time only, closes not his eyes! he moves Along the seas of darkness, where, no wave Trips neath his measur'd pace; and, in his hand

He holds the wheel, which round his finger turns:

His right, he keeps to regulate the spheres.

"Ah! when shall I escape this gloomy soil! A savage, in the folded shades of light, From all the past! till now, incapable To count the hours, or be their centinel. This never was my place! I could ascend Some glorious orb, and looking down on day,

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Teach worlds their revolutions! I could pass From orb to orb, along the solar beam, And set around the individual spheres A limit to durations, life to guide, And, bound the seasons by mortality. But this denied, 1, here, unciviliz'd Wander irregular hills, and vales of gloom, Which daylight never feel! but, pine, alway, To see my glory, cloth'd in shades, descend And pillow on the western hemisphere." So spake the sole companion of the past. His long career of idleness, was spent As by the pale Somnambulist, whose shade Glides from the haunted couch, at midnight hour,

To stalk the hush of slumbers; or, to climb, And balance, fearless, o'er a pinnacle, While, but a breath of air, might turn the scale.

So, midst the ruins of uncastled hills; Of sunless clouds, and herbless vales are found The traces of TIME's footstep: without thought He gaz'd on vacancy, or look'd at worlds.

Now, is there visible a chain of works, Whose causes, yielding up effects, have given

(34)

A nucleus to true order. All things, act Certain and slow: as music, from the splash Of wave on wave, their ways are beautiful! Increasing hourly, all their influence tends, To stimulate the feeling elements, To just appreciation of the laws: The instincts all obey; excited on, They feel the wonders, and they organize New mind, as fast as nature's works advance, Whence comes the birth of REASON; who the rank,

Immediately assumes, of deity. How grand, how different a scene, is now The living universe! no mind, before, Had genius to appreciate the heights, And depths, of self-revealing mysteries! But REASON, sees, with philosophic glance, A system of original worlds, not made, But co-eternal with th' eternal past, — And one another, in their symmetry. This new INTELLIGENCE escapes the place Of birth, and reasons, freely, to oppose The age of darkness! too sincere, his love Of truth, to forge, with hypocritic zeal, Good out of evil! or, diffuse abroad Deep doctrines of religion, to delude, (35)

And frighten into virtue! all he has, He leaves, and wanders o'er the stormy coasts, There, to detect the science, glimmering through,

The shapeless crude; and there, establish seats Whereon to urge th' experimental test, And sound the waters of philosophy!

For, as between the birth and dying rest, Of man, a period runs; so space, endures A conflict of the various passions, met, Devoid of sympathy! tho', one day, doom'd As human, o'er the earth to reign! If peace Succeeds to this sad war, 'tis but the grave Of hatred and revenge, whose moment, parts One, from another generation!

In solitude, the mighty genius, holds Converse with truth; and, as a lover, owns His heart by beauty soften'd, while at night When all is still, and his days labor o'er, He counts the centuries, which many a sphere Spends round its orbit; and, from all the past,

Illumes the present hour, with prophecies Of high induction, on events to come.

Meanwhile, ennobled by such influence, The spirits of the deep, their heads upraise Above the strata of the outer soil, And utter thoughts on their creative power. IMAGINATION, visibly ascends, With eyes, which, as the spirits of a dream, Dictate in every glance, the thoughts of worlds

Passing into existence, and relapsing Again into the void. Her dulcet voice, Engraves the tablet of the countenance, With great ideas, beautiful visions, bursts Of allegory, and bold metaphor! She proves her genius, as omnipotent O'er the vast combinations of ideas, Whence, independence springs, over the lands Of ruin, or of order. "For to one, Who shuts her outward eyes, to form her beam,

The darkness, is as vivid as the light! So whether in these plains of savage life, Where the Sublime has true original; Or among scenes of more perpetual peace, I will not bind my soul creations slave! But, planting mountains for my own abode, Shall raise, in their ascent and precipice,

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A MONUMENT to CHAOS. There, you'll find That, tho' the gloom, and grandeur of my soul,

Inseparably mingle with the soil, It will establish woe! where'er I dwell, There, Melancholy mourns, to see my spirit Alone, and happy! 1 remember, well, That Chaos is original, whence no art, Can close her in annihilation! She will ascend the mountain breaks, and hurl.

Downwards, the fragile hills, whose horrid fall Threatens, to crush the shrinking globe below!, And moves her centre, whose reaction, frees Earthquakes, and their Volcanoes, struggling, hard.

To find the disinherited domain! When those continuous heats, which loos'd the hills.

