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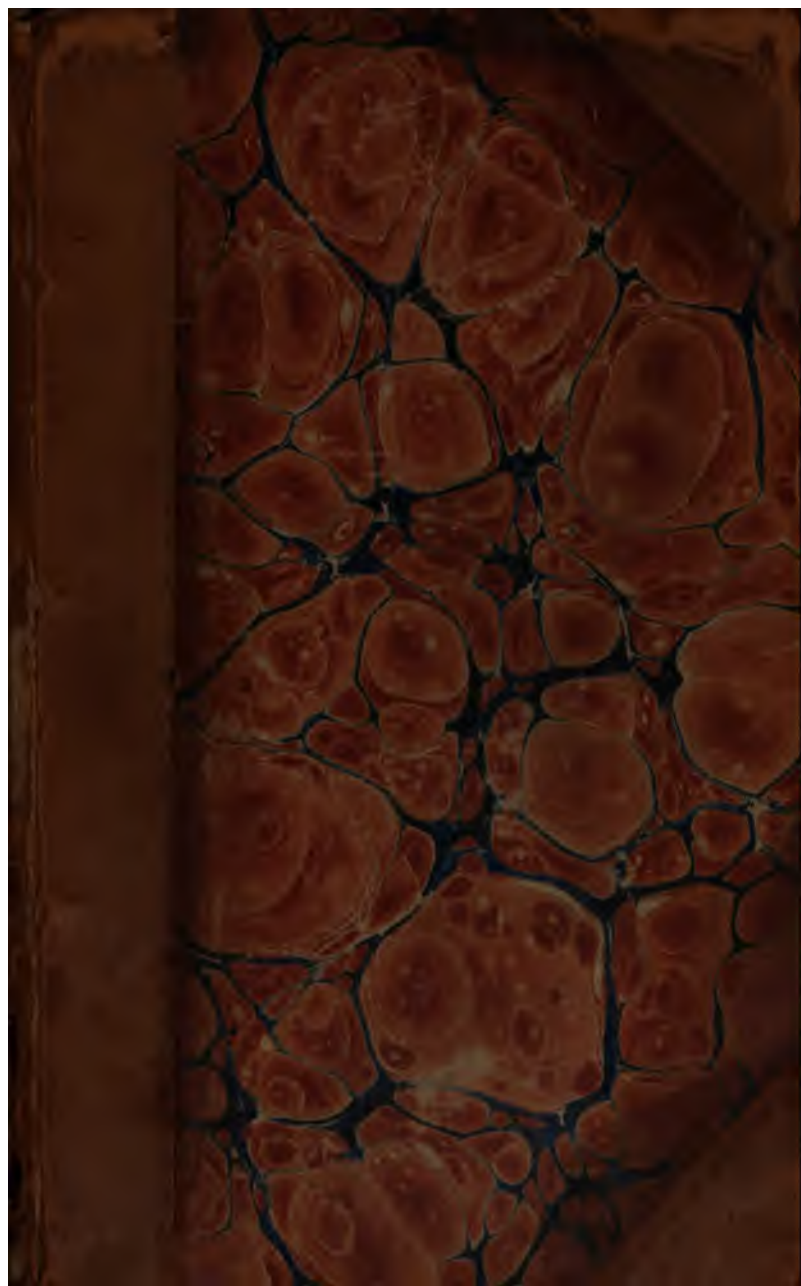
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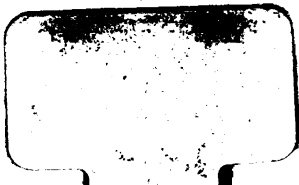


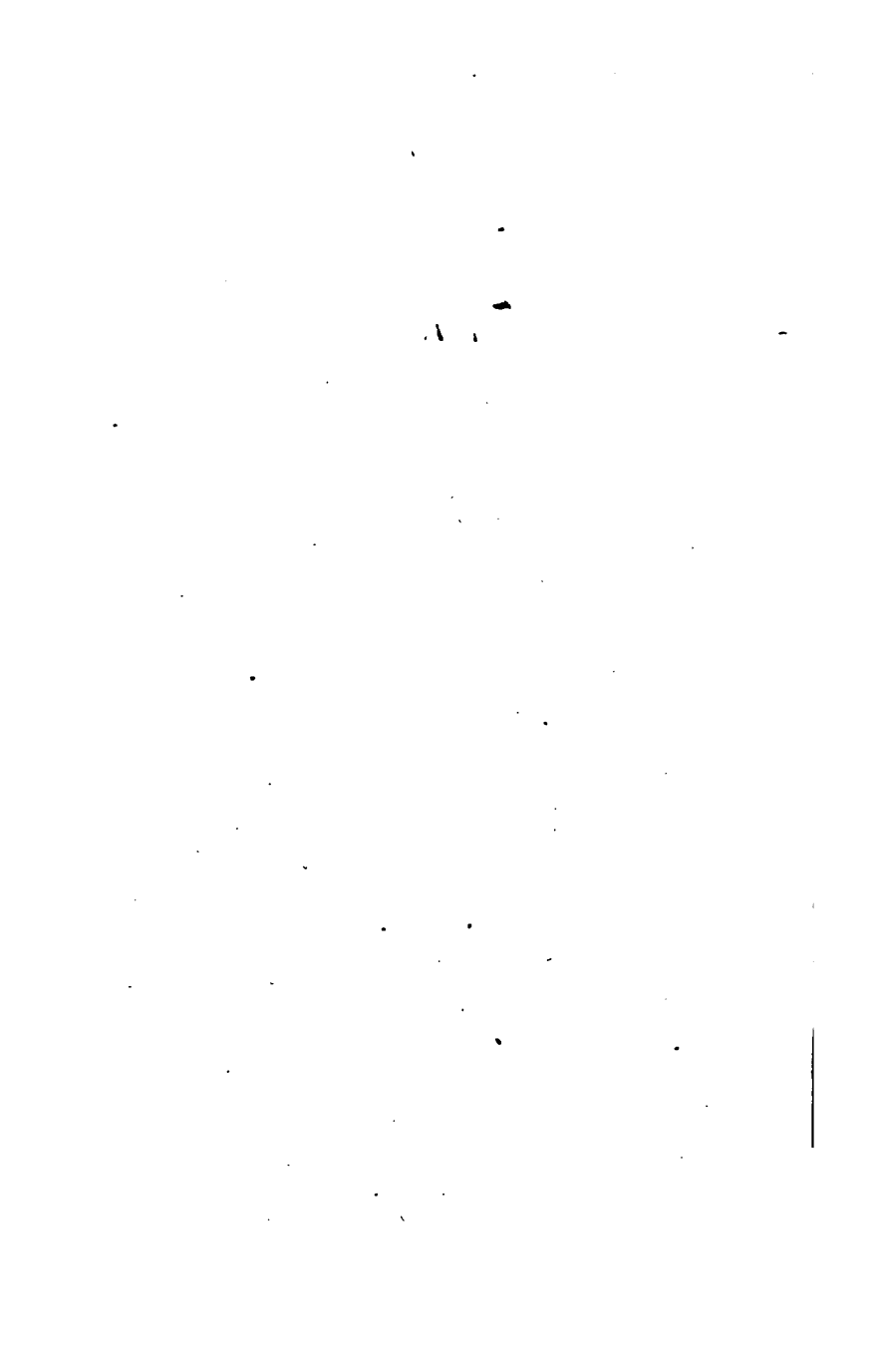
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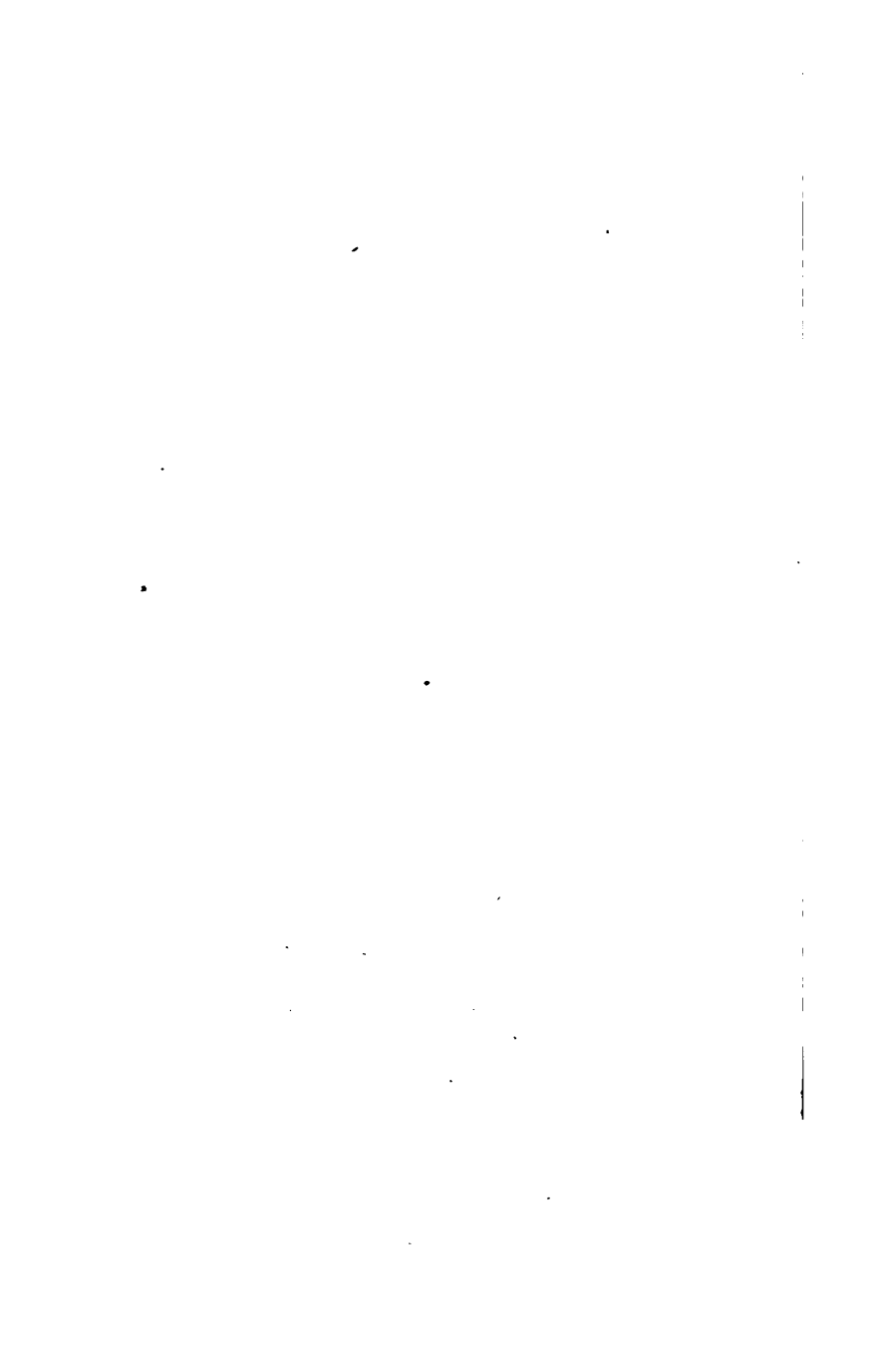
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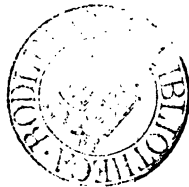
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VILLAGE PATRIARCH:

A POEM.

"A state of high civilization is one in which the principle of moral conservation is always in danger of being sacrificed to expediency, and in which manners go on refining, while the misery of thousands is left increasing."—*Monthly Review*.

LONDON:



PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,

AND PUBLISHED BY

EDWARD BULL, HOLLES STREET.

MDCCLXXXIX.

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B. BENSLEY, PRINTER, ANDOVER.

TO

HENRY BROUGHAM, Esq.

The friend of the Poor, and the champion of Education,

AS AN HUMBLE TRIBUTE OF RESPECT AND

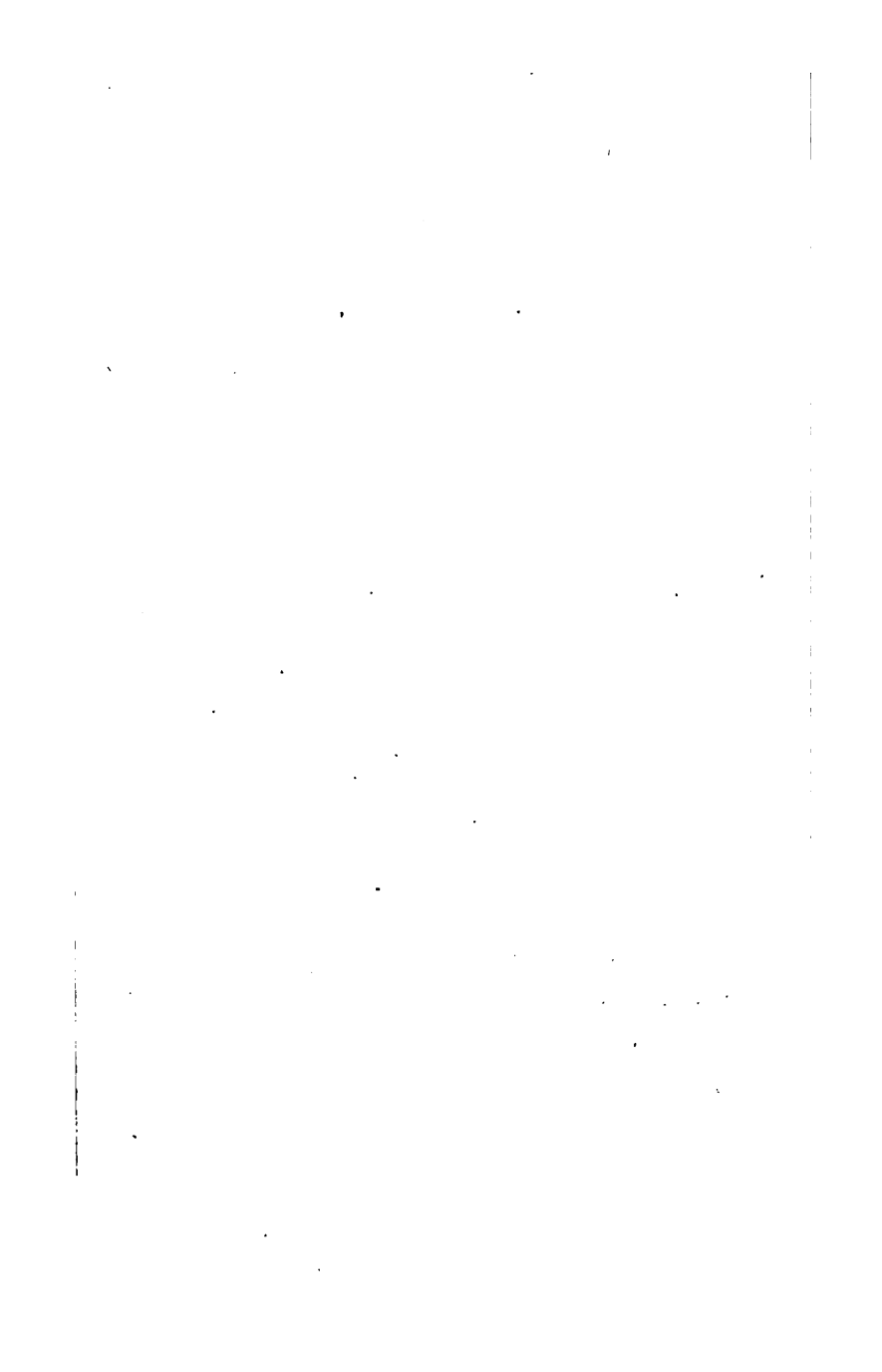
GRATITUDE FOR HIS EFFORTS IN THE

GREAT CAUSE OF HUMANITY,

THIS POEM

IS DEDICATED BY

THE AUTHOR.



PREFACE.

FOR sundry reasons, of which I shall only particularise the contempt of modern critics for modern poetry, and the absurdity of supposing that any of them will notice "a poor man's Poem," I have determined to be my own Reviewer.

THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH is a sort of history, in verse, of a blind old Whig, or Jacobin, who ought to have been sent to the tread-mill. He was, it seems, a bricklayer; and he died of Free-trade and the Corn-law, at the tender age of a hundred years. Of course, he was buried at the expense of the parish, as Whigs and Radicals generally are.

"Lord Byron," says an elegant writer, "spent much of his time in hammering out Brummagem

tragedies, to run on a rail-road by steam, and shame William Shakspeare for ever."

In like manner might the same writer elegantly observe, "Does the author of *The Village Patriarch* strive to imitate the pauper-poetry of Wordsworth; but his efforts are like those of a gardener's donkey in a go-cart, shamming a waggon, and flustering at a rumble, with ears, throat, legs, nose, and tail,—all nine at once."

I am, I suspect, still more unfortunate in my attempts to imitate Crabbe, that most British of poets; not that my imitation is servile, or that I have failed to stamp my individuality upon it; but my pencil wants force, though it is dipped in sadness, and familiar with shadow.* The clerical artist works with a wire brush. He has, however, been unjustly blamed for the stern colours, in which he paints the sublimity of British wretchedness. In what other manner could a true poet

* Let Mr. Jeffrey mend this if he can.

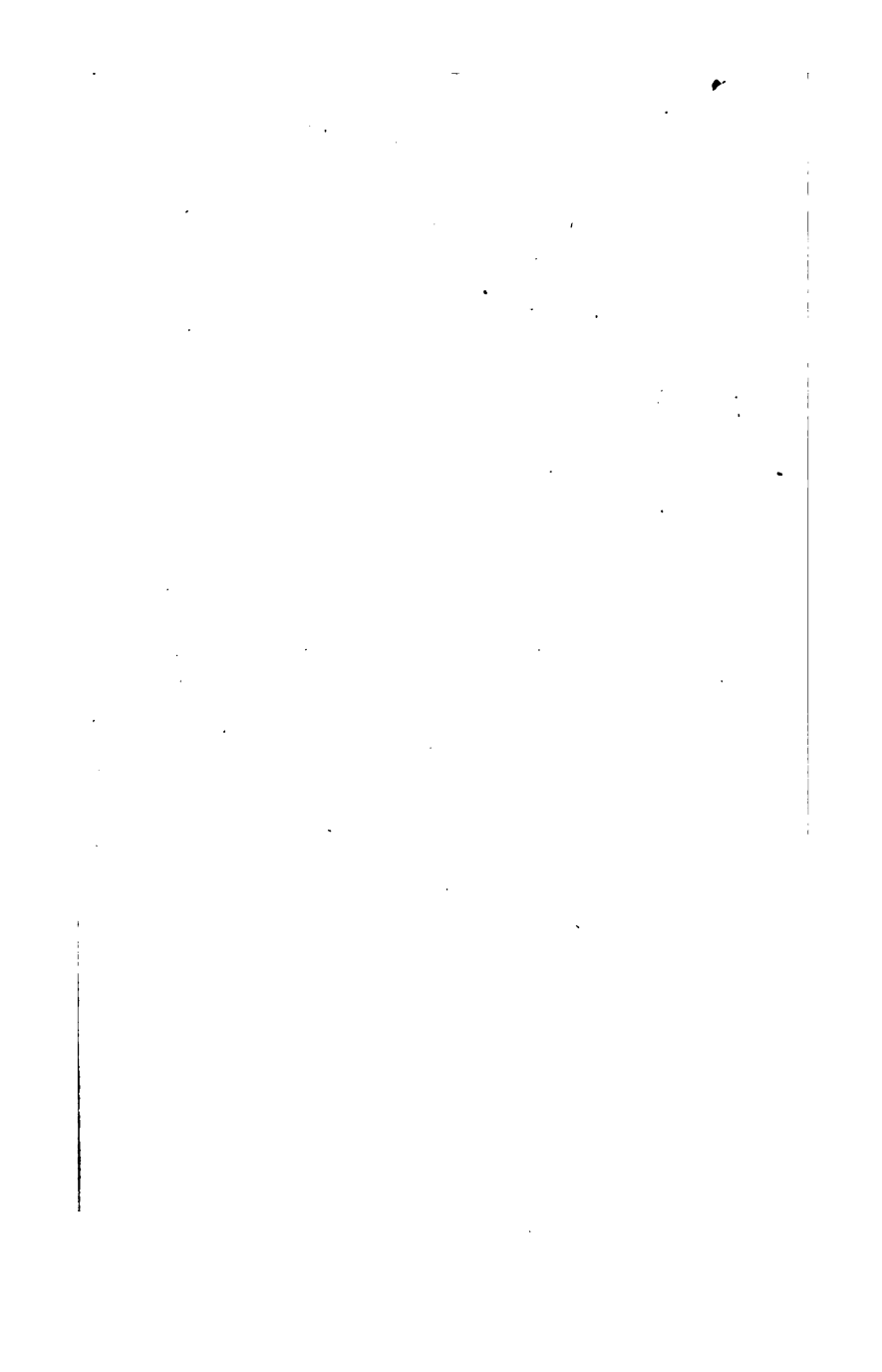
have depicted the blessedness of ultra-taxation, and its inevitable result,—the beautiful battle of ten dogs for one bone? Wordsworth, I may be told, has coloured similar objects differently. But Wordsworth only meets his subject half way, and with his hinder end towards it; “Sly is the look, which, o’er his *back*, the wary poet throws.” Crabbe, on the contrary, takes his hideous mistress in his arms, and she rewards his confidence in her by telling him all her dreadful secrets. The severity of his style is an accident, belonging, not to him, but to the majesty of his unparalleled subject. Hence it is, that the unhappy people of the United States cannot bear to read Crabbe. They think him unnatural, and he is so to them; for, in their wretched country, cottagers are *not* paupers, young men are *not* compelled to marry or become preachers; marriage is not synonymous with misery, and partridge-shooting is not religion to the elect. But I write for Englishmen; and every true Briton,

or anti-Huskissonian, ought to buy my goods. Certainly, in imitating those great masters of song, whom Homer probably copied in his "Swineherds and Good Peasants," I may be presumptuous, but, I hope, not unpardonably so. If my composition smell of the workshop, and the mechanic, I cannot help it; soot is soot. But he who lives in a chimney will do well to take the air when he can, and ruralize now and then, even in imagination.

EXORDIUM.

MONOPOLY! if every funeral bough
That loads thy trunk with want, and crime, require
The sighs of millions; if already thou,
Watch'd by mute Vengeance with his eye of ire,
Art putting forth thy buds of blood and fire,*
What will thy fruitage be? No matter, Wave
Thy branches o'er our hearts! and, like a pall,
Let thy broad shadow darken Freedom's grave!
Not yet the Upas of the Isles shall fall,
If ought shall stand—Spread then, and cover all!
Fear'st thou the axe? long since the feller died;
And thou art deaf to thunder. But, Black Tree!
Thy own fruits will consume thee in thy pride.
Oh, may thy inbred flame blast nought but thee,
When burns the beacon which the blind shall see!
Meantime, I make my theme the toil and grief
That water thee with tears—the fear and hate
Whose mutter'd curses fan thy deadly leaf—
Sad, silent changes, burning wrongs, that wait
To hear Delusion scream at Rapine's gate,
'Our Master's cause is lost, and Hell undone!'

* But what can the Grand Bashaws of any nation have to fear from the discontent of six, or eight, or ten, or twelve millions of paupers? The multitude have ever been as a flock of sheep, whether they offer their wool to the shears, or their throats to the knife. 'God curse these christian dogs!' said Kaled, 'they tire my arm.' 'Confound these Rebels!' cries the Orange Squire; 'let us ride them down: they are but six millions.' 'The thicker the hay, the easier mown,' said Alaric, and he, too, was a barbarian.



THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

BOOK I.

CONTENTS.

Continued frost. Enoch Wray leaves his cottage, on a visit to the neighbouring town. His blindness and poverty. His familiarity with the old roads of the country. His perplexity in the town. Changes there. Rural names of some of the streets. Country born widow, and her attempts at a garden—her consumptive boy, and his flowers. Female artisans singing hymns at their labour. Meeting of Enoch Wray and his old blind servant.

THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

BOOK I.

