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THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
WILIAM COWPER

WITH AN
EXPLANATORY NOTES
ETC.

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THE POETICAL WORKS
OF
WILLIAM COWPER.



THE "CHANDOS CLASSICS." *St. 82.*

THE POETICAL WORKS
OF
WILLIAM COWPER.

COMPLETE EDITION,

With Memoir, Explanatory Notes, &c.



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THE "CHANDOS CLASSICS"

THE POETICAL WORKS

OF

WILLIAM COWPER

COMPLETE EDITION

RICHARD CLAY & SONS,
BREAD STREET HILL, LONDON,
Bungay, Suffolk.



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CONTENTS.

EARLY POEMS.

	PAGE
Verses written at Bath	1
Of Himself	2
Poems to Delia :—An apology	3
Apology to Delia	4
The Symptoms of Love	5
An Attempt at the Manner of Waller	5
Written in a Quarrel	6
Reconciliation	6
Appeal to Delia for Forgiveness	7
To Delia	8
Delia's Absence	9
Written after Leaving her at New Burns	9
On her Endeavouring to Conceal her Grief at Parting	11
Despair at his Separation from Delia	11
R. S. S.	12
Written in a Fit of Illness	13
To Delia	14
Disappointment	15
Upon a Venerable Rival	16
An Ode on Reading "Sir Charles Grandison"	17
In a Letter to C. P., Esq.	18
In a Letter to the Same	18
Ode, supposed to be Written on the Marriage of a Friend	18
An Epistle to Robert Lloyd, Esq.	19
The Certainty of Death	21
A Comparison	21
The Stream	22
A Song	22
Song	22
A Song	23

	PAGE
Address to Miss Macartney, afterwards Mrs. Greville, on Reading her	24
"Prayer for Indifference"	26
An Ode	27
Lines Written During a Period of Insanity	28
Lines Written During the Author's Second Period of Insanity	28
On Observing Some Names of Little Note Recorded in the Biographia	29
Britannica	29

OLNEY HYMNS.

Walking with God	30
Jehovah-Jireh. The Lord Will Provide	30
Jehovah-Rophi. I am the Lord that Healeth Thee	31
Jehovah-Nissi. The Lord my Banner	32
Jehovah-Shalom. The Lord send Peace	32
Wisdom	33
Vanity of the World	34
O Lord, I will Praise Thee	34
The Contrite Heart	35
The Future Peace and Glory of the Church	36
Jehovah our Righteousness	36
Ephraim Repenting	37
The Covenant	37
Jehovah-Shammah	38
Praise for the Fountain Opened	38
The Sower	39
The House of Prayer	40
Lovest Thou Me?	40
Contentment	41
Old Testament Gospel	42
Sardis	43
Prayer for Children	43
Pleading for and with Youth	44
Prayer for Children	45
Jehovah Jesus	45
On Opening a Place for Social Prayer	46
Welcome to the Table	47
Jesus Hasting to Suffer	47
Exhortation to Prayer	48
The Light and Glory of the Word	48
On the Death of a Minister	49
The Shining Light	49

CONTENTS.

vii

	PAGE
The Waiting Soul	50
Seeking the Beloved	51
Welcome Cross	51
Afflictions Sanctified by the Word	52
Temptation	53
Looking Upwards in a Storm	53
The Valley of the Shadow of Death	54
Peace after a Storm	54
Mourning and Longing	55
Self-Acquaintance	56
Prayer for Patience	56
Submission	57
The Happy Change	58
Retirement	58
The Hidden Life	59
Joy and Peace in Believing	59
True Pleasures	60
The Christian	61
Lively Hope and Gracious Fear	62
For the Poor	62
My Soul Thirsteth for God	63
Love Constrained to Obedience	63
The Heart Healed and Changed by Mercy	64
Hatred of Sin	64
The New Convert	65
True and False Comforts	66
A Living and a Dead Faith	66
Abuse of the Gospel	67
The Narrow Way	67
Dependence	68
Not of Works	69
Praise for Faith	69
Grace and Providence	70
I will Praise the Lord at all Times	70
Longing to be with Christ	71
Light Shining out of Darkness	72
Anti-Thelyphthora, a Tale in verse, 1781	73
Love Abused; the Thought suggested by Thelyphthora	73
The Progress of Error	79
Truth	93
Table Talk	107
Expostulation	125
Hope	142