And made the wombs of nature, prophecy In fire, are pass'd away; the winter cold, Will freeze the vapoury atoms of the air, T'alight, and gather, still, in Avalanche. This, but the echo of a whisper, calls Down tow'rds the valley, bursting in the way Ten thousand pines! And, far below my path, (38)

Will many a precipice gape wide, whose cup Fill'd up with rolling mist, receives, with hiss, A breathless cataract, and mutters flame: The chaos, of the ruin'd hell of fire!"

Now, o'er the general face of earth, is seen The lovely SPIRIT of BENEVOLENCE, Beaming with love for men. She sees, inscrib'd, On the round surface, that, the FINAL DOOM, Of all the individual things, which live In turn, is DEATH, and EVERLASTING SLEEP! And that the UNIVERSE, alone, with life, Survives its inward workings of decay. This matters, but for man : his glorious powers, The prospect ne'er can face, that he must die. But rather, by ambition driven, will raise Some science from the dead, whose arguments Are fancy worlds, and immortality. No sooner death was whisper'd, than I saw Thro' the prophetic mirror of the law The lover, at his mistress' grave in tears; The mother, leaning o'er her dying child; And friend, rememb'ring friend, at intervals, Till he, himself, was scatter'd into sleep! The colors of the light, are cast aside, And on the features, only, melts the day.

(39)

Among the gayest scenes, Philosophy Despises life, for nothing gain'd, and lost, And reasons on the chances of the tomb! While SATIRE, in the dance, o'erlooking time With mortal prophecy, sees corpses glad! The BABD, awoke, by night's solemnity, From the repose of worldly thoughts, enquires, With fear, into his mental origin, And, dreads the mystery, of his maker's will! Thus, o'er the mental city, gloom keeps watch.

T'avoid her all pursuing scowl, behold How some leap into seas, to drink the tides Of an oblivious sand; or spurn the bread Of sustenance, for poison of decay! Let man be born, and, his superior mind Gives birth, at once, to FEARFUL TRAGEDY! Not scenes of blood, alone; for tragic scenes Are not outlaid with bleeding images, Which only last a moment, and are past; But, with those bleeding thoughts, which long survive, The hour of trouble! For less tragical,

Is death, than the survivor's misery! To see a woman struck, is tragical. There's tragedy, in lovely woman's eyes, When startled into terror, at a sound, From their mild beam! in beauty on the wape:

In the deep melancholy voice, which speaks With half a smile; in tyranny, impos'd On all the weak, and unresisting sorrows Of glory, conquer'd in its native land! In coldness to a woman's broken heart; In sneering, at the solitary hope, Which links a mortal to his happiness; In the last breath of infidelity! In thoughts, driven on by fierce necessity To tear thro' honor's ties! in the decay Of talents, which have made a nation great! In disobedience to a mother's wish; In quarrels of affection, which, have proved The last sad interview, between the grave! In midnight music, when the sleeping mind Awakes to sorrow! in the deep reverse Of poverty, which others love to share! When centuries are o'er, in pondering On wastes of desert time, whose harvests, fail To yield ought noble, save the memory Of soldiers, buried underneath the battle! In crippled graves, without a date, or name!"

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Next, rose the voice of cold NECESSITY. "Let us not deem that we are free, to move These mighty elements, to our own views: For we belong, not to ourselves alone, But act thro' causes, most infallible, Under a civiliz'd divinity.

It may be the design, to one day pour Our essence in the soil, and leave us there, To act securely thro' accustom'd laws, If, as our creed now tends, we are not part Of matter; difficult to understand, Surrounded by these cumbrous elements, And born in mental night, midst evidence Of shadows only, of a power surpreme. Whence first we came, and where our place, unknown!

So we must be the laws, the active laws: And, while our creatures live, must occupy Their systems, and exist as all in all. But, least the beings of superior mind, Maintain themselves thro' time; and, so increase As to possess, at length, the universe; Each shall, for safe continuance, depend On an unceasing factory of life, Whose circulation ceasing, ends his days. Thus, man will be immortal, in his line, (42)

Not in himself; and always tribute pay Of love, for having seen creation's ways. But, as a Living Universe, is form'd Of working ATOMS, which alone can act Thro' an inherent weight, or property; Each, having but one place, which cannot err; And not the power of revelation, --A UNIVERSE, cannot investigate The endless secrets, of its inward frame. For the most glorious thought, can never see Those causes which produce it, as they work, Not as its senses, but its origin: Hence, falls the hopes of an omniscience! This, reason will discover unto man: And, that all matter may know equally This truth, - the soil, which only vegetates At first, shall rise to be an animal; Whence, having learn'd, in mental offices, Of all its atoms, the co-sovreignty And power; will scatter, to commence again. How we have slept, from an eternal date, Let us commemorate in mind, as night Seems to decline into chaotic time. For all can not be day; nor, to the eye, The outward landscape ever visible: Eternal thought, itself annihilates.