THROUGH fiery haze broad glares the angry sun ;
The travell'd road returns an iron sound ;
Rings in the frosty air the murderous gun ;
The fieldfare dies ; and heavy to the ground,
Shot in weak flight, the partridge falls, his wound
Purpling with scatter'd drops the crusted snow.
Loud thumps the forge ; bright burns the cottage fire,
From which the tilter's lad is loth to go ;
Well pleas'd the tramper sees the smoke aspire ;

High flies the swan; each wild strange bird is shy,
 And, terror-taught, suspects hill, vale, and plain.

II.

Our poor blind father grasps his staff again;
 Oh, Heav'n, protect him on his way alone!
 Of things familiar to him, what remain?
 The very road is chang'd; his friend, the stone
 On which he wont to sit and rest, is gone;
 And ill the aged blind can spare a friend!

III.

How lone is he, who, blind and near his end,
 Seeks old acquaintance in a stone or tree!
 All feeling, and no sight! oh, let him spend
 The gloaming hour in chat with memory!
 Nor start from dreams, to curse reality,
 And friends, more hard and cold than trees and stones!

IV.

He takes the townward road, and inly groans
 At men, whose looks he does not see, but feels
 Men, whose harsh steps have language, cruel tones,
 That strike his ear and heart, as if with steel!

Where dwelt they, ere Corruption's brazen seal
Stamp'd power's hard image on such dross as their's?

v.

Thou meanest thing that heav'n endures and spares;
Thou upstart Dandy, with the cheek of lead!
How dar'st thou from the wall push those gray hairs?
Dwarf, if he lift a finger, thou art dead!
His thumb could fillip off thy worthless head,
His foot, uplifted, spurn thee o'er the moon.

vi.

' Some natural tears he drops, but wipes them soon;
And thinks, how chang'd his country, and his kind,
Since he, in England's and in manhood's noon,
Toil'd lightly and earn'd much; or, like the wind,
Went forth o'er flowers, with not a care behind.
And knew nor grief, nor want, nor doubt, nor fear.

vii.

Beadle! how canst thou smite, with speech severe,
One who was reverent'd long ere thou wast born?
No homeless, soulless beggar meets thee here,
Although that threadbare coat is patch'd and torn:

His bursting heart repels thy taunt with scorn,
But deems thee human, for thy voice is man's.

VIII.

You, too, proud Dame, whose eye so keenly scans
The king's blind subject on the king's high road ;
You, who much wonder, that, with all our plans
To starve the poor, they still should crawl abroad ;
Ye both are journeying to the same abode ;
But, Lady, your glad eye, o'er wave and shore
And shoreless heav'n, with sightless speed may rove,
And drink resplendent joy ! But he no more
Shall look on Nature's face. Rock, river, grove,
Hate's withering frown, the heart-sent blush of love,
Noon, midnight, morning, all are dark to him !

IX.

Thou, skaiter, motion-pois'd, may'st proudly swim
In air-borne circles, o'er the glassy plain,
While beauty lauds thy graceful sweep of limb ;
But to the blind, alas, her praise is pain.
It but recalls his boyish days in vain,
When he, too, seen and praised, could see and praise !
To him there is no beauty, but the heart's,

THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

No light, but that within ; the solar blaze,
For him, no colour to the rose imparts ;
The rainbow is a blank ; and terror starts
No ghost, in darkness thicker than his own.

x.

Yet sweet to him, ye stream-lov'd vallies lone,
Leafless, or blossoming fragrant, sweet are ye ;
For he can hear the wintry forest groan,
And feel the beauty which he cannot see,
And drink the breath of nature, blowing free !
Sweet still it is through fields and woods to stray ;
And fearless wanders he the country wide,
For well old Enoch knows each ancient way ;
He finds in every moss-grown tree a guide,
To every time-dark rock he seems allied,
Calls the stream, Sister, and is not disown'd.

xi.

Usurper of the hills ! hast thou dethron'd
The regal oak ? He bows his honours hoar,
Too conscious of his fall, in vain bemoan'd ;
He yields to thee, storm-loving sycamore !
And on the inland peak, or sea-beat shore,

Thou reign'st alike. But thee, though yonder hill
 Stoops to thy height, our father planted here.
 And still he loves thy palmy shade ; and still,
 Ev'n when the snow-flake plumes thy branches sere,
 He climbs the age-worn road that lingers near,
 And seems, though blind, on distant hills to gaze.

XII.

But much he dreads the town's distracting maze,
 Where all, to him, is full of change and pain.
 New streets invade the country : and he strays
 Lost in strange paths, still seeking, and in vain.
 For ancient landmarks, or the lonely lane
 Where oft he play'd at Crusoe, when a boy.
 Fire vomits darkness, where his lime trees grew ;
 Harsh grates the saw, where coo'd the wood-dove coy ;
 Tomb crowds on tomb, where violets droop'd in dew ;
 And, brighter than bright heav'n the speed-well blue
 Cluster'd the bank, where now the town-bred boor
 (Victim and wretch, whose children never smile,
 Insults the stranger, sightless, old, and poor.
 On swill'd Saint Monday, with his cronies yile,

Drunk, or the glory of the holy isle,
While pines his wife, and tells to none her woes!

XIII.

Here, Enoch, flaunts no more the wild briar rose,
Nor basks the lizard here, nor harmless snake.
In Spring, no more the broom, all golden, glows
O'er the clear rill, that, whimpering through the brake,
Heard thy blythe youth the echoing vale awake.
All that was lovely then, is gloomy now.
Then, no strange paths perplex'd thee, no new streets,
Where draymen bawl, while rogues kick up a row;
And fish-wives grin, while fopling fopling meets;
And milk-lad his rebellious donkey beats,
While dwarfish cripple shuffles to the wall;
And hopeless tradesman sneaks to alehouse mean;
And imps of beggary curse their dad, and squall
For mammy's gin; and matron poor and clean,
With tearful eye, begs crust for lodger lean;
And famish'd weaver, with his children three,
Sings hymns for bread; and legless soldier, borne
In dog-drawn car, imploreth charity;
And thief, with steak, from butcher runs forlorn;

And debtor bows, while banker smiles in scorn ;
 And landed pauper, in his coach and four (A)
 Bound to far countries from a realm betray'd,
 Scowls on the crowd, who curse the scoundrel's power,
 While coachee grins, and lofty lady's maid
 Turns up her nose at bread-tax-paying trade,
 Though master bilketh dun, and is in haste.

XIV.

Chang'd scenes; once rural—chang'd, and not defac'd !
 Far other woes were your's in times of old,
 When Locksley o'er the hills of Hallam chas'd
 The wide-horn'd stag, or with his bowmen bold
 Wag'd war on kinglings. Vassal robbers prow'd,
 And tyger-like, skulk'd robber lords for prey,
 Where now groan wheelworn streets, and labour bends
 O'er thousand anvils. Bled the feudal fray,
 Or rav'd the foray, where the cloud ascends
 For ever; and from earth's remotest ends
 Her merchants meet, where hamlets shriek'd in flames.

XV.

Scenes, rural once ! ye still retain sweet names.
 That tell of blossoms, and the wandering bee :

In black Pea-Croft no lark its lone nest frames ;
 Balm-Green, the thrush hath ceas'd to visit thee;
 When shall Bower-Spring her annual corncrake see,
 Or start the woodcock, if the storm is near ?

XVII.

But, mourning better days, the widow here
 Still tries to make her little garden bloom,
 For she was country-born. No weeds appear
 Where her poor pinks deplore their prison-tomb ;
 To them, alas, no second spring shall come !
 And there, in May, the lilac gasps for breath ;
 And mint and thyme seem fain their woes to speak,
 Like saddest portraits, painted after death ;
 And spindling wallflowers, in the choaking reek,
 For life, for life, uplift their branches weak.
 Pale, dwindled lad, that on her slated shop
 Set'st moss and groundsel from the frosty lea !
 O'er them no more the tiny wren shall hop :
 Poor plants ! poor child ! I pity them, and thee ;
 Yet blame I not wise Mercy's high decree :
 They fade, thou die'st, but thou to live again,
 To bloom in heav'n. And will thy flowers be there ?

Heav'n, without them, would smile, for thee, in vain.
Thither, poor boy, the primrose shall repair,
There violets breathe of England's dewy air,
And daisys speak of her, that dearest one,
Who then shall bend above thy early bier,
Mourning her feeble boy for ever gone,
Yet long to clasp his dust for ever here!
No, no, it shall not want or flower or tear!
In thy worn hand her sorrow will not fail
To place the winter rose, or wind-flower meek;
Then kiss thy marble smile, thy forehead pale,
But not the icy darkness from thy cheek;
Then gaze—then press her heart, that yet shall break;
And feebly sob, 'My child! we part, to meet.'

XVIII.

Hark! music still is here! How wildly sweet,
Like flute notes in a storm, the psalm ascends
From yonder pile, in traffic's dirtiest street!
There hapless woman at her labour bends,
While with the rattling fly her shrill voice blends,
And ever, as she cuts the headless nail,
She sings, 'I waited long, and sought the Lord,

And patiently did bear.' A deeper wail
Of sister voices joins, in sad accord,
'He set my feet upon his rock ador'd!'
And then, perchance, 'O God, on man look down!'

XIX.

And Enoch seeks, with pensive joy, the town;
For there his brother in misfortune dwells,
The old and sightless sawyer, once his own.
They meet—with pride and grief his bosom swells;
And how they once could see, each sadly tells.
But Charles is chang'd; and Enoch's bosom bleeds
To mark the change. Though ag'd but eighty years,
Bed rid and blind, the sorrowing sawyer needs
All friendly aid. Crack'd, on the wall appears
His famous violin. No rival fears
His trembling hand, which never more shall call
The young, the gay, the manly, and the fair,
To penny hop, or rustie festival!
Nor fading prude again shall cure her hair,
Nor fop new whiskers buy, nor age repair
To hear him charm the loveliest of the land.
The tear is trembling in our father's eye:

Kindly he takes his ancient servants' hand,
Stoops to his whisper, to his feeble sigh
Sighs; and with hands uplifted reverently,
And heav'nward eyes, upon his bended knees,
Implores the Father of the poor to spare
His pious friend, and cure his long disease;
Or give him strength his painful load to bear,
That, dying, he may shew, ' what good men are.'
For thou disdain'st not pray'r from lowly walls:
The squalid hovel, where the poor and just
Kneel, is in thy sight splendid as the halls
Where pray the proud—with contrite hearts—I trust,
Then highest, when they know they are but dust.
Oh, God, continue to thy grateful son
The grace which thou hast never yet denied
To humble faith, that bids thy will be done!
And let it still, in meekness, be his pride
To praise thy name, and hear it glorified!
Poor is thy son, and blind, and scorn'd, like me;
Yet thee we bless, that he can proudly say
He eats the hoarded bread of industry,
And that he hath not, in his evil day,

Tasted the bitterness of parish-pay.
Though frail thy child, like all who weep below,
His life, thou know'st, has been no baneful weed ;
He never gather'd where he did not plough,
He reap'd not, where he had not scatter'd seed ;
And Christ for wretched sinners deigned to bleed !
At *thy* tribunal want may be forgiv'n ;
There, to be lowly, is not to be base ;
Oh, then—if equal in the eye of Heav'n
Are all the children of the human race ;
If pomp and pride have in thy courts no place ;—
Let humble friends, who long have sojourn'd here
In love united, meet in love again,
Where dust, divorc'd from sin, and pain, and fear,
In ever bless'd communion shall remain
With powers that know not death, nor grief, nor stain,
Warbling to heav'nly airs the grateful soul !

the same time, the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA) has been publishing a column on "The Medical Student's Perspective" since 1972.

There are a number of reasons why the medical student's perspective is important. First, it provides a unique view of the medical profession from the inside. Second, it helps to identify and address the needs and concerns of medical students. Third, it provides a forum for the expression of ideas and opinions that may otherwise go unexpressed.

Over the years, the *Journal of the American Medical Association* has published a wide variety of articles on the medical student's perspective. These articles have covered a wide range of topics, including the medical student's experience of the medical profession, the medical student's role in the medical profession, and the medical student's views on the medical profession.

One of the most common topics covered in these articles is the medical student's experience of the medical profession. This includes the medical student's experience of the medical school curriculum, the medical student's experience of the medical profession, and the medical student's experience of the medical profession's culture.

Another common topic covered in these articles is the medical student's role in the medical profession. This includes the medical student's role in the medical profession's education, the medical student's role in the medical profession's research, and the medical student's role in the medical profession's patient care.

Finally, another common topic covered in these articles is the medical student's views on the medical profession. This includes the medical student's views on the medical profession's ethics, the medical student's views on the medical profession's politics, and the medical student's views on the medical profession's future.

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THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

BOOK II.

CONTENTS.

A fine day in Winter. Enoch Wray, seated in the sunshine, at his cottage door. His neglected garden a symptom of poverty. The condition of the poor changed for the worse, since the patriarch was young. Great events of his time—invasion of England by the Pretender—American war—French Revolution. Napoleon.

THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

BOOK II.

Thou call'st the village patriarch to his door,
Brief, brilliant summer of a winter's day!
While the sweet redbreast, minstrel of the poor,
Perch'd on the blossoming hazle, trills his lay,
To cheer that blind good man, old Enoch Wray.
Behold our Father, still unbow'd by time!
Eld with his gentle locks full gently plays,
And pain, in reverence, spares the man sublime;
Oh, few such men grace these degenerate days!

Ev'n Death, though fain to strike, in awe delays,
As if immortal age defied his might.

Lo, where the peeping primrose comes again,
To see his sad bright eyes, that roll in night,
While melts the hoar frost on the cottage pane!

And dew drops glitter in the lonely lane!

Calm, as of old, with not one hoary hair

Chang'd, thou art listening for the vernal bee;

Thy fingers, like the daisy's petals fair,

Spread to the sun, that loves to look on thee,

Thou, almost god-like, in thy dignity!

Hark, how the glad rill welcomes thee with pride!

Ye have been friends and neighbours five score years:

Father! the stream still loiters at thy side,

And still unchang'd by envious time appears!

Like human life it flows, a stream of tears,

But not to pass, like human life, away.

II.

What, though thy locks of venerable grey

Claim not with yon wild cliffs coeval date?

Yet, blind old Man, shake hands with them, for they

Are dark like thee; and, by an equal fate,

They, too, enduring long, shall perish late.
Thou see'st not Winco, in his dusky cap,
Lean'd on his elbow, as becomes his years,
With all the past beneath him, like a map,
O'er which he bends and ruminates in tears ;
But how like thee that woe-mark'd hill appears !
Ye are not changeless, though ye long endure,
And Eld herself sees but what still hath been,
In him and thee. Nor art thou yet mature
And ripe for death, but strong in age and green,
And alter'd less than this pathetic scene.
The cottage where thy sire, and his, were born,
Seems, as of old, a hillock in the vale ;
But many a chink admits the breezy morn ;
Neglect, long since, divorc'd the jasmine pale
That clasp'd the casement ; and the sorrowing gale
Sighs o'er the plot where erst thy choice flowers bloom'd.
Ah, when the cottage garden runs to waste,
Full oft the rank weed tells of hopes entomb'd,
And points in scorn at once—proud man, debas'd !
The dogs bark at him ; and he moves, disgrac'd,
O'er wither'd joys which spring shall ne'er renew.

III.

Yet here, ev'n yet, the florist's eye may view
 Sad heirs of noble sires, once dear to thee ;
 And, soon, faint odours, o'er the vernal dew,
 Shall tempt the wanderings of the earliest bee
 Hither, with music sweet as poesy,
 To woo the flower whose verge is wiry gold. (B)

IV.

But on thy brow, oh, ne'er may I behold
 Sadness !—alas, 'tis there, and well it may !
 For times are chang'd, and friends grow scarce and cold !
 Oh, let not Want ' his ready visit pay'
 To sightless age, that knew a better day !
 Oh, may no parish crust thy lips prophane !

V.

Man, poor and blind, who liv'st in worse than pain ;
 Where'er thou art, thou helpless, wingless owl ;
 The worm, our eyeless sister, might disdain
 Thee, subject to thy fellow's proud control !
 But what a worm is he, the blind in soul,

Who makes, and hates, and tortures penury !
Ah, who shall teach him Mercy's law sublime ?
He who can sever woe and poverty,
Or pride and power, or poverty and crime ;
He who can uninstruct the teacher, Time.
Oh, yet erect, while all around are bow'd,
Let Enoch Wray's majestic pride remain,
A lone reproach, to sting the meanly proud,
And shew their victims not, perhaps, in vain—
What Britons have been, and may be again.
Oh, Age and Blindness, why should you be pair'd ?
Oh, sisters three, worst Fates, Want, Blindness, Age,
Hope look'd from heav'n, beheld you, and despair'd !
But now she rends her hair, in grief and rage ;
Her words are prophecy, her dreams presage
Evil to serf and lord ; for want hath sworn
Thus, to the delver of the perilous mine,
And him who wakes with scrating file the morn,
' By the sad worm that dies not, I am thine,
And thou art mine ; thy joys shall still decline
Till death, thy woes encrease till death—Toil on !'

VI.

But why forestall our griefs? Dark thoughts, begone!
Sufficient is its evil for the hour.

The verdant leaves drop from us, one by one;
We need not shake them down. Life's weeping flower
Droops soon enough, however slight the shower;
And joy, unbidden, quits our fond embrace.

VII.

I *will* not read dejection in thy face,
Nor ought save tranquil hope, and gentle doom;
But deem thee parent of a happy race,
Thy slumbers peaceful, distant yet thy tomb;
And in thy autumn, late the rose shall bloom.
Come, let us walk, as we have often walk'd,
Through scenes belov'd, that whisper of the past;
And talk to me, as thou hast often talk'd
Of winged hours, too happy far to last,
When toil was bliss, and thrift could gather fast
Funds to sustain his long life's tranquil close;
When faces wore no masks, and hearts were glad;
When freedom's champions were not labour's foes;
When no man deem'd the wise and honest mad;

And Pope was young, and Washington a lad.
Thou to the past can'st say, 'Rise, live again !'
For, Enoch, well remember'st thou the time
When Britons till'd the Eden of the main,
Where manly thoughts were utter'd, even in rhyme,
And poverty was rare, and not a crime.
What envied England was, long years ago,
That times are alter'd, thou can'st truly tell ;
And, if thy thoughts are flowers that bloom in snow,
If with the present and the past they dwell—
Then, of the lifeless, like a passing bell,
Speak to the living, ere they perish; too.
If memory is to thee a precious book,
Brightest where written first, and brightly true,
Turning the pictured pages, bid me look
On sunny meadow and rejoicing brook,
And toil-brown'd labour, as the throstle gay.

VIII.

Thou weepst, sightless man, with tresses gray!
But wherefore weep o'er ills thou canst not cure?
The darkest hour will quickly pass away,
And man was born to suffer, and endure.

But, come what may, *thy* rest is near and sure,
Thy bed is made, where all is well with all
 Who well have done. Then, Enoch, cease to mourn;
 Lift up thy voice, and wake the dead! Recall
 The deeds of other days; and from the urn
 Of things which were, shake words that breathe and burn.
 O'er the dark mantle of the night are shed
 Sparks of the sun, in starry spangles proud;
 In show'ry spring, when morn his radiant head
 Veils, the rich broom, with glittering diamonds bow'd,
 Is sunny light beneath the sunless cloud.
 Though Nature to thine eye is vainly fair,
 Green laugh the seasons, and the laughing light
 Is verdant in thy soul: the flower is there
 That wither'd four score years ago, still bright
 And bathed in freshness by the dewy air.
 And pitying spirits to thine ear repair
 With tales, to which unsorrowing hearts are deaf,
 And deeds, whose actors live not, live with thee;
 Still laugh and weep long buried joy and grief;
 Which, speaking with thine eloquent tongue, shall be,
 When thou art gone, alive to memory.

Thus, to great men their country—when the bust,
 The urn, the arch, the column fall—remains ;
 For ever speaks of godlike deeds the dust
 Which feet immortal trode ; and rocks, and plains,
 When History's page no symbol'd thought retains,
 Hear dim tradition talk of deathless men.

IX.

Bright on the storm-swoll'n torrent of the glen
 Is angry sunset ; bright, and warm, and strong,
 Are the rich visions which the poet's pen
 Clothes in sweet verse ; and brighter is the song
 Of truth unwritten, from our father's tongue.
 But who starts now at Balmerind's name,
 Which England heard pronounc'd in dreams, and woke ?
 Then every mountain had a voice of flame ;
 Blue Kinderscout to starting Snailsden spoke,
 And fiery speech from troubled Stanedge broke.
 Tell, Enoch, yet again of that huge tree,
 Old as the hills ; that tree, to whose broad shade
 Your herds were driv'n, when age and infancy,
 The thoughtful matron, and the weeping maid,
 Fled through the gloom where lonest Rivilin stray'd.

Speak of the cellar, and the friendly well,
 In which thy mother, trembling, hid her plate;
 The ancient cup, whose maker none can tell;
 The massive tankard, used on days of state;
 And coins long hoarded, all of sterling weight;
 Say, how retir'd the robbers, disarray'd;
 Boast of the arms thy sire was proud to wield;
 Draw from its sheath, in thought, the trusty blade
 That drove rebellion o'er Culloden's field,
 Oppos'd in vain by highland dirk and shield;
 And feel the blood-rust on its splendor keen!

x.

Then wing my spirit to a grander scene;
 Let burning thoughts and words for utterance throng
 And bid me mark—though clouds will intervene
 To veil the waters swift, and wild, and strong,
 How pours the tide of human fate along.
 Tell of sad strife with Britain's sons, who trod
 Earth's virgin soil, beyond the sun-lov'd wave;
 Men—owning no superior, but their God,
 Strong as their torrents, as their eagle, brave,
 Who dug with Freedom's sword Oppression's grave!

Tell, too, of him, the warrior sage, whose deeds
 Uncurs'd the future, and enfranchis'd men!
 But, ah, not yet—Time's darkest hour succeeds,
 Unmatch'd in woe since life and death began!
 For Evil hath her place in Mercy's plan,
 And long will find a theme for mournful rhymes.

..... XI.

Speak! if thy soul, too full of ancient times,
 Will condescend, of later deeds to tell—
 Speak of the day of blood, the night of crimes,
 The moral earthquake, and the earthly hell;
 When slaves smote tyrants, serv'd too long and well.
 Say how Attention listen'd, pale in heav'n,
 When, madden'd by Abaddon's legion brands,
 And too too deeply wrong'd to be forgiv'n—
 They found redemption in their own right hands,
 Purg'd with rector'd fire their demon'd lands,
 And clad in fresher green the calcin'd sod.

..... XII.

Nor him forget, the stripling demigod,
 Before whose glance the herded nations fled.
 Tell how he crush'd the mountains with his nod,

Walk'd on the storm; and to convulsion said;
 'Be still, thou Rabble!' Tell how he who read
 The doom of kings, fail'd to foresee his own.
 He placed upon his head the crown of steel;
 But dream'd he of his grave, in ocean lone?
 Toussaint! thy foe was doom'd, thy pang, to feel,
 On jailer England, and on him, her seal
 Hath history set. For ocean's waste of waves,
 Fenc'd not his throne from million hostile swords;
 Therefore he built on multitudinous graves
 A tyrants' power, and strove to bind with cords
 Thought; for she mock'd him with her wing of words,
 That withers armies. Who shall credit thee,
 Genius? still treacherous, or unfortunate,
 Victim, or wronger! Why must hope still see
 Thy pinions, plum'd with light divine, abate
 Their speed when near'st heav'n, to uncreate
 Her glorious visions? Aye, since time began,
 Creatures, with hearts of stone, and brains of clay,
 Scorning thy vaunt to wing the reptile, man,
 O'er thee and thine have held barbarian sway.
 And in the night which yet may have its day,

(The night of ages, moonless, starless, cold,)
If the rare splendor of the might of mind
Hath sometimes flash'd o'er plagues and errors old,
It flash'd but to expire, and leave behind
A deadlier gloom. But woodbine wreaths are twi'd
Round thorns; and praise, to merit due, is paid
To vulgar dust, best liked when earthy most.
While Milton grew, self-nourish'd in the shade,
Ten Wallers bask'd in day. Misrule can boast
Of many Alvas; Freedom, oft betray'd,
Found her sole Washington. To shine unseen,
Or, only seen, to blast the gazer's eye;
Or struggle in eclipse, with vapours mean,
That quench your brightness, and usurp the sky;
Such, meteor Spirits! is your destiny,
Mourn'd in times past, and still deplor'd in these.