	PAGE
Charity	159
Conversation	174
Retirement	194
The Diverting History of John Gilpin	212

THE TASK.

Book I.—The Sofa	219
„ II.—The Time Piece	236
„ III.—The Garden	254
„ IV.—The Winter Evening	273
„ V.—The Winter Morning Walk	290
„ VI.—The Winter Walk at Noon	310
Tirocinium ; or, a Review of Schools	333

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

A Tale, Founded on a Fact, which happened in January, 1779	354
The Pineapple and the Bee	355
The Love of the World Reproved ; or, Hypocrisy Detected	356
On the Promotion of Edward Thurlow, Esq., to the Lord High Chancellorship of England	357
The Modern Patriot	357
The Nightingale and Glowworm	358
The Raven	359
The Doves	360
On the Burning of Lord Mansfield's Library	361
On the Same	362
A Riddle	362
To the Rev. Mr. Newton, on his Return from Ramsgate	362
On a Goldfinch, Starved to Death in his Cage	363
Report of an Adjudged Case	363
A Card	364
On the High Price of Fish	365
To Mrs. Newton, on receiving a Barrel of Oysters	365
Epigram	366
To Sir Joshua Reynold	366
A Poetical Epistle to Lady Austen	367
To Lady Austen	368
Heroism	369

CONTENTS.

ix

	PAGE
The Flattling Mill	371
From a Letter to the Rev. Mr. Newton, Rector of St. Mary Woolnoth	372
To the Rev. William Bull	372
Friendship	373
The Colubriad	376
Epitaph on a Hare	377
Epitaphium Alterum	378
On the Loss of the Royal George	378
In Submersionem Navigii Cui, Georgius Regale Nomen, Inditum	379
Ode to Peace	379
Song—On Peace	380
Song	380
The Distressed Travellers; or, Labour in Vain	380
The Rose	383
The Valediction	383
To the Immortal Memory of the Halibut	386
Pairing-time Anticipated	386
Human Frailty	387
Verses supposed to have been Written by Alexander Selkirk, during his Solitary Abode on the Island of Juan Fernandez	388
An Epistle to Joseph Hill	389
The Moraliser Corrected	391
Ode to Apollo	392
The Faithful Bird	392
Monumental Inscription to William Northcot	393
Mutual Forbearance Necessary to the Happiness of the Married State	393
Boadicea	394
To the Rev. W. Cawthorne Unwin	394
To the Rev. Mr. Newton	395
The Lily and the Rose	395
Idem Latine Redditum	395
The Winter Nosegay	396
The Poet, the Oyster, and Sensitive Plant	397
Epitaph on Dr. Johnson	398
On the Author of Letters on Literature	398
The Shrubbery, written in a Time of Affliction	399
The Poplar Field	399
To Miss Creuzé, on her Birthday	400
Gratitude	400
Sanzas subjoined to the Yearly Bill of Mortality of the Parish of All Saints, Northampton, Anno Domini 1787	401
On a Similar Occasion, for the Year 1788	402
On a Similar Occasion, for the Year 1789	403