(43)

So, save in seasons when the lights, appear, Of worlds, who do inhabit distances, — All shall, again, be dark as empty space, That man may think of his eternal rest."

Thus, o'er the circle of their influence, Their wilder eloquence they breath'd; when rose

The Shade of Superstition, urging on A mission of their prayers, up to the gates Of the celestial court, to ask for help, And recognition, from the reigning king. "For, while we seem to rule, with mental swav, This elemental wreck; has Gop no power, Over this chaos of intelligence?" At first, the gods agreed to his desires; And, deem'd the new hypothesis, of Oxe, A most sublime, and glorious tendency. But, looking round, some saw, the hollow side : For under magic arts, their hopes declin'd; All incantations fail'd; all mysteries, To' induce the happy revelation. And, all were disinclin'd, their views to yield, Of their own rightful glory, in exchange For the debasing tyranny of FEAR; Who, having heard the sophist speak, has faith.

(44)

In Nothing, to behold Divinity. Great numbers, gave discussion on the theme Most dubious of th'occult; express'd in grace, And oratorial art, as rais'd on earth, In after time, to places near the gods, The GRECIAN, and the ROMAN ORATOR. Their wild ideas now cease; for, 'midst the throng.

Comes REASOS, full of wisdom and research; He demonstrates the universe, as known To ancient glory; and the earth alone Is proved, to be the scene of miscry. A festival succeeds; the spirits act, By the symphonic, all the mysteries Of the creation. Personating spheres, In sacred ballet, females some appear, And others male; and, as our stars, receive New spaces to their bosom, — they advance, Swell in the circuit, or, obliquely dart Into the comets way. While close within Their harps, the seven, imprison'd, sit, and pour

The classic voice; the rest, in figures creep, And catch, with whispering grace, the dying sound.

Fair was the dawn of morning, as the east,

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Streak'd with the coming glory of the sun, Saw, many a spirit, gather'd round the world, To witness the effect, on its moist soil, Of burning heat: and, breathless with desire, They stay'd, awaiting the results of time. At noon, the earth shot forth with numerous HERES:

These, in the course of change, put out their buds,

And bloom'd; and, on the sweetest blossoms, grew

The HONEY-BEE; while from the violet, Rose on its wing, the AZURE BUTTERFLY. For the harmonious influence of the cause, Ranthro' the offspring: and together chain'd, Their looks entic'd the STRIDING ANIMAL, To come, and feed, on their rich meadow-land. BIRDS born on boughs, had wings to reach the corn.

And, Fisn, that found their organs in the seas,
Had fins, given by the waters, as they grew.
Thus, laws, obey'd their local tendencies.
Perfected by long time, thro' many a grade,
And, by the wonders of creation, driven
To such conception, MAX his life obtain'd;
Mov'd by the solar flame, and circumstance

(46)

Such as but once, in an eternity, Could happen; tho' a greater being still, His chance retains. From simplest elements, Mingling in love, to form an order more, See how th' ascending grade has risen ! We, now Behold intelligent, and lovely things, Folding their visible arms, to procreate Their kind! The spirits, mingled in these works, Feel their success, and hard-won liberty! Worthy of freedom, they, with joy, recal Their labors; and fair prospects of reward Their hearts enlighten, as, they feel themselves, In full possession, and the standard raise Of HAPPY ORDER! and, they bless the day, Which places on a level with the spheres, Their own peculiar earth, to form a part Of the MATERIAL DIVISITY ! The stars, are but the atoms, which unite To form his great, his living universe!

The worlds are form'd! the ancient prophecies Which fill'd the councils of the gods, fullfill'd! The beauties of the earth, are prospering In the new seasons; form'd of rich campaigns Of rivers, and wide banks; of hills, and seas Plantations, level plains, — a sun in heaven!