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THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

BOOK III.

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Comparative independance of skilled labour. Fine Sabbath Morning. Sunday stroll of the townsman. Coach-race. Misery and misfortunes of the Poor. Congregation leaving the village Church. Old Mansion. Country Youth working in the Town. Poacher of the Manufacturing Districts. Concluding reflections.

THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

BOOK III.

I.

TOWN of the unbow'd poor ; thou shalt not pine,
Like the fall'n rustic, licens'd Rapine's thrall ;
Ere Bedford's loaf, or Erin's sty be thine.
Cloud-rolling Sheffield ; want shall humble all :
Thou, first to rise, wilt be the last to fall !
Slow are thy sons the pauper's trade to learn,
Though, in the land that blossoms like the rose,
The English peasant, and the Irish kerne,
Fight for potatoes ; thy proud labourer knows

Nor workhouse wages, nor the exile's woes,
 Nor yet thy bit of beef, thy pint of ale,
 Thy toil-strung heart, which toil could ne'er dismay,
 Nor yet thy honest, skill'd right hand shall fail;
 Last, from thy hearths the poor man's pride shall stray;
 And still shall come thy well paid Saturday,
 And still thy morn of rest be near and sure.

II.

Light! all is not corrupt, for thou art pure,
 Unchang'd, and changeless. Though frail man is vile,
 Thou look'st on him—serene, sublime, secure,
 Yet, like thy Father, with a pitying smile.
 Light! we may cloud thy beams, but not defile.
 Even on this wintry day, as marble cold,
 Angels might quit their home, to visit thee,
 And match their plumage with thy mantle, roll'd
 Beneath God's throne, o'er billows of a sea
 Whose isles are worlds, whose bounds infinity.
 Why then is Enoch absent from my side?
 I miss the rustle of his silver hair;
 A guide no more, I seem to want a guide,
 While Enoch journies to the house of pray'r;

Ah, ne'er came sabbath day, but he was there!
 Lo, how like him, erect and strong, though grey,
 Yon village tower, time-touch'd, to God appeals!
 But hark! the chimes of morning die away!
 Hark!—to the heart the solemn sweetness steals,
 Like the heart's voice, unfelt by none who feels
 That God is love, that man is living dust;
 Unfelt by none, whom ties of brotherhood
 Link to his kind; by none who puts his trust
 In nought of earth that hath surviv'd the flood,
 Save those mute charities, by which the good
 Strengthen poor worms, and serve their Maker best.

III.

Hail, Sabbath! day of mercy, peace, and rest!
 Thou o'er loud cities throw'st a noiseless spell.
 The hammer there, the wheel, the saw, molest
 Pale thought no more: O'er trade's contentious hell
 Meek quiet spreads her wings invisible.
 But, when thou com'st, less silent are the fields
 Through whose sweet paths the toil-freed townsman steals.
 To him the very air a banquet yields.
 Envious, he watches the pois'd hawk, that wheels

His flight on chainless winds. Each cloud reveals
 A paradise of beauty to his eye.
 His little boys are with him, seeking flowers,
 Or chasing the too venturesome gilded fly.
 So by the daisy's side, he spends the hours,
 Renewing friendship with the budding bowers:
 And—while might, beauty, good, without alloy,
 Are mirror'd in his children's happy eyes—
 In his great temple, offering thankful joy
 To Him, the infinitely great and Wise,
 With soul attuned to Nature's harmonies,
 Serene, and cheerful, as a sporting child.
 His heart refuses to believe, that man
 Could turn into a hell the bloomy wild,
 The blissful country, where his childhood ran
 A race with infant rivers, ere began
 King-humbling blind misrule his wolfish sway.

IV.

Is it the horn, that on this holy day,
 Insults the songs, which rise, like incense sweet,
 From lowly roofs, where contrite sinners pray,

And pious rustics, poor, yet clean and neat,
 To hear th' apostle of the hamlet, meet?
 They come, they come, behold, hark!—thundering down,
 Two headlong Coaches urge the dreadful race;
 Woe to Outsiders, should they be o'erthrown;
 Be ready, Doctor, if they break a trace!
 Twelve miles an hour—well done; a glorious pace!
 Poor horses, how they pant, and smoke, and strain!
 What then? our jails are full, and England thrives:
 Now, Bomb! now, Bomb! Defiance leads again;
 Hurrah! Bill Breakneck, or the Devil, drives!
 Whip!—populous England need not care for lance,
 Oh, blessed Sabbath, to the coach-horse thou
 Bringest no pause from deadly toil. For him,
 There is no day of rest. The laws allow
 His ever-batter'd hoof, and anguished limb,
 Till, death struck, flash his brain, with dizzy swim,
 Lo, while his nostrils flame, and, torture-scor'd,
 Quivers his flank beneath the ruthless goad,
 Stretch'd, on his neck each vein swells, like a cord!
 Hark! what a groan! The mute pedestrian, aw'd,
 Stops—while the steed sinks on the reeling road,
 Murder'd by hands that know not how to spare!

Now landed Trader, that, with haughty stare,
Thron'd in thy curtain'd pew, o'erlook'st the squire!
Be kind and saintly; give, for thou canst spare,
A pittance to the destitute; enquire
If yon pale trembler wants not food and fire?
Though thou could'st thrive, say not all others can.
But look and see how toil and skill are fed;
Lo, merit is not food to every man!
Pious thou art, and far thy fame is spread;
But *thy* saint Peter never preach'd cheap bread.
Though bright the sun, cold blows the winter wind:
Behold the tramper, with his naked toes!
Where for the night shall he a lodging find?
Or bid that homeless boy relate his woes;
Oh, try to feel what misery only knows,
And be like him of Wincobank, who ne'er
Sent a fall'n brother heart-struck from his door!
Or be like Wentworth's lord, a blessing here!
Oh, imitate the steward of the poor,
According to thy means; heav'n asks no more.

Think of the hope often, the sire of nine.
The proud, skill'd man, wheel-shatter'd yesterday :
His wife will wring her hands ere eve decline ;
And, ah, the next week's wages, where are they ?
Oh, soothe her ; help her ; name not parish-pay !
Think, too, of her, the maid who dwelt alone,
Whose first, sole, hopeless love was Enoch Wray.
Forgotten ere she died, she liv'd unknown,
And told her love but once, passing away
Like a slow shadow, in her tresses grey.
Proud, though despis'd, she sternly paid for rent
Her all, her weekly eighteen pence, and died,
Rather than quit the home where she had spent
Twice forty years. Her last pawn'd rug supplied
A fortnight's food. None heard her, if she sigh'd ;
None saw her, if she wept ; or saw, too late.
That tears were ice upon her lifeless face.
Her Bible on her lap, before the grate
That long had known no fire, gnawing a lace
With toothless gums,—the last of all her race—
She died of cold and hunger in her chair.

The bell strikes twelve: The ancient house of prayer
 Pours forth its congregated youth and age;
 The rich, the poor, the gay, the sad are there;
 And some go thence, who, in their hearts, presage
 That one week more will end their pilgrimage.
 First, in all haste comes busy Bolus, croose
 As bantam cock, and neat as horse fresh poll'd.
 Then boys, all glad, as bottled wasps let loose,
 Clapping their hands, because their toes are cold.
 Then the new Squire (more dreaded than the old,)
 Rais'd from the milk cart by his uncle's will—
 A Norfolk farmer he, who lov'd his joke,
 At tax-worn tradesman aim'd, with practis'd skill;
 For, scorning trade, he throve, while traders broke,
 And did not care a straw for Mister Coke.
 Next, lo, the monarch of the village school,
 Slow Jedediah comes, not yet the last.
 Well can he bear the blame for stubborn fool,
 Meekly he bows to yeoman, stamping past,
 While Bolus, yet in sight, seems travelling fast.
 Thou, Jedediah, learned wight, know'st well

Why rush the younglings from the porch, with glee,
 Dear to thy heart is Nature's breezy fell,
 Deeply the captive's woes are felt by thee;
 For thou art Nature's, Freedom's devotee!
 Witness, the moss that winter's rage defies,
 Cull'd yesterday, beside the lizard's home;
 Witness, thou lichen of the precipice,
 Beautiful neighbour of the torrent's foam,
 Pluck'd, where the desert often sees him roam!
 Next come the train who better days have known,
 Condemn'd the taunts of paupers-born to brook,
 With prostrate hearts, that mourn their hopes o'erthrown,
 And downcast eyes, that shun th' upbraiding look.
 Then comes his worship; then his worship's cook;
 And then, erect as truth, comes Enoch Wray,
 Bareheaded still, his cheek still wet with tears,
 Pondering the solemn text, as best he may.
 Lo, close behind, the curate meek appears;
 Kindly he greets the man of five score years,
 The blind, the poor! while purse-pride turns away,
 And whispering asks, half wishful, half afraid,
 If Enoch has applied for parish pay?

Short-sighted curate! ply the worlding's trade,
 Or, unprefer'd, grow pale with hope delay'd,
 And die, the victim of low craft and spite.
 Short-sighted curate! do as worldlings do;
 Flatter the wolf! for he can snarl and bite.
 What, though thy life is pure, thy doctrine true?
 The Squireling hates thee, Bolus hates thee, too,
 Physician, surgeon, umpire of thy flock!
 Dar'st thou be wise beyond the learned schools?
 How laughs the Doctor at thy little stock
 Of drugs and simples! Burn thy useful tools,
 Priest and Mechanic, scorn'd by knaves and fools;
 Then, fawn on wealth, and spurn the all-shunn'd poor!
 To grandeur's halls, a punctual dun, repair;
 Or still shall honest rags besiege thy door,
 And thou be found at want's bed-side in pray'r,
 While pain moans low, and death is watching there,
 And hope sees better worlds beyond the sky.

VII.

Near yonder archer yews—that solemnly
 Keep aye uprais'd their desolate hands, in praise
 Of the old heav'ns, and hoar antiquity—

Behold the Hall! There once dwelt Matthew Hayes.

A trading yeoman of the bygone days.

There, where his fathers sojourn'd on the plain,

And damn'd the French, yet lov'd all human kind,

His annual feast was spread, nor spread in vain;

There his own acres billow'd in the wind

Their golden corn. A man of vulgar mind,

He laugh'd at learning, while he scrawl'd his cross,

And rear'd his boy in sloth. But times grew worse;

War came—and public waste brought private loss;

And punctual bankruptcy, the thriving curse,

Beggar'd his debtors, till an empty purse

Answer'd all claims. He sold his land—then died,

Following his broken-hearted wife—and left

Their son, the heir of prejudice and pride,

To drink, and swear, of self-respect bereft,

And feed the day's debauch by nightly theft.

Behold his home, that sternly could withstand

The storms of more than twice a hundred years!

In such a home was Shakspeare's Hamlet plann'd,

And Raleigh's boyhood shed ambitious tears

O'er Colon's wrongs. How proudly it uprears

Its tower of cluster'd chimneys, tufted o'er
 With ivy, ever green amid the grey,
 Yet envy-stung, and muttering evermore
 To yon red villa, on the king's highway,
 'Thou Dandy! I am *not* of yesterday.'
 Time seems to reverence these fantastic walls,
 Behold the gables quaint, the cornice strong!
 The chambers, bellying over latticed halls!
 The oaken tracery, outlasting long
 The carved stone! nor do their old age wrong
 With laughter vile, or heartless jest profane.

VIII.

Why, Enoch, dost thou start, as if in pain?
 The sound thou hear'st the blind alone could hear:
 Alas! Miles Gordon ne'er will walk again;
 But his poor grandson's footstep wakes thy tear,
 As if indeed thy long lost friend were near.
 Here oft, with fading cheek, and thoughtful brow,
 Wanders the youth—town-bred, but desert-born.
 Too early taught life's deepening woes to know,
 He wakes in sorrow with the weeping morn,
 And gives much labour for a little corn.

In smoke and dust, from hopeless day to day,
 He sweats, to 'bloat the harpies of the soil,
 Who jail no victim, while his pangs can pay.
 Untaxing rent, and trebly taxing toil,
 They make the labour of his hands their spoil,
 And grind him fiercely; but he still can get
 A crust of *wheaten* bread, despite their frowns;
 They have not sent him like a pauper yet
 For workhouse wages, as they send their clowns
 Such tactics do not answer yet, in towns.
 Nor have they gorg'd his soul. Thrall though he be
 Of brutes who bite him while he feeds them, still
 He feels his intellectual dignity,
 Works hard, reads usefully, with no mean skill
 Writes, and can reason well of good and ill.
 He hoards his weekly groat. His tear is shed
 For sorrows which his hard-worn hand relieves.
 Too poor, too proud, too just, too wise to wed,
 (For slaves enough already toil for thieves,)
 How gratefully his growing mind receives
 The food which tyrants struggle to withhold!
 Though hourly ills his every sense invade

Beneath the cloud that o'er his home is roll'd,
He yet respects the power which man hath made,
Nor loathes the despot-humbling sons of trade:
But, when the silent Sabbath-day arrives,
He seeks the cottage, bordering on the moor,
Where his forefathers pass'd their lowly lives,
Where still his mother dwells, content, though poor,
And ever glad to meet him at the door.
Oh, with what rapture he prepares to fly
From streets and courts, with crime and sorrow strew'd,
And bids the mountain lift him to the sky!
How proud, to feel his heart not all subdu'd!
How happy, to shake hands with solitude!
Still, Nature, still he loves thy uplands brown,
The rock, that o'er his father's freehold towers!
And strangers, hurrying through the dingy town,
May know his workshop by its sweet wild flowers,
Cropp'd on the Sabbath, from the hedge-side bowers,
The hawthorn blossom in his window droops:
Far from the headlong stream and lucid air
The pallid alpine rose to meet him stoops,
As if to soothe a brother in despair.

Exil'd from Nature and her pictures fair,
E'en winter sends a posy to his jail,
Wreath'd of the sunny celandine—the brief
Courageous wind-flower, loveliest of the frail—
The hazel's crimson star—the woodbine's leaf—
The daisy with its half-clos'd eye of grief—
Prophets of fragrance, beauty, joy, and song.

IX:

Bird! who would swelter with the laden throng,
That had thy wings? Earth spinners, you are free!
But thou must drag the chains of life along,
And, all but hopeless, till thou cease to be,
Toil, woe-worn Artisan! Yet unlike thee
Is minion'd Erin's sty'd and root-fed clown.
How unlike thee, though once erect and proud,
Is England's peasant slave, the trodden down,
The pariah-paid, in soul and body bow'd!
How unlike thee is Jem, the rogue avow'd,
Whose trade is poaching! Honest Jem works not,
Beggars not, but thrives by plundering beggars here.
Wise as a lord, and quite as good a shot,
He, like his betters, lives in hate and fear,

And feeds on partridge, because bread is dear.
 Sire of six sons, apprentic'd to the jail,
 He prowls in arms, the tory of the night;
 With them he shares his battles and his ale;
 With him they feel the majesty of might;
 No despot better knows that Power is Right.
 Mark his unpaidish sneer, his lordly frown;
 Hark, how he calls beadle and flunky liars;
 See, how magnificently he breaks down
 His neighbour's fence, if so his will requires;
 And how his strutle emulates the Squire's!
 And how like Mistress Gig, late Betty Scrub,
 Or Mister Dughill, with his British pride,
 He takes the wall of Glossin and his cub,
 Or loyal Guts, who, bursting, coughs, to hide
 The wounded meanness he mistakes for pride.
 Jem rises with the moon; but when she sinks,
 Homeward, with sack-like pockets, and quick heels,
 Hungry as boroughmongering goul, he slinks.
 He reads not, writes not, thinks not—scarcely feels;
 Insolent ape! whate'er he gets he steals,
 Then plays the devil with his righteous gain!

X.

Oh, Thou, whom conquer'd seas made great in vain,
 Fall'n Venice! Ocean Queen no more! oppress'd
 Nurse of true slaves, and lords whom slaves disdain!
 Whisper thy sickening sister of the west
 That Trade hath wings, to fly from climes unblest;
 Trade, the transformer, that turns dross to bread,
 And reaps rich harvests on the barren main;
 Trade, that uproots wild flowers, and from their bed
 Digs forth hard steel, to hew the bondsman's chain;
 Tamer of Tyrants, else oppos'd in vain!
 And ye—once guardians of the fainting state,
 Shades of the Rockinghams, and Savilles! ye
 Who liv'd when paupers did not dine on plate!
 Wake! can ye sleep? Indignant, wake! and see
 Alms-taking wealth; alms-giving poverty!
 Thou too, undemonizer of the proud,
 Religion, that canst raise and dignify
 The heart which abject penury hath bow'd;
 From gorgeous climes beneath the eastern sky,
 Call home the lightning of thy seraph eye;
 Gird thy almighty loins; thy work begin!

Plead for the pariah of the isle of woes,
 And speak, with Luther's voice, to giant sin!
 So may the year of tortur'd ages close
 Ere the slow Angel start from his repose,
 Like Stanedge, shaking thunder from his mane!

xi.

But who will listen when the poor complain?
 Who read, or hear, a tale of woe, if true?
 Ill fares the friendless Muse of want and pain,
 Fool! would'st thou prosper, and be honest, too?
 Fool! would'st thou prosper? flatter those who do.
 If, not ungrateful of the all-shunn'd poor,
 Thou write on tablets frail their troubles deep,
 The proud, the vain, will scorn thy theme obscure:
 What wilt thou earn, though lowly hearts may steep
 With tears the page in which their sorrows weep?
 Growl, if thou wilt, in vulgar sympathy
 With plunder'd labour; pour thy honest bile
 In satire, hiss'd at base prosperity;
 And let his enviers, from their pittance vile,
 Reward the pauper virtues of thy style.
 But, hark! what accents, of what slave, enquire

Why rude mechanics dare to wield the quill?
He bids me from the scribbler's desk retire,
Re-hoof my fingers, and forget my skill
In railing foully, and in writing ill.
Oh, that my poesy were like the child
That gathers daisies from the lap of May;
With prattle, sweeter than the bloomy wild!
It then might teach poor wisdom to be gay
As flowers, and birds, and rivers, all at play,
And winds, that make the voiceless clouds of morn,
Harmonious. But distemper'd, if not mad,
I feed on Nature's bane, and mess with scorn.
I would not, could not, if I would, be glad,
But, like shade-loving plants, am happiest sad.
My heart, once soft as woman's tear, is gnarl'd
With gloating on the ills I cannot cure.
Like Arno's exil'd bard, whose music snarl'd,
I gird my loins to suffer and endure,
And woo Contention, for her dower is sure.
Tear not thy gauze, thou garden-seeking fly,
On thorny flowers, that love the dangerous storm,
And flourish most beneath the coldest sky!

But ye who honour truth's enduring form;
Come! there are heath-flowers, and the fanged worm,
Clouds, gorse, and whirlwind, on the gorgeous moor.

THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

But when the morning sun had risen
And the dew was on the grass,
I saw the old man sitting
Under the big tree in the square,
His head on his hand,
And his eyes fixed on the ground.

THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

BOOK IV.

CONTENTS.

Recitation of Manfred to Enoch Wray. Byron, and his contemporaries. First perusal of Schiller's Robbers, followed by the blindness of the Patriarch. Further particulars of his history and character.

THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

BOOK IV.

I.

ENOCH! the lights are darken'd on the hill,
But in the house a thoughtful watch is set;
Warm on the ancient hearth fire glimmers still;
Nor do the travellers their way forget,
Nor is the grasshopper a burden yet.
Though blossoms on the mountain top the snow,
The maids of music yet are lingering near;
Still are the wakeful listeners wise to know;
Still to thy soul the voice of song is dear.

And when I read to thee that vision drear,
 The Manfred of stern Byron; thou did'st bend
 Fix'd, to drink in each touching word and tone;
 On thy chang'd cheek I saw strong feeling blend
 Impetuous hues; and tears fell, one by one,
 From thy clos'd eyes, as on the moorland stone
 The infant river drops its chrystal chill.

II.

Say, then, is Pope our prince of poets still?
 Or, may we boast, in these all-ryhming days,
 One climber of the Heliconian hill,
 Whose classic spirit, and unborrow'd lays,
 Johnson, or caustic Swift, had deign'd to praise?
 Scott, whose invention is a magic loom;
 Baillie, artificer of deathless dreams;
 Moore, the Montgomery of the drawing-room;
 Montgomery, the Moore of solemn themes;
 Crabbe, whose dark gold is richer than it seems;
 Keats, that sad name, which time shall write in tears;
 Poor Burns, the Scotchman who was not a slave;
 Campbell, whom Freedom's deathless Hope endears;
 White, still remember'd in his cruel grave;

Ill-fated Shelly, vainly great, and brave;
 Wordsworth, whose thoughts acquaint us with our own;
 Didactic, earnest Cowper, grave and gay;
 Wild Southey, flying, like the hern, alone;
 And dreamy Coleridge, of the wizard lay;
 These are true bards, who please not Enoch Wray.
 But may not Byron, dark and grand, compete
 With him who sung Belinda's ravished tress?
 Chaste is the Muse of Pope and passing sweet;
 But Byron is all fervor, rivalless
 In might and passion. Woman's tenderness,
 When woman is most tender, most deplor'd,
 Moves not like his; and still when least divine,
 He is a god, whose shrines shall be restor'd—
 Apollo, self-dethron'd. His mind a mine
 Where night-born gems in cherish'd darkness shine,
 He thrice a Ford, twice an Euripides,
 And half a Schiller, hath a Milton's power.
 But not a Shakspeare's; strength, and fire, and ease,
 And almost grace—though, gloomy as the tower
 Around whose dangerous brow storms love to lower,
 His world is all within, like Enoch Wray's.

III.

The full blown flower, maturely fair displays
 Intensest beauty, and th' enamour'd wind
 Drinks it's ripe fragrance. But could lengthen'd days
 Have ripen'd to more worth dark Byron's mind,
 And purg'd his thoughts, from taint of earth refin'd?
 Or would he have sent forth a fiercer glow,
 And gloomier splendor from his core of fire?
 We know *not* what he might have been, but know
 What he could *not* be. Proud of his high lyre,
 We mourn the dead, who never can expire.
 Proud of his fearless frown, his burning tear;
 Proud of the poet of all hearts, who heard
 The mute reproach of Greece; with zeal severe,
 We scrutinize our least injurious word,
 Nor longer deem his spleeny whims absurd,
 His pangs ridiculous, his weakness crime.

IV.

Heaven's favourites are short liv'd. Stern fate and time
 Will have their victims; and the best die first,
 Leaving the bad still strong, though past their prime.

To cure the hopeless world they ever curs'd,
 Vaunting vile deeds, and vainest of the worst.
 And He, who cannot perish, is no more!
 He died, who is immortal, and must be,
 To Time's slow years, like ocean to the shore,
 The sun to heav'n! He died, where fell the free (b)
 Of ancient Greece; and Greeks his loss deplore.
 There, where they fight, as fought their sires of yore,
 In the great cause of all the good and great,
 Liberty's martyr, England's, Europe's pride,
 Girding his broken heart, he champion'd fate,
 And laid down life—though not as Russell died,
 To him, 'by better ties than blood,' allied.
 Beyond the deep he perished, far from all
 That darken'd death with love; and though the wave
 Leagued with his foes, to mock his dying call,
 His dust is where his heart was, when he gave
 Years of defeated glory for a grave,
 Sighing in death his deathless love and woe.

V.