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
On a Similar Occasion, for the Year 1790	403
On a Similar Occasion, for the Year 1792	404
On a Similar Occasion, for the Year 1793	405
Lines Composed for a Memorial of Ashley Cowper, Esq.	405
The Poet's New-Year's Gift	406
The Negro's Complaint	406
Pity for Poor Africans	408
The Morning Dream	409
Sweet Meat has Sour Sauce ; or, the Slave-trade in the Dumps	410
Epigram	411
The Yearly Distress ; or, Tithing-time at Stock, in Essex	412
Sonnet addressed to Henry Cowper, Esq.	413
The Dog and the Water Lily	413
Motto for a Clock	414
On Mrs. Montagu's Feather Hangings	414
On the Death of Mrs. Throckmorton's Bullfinch	415
An Epistle to an Afflicted Protestant Lady in France	417
The Needless Alarm	418
Annus Memorabilis	421
On the Queen's Visit to London	422
On the Benefit Received by His Majesty from Sea-bathing in the Year 1789	423
The Cock-fighter's Garland	423
Hymn for the use of the Sunday School at Olney	425
On the Receipt of a Hamper	425
On a Mischievous Bull, which the Owner sold at the Author's instance	426
Verses to the Memory of Dr. Lloyd, spoken at the Westminster Election next after his Decease	426
To Mrs. Throckmorton, on her Beautiful Transcript of Horace's ode "Ad Librum Suum"	427
On the Receipt of my Mother's Picture out of Norfolk, the gift of my Cousin, Ann Bodham	428
Inscription for a Stone Erected at the Sowing of a Grove of Oaks, at Chillington, the Seat of T. Giffard, Esq.	431
Another, for a Stone Erected on a Similar Occasion at the same Place in the following year	431
To Mrs. King, on her kind Present to the Author, a Patchwork Counter- pane of her own making	431
Stanzas on the late Indecent Liberties taken with the Remains of Milton	432
In Memory of the late J. Thornton, Esq.	432
In Seditioem Horrendam	434
The Judgment of the Poets	434
Yardley Oak	435
Epitaph on Mrs. M. Higgins, of Weston	438

CONTENTS.

xi

	PAGE
Sonnet to a Young Lady on her Birthday	439
The Retired Cat	439
On the Neglect of Homer	442
To the Nightingale	442
Lines written in an Album of Miss Patty More's, sister of Hannah More	443
Epitaph on a Free but Tame Redbreast, a Favourite of Miss Sally Hurdis	443
On a Mistake in the Translation of Homer	444
Lines on a Late Theft	444
Sonnet to William Wilberforce, Esq.	444
To Dr. Austen, of Cecil Street, London	445
To Warren Hastings, Esq.	445
Lines addressed to Dr. Darwin, author of "The Botanic Garden"	445
Catharina	446
The Second Part	447
Sonnet addressed to William Hayley	448
Epitaph on Fop, a Dog belonging to Lady Throckmorton	449
Sonnet to George Romney, Esq., on his Picture of me in Crayons	449
Thanks for a Gift of Pheasants	450
An Epitaph on a Pointer belonging to Sir John Throckmorton	450
On Receiving Hayley's Picture	450
Epitaph on Mr. Chester, of Chicheley	451
To my Cousin, Anne Bodham, on Receiving from her a Network Purse made by Herself	451
To Mrs. Unwin	451
To John Johnson, Esq., on his Presenting me with an Antique Bust of Homer	452
Inscribed on the Bust of Homer, Presented to Cowper by Mr. John Johnson, and now in the Wilderness at Weston	452
To a Young Friend, on his Arriving at Cambridge Wet when no Rain had fallen there	453
Inscription for a Hermitage in the Author's Garden	453
Inscription for a Moss House in the Shrubbery at Weston	453
Inscription for a Garden Shed, Built in a far more Expensive Way than was Designed	453
Epigram on the Same Circumstance	454
On Abbott's Portrait of Him, Addressed to Hayley	454
The Four Ages	454
On a Plant of Virgin's Bower, Designed to Cover a Garden Seat	455
To William Hayley, Esq.	456
A Tale, Founded on Fact	456
On a Spaniel called Beau Killing a Young Bird	458
Beau's Reply	459

	PAGE
To the Spanish Admiral Count Gravina, on his Translating the Author's Song on a Rose into Italian Verse	460
On Receiving Heyne's Virgil from Mr. Hayley	462
Answer	462
Inscription for the Tomb of Mr. Hamilton	462
Montes Glaciales, in Oceano Germanico Natantes	463
On the Ice Islands seen floating in the German Ocean	464
The Castaway	465

TRANSLATIONS.