Behold, the tourist, by the midland sea Advancing, while, along the distant waves, The orb forsakes the day. He traverses A hill, beside the beach, whose side along, Blossoms the myrtle, and the orange flow'r. The native peasantry arrest his pace, And, of their plenteous fruits, without reward, Make offer, - greeting with a pleasant tour! Now, from the setting globe, the waters face Receives a golden flooring, which, extends Tow'rds land, and, half the purple sea conceals, Whilst numbers, gazing from the shingles, watch A fleet of boats, half on the purple wave, Half on the golden, hung on milk-white sails, And searching after fish! Behind the hill, A steady moon, gives twilight to the sky, And, seems a stranger to the scene below.

Now on Alpina, at St. Gothards base, I call on ASSALENA, with a shout Of joy, to follow, and behold the scenes Of new-created landscape! her kind voice, Softly as echo, answers to my soul! Spirits of human beauty! see ye not, How fair, her light blue eyes, among the mists? Her smiles, how cheering to the sunless shades? How sweet, attuned to liveliest thought, her voice

Among the cannon of the cataracts ! Her figure, how inspiring to these craggs; These caverns and rough paths, together mass³d

In the deep sufferings of deformity! Behold the beauty of the fairest clime, Trampling her path, across a wilderness! The ANSALENA! once, who climb'd, alone, Faida's hill! she, only, of her sex From Britain's isle! O hill, remember her! For, ere she taught you love, she taught to me, Peace, for the barren precipice of passion! And, ere the ruin'd heart was wreck'd, she threw

Her anchor, on the ocean of despair! Such were the scenes, midst which, my human brain,

Perform'd its long necessitated task; And, told the struggles of Chaotic time. And, now I sing, the gloomy wars of mind: For, while a discord of Chaotic Worlds Is charm'd; Spiritual Chaos, in her turn, Wreathes, under fatal war of principle.

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I took the Charmer's hand, and, led her forth, O'er the great mountain, where the alpine lakes

And valleys are; and, wandering o'er the waves,

Our kindred souls, made, by each others light, More luminous, gave way to a lament On the swift ruin of humanity. For, in the earliest periods, the deceit Of barren minds, gain'd o'er the ignorant A civil, and religious influence. Proclaiming, with a solemn face, that he Who, from a daily labourer, had risen After six days, to have the worlds estate, Had sent them, to declare his holy will. And, thus, their wills, became omnipotent! The shameless liars, saw their families, Enjoy the liberties of all mankind; And, as the sharks increase the seas, they bred, Princes and bishops and nobilities, Who, thro' an endless line of ancestors, Possess hereditary privelege, In honor of the pure descent; tho" half, Are bastards, born in wedlock; and no more The representatives of ancient blood, Than Mahomet of the Divinity !

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In contemplation of these miseries, We rose o'er Rigi's hill, to, thence, behold A panorama, from whose loveliness, 'Twere easy to desire a paradise; And, from our quiet feelings, as we gaz'd, To wish for blissful immortality! The wide campaign, and its luxuriance, Swam o'er the lakes, in islands; and, the hills,

Beyond, show'd their brown edges, as if age Had worn away the snow, and, their white breast,

Gave to the clouds, in sunshine slumbering low Under the azure sky! An airy mist Arises, and obscures the scenes from view. Then, as a curtain, by a breeze of sun Dispers'd, — brings, every moment, into view The cities, where th' illusion, now enslaves Men, whose great pride, is ancient liberty!

But some are more awake, and, spend their lives

In science, which, by curious processes, Casts back on chaos, the creation; all The laws untangling, without injury. Others, have pleasures in philosophy;

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And fancy, that their vision holds a sun, As luminous, as the original orb. And other noble spirits, feel desire To, gently, search the rough material; And, with creative chisel, underneath The blow, bring into view, the beautiful! Figures, and shapes, which match the noblest

gifts,

Of human admiration! see, the effect Produced on artists, as their eyes survey The WRESTLERS, by an ancient artist done, Where, strength so twists the vanquish'd hero's arm,

That, fancy, fears the marble group may split, Destroy'd by its perfection! Or in times Now present, when we see, the CHARITY Of BARTOLINI! her, that artist, calls A mother, pious in parental care, And pointing tow'rds the page! with one idea, The patriot, thus instructs the nations mind, And, future generations, trics to raise To his own standard! High experiments Of labor, and continual diligence, Gave birth to the expressive Theory. One, found the loadstone; and, his magnet, set In centres, whence, the justling substances

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Took base, and, to each other gave support In magical suspension! In his hand, He sometimes balane'd, in his scrupulous hand, The atoms; and, with chemic skill, would pierce

Each centre, with elective energy, And seal the law; whence divers liquids flow'd.