Father! thy life has been prolong'd, to know [lays.
 Strange times, strange men, strange changes, and strange

The warrior-bard, whom Athens, long ago,
 Crown'd peerless heir of never-dying praise,
 Hath found a greater. In those fearful days
 When, tempest-driv'n, and toss'd on troubled seas,
 Thought, like the petrel, lov'd the whirlwind best,
 And, o'er the waves, and through the foam, with ease,
 Rose up into the black cloud's thund'rous breast,
 To rouse the lightning from his gloomy rest;
 Then, in the shadow of the mountains dwelt
 A lady, to whose heart high hopes were dear,
 Who wildly thought, and passionately felt,
 And strangely dream'd, that man, the slave of fear,
 And pain, and want, might be an angel here,
 And oft that lady of the glen remote
 Call'd Enoch her wise mason, oft partook
 His humble meal, mirror'd in his thought,
 The pensive past assum'd her own sweet look,
 'Twas then she gave him her last gift, a book
 Dark with strange power, and fearfully divine,
 It chill'd his blood, it lifted up his hair;
 Spirits of terror liv'd in every line;
 A spell was on its pages of despair.

And burning woe, which Nature could not bear,
 'Twas grand, but dreadful as the thoughts that wrang,
 The son of morning, from the solar beam
 Hurl'd to the centre, where his soul unstrang
 Disdain'd submission still, too proud to seem
 Unvanquish'd. Was it but a fearful dream,
 That tale of Schiller's? Did the robber Moor,
 Pierce through Amelia's broken heart his own?
 Smite the dark tower? and shake the iron door?
 And was he answer'd by a father's groan?
 Th' Avonian seer hath ceas'd to stand alone.
 But thou no more shalt printed vision read,
 Enoch! that dire perusal was thy last;
 For, from thine eyeballs, with a spirit's speed,
 Gone and for ever, light and beauty pass'd.
 Not that a horror and a woe too vast
 Had quench'd thy brilliant orbs. Nor was thy doom
 Like his—the bard who sang of Eden's bowers,
 The bard of lofty thought; all fire and gloom,
 All might and purity—whose awful powers,
 Too darkly strong for organs frail as ours,
 Press'd on his visual nerve a pall-like night.

But God, who chastens whom he loves, ordain'd—
 Although thy frame was vigorous, thy step light,
 Thy spirit like th' autumnal gale unrein'd,
 That thine should be affliction, well sustain'd,
 To shew the proud what humble worth can bear.

VI.

Thou, hither, Pride, with tearless eyes, repair!
 Come, and learn wisdom from unnumbering woe,
 That, reft of earthly hope, yet scorns despair.
 Still in his bosom light and beauty glow,
 Though darkness took him captive long ago,
 Nor is the man of five score years alone.
 A heavenly form, in pity, hovers near:
 He listens to a voice of tenderest tone,
 Whose accents sweet the happy cannot hear;
 And lo, he dashes from his cheek a tear,
 Caught by an angel shape, with tresses pale.
 He sees her, in his soul. How fix'd he stands!
 But, oh, can angels weep? Can grief prevail
 O'er spirits pure? She waves her thin white hands;
 And while her form recedes, her eye expands,
 Gazing on joys which he who seeks shall find.

VII.

There is an eye that watches o'er the blind ;
He *hath* a friend—' not lost, but gone before'—
Who left her image in his heart behind.
But when his hands, in darkness, trembled o'er
Her lifeless features, and he heard no more
The voice who last tone bless'd him, frenzy came !
Blindness on blindness ; midnight thick and deep,
Too heavy to be felt ! then pangs, like flame,
That sear'd the brain ; sorrow that could not weep ;
Fever, that would have barter'd worlds for sleep !
He had no tears, but those that inly pour,
And scald the heart ; no slumbers, but the doze
That stuns the mourner who can hope no more ;
But he had shudderings, stupor, nameless woes,
Horror, which only he that suffers knows.
But frenzy did not kill. His iron frame,
Though shaken, stood. The mind's night faded slow.
Then would he call upon his daughter's name,
Because it was her mother's ! And his woe
Waned into resignation, pleas'd to show
A face of peace, without the smile it wore.

Nor did the widower learn again to smile (x)
 Until his daughter to her Albert bore
 Another Mary, and on yonder stile
 He nurs'd the babe, that sweetly could beguile,
 With looks unseen, 'all sadness but despair.'

VIII.

Nay, Enoch, do not weep. The day is fair,
 And flings bright lightnings from his helm abroad :
 Let us drink deep the pure and lucid air,
 Ere darkness call thee to her damp abode.
 Hark, how the titling whistles o'er the road !
 Holm, plume thy palms ; and toss thy purple torse
 Elm ; but, Wood Rose, be not a bride too soon !
 Snows yet may shroud alive the golden gorse :
 Thou early green ; deem not thy bane a boon ;
 Distrust the day that changeth like the moon.
 But still our father weeps. Ah, though all hues
 Are dead to him, the floral hours shall yet
 Shed o'er his heart their fragrance-loving dews !
 E'en now, the daisy, like a gem, is set,
 Though faint and rare, in winter's coronet.
 Thy sisters sleep, adventurous wind-flower pale ;

And thy meek blush affronts the calandine,
 The starry herald of that gentlest gale
 Whose plumes are sunbeams, dipp'd in odours fine :
 Well may'st thou blush ; but sad blight will be thine
 If glowing day shut frore in stormy night.

IX.

Still dost thou weep, Old Man ? The day is bright,
 And spring is near ; come, take a youngster's arm ;
 Come, let us wander where the flocks delight
 At noon to sun them, when the sun is warm ;
 And visit then, beyond thy uncle's farm,
 The one-arch'd bridge—thy glory, and thy pride ;
 Thy Parthenon ; the triumph of thy skill ;
 Which still bestrides, and long it shall bestride,
 The discontented stream, from hill to hill,
 Laughing to scorn the moorland torrent still.
 How many years hath he slept in the tomb
 Who swore thy bridge would yield to one year's rain !
 E'en London folks, to see and praise it, come ;
 And envious masons pray, with shame and pain,
 For skill like Enoch Wray's, but pray in vain.
 For he could do, what others could not learn,

First having learn'd what heav'n alone can teach :
The parish ideot might his skill discern ;
And younglings, with the shell upon their breech,
Left top and taw, to listen to his speech.
The barber, proudest of mankind, confest
His equal worth—' or so the story ran '—
Whate'er he did, all own'd, he did it best ;
And ev'n the bricklayer, his sworn foe, began
To say, that Enoch *was* no common man.
Had he cary'd beauty in the cold white stone,
(Like Law, the unknown Phidias of our day,)
The village Angelo had quail'd to none
Whom critics eulogize, or princes pay ;
But ne'er had Chantrey equall'd Enoch Wray,
Forgotten relic of a world that was !

THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

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BOOK V.

CONTENTS.

An excursion, with Enoch Wray, to the mountains. Beautiful Winter Morning. Rivers of Hallamshire. Short-lived Grinder, contrasted with the Patriarch. The moors. Mountain bee, Enfeebled snake. Lost lad. The desert a fit abode for spirits. Christ's love of solitude. Reflections, suggested by the desolation of the scene.

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THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

BOOK V.

1818

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I.

COME, Father of the Hamlet ! grasp again
Thy stern ash plant cut when the woods were young ;
Come, let us leave the plough-subjected plain,
And rise, with freshen'd hearts, and nerves re-strung,
Into the azure dome, that, haply, hung
O'er thoughtful power, ere suffering had begun.

II.

Flowers peep, trees bud, boughs tremble, rivers run ?
The redwing saith, it is a glorious morn.

Blue are thy heav'ns, thou Highest! and thy sun
 Shines without cloud, all fire. How sweetly borne
 On wings of morning o'er the leafless thorn
 The tiny wren's small twitter warbles near;
 How swiftly flashes in the stream the trout!
 Woodbine! Our father's ever watchful ear
 Knows, by thy rustle, that thy leaves are out.
 The trailing bramble hath not yet a sprout;
 Yet harshly to the wind the wanton prates,
 Not with thy smooth lisp, woodbine of the fields!
 Thou future treasurer of the bee, that waits
 Gladly on thee, Spring's harbinger, when yields
 All bounteous earth her od'rous flowers, and builds
 The nightingale, in beauty's fairest land.

III.

Five rivers, like the fingers of a hand,
 Flung from black mountains, mingle, and are one,
 Where sweetest vallies quit the wild and grand,
 And eldest forests, o'er the silvan Don,
 Bid their immortal brother-journey on,
 A stately pilgrim, watch'd by all the hills.
 Say, shall we wander, where, through warriors' graves;

The infant Yewden, mountain-cradled, trills
 Her doric notes? Or, where the Locksley raves
 Of broil and battle, and the rocks and caves
 Dream yet of ancient days? Or, where the sky
 Darkens o'er Rivilin, the clear and cold,
 That throws his blue length, like a snake, from high?
 Or, where deep azure brightens into gold
 O'er Sheaf, that mourns in Eden? Or, where, roll'd
 On tawny sands, through regions passion-wild,
 And groves of love, in jealous beauty dark,
 Complains the Porter, Nature's thwarted child,
 Born in the waste, like headlong Wiming? Hark!
 The pois'd hawk calls thee, Village Patriarch!
 He calls thee to his mountains! Up, Away!
 Up, up, to Stanedge, higher still ascend,
 Till kindred rivers, from the summit gray,
 To distant seas their course in beauty bend,
 And, like the lives of human millions, blend
 Disparted waves in one immensity!

IV.

Beautiful rivers of the desert! ye
 Bring food for labour from the foodless waste.

Pleas'd stops the wanderer on his way, to see
The frequent wier oppose your heedless haste.
Where toils the Mill, by ancient woods embrac'd,
Hark, how the cold steel screams in hissing fire!
But Enoch sees the Grinder's wheel no more,
Couch'd beneath rocks and forests, that admire
Their beauty in the waters, ere they roar
Dash'd in white foam the swift circumference o'er.
There draws the Grinder his laborious breath;
There, coughing, at his deadly trade he bends;
Born to die young, he fears nor man nor death;
Scorning the future, what he earns he spends;
Debauch and riot are his bosom friends.
He plays the tory, sultan-like and well:
Woe to the traitor that dares disobey
The Dey of Straps! as ratten'd tools shall tell:
Full many a lordly freak, by night, by day,
Illustrates gloriously his lawless sway.
Behold his failings! hath he virtues, too?
He is no pauper, blackguard though he be;
Full well he knows what minds combin'd can do,
Full well maintains his birthright—He is free,

And, frown for frown, outstares monopoly.
 Yet Abraham and Elliot, both in vain,
 Bid science on his cheek prolong the bloom :
 He *will* not live ! he seems in haste to gain
 The undisturb'd asylum of the tomb,
 And, old at two-and-thirty, meets his doom !
 Man of a hundred years, how unlike thee !

V.

But steeper hills look down on stream and tree ;
 I pray thee, pause, or, lo, I lag behind !
 Ah, thou wilt prove an overmatch for me,
 Despite the sad erectness of the blind.
 Whoever walks with thee, though young, will find
 'Tis hard for youth to emulate thy age.
 They were adventurous Sampsons, that would try
 To lift a load with Enoch, or engage
 To fling a heavier quoit. And thigh to thigh,
 And foot to foot, plac'd well and warily,
 He who throws thee had need be in his prime.

VI.

The Moors—All hail !—Ye changeless, ye sublime,
 That seldom hear a voice, save that of heav'n !

Scorners of chance, and fate, and death, and time,
 But not of Him, whose viewless hand hath riv'n
 The chasm, through which the mountain stream is driv'n!
 How like a prostrate giant—not in sleep,
 But listening to his beating heart—ye lie!
 With winds and clouds dread harmony ye keep;
 Ye seem alone beneath the boundless sky;
 Ye speak, are mute—and there is no reply!
 Here all is sapphire light, and gloomy land,
 Blue, brilliant sky, above a sable sea
 Of hills, like chaos, ere the first command,
 'Let there be light!' bade light and beauty be.
 But thou art here, thou rarest Cloudberry!
 Oh, Health-Restorer! did he know thy worth,
 The bilious townsman would for thee resign
 His wall-grown peach, well-pleas'd. In moorland earth
 Thee would he plant, thou more than nectarine,
 Thou better grape! and, in thy fruit divine,
 Quaff strength and beauty from the living bough.

vii.

This scene is ancient, Enoch must allow.
 Marble is less enduring than the flower

That wither'd ages hence, and withers now.
Where, black, as night, th' unalter'd mountain's tower,
And baffled Time sees things that mock his power,
I thank ye, billows of a granite sea,
That the brib'd Plough, defeated, halts below !
And thanks, majestic Barrenness, to thee,
For one grim region in a land of woe,
Where tax-sown wheat, and paupers, will not grow !
Here pause, old Man, the alpine air to taste :
Drink it from Nature's goblet, while the morn
Speaks like a fiery trumpet to the waste.
Here despot grandeur reigns in pomp forlorn.
Despair might sojourn here, with bosom torn,
And long endure but never smile again.
Hail to the tempest's throne, the cloud's high road,
Lone as the aged sky, and hoary main !
The path we tread the Sherwood outlaws trode,
Were no man bideth, Locksley's band abode,
And urg'd the salient roe through bog and brake.

VIII.

Know'st thou our Father, thou enfeebled snake,
That seek'st the sun too soon ? Dost thou, in awe

And love, the seldom trodden path forsake ?
 To him, thou seem'st the very snake he saw
 In ruddy boyhood. While thy folds withdraw,
 Uncoil'd o'er cranshy roots, and fern-stalks dry,
 He thinks he sees thee, colour'd like the stone,
 With cruel and atrocious Tory eye,
 And anxious look of dog that seeketh bone,
 Or sour Scotch placeman, when his place his gone,
 To feed some Whigish fool, who will not eat.

IX.

Bee! that hast left thy sandy-cov'd retreat (v)
 Before the living purple hath purvey'd
 Food for thee; potent pigmy! that the fleet
 Wing'd moments of the past, and years, array'd
 In patchwork, from the robe of things decay'd,
 Recall'st from sad oblivion; thou canst do
 What mightiest spirits cannot.—Silence hears
 Thy murmur; and our sire, who hears it, too,
 Lives o'er again a hundred pensive years.
 Pathetic Insect, thou hast brought fresh tears
 To sightless eye-balls, and a channel'd cheek.
 Oh, that, once more, he could become a boy,—

And see the morning o'er the mountains break,
 In clouds of fire, which army-like deploy,—
 That he might chase thee, with a hunter's joy,
 Vainly o'er moss and heath and plummy fern!

x.

Father, we stand upon the mountain stern
 That cannot feel our lightness, and disdains
 Reptiles, that sting and perish, in their turn,
 That hiss and die—and lo, no trace remains
 Of all their joys, their triumphs, and their pains!
 Yet to stand here might well exalt the mind;
 These are not common moments, nor is this
 A common scene. Hark, how the coming wind
 Booms, like the funeral dirge of woe, and bliss,
 And life, and form, and mind, and all that is!
 How like the wafture of a world-wide wing
 It sounds and sinks—and all is hush'd again!
 But are our spirits humbled? No. We string
 The lyre of death with mystery and pain,
 And proudly hear the dreadful notes complain
 That man is not the whirlwind, but the leaf,
 Torn from the tree to soar and disappear.

Grand is our weakness, and sublime our grief.
Lo, on this rock, I shake off hope and fear,
And stand releas'd from clay;—yet am I here,
And at my side are blindness, age and woe.

XI.

Far to the left, where streams departed flow,
Rude as his home of granite, dark and cold,
In ancient days, beneath the mountain's brow,
Dwelt with his son, a widower poor and old.
Two steeds he had, whose manes and forelocks bold
Comb ne'er had touch'd; and daily to the town
They dragg'd the rock, from moorland quarries torn.
Years roll'd away. The son, to manhood grown,
Married his equal; and a boy was born,
Dear to the grandsire's heart. But pride and scorn,
And avarice, fang'd the mother's small grey eyes,
That dully shone, like studs of tarnish'd lead.
She poison'd soon her husband's mind with lies;
Soon nought remain'd to cheer the old man's shed,
Save the sweet boy, that nightly shar'd his bed.
And worse days were at hand. The son defied
The father—siez'd his goods, his steeds, his cart:

The old man saw, and, unresisting, sigh'd :
But when the child, unwilling to depart,
Clung to his knees, then spoke the old man's heart
In gushing tears. 'The floor,' he said, 'is dry :
Let the poor boy sleep with me this one night.'
'Nay,' said the mother ; and she twich'd awry
Her rabid lip ; and dreadful was the sight,
When the dwarf'd vixen dash'd, with fiendish spite,
Her tiny fist into the old man's face,
While he, soft-hearted giant, sobb'd and wept.
But the child triumph'd ! Rooted to the place,
Clasping the aged knees, his hold he kept,
And once more in his grandsire's bosom slept.
And nightly still, and every night, the boy
Slept with his grandsire, on the rush-strewn floor,
Till the old man forgot his wrongs, and joy
Revisited the cottage of the moor.
But a sad night was darkening round his door.
The snow had melted silently away,
And, at the gloaming, ceas'd the all-day rain ;
But the child came not. Wherefore did he stay ?
The old man rose, nor long look'd forth in vain ;

The stream was bellowing from the hills amain;
 And screams were mingled with its sullen roar :
 ' The boy is in the burn ! ' said he, dismay'd,
 And rush'd forth, wild with anguish. From the shore
 He plung'd; then, staggering, with both hands display'd,
 Caught, screaming, at the boy, who shriek'd for aid,
 And sank, and rais'd his hands, and rose, and scream'd,
 He leap'd; he struck o'er eddying foam; he cast,
 His wilder'd glance o'er waves that yelp'd and gleam'd,
 And wrestled with the stream, that grasp'd him fast,
 Like a bird struggling with a serpent vast.
 Still, as he miss'd his aim, more faintly tried
 The boy to scream; still down the torrent went
 The lessening cries; and soon far off, they died;
 While o'er the waves, that still their boom forth sent,
 Descended, coffin-black, the firmament.
 Morn came; the boy return'd not : noon was nigh,
 And then the mother sought the hut in haste;
 There sat the wretched man, with glaring eye,
 And in his arms the lifeless child, embrac'd,
 Lay like a darkening snow-wreath on the waste.
 ' God curse thee, dog, What hast thou done ? ' she cried,

And fiercely on his horrid eye-balls gaz'd :
 Nor hand, nor voice, nor dreadful eyes replied ;
 Still on the corpse he star'd with head unrais'd ;
 But in his fix'd eyes light unnatural blaz'd,
 For *Miser* had left them, to return no more.
 Man of the wither'd heart-strings ! is it well ?—
 Long in the grave hath slept the maniac hoar ;
 But of the ' Lost Lad ' still the mountains tell,
 When shriek the spirits of the hooded fell,
 And, many-voice'd, comes down the foaming snow :

XII.

Hail, silence of the desert !—I speak low
 In reverence.—Here the falcon's wing is aw'd,
 As o'er the deep repose, sublimely slow,
 He wheels in conscious majesty abroad.
 Spirits should make the desert their abode.
 The meakest, purest, mightiest, that e'er wore
 Dust as a garment, stole from crowds unblest'd
 To sea-like forests, or the sea-beat shore,
 And utter'd, on the star-sought mountain's breast,
 The holiest precepts e'er to dust address'd.
 Oh, happy, souls of death-free'd men, if here

Ye wander in your noiseless forms unseen !
 Though not remote, remov'd from grief and fear,
 And, all that pride shall be and guilt hath been ;
 While gentle death his shadow casts between
 Thoughts seraph-wing'd, and man's infirmity !

XIII.

To live unseen, but not to cease to be ;
 Unheard, unseen, with men, or rocks, to dwell !
 Oh, that I were all thought and memory,
 A wing'd intelligence invisible.
 Then would I read the virgin's fears, and tell
 Delicious secrets to her lover's heart,
 By spectre-haunted wood, or wizard stream ;
 Or bid the awful form of Justice start,
 And prompt the conscience-stricken murderer's scream ;
 Or scourge the rich man, in his ghastly dream,
 For heartless deeds, unwept, and unatoned.

XIV.

Hail, Desolation ; Solitude ; and, thron'd ;
 On changeless rocks, Eternity ! Look down,
 And say, What see ye ? Want, that vainly groan'd,
 While mercy gave him stones for food ! The frown

Of guilt, on minds and hearts, in ruins strown!
 Hate, torturing constancy, that lov'd too well!
 Majestic things, in gnats that live an hour!
 Soul-bartering Faction, fain to buy or sell,
 And 'spous'd to Fraud, with kingdoms for a dower;—
 Ye sister forms of Nature's dread and power!
 Stand ye upon the earth? Heav'n hath no cloud,
 To be a carpet for your dismal feet.
 Ye stand upon the earth, and skies are bow'd
 To knee your throne, this granite-pillar'd seat,
 That is, and was, and shall be. Mildly beat,
 Beneath your footstool, passions, feelings, deeds,—
 Like billows on the solitary shore,
 Where baffled wave to baffled wave succeeds,
 Spurn'd by the sullen rocks, with sullen roar,
 And rising, falling, foaming evermore,
 To rise, and fall, and rear, and foam in vain.

XV.

Ye rocks; ye elements; thou shoreless main,
 In whose blue depths, worlds, ever voyaging,
 Freight'd with life and death; of fate complain;
 Things of immutability; ye bring

Thoughts, that with sorrow, and with terror, wring
The human breast! Unchang'd, of sad decay
And deathless change ye speak, like prophets old
Foretelling Evil's ever present day;
And, as when Horror lays his finger cold
Upon the heart in dreams, appal the bold.
Oh, thou, Futurity, our hope and dread,
Let me unveil thy features, fair or foul,
Thou, who shalt see the grave untenanted,
And commune with the re-embodied soul,
Tell me thy secrets, ere thy ages roll
Their deeds, that yet shall be on earth, in heav'n,
And in deep hell, where rabid hearts with pain
Must purge their plagues, and learn to be forgiven!
Shew me the beauty that shall fear no stain,
And still, through age-long years, unchang'd remain!
As one, who dreads to raise the pallid sheet
Which shrouds the beautiful and tranquil face
That yet can smile, but never more shall meet,
With kisses warm, his ever fond embrace;
So, I draw nigh to thee, with timid pace,
And tremble, though I long to lift thy veil.

THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

BOOK VI.

CONTENTS.

Enoch Wray verifies his dream. His anxiety to recite his composition to his neighbour, Alice Green. Snow storm. Disasters of Enoch Wray, on his way to the cottage of Alice Green. Her person described. An incident in her life, and its consequences. Her eloquence.

THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

BOOK VI.

I.

DREAMS! are ye vapours of the heated brain,
Or echoes of our deeds, our fears, our hopes?
Fever'd remembrances, that o'er again
Tell prose adventures, in poetic tropes,
While drowsy judgment with illusion copes
Feebly and vainly? Are ye paid when due,
Or like our cobweb wealth, unfound when sought?
Be ye of sterling value, weigh'd and true;
Or the mere paper currency of thought,

By spendthrift fancy sign'd, and good for nought ?
Enoch hath dream'd a dream, like saddest truth,
And done it into ryhme. And Alice Green,—
The shrewish village quack, and ever sooth
Interpreter of dreams—can tall, I ween,
What signs and omens, ryhm'd or ryhmeless, mean.
With all a poet's ardour to rehearse
A vision, like the Florentines of yore,
Feverish and nervous, muttering deathless verse,
He opens oft, and oft he shuts the door,
And every leaden minute seems a score.
But he is storm-bound. To the marsh below
While squattering ducks descend, and, with pale beams,
The hooded, ineffectual sun, through snow
That fell all night; and still is falling, gleams,
Like reason, struggling half awake, in dreams;
He hears the redbreast peck the frosted pane,
Asking admittance to the warm fire-side;
And—while o'er muffled ruts each cart and wain
Moves without sound—he opes the casement wide,
To hail once more the guest he ne'er denied;
Then spreads his hands, to feel if yet the plumes

Of heav'n's ~~are~~ wavering in the noiseless air ;
 Determin'd, when the burden'd sky resumes
 Its lucid azure, clear, and cold, and fair—
 Through paths of hidden peril to repair,
 And have some harmless fun with Alice Green.

II.