Translation of Psalm cxxxvii.	468
Translation of Greek Verses :—	
The Spartan Mother, by Julianus	469
On the Same, by Palladas	469
An Epitaph	469
Another	469
Another	470
Another	470
On Melanippus and his Sister, by Callimachus	470
On Miltiades	470
On an Infant	470
On Aretimias, by Heraclides	471
On a Reed-pen	471
To Health	471
On the Astrologers	472
On an Old Woman	472
On Invalids	472
On Flatterers	472
To the Swallow	472
On Late Acquired Wealth	473
On a True Friend	473
On a Bath, by Plato	473
On a Fowler, by Isidorus	473
On Niobe	473
On a Good Man	474
On a Miser	474
Another	474
Another	474
On Female Inconstancy	475
On the Grasshopper	475
On Hermocratia	475
What Wealth cannot Buy	476

CONTENTS.

xiii

	PAGE
On Pallas Bathing, from a Hymn of Callimachus	476
On a Flattering Mirror, to Demosthenes	477
On a Similar Character	477
On an Ugly Fellow	477
On a Battered Beauty	477
On a Thief	478
On Pedigree, from Epicharmus	478
On Envy	478
On Immoderate Grief, by Philemon	479
On the Teaching of Cupid, by Moschus	479
The Fifth Satire of the First Book of Horace	480
The Ninth Satire of the First Book of Horace	484
Translations from Horace :—	
Lib. i., Ode ix.	488
Lib. i., Ode xxxviii.	489
Another Translation of the same Ode	489
Lib. ii., Ode xvi.	489
Translations from Virgil :—	
Æneid, Book viii., Line 18	490
The Salad	500
Translations from Ovid :—	
Trist. Lib. v., Eleg. xii.	503
Complimentary Pieces addressed to Milton :—	
The Neapolitan, John Baptist Manso, Marquis of Villa, to the Englishman, John Milton	505
An Epigram addressed to the Englishman, John Milton	506
To John Milton	506
An Ode addressed to the Illustrious Englishman, Mr. John Milton	506
To Mr. John Milton, of London	508
Translations of the Latin and Italian Poems of Milton :—	
Elegy I.—To Charles Diodati	509
Elegy II.—On the Death of the University Bedel at Cambridge	512
Elegy III.—On the Death of the Bishop of Winchester	513
Elegy IV.—To his Tutor, Thomas Young	514
Elegy V.—On the Approach of Spring	517
Elegy VI.—To Charles Diodati	521
Elegy VII.	523
Epigrams :—	
On the Invention of Guns	526
To Leonora, singing at Rome	526

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
To the Same	526
The Cottager and his Landlord	527
To Christina, Queen of Sweden	527
On the Death of the Vice-Chancellor	527
On the Death of the Bishop of Ely	529
Nature Unimpaired by Time	531
On the Platonic Idea as it was understood by Aristotle	533
To his Father	534
To Salsillus, a Roman Poet, much indisposed	537
To Giovanni Battista Manso, Marquis of Villa	538
On the Death of Damon	541
An Ode Addressed to Mr. Rous, Librarian of the University of Oxford	548

Translations of the Italian Poems :—

Sonnet	551
Sonnet	551
Canzone	551
Sonnet, to Charles Diodati	552
Sonnet	552
Sonnet	553
Translation of a Simile in Paradise Lost	553
Translation of Dryden's Epigram on Milton	553