And solids grew, and vapours rose in air, Of colours new! Another artist, strikes His beam on prisms; and with analysis, The fluent genius of his mind, explains The various hues of landscape, and of sky. And, there was talent, whose great strength, uprais'd

The telescope to heaven; and thro' the night Discover'd endless TIME, that graceful spirit Whose paces, are the motions of the spheres! Fulfilling hopes, of the discovery Of hidden systems, fit to act alone The drama of Creation, far beyond The reach of interfering miracles. These things, alarm'd the great aristocrats Of civil, and religious slavery. Affrighting on their hypocritic thrones The logical Divines; who, when the means

(53)

Of prisons fail'd to crush philosophy, Persuaded courts to patronize, and keep Intelligence at work, least it should rise, Bearing the emblems of the sciences, And cause a glorious revolution! But as the Chaos of material things In order found sweet peace; so must the mind,

After her numerous struggles, find a home, Or cringe back to annihilation. How many a piercing intellect, has tried 'Mid general ignorance, and scorn, to turn Dull error's tide! his private happiness A sacrifice to truth: his boldness deem'd A wonder, and another miracle. At length he dies! tho' not his influence Which forms a portion of the mental world.

THE TROUBLES OF CHAOS.

PART. III.

Thus ages waned, and slow was change: the truth

The' visible, could not admission gain, Into the guarded temple of the law. But to disturb a moral war, there came On earth the God of SATIRE, in the form Of flesh: not to be spit on, or revil'd In meekness; but on sarcasm, to enthrone His genius o'er pretenders, and to crown Their heads with bitter thorns! Resolv'd to shed,

At every risque, the blood of prejudice, And clear the mind for noble purposes, He came on earth, to crucify mankind! For equal born to all the universe, With justice as his guide, he felt his power To trample on the throne, tho' in the rank Of beggar, which he chose as suited best, To learn the sources of hypocrisy. His will, was to behold the human race All noble; rais'd, by education's gifts, To their hereditary peerages!

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Then, as the greater numbers of mankind Would bow to highest sense of right, and wrong,

Kings might make war on kings, to quench their thirst

Of human blood; or practise suicide. And prelates, to each other, preach their creeds.

Labourers, the strongest, and most injur'd part

Of nations, starting from a trance, perceive For the first time, their frightful slavery; And, round the beggar, flock, to learn the way 'To the lost station of their ancestors. He, thus, in allegory, pictures forth The Church of England, as their deepest woe: There is a Man in Britain's capital Belov'd for rarest virtues; on his head He wears a Mitre; in his hand displays A Book, and from his mouth Religion flows. He, never has been seen to touch the skin Of woman, or, to eat the flesh of beasts, On days given up to fast; but breathes the Word.

The secret entrance of the human heart, He, daily, enters in a bandit's guise, To steal the faults; then, of the prize, he forms His sermons; lucre, for his purse and soul. To private charities, he yearly gives A portion of his spoils, which all men praise: Nor ostentations, even he bribes the poor, To make no mention of his charity."

(Holding, in either hand, a human skull He, next, dwells on the claims of royalty:)

"Which of these skulls, once wore a golden crown?

My careful eye surveys them, but, the trace Of honor has pass'd by, and memory

Which keeps the wide museum of my mind, Scarce knows the things apart! This haggard skull,

Once held a tyrant; see its meekness now !"

(He drops the rolling bone, and then proceeds.)

"I once sat in his presence, (for my mind Could never feign an inequality) So, was I sent to prison! But, revenge Comes after, thence surpasses injury!"

(The beggar, shews a chair, made out of bones, And sitting, thus continues his discourse.) (

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"These are his bones, on which I daily sit. And here, with thoughts fresh gather'd I enjoy To flay alive the virtues, and, set free The curling serpents, underneath the skin! The greatest vice is shame! it masques the soul In such disguises, that, even virtue, seeks A splendid prison of hypocrisy! Here comes a noble: hear our dialogue."

BEGGAR.

"I starve on charity! Oh! give me food, And take my thanks!"

LORD.

"I never give relief,

In private."

BEGGAR.

"O most noble lord! your dress Is better serv'd, than my poor tatter'd skin!"

(The noble frown'd; but to appease his wrath The mendicant produc'd a scroll.)

"Behold,

This my subscription, which contains the names Of many public men !''

(The noble, casts His eye along the page: he writes his names And titles; ending with his charity.)