How wild, how wondrous, and how chang'd the scene
 Since yesterday! On hill and valley bright
 Then look'd broad heav'n, all splendid and serene;
 And earth and sky were beauty, music, light.
 But now the storm-cock shakes the powdery white,
 With start impatient, from his shivering wings;
 And, on the maple's loaded bough depress'd,
 Perch'd o'er the buried daisy sweetly sings, (D)
 With modulated throat, and speckled breast,
 To cheer the hen bird, drooping in the nest
 On dusky eggs, with many a dot and streak.

III.

Love of the celandine, and primrose meek,
 Star of the leafless hazle, where art thou?
 Where is the wind-flower, with its modest cheek?
 Larch! hast thou dash'd from thy denuded brow

Blossoms, that stole their rose-hues from the glow
Of Even, blushing into dreams of love?
Flowers of the wintry beam, and faithless sky!
Gems of the wither'd bank, and shadeless grove!
Ye are where he who mourns you soon must lie;
Beneath the shroud ye slumber—tranquilly,
But not for ever. Yet a sudden hour
Shall thaw the spotless mantle of your sleep,
And bid it, melted into thunder, pour
From mountain, waste, and fell, with foamy sweep,
Whelming the flooded plain in ruin deep.
Yes, little, silent minstrels of the wild,
Your voiceless song shall touch the heart again!
And shall no morning dawn on Sorrow's child?
Shall buried *mind* for ever mute remain
Beneath the sod, from which your beauteous strain
Shall yet arise in music, felt, not heard?
No! faith, hope, love, fear, gladness, frailty, all,
Forbid that man should perish. Like the bird
That soars and sings in Nature's festival,
Our souls shall rise, and fear no second fall;
Our adoration strike a lyre divine.

IV.

Now, through the clearing storm, the sunbeams shine;
 And, lo, the fluttering flakes are winnow'd fire!
 Thinner and thinner fall the fleeces fine;
 From mantled fells the umber'd clouds retire;
 And heav'n, that stoop'd to earth, is lifted higher.
 How Nature dazzles in her bridal vest!
 Like air-blown fire on fire, is light on snow.
 A long-lost feeling wakes in Enoch's breast;
 His lightless eye-balls feel a sapphire glow,
 That speaks of hues and forms dead long ago,
 The bright, the wild, the beautiful, the grand.

V.

Now the third Mary takes her grandsire's hand,
 And leads him forth into the soon chang'd road;
 A world unknown, an undiscover'd land!
 Confus'd, amaz'd, perturb'd, he walks abroad,
 Yet inly pleas'd tow'rd's Alice Green's abode.
 But, too erect on slippery paths to roam,
 With forward hand, in vain his way he feels.
 When snows are deep, the blind should stay at home.

At length, the path descends ; he staggers, reels,
And from beneath him glide his treacherous heels.
He lies, with ghastly terror in his face,
Like one half stunn'd beneath the lightning's stroke.
Rising, he slips ; he moves with timid pace,
Almost repenting his intended joke ;
Then clings, half prostrate, to the hoary oak,
And gasps, with eye-brows lifted in dismay.

VI.

Ye who can gaze on beauty-breathing day,
And drink intoxication with your eyes !
Compassionate the sightless on his way ;
With gloomy trepidation sympathize,
When faithless snows the icy way disguise ;
With pity hear his faint and feeble call,
With pity see his quivering lip and cheek,
His grasping hands, that try to catch the wall,
His wild, wide eyes, that helpless trouble speak,
His sliding feet, his knees, bent, trembling, weak,
His hatless locks, which frantic Dread appears !

VII.

The beauteous girl, too, trembles, and, in tears,
Pale with her grandsire's fear, laments its cause.
But, lo, the skaiter, aliving Bill appears,
And, while on his broad chin the snow flake thaws,
Deigns to instruct him in the skaiters' laws:
Stoop, Enoch, stoop! bend forward! and, uncar'd,
O'er slapest ice thy gloomy way pursue;
And see! old Alice limps from yonder yard!
Last night, she dream'd that Enoch came to woo
The five-times wedded, non aged eighty two,
With fifty guineas sew'd in his left sleeve.
Certes that ancient sleeve is darn'd and stitch'd:
But who shall now her dream-craft disbelieve?
He comes!—she laughs and winks, like one bewitch'd,
And feels already married, and enrich'd.
Her right hand on her hip, her left beneath
Her folded apron, at the crippled gate,
Where erst the ash tree look'd on fern and heath,
With palpitating heart, and shaking pate,
And short black pipe between her lips sedate,

The dream-expounder stoops! whose skill assures
 To dreaming wights, whate'er they wish, and more;
 The female Galen; famous for her cures,
 And eke her salve, from Ecclesfield to Dore:
 Almost to dead men she can health restore!
 Her right divine what patient dares dispute?
 Her sacred mysteries deepest awe inspire;
 Sublime as Laud, inerrable as Bate!
 Who doubts her skill deserves the stake and fire;
 Believe, obey! 'tis treason to enquire.
 And was she not a beauty in her youth?
 Still she hath eyes—one red and 'blind, one green;
 And in her upper jaw is yet a tooth,
 Which, when she laughs or yawns, may well be seen,
 With two below, and bluish stumps between.
 Ah, faded one! not 'reft of every charm;
 Was she not form'd in Nature's finest mould?
 The loveliest maiden, once, that cot or farm.
 Sent forth to shake the dew from cowslips cold?
 The loveliest far of all, save Mary Gold?
 Enoch salutes her with a hearty smack,
 And grasps her right hand in a living vice:

The gentle dame smiles meekly, and draws back ;
 But why should friends be formal, and precise ?
 She leads him through the yard ; and, in a trice,
 Behold him, in her dear last husband's chair !
 Lo, in the cheerful blaze his white locks gleam ;
 She sets before him her best hoarded fare,
 And pours the long-cork'd bottle's gladdening stream,
 Tapp'd from the birch tree, when the moon's wan beam
 Silver'd the broken cloud, and budding grove.

VIII.

But while he drank, she sigh'd, and look'd above,
 Where hung a portrait, faded in its frame,
 The keep-sake of her first and only love,
 Who died unmarried, murmuring oft her name.
 Still in her bosom glows the cherish'd flame
 Of virgin love, for low-laid Thomas Broom.
 Ah, who could dream—when, like a vestal vow'd,
 Scattering her Sunday posy on his tomb,
 A stainless, broken hearted maid, she bow'd—
 That clowns would whisper' in the market crowd,
 Of Alice Green's warm cordials, over proof ;
 And neighbours call her 'Cut-and-come-again!'

And to the passer-by point out the roof
Where dwells the widow, buxom, fair, and fain?
Too well she lov'd, but lov'd, alas, in vain!
And, cross'd in fondest love, her feelings froze,
Like dew drops on the leafless blossoming slow,
Crisp'd into diamond when the north wind blows.
Her grief for Thomas was not worn for show,
As oft she told her husbands, long ago;
She wish'd he had been her's; and so wish'd they.

IX.

But when th' unconscious wooer, Enoch Wray,
Had duly prais'd her wine, her jam, and cream,
He look'd like one who had grave things to say,
And 'gan to tell that he had dream'd a dream,
And that he therefore came, her aid to pray,
Despite the drifted snow, and slippery way.
Then Alice sought, with thin and palsied hand,
And slowly from her pouch, at last drew forth
Her spectacles, the wonder of the land,
Though purchas'd of a native Jew from Perth
Once her third husband's, that best man on earth!
To mend her insight into things to come,

She set them on her snuffy nose astride ;
But first, she wip'd them with her learned thumb ;
Then, to a drawer a crooked key applied,
And drew there-out her book of art and pride.
She spread it, open, on her quaking knee,
With expectation in her upward look,
Gazing on Enoch, or impatiently
Turning the pages of the wond'rous book.
But—though despostic Alice ill could brook
Suspense, and long'd to speak her words of doom—
He still delay'd. Slyly he prais'd the rose,
(By him unseen,) which still, he said, in pride
Bloom'd on her *cheek*,—he err'd, 'twas on her nose ;
' Why might we not make up a match ? ' he cried :
She frown'd, she fuff'd, like eggs with bacon fried ;
She wonder'd that a man like Enoch Wray
Should talk such stuff, it ill became his years ;
And yet she *had* been pretty, in her day ;
Nor *is* she quite so old as she appears ;
But, foh ! she blushes at the trash she hears.
Then, oft she drank his health, while Enoch smok'd ;
And soon her tongue—that deafen'd Albert's mill.

When Richard, fifth and last, her rage provok'd,—
 Seem'd able, in the cause of her sweet will,
 To talk into their graves five husbands still.

x.

'I dream'd a dream,' quoth he—But Alice Green
 Is not now in the vion for hearing dreams;
 And she long us'd to sovereignty hath been:
 But she dilates the more on other themes.
 'Her house,' she boasts, is richer than it seems.
 She has two clocks; her sheets are thirteē pair,
 Her blankets twelve; and as for satin gowns,
 She could lend six, and still have seven to spare:
 Cotton is only fit for wives of clowns,
 But *she* looks well in silks, even envy owns.
 She *once* was cheated—when she bought her busts.
 Her name is buy and pay; and not a straw
 Cares she for draper Glossop, though he trusts,
 As Mistress Strat well knows. When Swindler Mawe,
 Ruin'd by women, racing, and the law,
 Sold dish and spoon, she bought her feather bed,
 And her green sofa. But she quite forgot
 Her sweet down pillows, and her curtains red.

She has a still, too—Mistress Strut has not.
No doubt, they shall contrive to boil the pot ;
But much would still have more. Your darn'd left sleeve
Seems heavy. Enoch. Cash is every thing.
You must have money—plenty, I believe ;
And, money, Enoch, makes the slave a King.
But how much have you? Have you bought the ring ?

What mortal poet, eager to recite,
Could interruption vile as this abide ?
The village Dante lost his temper quite :
But still she talk'd ; and he, still baffled, tried
Between her endless words a word to slide.
In vain, he hinted that her pipe was out ;
The paper, which she twisted, and illum'd,
To reignite the tube, avail'd him nought ;
She talk'd, and held it burning, till, consum'd,
And thrown upon the floor, it smok'd and fum'd.
And still she prais'd one Alice Green—then took
Her plenteous pinch of true rappee—then puff'd
At Mistress Strut ; and still, with heartier snook,
While learnedly her ancient wares she puff'd,

CONTENTS.

Enoch Wray's Dream.

THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

BOOK VII.

I.

GONE? are ye gone? Bright dreams of youth adieu!
Old, blind, and poor, I dream of dreadful things.
Methought, I saw a man renown'd and true
Rise from the grave, upborne on sable wings,
Bradshaw his name, abhor'd by slaves and Kings.
His hue was death's, his majesty his own;
There was a thoughtful calmness in his air;
Decision, like a ready sword undrawn,
Repos'd, but slept not, on his forehead bare;

But Caution, too, and deep research were there.
At first, his lip curl'd fiercely, as he went
O'er fields, o'er towns, o'er souls, in baseness bow'd ;
But, meeken'd soon, his awful visage blent
Sad beauty with his sternness, like the cloud
Whose tears are lightnings. 'What !' he cried aloud,
Is tyranny immortal? Oh, if here
Freedom yet linger, in what hated shed,
Where proud endurance scorns to drop a tear,
And woe-nurs'd virtues eat their hard-earn'd bread,
Nerves she the heart and hand that despots dread ?
Hide not thy head in clouds, thou Rock, that saw'st
The Pyms and Hampdens ! these, our sons, can feel
The pang of shame, though, dwarf'd in soul, they boast
Nor manly thoughts, nor hearts, nor hands of steel,
Like those that battled for the common weal.
Say, Rock, is that a Briton ? that mean thing,
Who dares not lift his eyes above the feet
Of pauper Satraps, or the village king
Whom they depute, to torture, and to cheat ?
Slave—free to toil, that idle wolves may eat !
What is a Briton ? One who runs away.

To barter souls for untax'd wine abroad,
 And curse his brutes, who sweat at home, and bray.
 Art thou a Briton, Ass, that lov'st the goad,
 And bray'st in honour of thy glorious load?—
 Say, palac'd Pauper, drunk with misery's tears,
 Did Russell, Fairfax, spring from gods like thee?
 Or, scourge for poverty, is this Algiers?—
 Dog of the bread tax-eating Absentee!
 Our children feed thy lord; why growl at me?
 Where are thy paper wings of yesterday,
 Thou bankrupt Gambler for the landed knave?—
 Audacious poacher, scorn'st thou parish-pay?
 Kill'st thou God's hares, to shun a beggar's grave?
 What! is it better to be thief than slave?—
 Wretch that did'st kill thy sire, to sell him dead!
 Art thou a Briton? Thou hast Strafford's brow.
 Poor, corn bill'd weaver, singing hymns for bread!
 Could Hampden breathe where crawl such worms as thou?
 Spirit of Pym! lo, these are Britons now!
 Charles Stuart! are they worthy to be thine?
 Thou smil'st in scorn, in triumph, and in pride.
 And thou, at Marston taught by right divine!

Rash, recreant patron of vain regicide !
Laugh'st thou at blasted hopes, whose vauntings lied ?
Beast, featur'd like the angels, canst thou view
This dome, outstretch'd by God's geometry,
And doubt that *Man* may be sublime and true ?
Or, while that boy smiles upward from thy knee,
Believe that slaves of slaves shall not be free ?—
How like meek Laud, yon Cadi-Dervise scowls !
A patent parson, made to please the squire !
Priest, Judge, and Jury, for the cure of souls !
Virtues like his no still small voice require ;
He cries his wares, and is himself the crier.
No school is built, without his fulsome prayer,
Which fulsome prints, with fulsome praise, record ;
No wretch is tried for want, but he is there
In solemn session, sourest on the board,
Where, like saint Peter, he denies his lord.
Oh, Cant and Cunning ! mark the contrast well ;
The poor, damn'd here, are thankful, though they pine ;
Through foul and fair, they limp to'ards heav'n or hell ;
While he (snug Martyr,) when the day is fine,
Seeks Abraham's bosom, and a Tory's wine.

King of bad ale and hares ! he shoots, and hunts ;
Then whips, or jails, the woe that cannot pay ;
Grants Lickgrub's license, and refuses Grant's ;
Or fines poor Strap, who shav'd on Sabbath day ;
And like Saint Barbones, he detests a play.——
Thrice-loyal Jefferies ! greet with shout and song
The heir of all the Noodles of past years,
Lord Robert Shallow ! ready, rough, and wrong,
He sheaths a world of wisdom in his ears,
Yet seems no witch, and is what he appears.
A sleepy watcher, he must feel to see,
And, born to teach, may yet be taught to read ;
Bound by an accident, he hates the free,
And, deaf and blind when truth and justice plead,
Led by a shadow, seems to take the lead.
How like a snake, all frozen but the fangs,
His coldness threatens, and his silence chills !
How like a poisonous icicle he hangs
O'er human hopes, and on the soul distils
All mean, malignant, and infectious ills !
The freezing cloud descends in snow or hail ;
The hill-born deluge floods the reedy fen ;

And shall not lords teach slaves? and Heav'n turn pale,
 And the grave shudder, at this crowded den
 Of wolves and worms?—Oh, Nature, are they men?
 Oh, Time, is this the Island of the just
 And the immortal, in her virtues strong?
 The land of Shakespeare? worthy of our dust,
 Because she guards the right, and loathes the wrong!
 The land of Ireton's bones, and Milton's song?
 Rise, Bard of our Republic!—wherefore rise,
 Like Samuel, to the troubled King of old?
 Could'st thou flash living fire in Britons' eyes,
 Would pigmy souls be minds of giant mould?
 Oh, what could wake these worse than dead and cold?
 But thou, Oh, Rock, that watchest freemen's graves!
 Well may'st thou veil thy lofty brow in shade,
 Scorning to look on boroughmongering knaves,
 And game-law'd, corn-law'd, war-worn, parish-paid,
 Rag-moned, crawling wretches, reptile-flay'd.—
 What nameless curse comes next? Degraded Rome!
 How like a Cæsar of thy days of shame,
 He lolls behind his steeds, that ramp and foam
 Through crowds of slaves, with long submission tame,
 Hacks, not worth harness, void of tail and mane!

All praise to him, to whom all praise is due ;
To him whose zeal is fire, whose rancour raves ;
Sworn anti-catholic, and tried true blue ;
Champion of game laws, and the trade in slaves ;
Mouth of the bread-tax ; purchas'd tongue of knaves ;
All praise to him !—a menial yesterday,
And now a kingling, serv'd by hate and fear ;
The upstart buyer of yon' ruins gray,
That mock his tax-built pandemonium near !
Clerk ! Thief ! Contractor ! Boroughmonger ! Peer !
His mercy would be cruelty in hell ;
His actions say to God, ' Submit to me !'
Dey of Starvation, dark and terrible !
Men's purses may submit to thy decree ;
But why should conscience have no god but thee,
Thou Chariotted Blasphemer ? Hence, away
To Spain, or Naples, with thy loathsome scowl ;
Why stay'st thou here, to fuddle tax'd tokay ?
Go, be the Inquisition's holiest goul,
And gorge with blood thy sulky paunch of soul !—
But ye—poor Erin's cheerful exiles, born
To till the flint in unrepining pain !

Why bow ye to your foe, Hibernia's scorn ;
This almoner, whom treadmills might disdain ;
This pauper, worthier of the whip and chain ?
Fools ! let accusing scorn, in each calm eye,
Inform the tax-fed harpy, and his hordes, {die,
That wrongs have brought forth thought, which cannot
And that your wives have brought forth sons, whose words
Shall sting like serpents' teeth, and bite like swords.
For what ? Sad neighbour of the western star !
Land of the daring deed, and splendid song !
For thee—whom worse than fiends, with worse than war
Aping base Cromwell, and his tyrant throng,
Torment for gold. Poor Land of deathless wrong !
Scath'd Eden of the vainly-roaring deep !
Are these thy gods ? the lowest of the low !
Are these the wolves, for whom thy millions weep ?
These lords of dungeons, partridge eggs, and woe,
Who think the lightning's ruinous wing too slow ?
But—Isle of Tears ! Hispania of the sea !
Mourner of ages, helpless in thy pain !
Still untransform'd, blood-weeping Niobe !
Mute, hopeless sufferer of the sun-lov'd main,
Whom e'en thy own Fitzwilliam cheer'd in vain !—

The dawn delay'd is nigh, the dismal morn,
 The day of grief, without remorse and shame,
 When of thy very famine shall be born
 A fiend, whose breath shall wither hope, like flame ;
 Lean Retribution is his horrid name.
 Behold his bare and sinew'd haggardness !
 Behold his hide-bound arm, his fleshless thigh !
 'Tis he ! the fearless and the merciless !
 I see his cheek of bone, his lifeless eye,
 His frown—which speaks, and there is no reply !
 I hear his mutter'd scorn, his taunting strain : . . .
 ' Oppressor ! hath thy bondage set us free ?
 Is all thy long injustice worse than vain ?
 Art thou, too, fall'n, scourg'd, trampled, weak, as we ?
 What ! hath our destitution beggar'd thee ?
 And canst thou tell why plunder'd states are poor ?'

II.

The wild words ceas'd, and o'er the blasted moor
 Slow fled the form of that fierce regicide,
 While shriek'd beneath my feet the granite floor,
 From stream to headlong stream. But, eager-ey'd,
 I gaz'd on stately shadows at my side ;

For buried kings, whose will ere while was law,
 Around me, like the ghost of Hamlet, kept
 Their state majestic, arm'd! and when I saw
 Their cruel faces bath'd in tears, I wept.
 But o'er my heart a deadlier chillness crept;
 My white locks, every hair, fear-stricken, stirr'd;
 My limbs, all shaken, trembled, every bone;
 My pulse stood still! and in my soul I heard
 The torrent, tumbling o'er the cold grey stone,
 Prophecy! while the shadowy mountains lone,
 That saw the Roman eagle's wearied wing,
 Spake to the silence of the dead of old:
 'King of the poor! thou wast indeed a king.
 But com'st thou sorrowing from the charnel cold?
 Henry Plantagenet, the uncontroll'd!
 Why? Did thy gracious servants bid thee reign
 O'er bread-tax'd vermin, and transform thy name
 Into a synonyme and type of pain,
 Written o'er famish'd realms in tears, or flame?
 King of the people! royal is thy fame:
 Thou need'st not blush.'—'First Edward! thou here, too?
 King of the Kingdom, hail! But on thy brow

Why grows the saddening cloud ? Is Peterloo
A nobler word than Falkirk ? or wast thou
The nominee of kinglings, such as now
Ordain what shall be best for states and thrones ?
Did men like them, when thou wast lov'd and fear'd,
Glut death with blood, and cover earth with bones ?—
' Third Edward ! weepst thou ? Oh, prince rever'd !
Lord of the lance, to chivalry endear'd !
Still dost thou mourn the fall'n, the unrestor'd ?
And was Napoleon, with his burning brain
Chain'd to the sunbeam, less to be deplor'd
On his hard rock, amid the groaning main,
Than captive John, with princes in his train,
Serv'd by mate kings, and pensive victory ?
But thou art not that Edward who gave laws
To wolfish anarchists. Thou less than he
Who tam'd the feudal beast, and pared his claws,
And tore the venomous fangs from rabid jaws,
And by, and for, the nation, reign'd, a king !
Dost thou, too, weep thy country's failing weal ?
Oh, doubt not that futurity will bring
For her a purchaser ! The North hath steel,

The South hath gratitude ; and slaves can feel—
What can they feel ? the rankling of their chain.'

III.

Our souls are lyres, that strangely can retain
The tones that trembled on their stricken chords ;
And these, impress'd upon my heart, remain :
But the sad monarchs, leaning on their swords,
Vanish'd in darkness, with the closing words,
Like voiceless mists o'er ocean's sleepy waves.

IV.

What saw I next ? A temple pav'd with graves.
Lo, on the floor a giant corpse lay bare !
And thousand, thousand, thousand, thousand slaves,
All dead and ghastly, kneel'd for ever there,
Statues of baseness, worshipping despair !
From many a battle-field, and many a sea,
Cast forth by outrag'd earth, and loathing tide,
They made a winter for eternity,
And seem'd like suppliant demons side by side,
For in their looks their crimes were petrified.
Bound by a spell, which ne'er, methought, would break,
Amid the dead I stood, the living one !

And, lo, the tears were froz'n on every cheek!
But ne'er in solitude felt I so lone,
As in that crowd, whose tears were turn'd to stone.
The Titan corse, sublime in stillness lay,
With marble looks, like power and pride asleep;
Oh, God! its dreadful silence could dismay
More than the shriek of shipwreck o'er the deep;
And every lifeless form did seem to weep,
Gazing in tranced horror and remorse,
On the sad features of the mighty dead,
While, on the forehead of that giant corse,
In letters of eternal fire, I read^o
This sentence: 'I am he for whom ye bled,
Undying Death; feast, Dogs, but lap no blood.'

v.

Then, lo, what, distant, seem'd the ocean's flood,
Smote on my heart, with clamour fierce and foul.
Wave shouldering wave, they shook me where I stood.
No winds urg'd on the billowy, living roll,
But whirlwind dwelt within it, like a soul,
Heaving the foamy, roaring surges high,
While all beside was voiceless, breathless fear;

And, lo, the foam was human agony,
Alive with curses, horrible to hear !
The waves were men ! a deluge wide and drear !
And while, all raving, all at once, they came,
Heap'd on each other, to devour the shore,
The flash of eyes made heav'n's red vengeance tame !
The thunder dar'd not whisper to the roar ;
When, with their multitudinous hands, they tore
The rocks, that seem'd to live in bestial forms.
Lo, frozen there, the tyger's terror glar'd ;
Stiffen'd the startled folds of fanged worms ;
Wolves grinn'd, like nightmare ; glassy caymen star'd ;
And the boar's tusk, his powerless tusk, was bar'd
In fear, a tyrant's fear ! High over head,
The despot eagle ceas'd his prey to tear.
His mighty pinions not for battle spread,
But stretch'd to fly, and palsied by despair.
Oh, what a hell of silent pangs was there,
When, like an angel, sweeping worlds away,
Did that resistless sea of souls assail
And crush'd his foes to dust, in dreadful play,
Rending the monsters and their granite mail !