Translations from Vincent Bourne :—

The Thracian	554
Reciprocal Kindness the Primary Law of Nature	554
A Manual, more Ancient than the Art of Printing, and not to be found in any Catalogue	555
An Enigma	556
Sparrows Self-domesticated in Trinity College, Cambridge	557
Familiarity Dangerous	558
Invitation to the Redbreast	558
Strada's Nightingale	559
Ode on the Death of a Lady, who lived One Hundred Years, and Died on her Birthday	560
The Cause Won	561
The Silkworm	561
The Innocent Thief	562
Denner's Old Woman	563
The Tears of a Painter	563
The Maze	564
No Sorrow Peculiar to the Sufferer	564

CONTENTS.

xv

	PAGE
The Snail	565
The Cantab	565

Epigrams Translated from the Latin of Owen :—

On One Ignorant and Arrogant	566
Prudent Simplicity	566
To a Friend in Distress	566
Self-Knowledge	566
Retaliation	567
Sunset and Sunrise	567
On the Shortness of Human Life, translated from the Latin of Dr. Jortin	567

Translations from the French of Madame De la Motte Guyon :—

The Nativity	568
God Neither Known nor Loved by the World	572
The Swallow	573
The Triumph of Heavenly Love Desired	574
A Figurative Description of the Procedure of Divine Love	574
Truth and Divine Love Rejected by the World	576
Divine Justice Amiable	576
The Soul that Loves God finds Him Everywhere	577
A Child of God longing to see Him Beloved	578
Aspiration of the Soul after God	580
Gratitude and Love to God	580
Happy Solitude—Unhappy Men	581
Living Water	582
The Testimony of Divine Adoption	582
Divine Love Endures no Rival	583
Self-Diffidence	584
The Acquiescence of Pure Love	585
Repose in God	585
Glory to God Alone	586
Self-love and Truth Incompatible	587
Love Faithful in the Absence of the Beloved	588
The Love of God, the End of Life	588
Love Pure and Fervent	589
The Entire Surrender	589
The Perfect Sacrifice	589
God Hides His People	590
The Secrets of Divine Love are to be kept	591
The Vicissitudes Experienced in the Christian Life	594

	PAGE
Watching unto God in the Night Season	597
On the Same	598
On the Same	600
The Joy of the Cross	601
Joy in Martyrdom	603
Simple Trust	603
The Necessity of Self-abasement	604
Love Increased by Suffering	605
Scenes Favourable to Meditation	607
Translations from the Fables of Gay :—	
Lepus Multis Amicis	608
Avarus et Plutus	610
Papilio et Limax	611



PREFATORY MEMOIR
OF
WILLIAM COWPER.

WILLIAM COWPER, the son of the Rev. John Cowper, was born at Great Berkhamstead Rectory, on the 26th of November, 1731. His family was of ancient descent, capable of being traced back without interruption to the time of Edward IV. on his father's side. His mother, Ann, daughter of Roger Donne, of Ludham Hall, Norfolk, was of the family of the celebrated and excellent Dr. Donne, Dean of St. Paul's, and was said to be descended from King Henry III. through four different lines.

When Cowper was only six years old the great misfortune of his life befell him: his mother died. What that loss was to the tender sensitive child we can best judge by his own exquisite lines addressed to her picture, which he received from his cousin, Ann Bodham, more than fifty years afterwards. She left also a newly born child, his brother John, who survived to manhood; five other children had died in their infancy.

In less than a year after his mother's death, Cowper was sent to school at Dr. Pitman's, Market Street, between St. Albans and Dunstable. Here he suffered for two years from the most cruel bullying on the part of the elder boys; his shyness, physical delicacy, and sensitive nature exposing him in a peculiar manner to their savage tormenting. Of one of these young tyrants, Cowper writes:—

"I had such a dread of him, that I did not dare lift my eyes to his face. I knew him best by his shoe-buckle." But the cruelty exercised by this young savage was at length discovered, the coward was expelled, and Cowper was taken from the school.