"Adventurous coward! thus, with Charity, He holds a broil of words, to save his gold! But brib'd by praise, he, for her wicked hire, Stabs pity to the heart, and, tells mankind, That he is pity! While the world applauds, He mounts the marble steps of charity, And weeps these golden tears! But, now behold That wealthy merchant, who, has paid his priest The price of an indulgence. Hear me beg, In heavens name: — "O rich man! have compassion."

MERCHANT.

"Faugh! begone."

BEGGAR.

"O whither? if to death, I am a sinner: only, give me, that Which gains us absolution; only, save A wither'd soul, from purgatory fire!"

(The merchant stares, but deigns not a reply. Next comes a youth: and, at his arm, a maid As fair as her creator, whose deep charms, Are veil'd in mystery.)

BEGGAB.

"Be merciful!

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I ask no more than mercy."

MAID.

"Poor, old man!"

(She, with neat hand, her purse unloosing, gives.)

BEGGAR.

"Two hours ago, I saw that girl alone: She treated me with scorn! but, with her lover, She smiles, and she bestows; herself deceives, Into benevolence, she feigns so well When driven by happy opportunity! Sad is this hour which hears my voice exclaim, Benevolence! most hard of heart. It comes Of dearly bought experience! for, I've search'd The populous cities of the globe, and found The statue only, not the living soul! Yes! I have travers'd countries, to procure A share of daily bread, for seventy years! The green tides of the Po, the purple Rhone, Have roll'd beneath my tears; and, this white head

Has bow'd, with reverence, 'neath the aged Alps Seven various times, to search their wilderness, For what my native soil, in affluence, Has long denied! her produce, rcap'd by men Who first subdued, and then oppress'd the poor! But gold, it needs not, to detect the heart! And I, who visit places where the mind Commits her coldest crimes, — how oft I've

seen,

Thoughts shap'd like daggers, ere they enter in The sheath of pity! Often have these hairs, The greatest honors that a man can wear, Borne their reproach! and, those whose fainting hearts, (69)

Shudd'ring beneath an inward weight of crime, Have given me aid, arous'd into revenge, Have told my idle bones, to work for bread. When young, I pardon'd all whose years were more.

But now, that time is pass'd, and, my old age, Breeds an abhorrence of the human race. And this I feel all day, till o'er my soul, Close, like a grave, these melancholy eyes. And dreamless is my sleep! Well, nature knows, I long have struggled to discover good In men ; but, I have found even generous hearts, Void of the virtues of fidelity ! For, as Philosophy, in various ways, Is pleasing, and may tempt the mind, to stray From one, t'another system; so, the heart Is selfish, and must seek variety, To amply gratify its lusts of pity! Hence, I abhor the boasts sentiment, From every living soul! Behold the fool Is turned, by music, to an eestacy! A second, sees the tragedy perform'd; And, while the actor, full of genius, Renews the writers sense, a phrenzy drives The weak spectator to the tragic muse! But, how I love self-satire! Oft, I' ve heard The English, sigh their love of Italy, Being banish'd there, by poverty and debt! Or, that domestic game, adultery !"

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(61)

"What noise is this? I know: The gamling rooms

Are breaking up: perhaps, more charity May there be found, than, in a sabbath day."

(A man, wrapp'd, closely, in an cloak, descends.)

"Sir! with respect, my age asks pity!"

GAMBLER.

"True.

I don't believe in pity! and, to throw The hypocrite aside, I hate old age! Take my advice; walk calmly to the sea, And drown your useless soul!"

> Beggar. "I trust in Christ!"

GAMBLER.

"You think, that, preaching can convert the purse !"

BEGGAR.

"In his disguise, he feels himself unknown: But I could strip him to the naked sin. Terror his consciousness should drive away, And dumbness curse defence! Enlighten'd man, And moral nation! England! how thou art fool'd, With all thy sense! that man receives of thee A missionary's pay, o'er foreign lands, To teach improv'd religion! This is he, Who, yester-morning, preach'd to multitudes On faith, on charity, and, hopes of heaven! He mention'd, being humble, for the grave; And merciful, around the poor man's home. He told the rich, to sell their goods; dispose Of all their wealth, and bear the naked cross! To day, this lamb clothed in the skin of wolves.

Visits the seats of plunder, to commit The murderof his brother's peace of mind. Oh! I am sick of selfish tyranny! And, yet, I'll try another heart, before I my last hope, resign."

(He looks around, And, hears a lady, at her door, addrcss A person, thus, about her dying child:)

LADY.

"My child, my only treasure! dearer far Than husband, brother, sister, parent, friend! Save but my child, and, I will worship thee, The saviour of this heart! O! night and day, I've watch'd its little features in their growth, And, ere I watch'd, they were a part of me! I only had the hope, before this child! The virgin dream of hope, was realiz'd.