Then all was hush'd ! a sea, without a sail !
And, black with death, a strand of gory mud !

VI.

The vision chang'd ; and, lo, methought, I stood
Where sinners swelter in the penal glare
Of everlasting noon ! A fiery flood,
As of steel molten, on their nerves all bare,
Rush'd from the brazen sky ; and scorching air
Burn'd upward from red rocks of solid fire.
There I beheld a statesman evil famed,
With unremitting and intense desire
To quench immitigable thirst inflam'd ;
Stretch'd, moaning, on the cinderous marl ; and nam'd,
In scorn and rage by spectres pitiless,
Who bade him, smiting their clench'd hands, restore
Their homes, their innocence, their happiness ;
And, in dire mockery, to his hot lips bore
Rags, steep'd in black, thick, slippery, burning gore.
But when he doz'd, worn out with pain, he dream'd
Of fire, and talk'd of fire, that ever burn'd ;
And through his frame, in all his vitals, gleam'd
Fire ; and his heart and brain, to cinder turn'd,

Still crack'd and blaz'd, while, tossing, low he mourn'd,
 And from his eyes dropp'd tears of sable flame.
 For now no longer in his fraudulent brain [shame,
 Schoon'd dreams of crime-bought good unting'd with
 False as the mists that loom along the main
 With shews of golden Ophir, sought in vain
 Where fiends of shipwreck watch their prey, and smile.

VII.

Yet seem'd he not the vilest of the vile.
 An apparition cold of life in stone,
 Or life in ice, drew nigh, with lips of bile;
 A visage, to the aw'd spectators known
 That turn'd to frigid rancour, like his own,
 Their fiery hatred. Frozen where they stood,
 Chain'd by his smile petrific, and his eye
 Whose serpent keenness sadden'd, while it blaz'd,
 'Make way!' they yell'd, 'the long-desir'd draws nigh;
 The dog of kings, their whip for poverty,
 Seeks here the luxury of infernal tears.'
 Then shriek'd the prostrate wretch, as black he rose,
 'Even here Democracy his standard rears!
 Save me, my Brother, from unutter'd woes,

Worse even than Paine deserv'd, or Ireland knows !'
'Thee? Aspect mean!' reply'd the new-arriv'd,
Thee? And am *I* thy brother? Lo, on thee
I look with scorn—Driv'ler! whose fears contriv'd
To thrall arm'd kings, whom I was born to free:
And dost thou claim fraternity with me?
I blew not up a spark into a flame
That set the earth on fire: I drove no trade
In petty retail havoc: No! I came,
I saw, I conquer'd; and a world dismay'd
Found safety in my daring, that array'd
Slaves, who in freedom's fight like freemen fought,
And still are slaves.' Then, turning to the crowd
Of silent spectres,—who regarded nought
But him, such awe controll'd them—he, with proud
Scorn, read their abject fear, and cried aloud,
'Hence, vile Plebeians! know your lord.' And well
The abject ghosts obey'd; for, while he spoke,
He rais'd his hand to strike; but, ere it fell,
Approaching sounds, that in the distance broke
Murmuring, arrested the descending stroke.
As, when black midnight melts from sky to sky,

And shriek the lightnings at the wrath of heav'n,
Air becomes fire, and, like a sea on high,
Wide whirlwind rolls his deluge, sear'd and riv'n,
While, with clos'd eyes, guilt prays to be forgiv'n ;
So, sight shrank, conquer'd, from his visage froze,
That mock'd insulted fire with icy glare,
While seem'd the torrid clime to burn the more,
As if incens'd, and sounds swell'd on the air
Which told of foes that knew not how to spare.
Soon, spectre skeletons, like wolves in chase,
Came howling on. As outstretch'd greyhounds fleet,
Some with riv'n ribs, and one with half a face,
They came, all hungry, and their clattering feet
Stamp'd on the soil of adamant heat.
Then sprang they on him, and his muscles rent
With cranshing teeth ; and still their hate increas'd
As fast it fed, and joyful sounds forth sent ;
Yet from the rapturous banquet oft they ceas'd,
Exclaiming, in the pauses of the feast,
' Ice-hearted Dog ! when fell the crimson dew
At Wexford, there we died ! in dungeons we !
We of slow famine ! we at Peterloo !

We, by the mercy of the scourge set free !
Unvanquish'd by relentless torture, he,
While crisp'd in fire his cold flesh scorch'd and torn,
Forgot not, though he wept, the bearing high
And proud demeanour of a tyrant born,
But cried, uplooking to the hopeless sky,
'Thou, who inhabitest eternity!
Here, too, thy frown is felt, thy mercy just.'
But when those skinless dogs of hell had par'd
The bones of their oppressor, and, with gust
Infernal, crunsh'd his vitals, till the bared,
Cold, burning heart, with pulses unimpair'd,
Shone in its grated chamber, like a light
That saddens some snaked cavern's solitude ;
Then, pangs of deathless hunger, in their might,
Wrung savage howlings from his soul subdu'd ;
And, thenceforth and for ever, he pursu'd,
Heading that dismal pack, the sentenc'd dead,
For food, for food : hunter of souls ! with yell
Immortal, hounding on his fiends, while fled
Their prey, far shrieking through unbounded hell.
In ravenous ardour, sateless, horrible,

He champ'd together still his stony jaws.
Oh, could the living heirs of fear and hate
See the lost trampler on eternal laws,
Taught by his voice of mourning, ere too late,
How would they shun his crimes, to shun his fate,
And, even for mean self-love, be less than fiends!

THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

BOOK VIII.

CONTENTS.

Ezra White unroofs the cottage of Hannah Wray, the widow of an imputed poacher. He detects her, and her daughter, in the act of re-roofing their cottage. He assaults the mother, and is killed by the daughter. Imprisonment, trial, and death of Hannah Wray.

THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

BOOK VIII.

I.

KIND souls! ye jail the peasant, while ye plough (6)
The wild, that lov'd to laugh around his home.
Where the broad common fed his father's cow,
And where himself, a fearless boy, could roam
Unquestion'd; lo, the infant rivers foam
No longer, through a paradise of fern!
Look, how like burden'd slaves they steal, through fields
That sullenly obey your mandate stern!
And how the tortur'd waste, reluctant, yields

Corn, bought with souls, while soulless avarice builds
His palace, rafter'd with iniquity !

II.

Storm-smitten rock ! and thou, time-wrinkl'd tree ! (H)
Where is the sun-lov'd cottage that of old
Ye screen'd from envious winds? And where is he
Who dwelt in that lone cottage of the wold?
Far from the mountain bee he slumbers cold.
Thou, Enoch Wray, shalt hear the son no more,
Who kill'd the harmless hare, that ate his kale:
Atrocious crime ! for which he sternly bore
Slow pain, and wasting fever in a jail.
He perish'd there. Then died his widow pale,
Who sleeps unsepulchr'd, and yet sleeps well.
But silly Jane, their child, still wanders here,
Seeking her mother on the stormy fell.
While freezes as it flows the scalding tear,
She lifts her left hand to her heart in fear,
And waves a fan of bracken in the right,
Forbidding evil sprites to melt the snow
That veils the fields once till'd by Ezra White.
Hark ! how she grinds her teeth, and mutters low,

With black lips quivering, 'God, let nothing grow !'
For Ezra White unroofed their humble home,
And thrust them forth, and mock'd the mother's woe,
Bidding her, with her brat, a beggar roam,
Or hire a hearth of him who feeds the crow,
Or to the Workhouse, hope-abandon'd, go.
'I to the Workhouse? I!' the widow cried,
And from her shoulders ript the kerchief thin,
Displaying to the tyrant, elder-eyed,
A breast that might have tempted saints to sin,
While all th' impassion'd woman rag'd within ;
'I! to the Workhouse?' and her forehead burn'd,
And swell'd the tortur'd heart that would not break,
And her neck thicken'd, and her visage turn'd
Black, and she gasp'd, long impotent to speak :
'I! to the Workhouse? rather will I seek
The welcome grave. But hope not thou to thrive !
Though, feeding on old crimes, and plotting new,
Thou yet may'st crawl, the meanest thing alive ;
Here and hereafter thou shalt have thy due,
And this vile deed with snakes shall whip thee. Jew !
Am I thy tenant? did I bid thee pay

The Squire my rent? and are three pounds eleven?
Thou tyrant! yet shall come thine evil day;
Yet shalt thou find there is a God in heav'n,
Although thy two-fat farms have swallow'd seven.
God! see this glutton! how he crams and grasps,
Like death, for more—a beast of pray'r and prey!
Would, all their maws were stuff'd with stings of wasps!
When shall I see them, on the bare high way
Toil, like their betters, for a groat a day?
God! let him sow in vain! let nothing grow!
Be straw his harvest, grainless chaff his food!
To-morrow he will marry wealth and woe;
(Ah, Lucy Hargrove is for him too good!)
But may a mother's curse be on his blood!
May he die childless! And she turn'd, and bent,
In passionate fondness, o'er her idiot child
Weeping; then took her hand in haste, and went
She cared not whither, uttering curses wild,
But paus'd, and groan'd, while Jane look'd up, and smil'd
When Ezra's parting sneer shot through his brain.

III.

Morn rose, all splendid, o'er the frosty plain,
And Lucy Hargrove married Ezra White.
But Ezra strove to cheer his bride in vain;
Long stay'd the day, and linger'd long the night;
For Hannah's curse was on them like a blight.
The homeless widow seem'd to haunt their bed,
The idiot child to thunder at the door;
'They fire the stacks;' he growl'd, 'I hear their tread.'
'Oh, give them back their cottage on the moor;
How canst thou prosper if thou rob the poor?'
Cold lay the moon-beam on the glittering rock,
When Ezra gruffly left his troubled bride;
His early steps alarm'd the wondering cock;
And the fox saw him on the dim hill side,
Plodding through molten snow, with cautious stride
And horrid instinct, hither. But, behold;
Here labour'd Hannah Wray, and silly Jane,
Fearless of blinding sleet, and blue with cold,
Busily roofing their sad cot again;
Flash'd Ezra's eyes, and rage fired every vein,

As when men wound a tiger. On he sprung,
And grasp'd the struggling widow by the throat,
Till white her eyes up turn'd, and forth her tongue
Protruded through retracting lips that caught
Sad hues from coming death, while anguish wrought
Terrific changes on her pensive cheek.

But Jane took up a stone, and smote his brow.
He fell, but held his prey ; with strangled shriek,
He tried to heave his bulk, relaxing slow
His murderous gripe, and backward sank ; then low
Dropp'd his large chin, and grim he gap'd in death !
But long lay Hannah senseless, happy she,
If, senseless, she had yielded up her breath.
But her eyes clos'd, then open'd—what to see ?
She gaz'd on Ezra's corpse, in agony,
Then on her daughter ; and then gush'd her tears.
The horrid future on her spirit gleam'd ;
She trembled, with unutterable fears ;
And, while the wan dawn o'er the mountains beam'd,
She clasp'd her daughter to her breast, and scream'd—
'No, I can die ; they shall not hang my child.'

IV.

Then came the hue and cry; the parting wild
Of sunder'd bosoms, ne'er again to meet;
The dungeon'd weeks; and hope, that never smil'd.
Yet once, in slumber, came a vision sweet,
Which bore her spirit to the dear retreat
Where still, she thought, her husband dwelt, and Jane
Still press'd the nipple, pillow'd on her breast:
The grave had lost its prey, the past its pain;
The dead had never died! But thoughts so bless'd
Could not endure. A darker dream oppress'd
The dosing captive. Not to see her die,
But dead, she thought, her child arriv'd, at last;
She saw herself a corpse; saw Jane draw nigh
Shrieking to gaze upon that corpse, aghast;
And, shrieking, wak'd, with temples throbbing fast!
Then came the trial brief; the evidence
So clear, so false, so fatal; the sad eyes,
All gazing on convicted innocence,
But not in pity; her convulsive sighs,
Her sudden tears; the dread solemnities
Of sentence on the wrong'd and guiltless!—Oh,

Was there no pleader, by the laws allowed,
To aid the sufferer in her hour of woe?
No. Not a voice in all that awe-struck crowd
Was rais'd for her whom fate had stunn'd and bow'd,
For her, who *then* must plead, or ne'er again.

v.

Dreadful, oh Death, are all thy paths of pain!
And many a wretch hath felt, but who shall tell
What pangs unnam'd the convict must sustain,
Ere frailty, pale as snow, bids hope farewell,
And, for the living, tolls the passing bell?
Still, in her desolation, nightly she
Dream'd that the Lord had heard her earnest pray'r;
Her child, she thought, poor Jane was come; to see
Her mother die, and beg a lock of hair,
Which she might kiss in tears, and ever wear;
Dark roll'd the hours by cruel mercy given,
The waking hours of certainty and doom;
And, in her cell, she cried to earth and heav'n,
'Oh, let my child sleep with me in the tomb;
Tomb? I shall have none!' And the echoing gloom
Mutter'd even when she slept, her heavy sigh.

VI.

As if no heart had ever ach'd, no eye
Shed bitter tears; another morn arose,
All light and smiles; but, with the brightening sky,
Hannah awoke from dreams of death, to close
Her eyes in dreamless and profound repose.
But Jane came not! poor Jane was far away:
She, though oft-told, knew not her mother's doom;
But much she wonder'd at her lengthen'd stay,
With saddening thoughts, and cheeks that lost its bloom.
Hark! the bell tolls; and yet Jane is not come!
' But she, who murder'd pious Ezra White,
And trampled on his brains,' (so rumour lies,)
Ere minutes pass, must wrestle with the might
That none can vanquish. Lo, ten thousand eyes
Are gazing on the prison where she sighs!
The streets are pav'd, the house-tops pil'd with heads,
The windows choak'd with faces, anxious all
To look on all that man most hates and dreads.
Now the hush deepens near the fetter'd wall;
Now a dropp'd feather might be heard to fall;
Now, by the scaffold, hearts throb quick and loud;

Now, in dire stillness, hark, faint murmurs rise!
And, lo, the murderess bends above the crowd,
Bursting, with desperate strength, the cord that ties
Her arms, and rolling on all sides her eyes!
Chill'd, in a moment, chill'd is every heart.
'Where is my child?' she sobs; 'My child!' she shrieks;
'Oh, let me see my child, ere I depart!'
And long, for her who is not here, she seeks;
Then, to the crowd, with hands uplifted, speaks:
'Ye come to see a murderess? I am none.
A stainless conscience is my rock and tower.
'Tis true, my foe to his account is gone;
But not for all this world's vain pomp and power
Would I have shorten'd his bad life an hour.
I die his victim, and die reconcil'd.
Kind hearts! ye melt—but which of ye will bear
A dying mother's keepsake to her child?
Oh, for a kindred heart, my grief to share,
A kindred voice, to join my parting prayer!'
Lo, as she ended, on her bosom bent
A blind old Pilgrim, who had left the throng
Weeping aloud, all pitied as he went!

She clasp'd him with a grasp convuls'd and strong,
She kiss'd him fervently, and held him long.
' God bless thee, Enoch, for this last good deed!'
She sobb'd—and down her cheeks the tears gush'd free.
' But we must bear whatever is decreed.—
Nay, father of my Joe, be firm, like me!
Hold up! be firm, as innocence should be!—
Guiltless, I go to join thy son in heav'n.
Jane, too, is guiltless, though she kill'd our foe,
Who, when he died, had need to be forgiv'n.—
Bear to my child this tress; a month ago,
'Twas raven black, and now 'tis white as snow.—
Yes, Enoch, I am guiltless. Let them pare
My bones, and make a mockery of my frame;
They cannot stain my soul! and I can bear
What must be borne. Why, then, should my sad name,
Whenever utter'd, flush thy cheek with shame?
Poor Enoch! where thy murder'd son lies low,
I hop'd to weep again; but hope deceives!
Oh, might I rest with him!—No flower will blow
O'er me, no redbreast cover *me* with leaves!
This thought, despite my will, appals and grieves

My conquering soul, ere it take wing, and soar.—
Should one or two remember me in love,
Say I died guiltless.—Though we meet no more
On earth, an angel waits for us above;
But thou shalt nurse awhile my orphan dove,
Far from the parent bird—when I am free!

VII.

And all is o'er—the shock, the agony,
The low-breath'd moan of sympathetic woe.
But silly Jane, still wandering gloomily,
Wears on her breast the cherish'd lock of snow;
And still she mutters, 'God! let nothing grow!
'God! may a mother's curse be on their blood!'

THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

BOOK IX.

CONTENTS.

England, twenty years hence. Secret sorrow and illness of Enoch Wray. He takes leave of objects associated in his mind with the past.

THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

BOOK IX.

I.

HAIL, England of my Children!—not this den
Of vermin, and their victims, nick-nam'd free—
Isle of the Future; will thy sons be men,
Or corn-law'd bipeds? Lo, I turn to thee,
Not hopeless in my fear. What wilt thou be
When forty, or when twenty years are pass'd?
What will our children's sons in thee behold?
Will the next change be loathsome, as the last?
Will souls be cheap, that bodies may be sold?

Will pious lords ask alms, and worship gold ?
 Will millions thrive by giving all to few ?
 Will Cæsar's image still take rag, and fly ?
 Will Lethbrige and the workhouse, have their due ? (i)
 Wilt thou be Irish ? Russian ? French ? or vie
 With Turkey, and Algiers, in liberty ?
 Will harpies toll the rags which they deride ?
 Will purse-proud gods, ador'd with curses deep,
 Awe dandy cowardice, and beggar-pride ?
 Will Famine's cellar'd fiends, too fierce to weep,
 Like buried murder, grimly seem to sleep ?
 Will outrag'd Mercy's only Unforgiven,
 Be circumcis'd of heart, and soul'd with stone ?
 Will Acres cease to curse the Sent of Heav'n ?
 Or tax our bread, that he may beg his own,
 And be the wandering Jew of every zone ?
 Will Cantwell ride to heav'n on Satan's back ?
 Will root-fed woe thy soul-plough'd deserts till ?
 Will pauper mean Sir Bread-tax, or poor Jack ?
 Will plunder'd trade be capital and skill ?
 Will Glynn accept, when Rentless draws his bill ? (κ)
 Will gamblers be thy merchants ; chains thy wings ?

Will beggary be thy wealth ? thy hope despair ?
 Will every village have its leash of kings ?
 Or will the barren tree begin to bear ?
 Will Nimrod's mortgagee be Nimrod's heir ?
 And labour shout, ' Richard's himself again ?'

II.

Why is our father's look so full of pain ?
 What silent malady, what secret woe,
 Weighs on his gloomy heart, and dizzy brain ?
 An evil, which he seeks, yet dreads, to know,
 Not yet assur'd, suspected long ago.
 Hath the dark angel of the night, that still
 Delights in human agony and tears,
 Appall'd his slumbers with predicted ill,
 And confirmation of his worst of fears ?
 The cause I tell not, but th' effect appears
 In sudden alteration, such as oft
 Comes on the unailing aged, when they seem
 Strong as old eagles on the wing aloft.
 Swift was the change, and ghastly, as the gleam
 Of baleful meteors on a midnight stream,
 Blighting the waters. His herculean frame

Stood in the winds of March, erect and bold ;
But when the cowslip—like a living flame
Kindled in April—burn'd its incense cold,
He seem'd the shadow of himself, and roll'd,
With a strange keenness, his benighted eyes.

III.

Bright shines the ice o'er which the skaiter flies,
Roofing the waters with transparent stone,
Firm as the rock, when umber'd evening dies,
But when the cloudy morn arises—gone.
So perish human glories, every one.
Oh, ne'er again, ye misty mountains dim !
When the frost parcheth on your sides the heath,
Shall its shrill histic whistle welcome him
Who once could see the tempest toss beneath
Your solemn brows, and to the vales bequeath
The vollied hail, from clouds of every hue.

IV.

The meanest thing to which we bid adieu,
Loses its meanness in the parting hour.
When long-neglected, worth seems born anew,
The heart, that scorns earth's pageantry and power,

May melt in tears, or break, to quit a flower.
 Thus, Enoch—like a wretch, prepar'd to fly,
 And doom'd to journey far, and come no more—
 Seeks old acquaintance with a boding sigh.
 Lo, how he weeps for all he lov'd of yore,
 Telling to weeds and stones quaint stories o'er!
 How heavily he climbs the ancient stile,
 Whence, on the hill which he no more shall climb,
 Not with a brief, albeit a mournful, smile,
 He seems to gaze, in reverie sublime.
 Till, heard afar, and saddening all the clime,
 Slow swings from yonder tower the passing bell!

v.

There is a flower—the housewife knows it well—
 A flower, which long hath grac'd the warm hedge side
 Of Enoch's dying neighbour, Andrew Gell,
 Whose spleeny sire he pummell'd for his pride,
 Ere beauteous Mary Gold became a bride.
 It is the flower which (pious rustics say,)
 The virgin-mother on her bosom wore.
 It hoards no dew-drop, like the cups of May,
 But, rich as sunset, when the rain is o'er,

Spreads flamy petals from a burning core,
Which, if morn weep, their sorrowing beams unfold,
To wake, and brighten, when bright noon is near.
And Enoch bends him o'er the marygold ;
He loves the plant, because its name is dear.
But on the pale green stalks no flowers appear,
Albeit the future disk is growing fast.
He feels each little bud, with pleasing pain,
And sighs, in sweet communion with the past ;
But never to his lip, or burning brain,
The flower's cold softness shall he press again,
Murmuring his long-lost Mary's virgin name.

VI.

Deep in the vale, where, known to humble fame,
Poor Enoch's rival in immortal verse,
The village Poet lives—well skill'd to frame
The beauteous slipper, and the sonnet terse,
Wise to compose, and willing to rehearse ;
A kind, good man, who knows our father's worth,
And owns his skill in every thing but rhyme ;
Sage, too, and meek, as any wight on earth,
Save that he laughs at transitory time,

And deems his own a deathless name sublime ;—
There, by the brook, cowers a low edifice,
With honeysuckle'd wall, and ivied roof,
A warm, safe nest, in which two mortal mice
Might slumber through existence, far aloof
From city folks, whose sickly looks give proof
That, whatsoe'er is theirs, thou, Health, art not.
A dial, by our skilful father made,
Instructs the inmates of that little cot ;
The masterpiece, which first his skill display'd,
When all to him their wondering homage paid,
Lo ! on a visit, m'ournfully he wends,
To feel the dial, his acquaintance old ;
But, by the way, in pensive musing bends
O'er ancient landmark, now half sunk in mould :
Shake hands, sad friends, for times are chang'd and cold ;
But, lo, he enters at the garden gate ;
Awhile in chat the rival poets stand :
He feels the bench, where oft in youth he sate,
The shed, which, long ago, he built and plann'd ;
And now the dial is beneath his hand.
Ah, the slow shadow, measuring the swift hours,

While his touch wanders o'er the figur'd plane.
Baffles his patient finger's cunning powers ;
But man, the shadow, mocks grey Time in vain ;
Dusky, we pass away ; he laughs amain ;
His sportive trade it is to mow us down ;
He plays at death, and is industrious, too !
Thou dark and sorrowing mortal, yet unmown,
Weep—but thy sun-clock, as of old, is true !
Oh, better weep, than do as others do,
Whose eyes discredit all save what they see ;
But *thou* deny'st not beauty, colour, light ;
Full well thou know'st, that, all unseen by thee,
The Vernal Spirit, in the vallies bright,
Is scattering diamonds over blossoms white.
She, though she deign to walk, hath wings of gold
And plumes all beauteous ; while, in leafing bower,
The chrysalis, that ne'er did wing behold,
Though born to glide in air o'er fruit and flower,
Disproves the plume, the beauty and the power,
And deems it quite impossible to fly.

VII.