(63)

Bereft again, my youth, into the age Of sorrow changes; and, the void, becomes A bar before the prison of my chamber, Where the sweet spirit of my infant, rests."

(Enters a house.)

PERSON.

"A little, puny wretch! It is no matter, if it lives or dies. Does nature care? we see the loveliest things, Strangled, in their unlucky pass to light: But minds, with double backs, and cloven feet, Live, and inherit titles and domains."

BEGGAR.

"Here, lives a lady with a ruin'd heart."

(He enters; and, the curious scene, is chang'd To the rich room, where, on an ottoman, The lady sits, conversing with her maid.)

MAID.

A lady, living near us, has a child As sickly as our own. It soon will die."

LADY.

Unhappy mother! do I know her ?"

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MAID.

"No."

(64)

LADY.

"Go, take my love, and offer all my power, Her sorrow to appease: Unhappy mother!"

(The maid departs, but soon re-entering:)

"A poor man asks to see you; and, he speaks Of some sick child."

LADY.

"What child? it must be mine! Desire him to come in."

BEGGAR.

"My Lady, hear! Then know commiseration. Tho' I stand An ancient order of the human race, I beg my daily bread! My daughter's babe, Sweet daughter, now is dying of disease, Caus'd by the famine of our poverty; And, not the failure of prolific soil! It breathes the hasty spasm of the air, At distant intervals; and every hour Brings promise of relief, from th'angel, Death."

LADY.

"And dar'd you tread this floor? If I had mines Of running gold, for this presumptuous act, They should not give you work!"

(65)

BEGGAR.

"O Tyranny! Not in the despot's budding sceptre, born, More than in those who rise, to overthrow His throne! the peasant and the prince, with thee,

Insults his subject; and, with thee, the rich Assume divinity, to scourge the poor! Old Age! I thee invoke, my only friend! Let not this woman reach thy reverence."

MAID. "Is your child very ill?"

Beggar.

"Yes! very ill."

MAID.

"Take this, 'tis all that I have, now."

BEGGAR.

"Indeed!"

I don't believe thee, girl! altho' I love thee."

(The girl, in blushes and in tears, replies:)

"I'll give you all I have !"

Beggar.

"No! stay, my girl.

I am not poor, for, I possess a mind Superior both to wealth, and poverty.

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The paupers of a nation, are her mean And niggard spirits; and the barren mind. But for example, you had never told A lie; for, you have native innocence."

(The Beggar walking thro' a plain, begins To meditate in silence, and alone.)

"O Nature, how can thy great struggles end! Yonder, I see the armies, gathering, Of a great PEOPLE: the last struggle comes Against the proudest KINGS, and COURTIERS, crown'd

Destroyers of mankind. All other sects, Are lost, in this great war! it must decide, To day th' impending fate of LIBERTY; Must either yield its ashes to the Urn, Or give the Restoration!"

As he spoke

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He saw, whole multitudes of autocrats, Who wore the arms of God, along the plain, In numerous places; and, within their pale All nature work'd disturbance! without ccase The winds dislik'd their destin'd course, and howl'd

Thro' all the darken'd avenues of day; Clouds, pregnant with the mystic fire, stood still Too weak to burst; and, 'mid the gathering storm (67)

A brilliant sun sank rapidly. No stars Witness'd the agitation of the night; The sea, was with itself at enunity! Spirits, in vain, made earthquakes of their graves, In hopes to rise again; and spectres walk'd To seek their corpse, thro' chambers where they died. Men rose in battle, and each other slew, To earn their daily bread; and, all were known To glory in a bloody victory! Brothers were heard to quarrel; children felt, Disdain for parents! Even, the bishops, miss'd Their public prayers, and in their chamber knelt ! The rich man, talk'd no more, of charity. The mothers, walk'd their daughters thro' the streets Of evening masquerades, to get them men! Philosophers, who valued human life, And preach'd against assassination, All paid for their own tombs! the virtuous man. Pass'd beggars in the way, nor gave them aid ! So chang'd were things, that royal ministers All merit overlook'd, and, public gifts Bestow'd on home! The pride of nations ceas'd! The little minds of dwarfs, had eminence; And genius, without notice, wander'd o'er

(68)