Farewell, ye mountains, neighbours of the sky !
Enoch will tread your silky moss no more ;
But here he breathes your freshness. Art thou nigh,
Grey moth of April, and the reedy shore ?
For the last time he hears thee, circling o'er
The starry flower. Broad poplar, soon in bloom !
He listens to thy blossomy voice again,
And feels that it is vernal ! but the tomb
Awaits him ; and thy next year's flowers, in vain,
Will hearken for his footsteps. Shady lane,
Where Fearn, the bloody, felt his deadly arm !
Gate, which he climb'd, to cut his bow of yew
From the dark tree of ages ! Upland farm,
His uncle's once ; thou furzy bank, whose hue
Is of the quenchless fire ; adieu, adieu,
For ever ! Thy soft answer to the breeze,
Storm-strengthen'd sycamore ! is music yet
To his tir'd spirit : here, thou king of trees,
His own hand did thine infant weakness set ;
But thou shalt wear thy palmy coronet
Long, long, when he is clay. Lake of the Mill,

That murmurest of the days when vigour strung
His oary feet, farewell! he hears thee still,
And in his heart beholds thy banks, o'erhung
By every tree thou knew'st when he was young!
Forge!—built by him, against the ash-crown'd rock,
And now with ivy grown, a tussock'd mound—
Where oft himself, beneath the hammer's shock
Drew forth the welded steel, bright, blue, and sound!
Vale of the stream-lov'd abbey, woodland-bound,
Thou forest of the druids! Oh, thou stone,
That once was worshipp'd; pillar of the past,
On which he lean'd amid the waste alone;
Scorner of change; thou listenest to the blast
Unmov'd as death! but Enoch travels fast.
Thatch'd alehouse, still yclept the Sickles cross'd;
Where died his club of poverty and age,
Worst blow of all! where oft the blacksmith toss'd
His truth-deciding coin; and, red with rage,
The never-silenc'd barber wont engage
In argument with Enoch! Fountain dim,
In which his boyhood quench'd the sultry beam!
School, where crown'd monarchs might have learn'd of him :

Who sway'd it, how to reign ! Cloud-cradled stream,
That in his soul art eloquent as a dream ;
Path-pencil'd hill, now clad in broomy light ;
Where oft in youth he wak'd the violets cold,
When you, love-listening stars, confess'd the night
Of earthly beauty, and o'er Mary Gold
Redden'd with passion, while his tale he told !
Rose, yet unblown, thou future woodbine flower ;
Majestic foxglove, still to summer true ;
Blush of the hawthorn ; glad May's sunny shower ;
Scenes long belov'd, and objects dear, adieu !
From you, from earth, grey Enoch turns his view ;
He longs to pass away, and soon will pass.
But not with him will toil and sorrow go :
Men drop, like leaves—they wither, and, alas,
Are seen no more ; but human toil and woe
Are lasting as the hills, or ocean's flow,
Older than death, and but with death shall die !

VIII.

Ye sister trees, with branches old and dry !
Tower'd ye not huge as now, when Enoch Wray,
A happy lad, pursu'd the butterfly

O'er broomy banks, above the torrent's spray.
 Whence still ye cast the shadow of your sway ?
 Lo,—grey-hair'd Oaks, that sternly execrate
 The poor man's foes, albeit in murmurs low ;
 Or, with a stormy voice, like that of fate,
 Smiting your wrinkled hands, in wrath and woe,
 Say to th' avenging lightnings, ' Why so slow ?'
 Lo, that glad boy is now a man of pain !
 Once more, he totters through the vernal fields ;
 Once more, he hears the corncrake on the plain ;
 The vale invites him, where the goldring builds,
 And the wild bank that primrose fragrance yields ;
 He cannot die, without a sad adieu
 To one sweet scene that to his heart is dear ;
 Yet—would he dream his fears may not be true,
 And miss a draught of bitterest sorrow here—
 His feet will shun the mill-dam, and the wier
 O'er which the stream its idle brawling sends.

ix.

But, lo, tow'rds Albert's mill the patriarch wends !
 (His own hands rear'd the pile : the very wheels
 Were made by him ; and where the archway bends,

His name, in letters of hard stone, appeals
To time and memory.) With mute step, he steals
Along the vale, but does not hear the mill!
'Tis long since he was there. Alas, the wave
Runs all to waste, the mighty wheel is still!
Poor Enoch feels as if become a slave;
And o'er his heart the long grass of the grave
Already trembles! To his stealthy foot,
Around the door thick springs the chance-sown oat.
While prene their plumes the water hen and coot,
Fearless and fierce, the rat and otter float,
Catching the trout in Albert's half-sunk boat;
And, pendent from each bucket fat weeds dip
Their slimy verdure in the listless stream.
'Albert is ruin'd, then!' his quivering lip
Mutters in anguish, while with paler beam
His sad eye glistens; 'tis, alas, no dream!
'Heav'n, save the blood of Enoch Wray from shame,
'Shame undeserv'd, the treadmill of the soul!'
Thus, Enoch mutely prays, but does not blame
Albert, who could not, well he knows, control
The fate that hurl'd him down to fortunes foul.

Triumphant Science! what avail thy deeds,
Thy sailless navy, and thy steam-drawn car,
If growing power to deeper misery leads?
If weeds and worms thy tenfold harvest mar?
And all thy fruits but fatten waste and war?
England is chang'd, since Enoch was a lad.
Grubs dream'd not then that earth for them was made;
Men did not sweat to bloat the weak and bad,
In hopeless sorrow faithful, though betray'd;
Nor was toil, famine; nor was gambling, trade.
Albert is strong, laborious, frugal, just;
But danger lurk'd where safety seem'd to be,
And cloudless thunder turn'd his hopes to dust.
While navies sank on fortune's sunny sea,
Unskill'd to save his little bark was he.
In dreadful calm, the viewless storm increas'd;
Most fatal when least dreaded, came the blow
That still was nearest when expected least;
And none who felt the stroke could see the foe;
But all was wondering fear, and helpless woe.
The servant took the master by the nose;
The beggar'd master slunk aside to die;

Down dropp'd the cobweb Cressus; stunn'd, he rose,
And fell again, he knew not how or why.
Like frost and thaw in April's fickle sky,
The wretched rich, and not less wretched poor,
Chang'd places miserably; and the bad
Throve, while the righteous begg'd from door to door:
None smil'd, save knaves; but loudly laugh'd the mad
Even at their prayers, and then they kick'd the sad.
And still men fought with *shadows*, and were slain!
For ruin smote, nor warning gave at all.
Unseen, like pestilence, and fear'd in vain;
But when red Battle wings the whirling ball,
The cannon flashes ere the victim fall,
Loud bursts the roar—and then is heard the groan.

x.

What *is* this plague, unsearchable and lone,
Sightless, and tongueless, till a wild voice howls
When nations die? What *is* this power unknown?
And whence this strange simoom, that withers souls?
Oh, ask the empire-swallowing deep, that rowls
Black, over long, long buried wealth and fame!

. XI.

Shall *I*, lost Britain! give the pest a name (L)
That, like a cancer, eats into thy core?
'Tis Avarice, hungry as devouring flame;
But, swallowing all, it hungers as before,
While flame, its food exhausted, burns no more.
Oh, ye hard hearts, that grind the poor, and crush
Their honest pride, and drink their blood in wine,
And eat their children's bread, without a blush,
Willing to wallow in your pomp, like swine,
Why do ye wear the human form divine?
Can ye make men of brutes contemn'd, enslav'd?
Can ye grow sweetness on the bitter rue?
Can ye restore the health of minds deprav'd?
And self-esteem in blighted hearts renew?
Why should souls die, to feed such worms as you?
Numidian! who didst say to hated Rome,
'There is no buyer yet, to purchase thee!'
Come, from the damn'd of old, Jugurtha, come!
See one Rome fall'n! another, mightier, see!
And tell us what the second Rome shall be!
But long, Oh, Heav'n, avert from this sad land

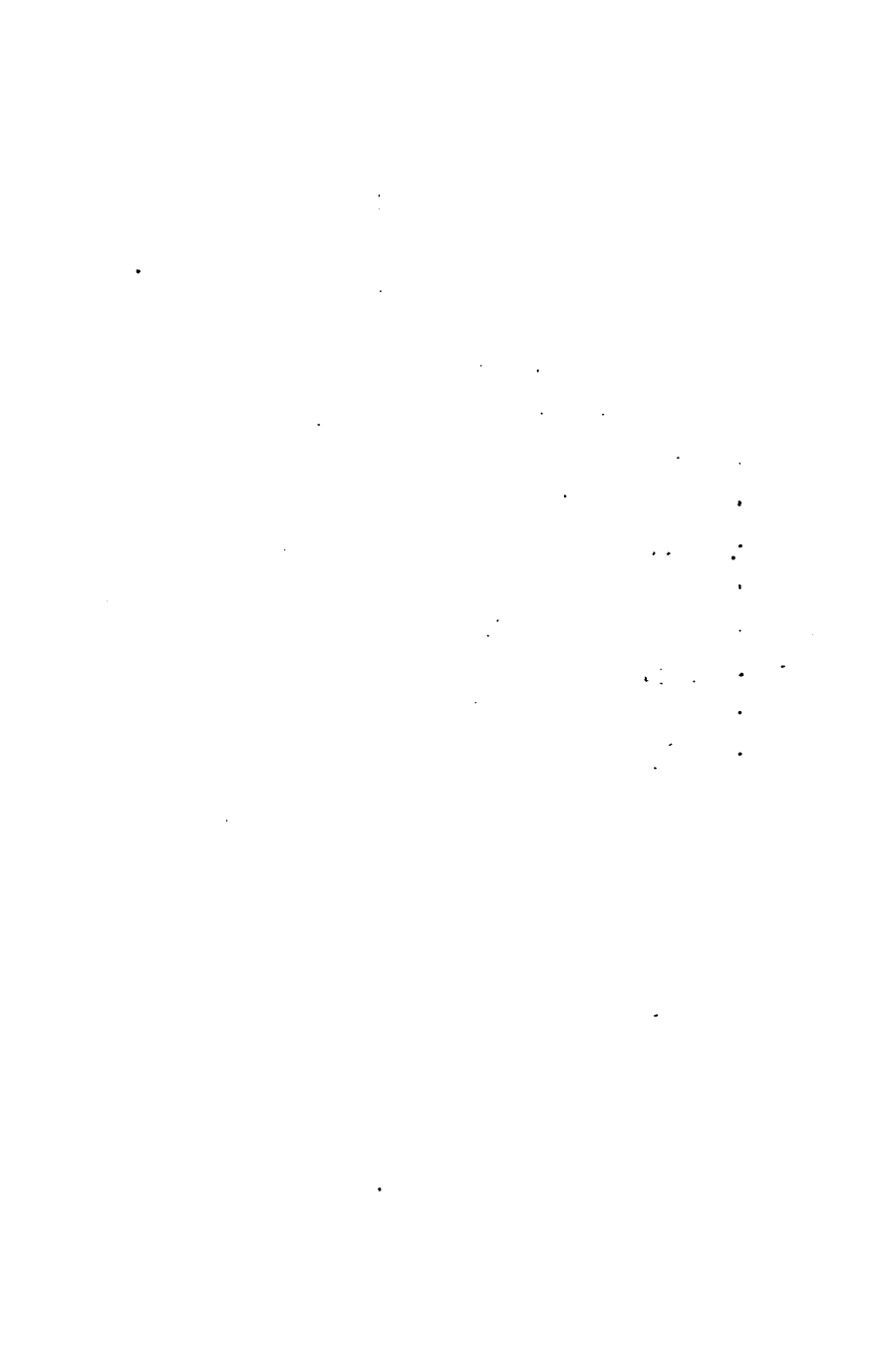
The conflict of the many with the few,
When, crumpled, like a leaf, in havock's hand,
The great, the old, shall vanish from the view,
And slaves be men, all traitors, and all true!
Nor from the fierce and iron-breathing North,
That grimly blossoms with the sword and spear,
Call a new Alaric, and his robbers forth,
To crush what worth is left untrampled here.
And shake from Freedom's urn dust still too dear,
While trade-left Thames pours mute his shipless wave!

XII.

But thou, our Father, journeyest to the grave,
A Briton, like thy sires, the fear'd of old!
Thou shalt not see outlandish king or slave
Conquer the green isle of the stern and bold,
That despots, erst, though leagued with hell, controll'd.
The land where Hampden fell, and Russell bled,
Is yet no barrack for invading hordes;
Mary is undefiled, her boys unled
To slaughter, by their country's foreign lords.
Yet hast thou seen our fratricidal swords
Assail the bondman, struggling to be free;

And strike for tyrants, destin'd, soon or late,
To thank our crimes, by which they reign, and be
Black vengeance to our hearths, and righteous fate.
But go!—no second spring can renovate
Thy blighted soul. A moment, big with woe,
O'er thee hath roll'd another hundred years.
Go, to the cottage of thy childhood, go!
Where green, as in thy youth, the vale appears,
And Mary's love awaits her sire, in tears.
Go to thy cottage—not with humbled look,
And stealthy pace, a thing of guilt and fear!—
But thou, alas, dependance canst not brook;
Ev'n pity now is insult to thine ear;
Fall'n is thy crest, thy heart is cold and drear.
Yet go thou to thy home, though daily there
Some little comfort is retrench'd; nor blame
The child, who veil'd her griefs, her sire to spare!
' Though Mary is become an ill-starr'd name,
' Why should her father feel the pang of shame?'
How often from thy side doth she retire
To weep alone! ' Shall he, who gave us all,
' Shall Enoch Wray, the soul of fearless fire,

‘ The good, the proud, become in age a thrall ?’
Oh, not for this, the lord of shroud and pall
So long hath pass’d him on his gloomy way !
No, He who hears the voiceless worm complain,
Hath heard his spirit for dismissal pray :
‘ Oh, let me, Lord, my God, till death retain
‘ My humble pride, a name without a stain !
‘ When the flesh fail’d not, Lord, I lean’d on thee !
‘ Though the flesh fails, let not my soul be mov’d !
‘ But now release me—if thy will it be—
‘ Oh, let thy child rejoin the lost and lov’d !
‘ For long on earth have I thy mercy prov’d,
‘ And my heart yearns to bless thy name in heav’n.’



THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

BOOK X.

CONTENTS.

Horrors of paupery to independent minds. Enoch Wray visits the Churchyard, where he reads the grave stones with his fingers. Death of the Patriarch.

THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

BOOK X.

I.

LIFE! who would live, to be the helpless prey
Of sordid avarice? Oh, neglected Age,
That, bed-rid, lingerest in prolong'd decay;
Who would, like thee, a war all hopeless wage
With foes that mock his grief, and scorn his rage?
How sad the sight, when far from all he loves,
By crowds pursu'd, the slander'd terrier flies,
Till, wounded by his lord in unknown groves,
He mingles looks of love with piteous cries,

And, smiling on his dear destroyer, dies !
How terrible, to wake, interr'd alive,
And shriek for instant aid, which cannot come ;
And scare the worm, that yet shall feed ; and strive,
Beneath six feet of earth, in airless gloom,
With desperate wretch, to dispossess the tomb ;
More dreadful still, lost Captive, is thy fate,
To whom a grave is given, and death denied ;
For life, imprison'd by relentless hate,
Who bids despair, thy chamberlain, provide
Hope's coffin'd corpse, to mate thy sleepless side ;
But direr, sadder than all these, is man
Wasted by want, and superhuman toil ;
Or fall'n from decent competence, and wan
With grief, and forc'd, while heart and brain recoil,
To beg a crust on his paternal soil,
Or ask his equals for a pauper's pay.

II.

But thou art not a pauper, Enoch Wray ;
Free hast thou liv'd, in honesty and pride,
A hundred summers ; bright hath been thy day
Even in its gloom ; and on the grave's dark side

Thou little hast to fear, and nought to hide,
Prepar'd to die, as good men wish to die.

III.

Hark !—like a spirit, preaching from the sky,
' Repent ye, for the kingdom is at hand ;'
An iron voice—as if Eternity,
Dethroning Time, sent forth his high command—
Speaks to the aw'd heart of the silent land ;
From yonder tower, time-darken'd, thunder scar'd,
Still the deep toll is floating on the air ;
It calls our father to the lone church-yard ;
Ah, many, many of his friends are there ;
And Age, at five score years, hath few to spare !
Thou antique Fane ; that in thy solemn suit
Of carven flowers, and stone-embroidery grand,
(Old, yet unshaken, eloquent, though mute,)
Tower'st, like the sculptur'd guardian of the land ;
Thy reverend looks what bosom can withstand,
And feel nor throb like love, nor chill like fear,
Nor glow like adoration ? The leaves fall
Around thee—men fall with them ; both are here ;
While thou alike view'st bridal robe and pall,

Sovereign of marriage, and of funeral ;
Witness of Ages ; and memorial hoar
Of generations, to eternity
Gone, like the hour that can return no more ;
Grey Enoch is a child compared with thee ;
Yet man like him thou ne'er again shalt see !
How would it gladden thy bewilder'd eyes,
(Dusk'd with cobweb films, and colours old,
And with long gazing on dim blazonries,)
Could'st thou, in these degenerate times behold
A pair like Enoch Wray and Mary Gold,
As to the altar in their youth they came ;
He—like a warrior to the battle feast,
With cheek of downy light and umber'd flame,
A presence glorious as the bright'ning east ;
She—bending at his side, with charms encreas'd,
Like chaste Andromache by Hector led ;
Her arm in his, her gentle eyes depress'd,
Her neck and face with burning crimson spread,
And lovely as maternal beauty's breast,
Beneath the soft cheek of her child caress'd,
Returning love for love, and smile for smile !

IV.

But, oh, not now, thou venerable pile;
Comes he, with genial thoughts to rapture true,
But with sad heart, though not without a smile,
To bid his old remembrances adieu,
And, ere he mingle with the clay, renew
Feelings which, when the dust that moulders here
Could sympathize with animated clay,
Joy'd with its joy, return'd it tear for tear,
And, bidding sorrow look for brighter day,
Pointed to heav'n but did not 'lead the way.'
Now, on the tomb-stones which of old he laid,
(Pages with silent admonition fraught,)
He kneels—and in the twilight of thy shade,
Reads, with his fingers, what his chisel wrought.
Perchance, th' effusions of his pensive thought,
Full oft' recited in his soul, with pride.

V.

Beneath him rest five husbands, side by side:
Can ought disturb them? We, perhaps, shall see:
But why unite what death and fate divide?

‘ John Stot, Charles Lamb, Giles Humble, Simon Flea,
 ‘ And Richard Green, here wait for Alice—me !’

Erect, like youth, stands this sepulchral stone :
 But what is youth ? a flower. And life ? a dream.
 Read !—for youth, life, the flower, the dream, are gone :
 Read !—‘ Death is life ! I *am* not what I seem :
 ‘ Think of poor Henry still ! but rightly deem.’

The next is dateless ; but, aged eighteen years,
 Died she, whom hardest hearts have ceas’d to blame ;
 The kind still read her epitaph with tears :
 ‘ Here rests a stranger : she had once a name :
 ‘ Weep for the gentle dust that died of shame.’

They did not lay his bones where four roads meet :
 Although his crime was grief, which some called pride,
 Wrong not the wrong’d, who slumbers at thy feet !
 ‘ Was Jones a coward ? Honest, yet belied,
 ‘ He was too brave to live disgrac’d, and died.’

In yonder grave, heav'n's grateful debtor lies,
Struck blind in youth—old Shiloh Hollischart.

'The beam of beauty left his cheerful eyes,
'To glow more deeply, brightly, in his heart.'

Read, mortal! be instructed, and depart.

'Tears for the slander'd! tears—but shed too late.
'Come! if thou come to weep, traducer fell,
'Whose slighted love hath done the work of hate!
'But thou, perchance, hast yet more lies to tell
'Of her who lov'd not thee, and lov'd too well?'

But why hath Enoch grav'd on this lone tomb
The yeoman tall, who grasps, with amorous strain,
A snake, that feedeth on his fading bloom?

Read!—'I was friendless, and I liv'd in vain;
'Cramp tore my nerves, and cancer gnaw'd my brain:
'Yet, to the last, I pray'd for life, in pain.'

This still retreat, thou faithful to the dead,
Claims thy attentive pause, demands thy tear!
Stop! read again th' inscription, often read:

' Remember me, and, weeping, linger here,
 ' If still to thee thy Harcourt's name is dear !
 ' But if thou wed again, oh, come not near !'
 A broken mast, a bursting wave, a child
 Weeping, a woman frantic on the shore ;—
 Rude stone ; thou tell'st a story sad and wild !
 ' Pain, want, unkindness, all ' afflictions sore,'
 ' Disease, suspense, with constancy I bore ;
 ' My heart was broken—Letty lies with me ;
 ' And now we know that Matthew died at sea.'

No sculptur'd stone informs the passer-by
 That the poor clown is now the squireling's peer :
 Here lies a rogue, whose crime was poverty !
 And just Sir Cornlaw sleeps in marble near !
 Bones of the treadmill'd slave ! what do ye here ?
 Oh, shame to bread-tax'd England's bought and sold ;
 The loathsome wretch, who toil'd, and starv'd, and died,
 And he, whose merit was a robber's gold,
 Repose, like married equals, side by side !
 Audacious Death ; is Mammon, thus, defied ?
 What, shall the parish-paid of yesterday

Rest with the sacred boroughmongering great ?
 Why fence ye not a Pauper's Golgotha,
 Where, buried without bell, these dogs may wait
 The crowing cock, while rich men rot in state ?

But to one grave the blind man's eyes are turn'd,
 Move where he may—and yet he seeks it not.
 He communes with the poor, the lost, the mourn'd,
 The buried long, by all, but him, forgot :
 The hated ? no ; his bosom never burn'd
 With fire so base : the dreaded ? No he spurn'd
 Fear, as unworthy of the human breast.
 Why does he pause on his dark pilgrimage ?
 Hath he forgot what love remembers best ?
 Oh, stoop and find, in this familiar page,
 The mournful story, dearest to his age !
 ' Here Lucy rests, who in this vale of tears
 ' Dwelt thirty weeks : Here waits the judgment-day
 ' Her brother James, who died, ag'd fifty years :
 ' Here slumbers sinless Anne, who liv'd a day :
 ' Children of Mary and of Enoch Wray.'
 His finger pauses, like a trembling wand,

Held o'er desponding hope by mercy. Lo!
Another line, cut by another hand,
On the cold stone, from which he riseth slow;
But it is written on his heart of woe ;
' Mary ! thou art not lost, but gone before.'

VI.

Oh, no ! not lost. The hour that shall restore
Thy faithful husband, Mary, is at hand ;
Ye soon shall meet again, to part no more ;
By angels welcom'd to their blissful land,
And wander there, like children, hand in hand,
To pluck the daisy of eternal May.

VII.

It is the evening of an April day
Lo, for the last time, in the cheerful sun
Our father sits, stooping his tresses grey,
To hear the stream, his ancient neighbour, run,
Young as if time had yesterday begun.
Heav'n's gates are like an Angel's wing, with plumes
Of glorious green, and purple gold, on fire :
Through rifts of mount'nous clouds, the light illumines
Hill-tops, and woods, that pilgrim-like retire ;

And, like a giant's torch, burns Morthen spire.
Primrosy odours, violet-mingled, float
O'er blue-bells and ground ivy, on their wings
Bearing the music of the blackbird's note ;
Beneath the dewy cloud, the woodlark sings,
But on our father's heart no gladness flings.
Mary bends o'er him, mute. Her youngest lad
Grasps, with small hand, his grand-sire's finger fast ;
Well knows the old man that the boy is sad ;
And the third Mary, as she hurries past,
Trembles, and looks towards the town, aghast.
Enoch hears footsteps of unwelcome sound,
While at his feet the sightless mastiff lies ;
And, lo, the blind dog, growling, spurns the ground !
' Two strangers are approaching,' Enoch cries ;
But Mary's throbbing heart alone replies.
A stern, ' Good day, Sir !' smites his cheek more pale ;
A rude collision shakes him in his chair ;
The Bible of his sires is mark'd for sale ;
But degradation is to him despair ;
The hour is come which Enoch cannot bear !
But he can *die* ! and in his humble grave

Sweet shall his long rest be, by Mary's side ;
 And o'er his coffin unscib'd shall wave
 The willow tree, beneath the dark-tower's pride
 Set by his own sad hand, when Mary died :
 Though basely brandèd with a poacher's name,
 Poor Joseph slumbers in a distant tomb ;
 Though Joseph's widow died a death of shame,
 Still there was mercy in the old man's doom !
 But now, dependance and disgrace are come !
 ' Albert,' he sighs, ' will perish by this blow.—
 ' Where is he ?'—No reply.—' And shall the throng
 ' Of paupers see my daughter weekly go
 ' For parish alms ? No, heav'n ! I yet am strong ;
 ' Restore my sight ! or I have liv'd too long.'
 The vain, vain wish, too mighty, leaves him faint ;
 His visage wan assumes a darkening hue ;
 The blind dog whines a melancholy plaint,
 And ghastly roll his eyes of pallid blue ;
 Ev'n the hard bailiffs dread the scene to view.
 Lyre of the past ! oh, art thou, then, unstrung ?
 The boy resigns his grand sire's finger cold ;
 A sweet word lingers on our father's tongue—

' Mary ! dear Mary ! '—But the tale is told :
With her, whose virgin name was Mary Gold,
He hears, in heav'n, his swooning daughter shriek.
And when the wood-hine's cluster'd trumpet blows ;
And when the pink's melodious hues shall speak,
In unison of sweetness with the rose,
Joining the song of every bird, that knows
How sweet it is of wedded love to sing ;
And when the fells, fresh bath'd in azure air,
Wide as the summer day's all golden wing,
Shall blush to heav'n, that Nature is so fair,
And man condemn'd to labour; in despair ;
Then, the gay gnat, that sports its little hour ;
The falcon, wheeling from the ancient wood ;
The red-breast, fluttering o'er its fragrant bower ;
The yellow-bellied lizard of the flood ;
And dewy morn, and evening—in her hood
Of crimson, fring'd with lucid shadows grand—
Shall miss the Patriarch ; at his cottage door
The bee shall seek to settle on his hand,
But from the vacant bench haste to the moor,
Mourning the last of England's high-soul'd poor,

And bid the mountains weep for Enoch Wray,
And for themselves, albeit of things that last
Unalter'd most; for they shall pass away
Like Enoch, though their iron roots seem fast
Bound to the eternal future, as the past!
The Patriarch died; and they shall be no more.
Yes, and the sailless worlds, which navigate
Th' unutterable deep that hath no shore, (M)
Will lose their starry splendour, soon or late,
Like tapers, quench'd by Him whose will is fate!
Yes, and the Angel of Eternity,
Who numbers worlds, and writes their names in light,
Ere long, oh, Earth, will look in vain for thee,
And start, and stop, in his unerring flight,
And, with his wings of sorrow and affright—
Veil his impassion'd brow, and heav'nly tears!

NOTES.



NOTES.

BOOK I.

(A) page 10.

And landed Pauper, in his coach and four,
Bound to far countries, from a realm betray'd,
Scowls on the crowd.

Oh Jehu! a Pauper, in his coach and four! Is there no longer any respect for high birth, the gradations of rank, and the privileges of the aristocracy? In what catastrophe will the insolence of this generation end? For, alas, jacobinism is not now confined to the rabble of any country! Has not the Grand Turk himself turned radical, and lately destroyed the finest body of tories in the world, his ancient, orthodox, and unalterable janizaries? But in this country, liberalism appears openly in all places, flown with abominable knowledge. Nor does there appear to be any salvation left for us, unless the bread-tax-eaters can be induced to convene, and, with Lord Winchelsea at their head, give the Whigs two dips and a wallop

each, in the huge steam-engine boilers of the detestable manufacturing districts. Positively, there is no remedy, but hot submersion. For your true Whig, or radical, or whatever else be his revolutionary name, is a sort of cock turnip; he can bear cold pretty well, and he has no objection to a moderate degree of heat; but if you boil him, as you do your turnip, you will infallibly discover the heroic virtues which his modesty had concealed. The sickness of the states, I repeat, admits but of this cure; and there are persons who doubt whether the cure would not be worse than the disease. For those abominable Whigs, especially the town-dwelling portion of them, are very profitable stock; if they were all destroyed, rents would probably fall one half, the estates would change hands, and the lords of the creation be ousted by money-lenders, low wretches engaged in trade.

BOOK II.

(B) page 22.

And soon, faint odours, o'er the vernal dew
Will tempt the earliest bee to woo the flower
Whose verge is wiry gold.

The flower here alluded to is the Polyanthus, 'the poor man's flower,' which never deserts his garden, until hope has deserted him. It is the jacobin of the vegetable kingdom; and when it is transplanted into the gardens of the great, it loses *all* its worth.

BOOK III.

(c) page 43.

Kindly he greets the man of five score years,
The blind, the poor ; while purse-pride turns away.

The few act after the manner of the few ; and whenever wealth is synonymous with insolence, the great mass of the people are already in a state of real or apprehended poverty. Hence the prevalence of purse-pride in England, where Beggar-pride would rather be suspected of the plague, than any acquaintance with the rabble ; and where destitution is so general, that to sympathize with the poor is equivalent to a sentence of banishment from the inestimable smiles of all the great vulgar. But in France, if an English nobleman were to give himself such airs as we witness here daily, in the freaks of every fifty-pound upstart, he would instantly be rolled in the mire. This is the first discovery made by the hideous tax-eater, when he crosses the Channel. Yet on his return for a fresh supply of the needful, he resumes a complacency quite as safe as that in which the despotism of Charles the First reposed, when he was supported and addressed by the whole nobility and gentry of a justly indignant nation, in whose hands, a few months afterwards, that crawling nobility, and those honourable gentlemen, were as vermin shaken from the mane of the horse in battle ;—but the rider of the horse was Hampden.

BOOK IV.

(D) page 61.

He died, where fell the free of ancient Greece.

It is amusing to hear the sons of the serviles who sent Burns broken-hearted to the grave, *now* praising Byron for the only

fault which he ever had in their eyes; but it is too bad when they exalt into a hero the coxcomb who would have gone into hysterics if a tailor had laughed at him.

-(E) page 66.

Nor did his sorrow smile
Until his daughter to her Albert bore
Another Mary.

“ Another Mary Green
Is come to Goldrill side.”

Wordsworth.

BOOK V.

(F) page 78.

Bee ! that hast left thy sandy cov'd retreat
Before the living purple hath purvey'd
Food for thee.

I am told by a friend, that my natural history is incorrect. But what I have seen, I can believe. On the twenty-sixth day of January 1827, I saw the wild honeysuckle in leaf, and the hazle in flower; and towards the close of the following March, the wood-rose had kindled into full verdure, and the elm, the poplar, the willow, the celandine, the daisy, the wind-flower, and the primrose, were all in bloom, while the adder, the lizard, and the sand-bee, were rejoicing in the sunbeams.

BOOK VIII.

(G) page 127.

Kind souls ! ye jail the peasant, while ye plough
The wild that lov'd to laugh around his home.

What remuneration has been made to the poor for the commons of which they have been deprived ? It is no answer to say, that they had no *right* to the rent-free lands which they occupied. They were in possession, and they are ousted ; they were independent, and they are paupers. When the landholders complain of the poor-rates, they must not expect us to forget, that the waste lands, falsely so called, were a national benefit, when the poor held them, and that they are now a nuisance and a curse. Let those gentlemen state the account fairly between themselves and their paupers ; let them, in addition to some millions of tax-ploughed acres, pass to the credit of the poor what has been taken from them by the operation of Workhouse wages—by the fluctuations of paper-prices—and by taxes, the bitter fruit of our antijacobin wars—and they will find that all the lands of England, if unmortgaged, would not pay the balance, which before the eternal throne stands at their debit. But a demoralized population, and a debt of eight hundred millions, are not the only results of our indulgence in the luxury of carnage. The Corn-law is another proof of our having annihilated jacobinism and French principles. Over it in embryo the hereditary ears had long been fondly shaken : but when the perfection of monopoly was born, how joyful were the pangs of parturition ! how loud was the bray of Absolute Wisdom on the birth of the donkey of his dotage, so worthy of its father, and so like him ! The thistles of old Scotland had a holiday on the occasion, and, to this hour, expecting to be food for man, disdain the approaching jackass.

(H) page 128.

Storm-smitten rock! and thou, time-wrinkled tree!

Where is the sun-lov'd cottage, which, of old,

Ye screen'd from envious winds?

I am no advocate for the cottage-beggary. But in France, since the revolution, there are cottagers who are not beggars. Is it only in countries blessed with British constitution, that cottager and pauper are synonymous? I think I can remember the time when the agricultural labourers of this country were not paupers. If I am mistaken, I beg pardon of 'the gentlemen of England, who live abroad at ease;' for they cannot have degenerated from their ancestors, who, it would seem, watched over the interests of the poor with the same paternal solicitude which distinguishes their most Christian successors. Still—though the Rockinghams and the Savilles might be, like the Landsdowns and the Fitzwilliams, exceptions to a general rule—I am unwilling to believe that 'the famous roast beef of Old England,' was always translateable into sixpence a day, with bread at an average of about forty pence per stone. The Parisians talk of 'Roast Beef of Pork;' but what would they say to 'Roast Beef of Potatoes?'

But whatever may have been the former state of our agricultural labourers, I can fearlessly declare, from my own knowledge and observation, that the little master manufacturers of the district around Sheffield, are in a much worse condition than they were twenty-five years ago. The hard-working and once-happy nailer, or cutler—a freeholder, perhaps, still living in his own cottage, fronted by its lovely garden—can no longer keep up his credit as a tradesman. He might possibly pay his debts, by selling the freehold, and removing into the town, but that would break his heart. In the country he is something,

for he is a freeholder ; but what would he be in the dingiest hovel of the dirtiest town's vilest street ? In a very, very few years, if the corn-law continue, the whole race of such men will have become paupers.

BOOK IX.

(i) page 142.

Will Lethbridge, and the workhouse, have their due ?

That such men as Sir Thomas ought to receive parish pay, I by no means think ; that they deserve to starve, I will not say ; but that their advocacy of corn bills, if persisted in with success, will bring them to the workhouse, I am happy to believe ; and if they *will* have it so, I shall be glad to see them there—the sooner the better.

(k) page 142.

Will Glynn accept, when Rentless draws his bill ?

Certainly, Glynn will not accept ; and certainly, in spite of the magic which I am told there is in the word rent, the bread-tax eaters, if they have no hope but in monopoly, will become rentless.

But in what does the magic of the word rent consist ? Can we conjure better with it, than with any other word ? A landholder, living on his annual rental, is precisely like any other annuitant. I suspect there is some fallacy in Mr. Ricardo's famous theory. That in any over-peopled country, *blessed with a corn monopoly*, the demand for bread exceeding the supply, would cause bad lands to be cultivated, and good lands to rise in value, I can readily believe. But if the theory of rent is true, land must be unlike all other things. Accordingly, it is attempted to be shown, that land, being limited in extent, is there-

fore unlike all other things, and especially unlike the productions of human labour, which are produced in quantities proportioned to the demand for them. But land is of no value until there is a demand for its productions, and consequently that proportion of it which is not in cultivation, is of no more account at present, than the labourer who will be born a hundred years hence. I shall not ask whether *the capability of skill and labour to produce goods* is not like *the capability of the land for cultivation*, philosophically a limited quantity; but it does seem to me, that *the quantity of land actually in cultivation* varies with circumstances, just as the productions of skill and labour do; and, if so, the distinction between land and other things, with regard to limitation, is a distinction without a difference. Even if the last cultivable acre in the world were cultivated, my argument would still hold good; for the exertions of skill and labour have also their limits. That the iron ore in the bowels of the earth is precisely as limited in quantity, as the surface of the earth is limited in extent, no man will deny; yet the limited quantity of the iron ore in the world, does not prevent the iron ore, or the finished iron of Ulverstone from being governed in price by the iron ore, or the finished iron of Russia and Sweden. *Give the English iron-master a monopoly*, and then, I grant, the theory of rent will *work well* in the mines of Cumberland.

(L) page 156.

Shall I, lost Britain, give the curse a name,
That, like a cancer, eats into thy core?
'Tis Avarice.—

That the too famous anti-profit law, commonly called the bread-tax, was the cause of the late commercial crisis, and of all

the speculation that preceded it, and that it is also the principal cause of our present distresses, no man in his senses doubts. It is not then at all wonderful that the wisdom of our landholders, and the benevolence of their intentions, when they passed their self-denying ordinance, has not hitherto been even suspected. Perhaps, none but the poet of all beggars could have made the discovery, that Messrs. Protection, Clod, & Co. are not levellers, but merely liberals, and that their aim is not revolution; but only radical reform. If, however, there are still any persons who doubt the necessity of Parliamentary Reform, the corn-law, I fear, is destined to convince them, with a vengeance. Yet that law is worth the yearly forty millions which it costs us, if it do no more than demonstrate to the firm above named, that they must beware in future how they play at the game of war. Machiavel says, that the country whose people are compelled to pay a high price for their bread, cannot maintain its independance; but to the corn-law we owe our knowledge of the precious truth, that no fully-peopled country can maintain its rank among the nations, *unless it untax its manufacturing industry, capital, and skill*. Very possibly, those profound men, Sir Locust Almoner, and his great relations, were not quite aware of this, when, with a paper lie in their hearts, and parish pay in their hands, they said to the plundered labourers, 'Increase and multiply in numbers and in wretchedness, for our honour and glory.' But if two and two are four, it is now certain, that the government of this empire *must* untax every thing but land, if we are to pay a regiment of soldiers, or keep a ship of war in commission. In fact, the continuance of the corn-law is a sentence of paupery passed by the land-owners on themselves, or their heirs. Beside, if the corn-law should destroy our trade, and

the agriculture of the country be unable, as it would be, to furnish even potatoes for the population, it is rather probable that fifteen millions of radicals would not die of famine without making very odd grimacés, and uttering sounds which Nimrod and Tallyho could not easily mistake for the cry of a pack of hounds, though each of those gentlemen might play his character of puss, or fox, in the drama of retribution. These truths have long been obvious to all whose brains are near their eyes; but the brains of the land-holders are in their bellies; and it is only through their pockets and their intestines, that they can be made to understand any thing. Yet let us hope that the time is at hand, when labourer and artisan, shopkeeper and merchant, manufacturer and farmer;—every gentleman who would weep to see our venerable institutions prostrate in the dust,—every man who still respects, in spite of themselves, that noble body which has produced a Bacon, a Fairfax, a Russell, a Byron, and a Holland, will join in a yell of execration, against the all-beg-garing bread-tax.

BOOK X.

(M) page 176.

Th' unutterable deep, that hath no shore.

It seems beyond the powers of the mind of any liminary being to conceive, that space ever had a beginning, or that it ever can have an end.

APPENDIX I.

FROM 1773 to 1791, the importing price of wheat in England, was 44*s.* per quarter, with a duty of sixpence. The average price of wheat during this period, was 44*s.* 6*d.* per quarter, and that of agricultural labour 1*s.* 9*d.* per day.

From 1791 to 1800, the importing price of wheat was 54*s.* per quarter, with a duty of sixpence, or 50*s.* per quarter with a duty of 2*s.* 6*d.* The average price of wheat during this period was 55*s.* per quarter, and that of agricultural labour 1*s.* 9*d.* per day.

From 1804 to 1815, the importing price of wheat was 60*s.* per quarter, with a duty of 2*s.* 6*d.*, or 63*s.* per quarter, with a duty of sixpence. The average price of wheat during this period was (in paper money) 84*s.* per quarter, and that of agricultural labour 2*s.* per day.

In 1815, the importing price of wheat was raised to 80*s.* per quarter, a price absolutely prohibitory. That the average price of wheat in England since 1815, has quite equalled the benevolent expectation of Robert Shallow Esq., is not certain ; it appears, however, that the

price of labour in the agricultural counties of England, is, at this time (1827) 3s. 6d. per week, paid out of the parish rates. It follows that agricultural labourers in England from 1773 to 1791, were four times better off than at present. The first great blow struck at their independence, was the Bank Restriction Act, which ought to have been called 'An Act for converting Peasants into Paupers;' for against the fluctuations of paper prices, the poor have no defence. Then came the law for enabling the farmers to pay their wages out of the parish rates, and consequently their rack rents out of other people's pockets; and then, to complete the work of degradation, came in swarms the shoeless child of misrule, the potatoe-fed biped from the sister kingdom offering to work twelve hours for sixpence.

APPENDIX II.

Extracts from the Report of the Select Committee on Criminal Commitments, and Convictions, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, 22 June, 1827.

FRANCIS PYM, jun. Esq. says, "That 2s. 8d. per week are given to single men who apply for relief, and have no employ. Criminals begin with poaching, which leads to every thing that is bad. Few families have escaped the degradation of receiving parish relief; and during the last ten years" (in spite of the corn-law, or in consequence of it, this witness sayeth not,) "the mischievous operation of the poor-laws has increased tenfold."

JAMES GRAHAM, Bart. says, "That the peasantry of Cumberland are not paid out of the parish rates, and that the labourers there are as well off as they were thirty years ago." He does not state that this is owing to the proximity of flourishing manufacturing districts, which furnish a demand for the surplus labour of Cumberland.

"Within the last eighteen months," the same gentleman adds, "there has been a great deal of poultry stolen by the hand-loom weavers, whose

labour has been superseded by machinery." He does not state, that, but for such machinery, the pauperized peasantry would be at this moment in a state of insurrection, and that—unless a free corn-trade be allowed—nothing but improved machinery can prevent the yet undegraded peasantry of Cumberland from becoming what the paupers of Bedfordshire are. In fact, Robert Shallow, Esq. must cease to be an almoner—he must contrive to do without his suicidal bread-tax—or condescend to thank mechanic genius, if his heirs escape beggary. Lord Byron, speaking of him of the nerves of agony, said, "Cowper was the *almoner* of Mrs. Throckmorton." But the magnates of whose alliance the noble pretender to jacobinism was proud even to ostentation, are the almoners of the poor corn-billed weaver, at whom they turn up their noses "in beautiful disdain."

The same witness states, "That he has diminished the population on his own property from four to three hundred souls." Yes, he may expel his cottagers, so long as the manufacturing districts can find employment for them. But when the landholders shall have succeeded in reducing the wages of labour throughout England to eightpence per day, will they be able to prevail on the French to receive (as we receive the Irish,) our surplus population, breeding, as a reckless population will, like rabbits in a warren?

GEORGE TOLLET, Esq. thinks, "That the uncertainty of punishment, in regard to the higher offences, is a main cause of the increase of crime." Like his brethren, he never seems to have suspected, that the increase of crime in this country is owing to the wars of our landed faction, and their palaced paupery—I mean, their bread-tax.

P. HUNT, R. MOORE, and T. BARBER, state, "That in many parishes in the county of Bedford, the wages given to young unmarried men, in the prime of life, seldom exceed 3*s.* 6*d.* per week, paid to them out of the parish rates; and that in the immediate vicinity of the dwellings of such half-starved men, there are abundantly-stocked preserves of game, in which, during a single night, they can obtain a rich booty." It does not appear that, in the opinion of those gentlemen, burglary would be a desirable substitute for poaching.

SIR T. BARING thinks, "That when the price of agricultural produce is low, distress prevails among the agricultural labourers." He does not state, that the landholders can have no more for their article than the last penny which the manufacturers have to give them.

SIR T. BARING also thinks, "That the objection which the farmers have to a change of system, arises from their desire to throw the burden from themselves

upon others." He does not state that a similar desire on the part of the landholders, and the power gratify it, have caused all the evils under which this country labours.

The Rev. Dr. HUNT calculates, "That from 1801 to 1827, the population of the county of Bedford has increased 40 per cent.; while, during the same period, crime has increased 900 per cent. In the year following 1801, criminal commitments more than doubled, and have never since decreased. Able-bodied, young, unmarried men do not, he says, receive more for six days' labour than 3s. 6d., or sevenpence per day. He saw a young unmarried man who received only 2s. per week, and who had no other means of subsistence, except what he could make from deprecation. There is no want of a supply of labourers during the harvest time, as a great number of Irishmen come at that time. The farmers will not employ young men, because there is a sufficient supply of married men with families. The young peasants are hardly free agents, for many of them marry at the suggestion of the parish officers, rather than go to prison on a charge of bastardy, and because, *-if they do not marry, they can get no employment!!!* They have no power, after a first commitment, of keeping out of prison, under such distress do they labour, when they return to their homes." If the statement of this gentleman is correct,

as no doubt it is, the agricultural labourers of this country are now about *five* times worse off than they were in 1274, when wheat was 3s. 4d. per quarter, and the wages of a labourer three-halfpence per day.

According to this witness, "in almost all cases of simple poaching, during the day-time, by labourers, the offence is *tried* by the summary jurisdiction of a single justice out of sessions"!!

The same gentleman imputes "the low rate of wages, in some parishes, to the agriculturists having established a low rate when the price of corn was low, and to their not having been willing to increase the rate when the price of provisions rose." And are these the worthies whose *prejudices* we are called upon to respect?

MR. JOHN ORRIDGE (no doubt with his hair on end,) says, "That the agricultural labourers do not consider parish pay, (*i. e.* the wages of labour here,) as a matter of favour, but of *right!*" They say, "We are come for our *pay.*" He attributes the increase of crime, "in great measure, to the fact, that there is an abundant market for game, and nobody to compete in that market with the poacher." He does not seem to know, that there is nobody to compete in our corn-market with the landholder.

MR. JOHN ORRIDGE further says, "That the commitments began to increase in 1815, (when the mo-

nopoly corn-law was enacted,) that in 1816 they increased very much, and that, from that time, they have never diminished." So then, it appears, the corn-law of 1815 has benefited the poor, much as the residence of his landlord benefits the wretch whom said landlord sends to gaol for breaking a pheasant's egg! Are we still to be told by the ruinmongers, that a high price of corn is an advantage to the poor? But, perhaps, our blind deities are really incapable of distinguishing between high prices, *and the advantage of being able to pay them.* But hear their oracle. "When the price of corn is high," says John Orridge, "the farmer can afford to employ all the labourers around him." This judicious sentence, translated into honest English, means, "That when the consumer can *afford* to pay a high price for corn, the farmer thrives." We are not, however, told by John Orridge, that, when corn is dear; the farmer actually does employ all the labourers, even at any thing like *fair* wages; and yet, we should suppose, persons who imagine they are receiving twice the just price for their goods, might contrive to be *generous*. But the community cannot for ever afford to be robbed by wholesale. If the manufacturer is forced to pay an extravagant price for bread, his trade suffers; perhaps, it is actually destroyed, by the very means taken to obtain that unjust price; agricultural prices fall, in conse-

quence; and Cormorant,—wondering how it happens that people cannot be plundered of their property, and have it, too,—consults cousin Owl, who (not at all aware that they are both about to be eaten by the carrion-crows,) advises him to take out a patent for converting bracken into indigo, and potatoes into wheat.

Would it be possible to extract from the annals of the human race, in the same number of words, an equal amount of facts appalling as these?

Let us sum up. “During the high price of provisions, which occurred soon after the enactment of the Bank Restriction Act, the farmer, instead of raising wages in proportion to the increased value of subsistence, had recourse to the expedient of robbing his neighbours, by making up the deficiency out of the poor-rates. While the war continued, the increasing demand for agricultural products, and the abundance of paper-money, concealed the evils with which the system was pregnant. The new administration of the poor-laws” (in other words, the paying of rack-rents out of them,) “*tended rapidly to increase the population!* The fluctuations which have taken place since 1816” (*arising* out of the attempted return to cash payments, and the determination of the landholders to secure their paper-rents in specie, by means of the corn-law,) “have still further acted, and, after twelve

years of peace, are still acting, to prevent the possibility of improvement in the condition of this country." So much for Tory-rule, and Beadle-loyalty—war, and taxes—Pitt, and paper-money — Malthus, and moral restraint! Yet, why are we ruined? The whole rental of the tax-eating portion of the aristocracy, does not, perhaps, exceed three millions sterling, a sum about equal to the income of Birmingham. The great peers, the truly noble—the Devonshires, the Norfolks, the Fitzwilliams—are all losers by the corruption and misrule, of which the Church itself will be the next great victim. Why, then, are we ruined? Will posterity believe, that the peasantry of England have been degraded to the brutes, and the best interests of the state, if not the state itself, sacrificed for the gratification of a junto, contemptible alike in numbers and property?

THE END.