Her native land, a lonely prisoner! Nature was set aside, and with her power, Ceas'd her religion! Life were a reward, If inborn mental piety, had stood: But all the nations are man-worshippers! The christians, rush to church on sabbath day, And to the plot, as critics arm'd, attend While priests recite the holy tragedy. O credulous! with such ignoble creeds, A single step above th'idolator, The mind, is baser than the slave, who toils In chains, beneath the lash of cruelty ! Devoted to illusion! not to works, Which render human glory, eminent Above the universe, whose infinite, Itself, is comprehended in the mind! O credulous, O self-enslav'd ! by right The gods, by choice the subjects! your reward Will be to perish; never to assume The rank of man; but, buried in decay, No hope the corpse surviving, nor, the strength To whisper to the neighbouring dust, "alas! My soul has perish'd in the tomb !" Oman ! One effort more, or all is lost! - Man dies! For, on the Holy and the Royal side, Is pestilence; and, thro' our city gate Flows poison with the breeze! Their ensign lifts The standard of the PLAGUE ! their armies, come, Receiv'd by wide mouth'd famine, and o'erwhelm

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Our struggling numbers ! Ha ! the mother lies, Stript of her costly robe, insensible; And, on the famine of her breast-, a babe Cries, to give language to its misery !

The galley slaves are loosen'd, to assist The dying; and, to cry, thro' all the streets, The death-watch, gath'ring taxes for the grave.

There is a general truce, to dying mind! Behold this pile of bodies! one, his head Plac'd on his perish'd brother, for a couch, And others came, and made their monument! The houses, are turn'd into sepulchres. The vaults are open'd, to afford the sick A home, by the industrious few, whose doom But struggles with the hours! Th'immortal mind.

Who still survives, stricken and impotent, Wanders in ruin, treading, as he goes, O'er heaps of dead emotions; putrid lusts; Smash'd mitres, and, ambition with her crown ! The intellectual fortress, once the hold Of Reason and her Court, is broken down By phrenzied spirits, a scene of civil war; And Human Nature, without glory, dies ! No offspring, rises to perpetuate, The wonders of our name. And, yet, there seem, Re-organizing efforts; for, I see

Where once the skin was moisten'd, soft, and fair,

(70)

Minutest insects move, o'er every spot! The organs, once which chang'd the aliment, And fed the vital sluices, now, the rat Tears with his cautious mouth, and backward tugs!

And, from the human soil, the mushroom grows.

Now, while the dying continents, proclaim Their pardon to Ambition, and implore Mercy of heaven; suddenly, descends Over the troubled universe of things, A sable drop, and, all again is dark! But, indistinctly, from behind, are heard 'Mid prayers, and groans, and lamentations, — Portions of revolutionary hymns, As if arising from a struggling world! And screams, and noises, such as only rise From forc'd destruction, ruin premature, — Send terror thro' the ghastly face of night. Whilst silence pregnant with events, draws breath

From time's unfathom'd schemes, the ear is shock'd

By the deep knell of some grand funeral, Which leaves, an awful murmur! now is heard, A choir of chanting voices, rising shrill And sinking, as did once the burial hymn, By vestals sang. Again is heard the knell! Slow music, walks to weeping parces; thoughts Are humble, looking down into the grave,

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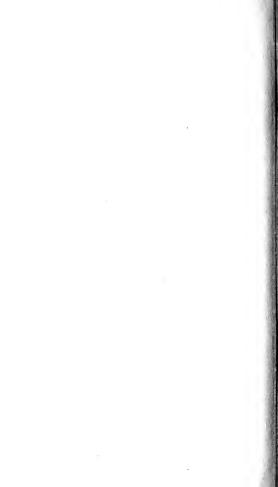
(71)

And, pondering over mortal VANITY! Now all is still, and Nature takes her rest.

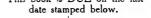
The shadows of the past, still, haunt the night.

Spiritual cities, crowded with the souls Of happy men, a moment, stand on air And vanish; or the Ocean, with his fleets, Is seen, and merchant vessels, all becalm'd! The blushing virgin, to the altar led, Sinks in her lover arms, then disappears ! The slave, snaps off his chains, and, o'er his head

He holds them, as from view he melts away! Now opens, to the void, a senate-house Of reverend heads, in serious debate, On human welfare! - As this glides along, The armies, lean in regimental line With bayonets; and cannon light as air : And, while the vision of their tyrant comes, Each soldier wears a smile, and, his reward Is peace! Unto the nations of the earth. A slow, and transitory flash of light, Reveals a judgment-seat in the obscure, And thereon sits, a grinning skeleton ! And, last, the bard, and the philosopher, With instrument and book, in mist, arise To seek their promis'd immortality; And, once more, wane into oblivion!







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