The next two years he spent under the care of an oculist, who attended him for inflammation of the eyes. From this home he was removed to Westminster School. Here his dull and suffering young life brightened. He was an excellent scholar, and became also a good cricketer and football player. The usher of his form was Vincent Bourne—celebrated for his Latin poetry, which his pupil afterwards translated. His chief school friends were, Robert Lloyd, the son of Dr. Pierson Lloyd, another usher; William Russell, Warren Hastings, George Colman, Charles Churchill, and Cumberland. To these he was sincerely and faithfully attached; proofs of his friendship for them are scattered through his poems. While still a Westminster scholar, he wrote his first poem, in imitation of

Philips' "Splendid Shilling" (see p. 1). In the same year—1748—he left Westminster and remained under his father's roof for nine months. He was then articled for three years to a solicitor—a Mr. Chapman, of Ely Place, Holborn. It was settled that while he was there he should visit every Sunday an uncle of his—Mr. Ashley Cowper, afterwards clerk of the Parliament, who resided in Southampton Row. His fellow clerk at Mr. Chapman's—Edward Thurlow—destined to become hereafter (as Cowper often jestingly prophesied) Lord Chancellor—shared this privilege with him, and not only Sundays but much of the two lads' time was spent at Mr. Ashley Cowper's, whose house was the more attractive probably from the fact that he had three daughters, two of whom, Harriet and Theodora, were growing into womanhood. With the latter Cowper fell deeply in love, and it was to her, under the name of "Delia," that his early poems are addressed. Harriet became engaged to and finally married Mr. Hesketh, who was afterwards created a baronet.

When his three years with the solicitor expired, Cowper entered into residence at the Middle Temple, 1752, and here the first shadow of that awful melancholy which clouded all his future life stole over him. He became painfully depressed. "I was struck," he says, "with such a dejection of spirits, as none but they who have felt the same can have the least conception of. Day and night I was upon the rack, lying down in horror and rising up in despair."

He sought relief in medicine and religion, and found some comfort in George Herbert's works, "but a very near and dear relation," he tells us, disapproved of that excellent divine's teachings, and Herbert—so well suited to his reader!—was unhappily laid aside. Mr. Hesketh, Harriet's lover, then took him to Southampton for change of air and scene, and this appears to have done him good. In 1754 he returned to London and was called to the bar.

It does not appear that he ever had, or desired to have, a brief. He hoped for an appointment to one of the patent offices in connexion with the House of Lords, the nomination to which was vested in a member of his father's family. Meantime he wooed and won his cousin, Theodora Jane Cowper, who was willing to run all risks, and even share poverty with him. "If you marry William Cowper," said her father, alluding to his nephew's poverty one day, "what will you do?" "Do, sir?" answered Theodora, "wash all day, and ride out on the great dog at night."

Probably Mr. Ashley Cowper's hesitation as to permitting the match became a decided objection on account of the sad despondency and restlessness of his nephew. He declared firmly that the marriage must not take place, assigning as an excuse his dislike to cousins marrying. No one, looking at the future which followed, can avoid allowing that Mr. Cowper acted wisely; Cowper's madness, and the eccentricity afterwards developed by Theodora, prove that his decision was both wise and kind. Just about this time Cowper was summoned to Berkhamstead to the death-bed of his father, who died of apoplexy soon after his son arrived. He had married a second time, and Cowper had been very little at home

since that event occurred, but he loved the place full of boyish memories, and no doubt grief for his father's death, and the loss of his old home, bitterly aggravated the sorrow of his disappointed affection.

Dr. Cowper did not leave much money to his sons. The younger, John, was then studying at Cambridge for holy orders; and Cowper returned to his lonely chambers, feeling all the more desolate because his uncle Ashley had removed from Southampton Row to Palace Yard, and had taken that opportunity of refusing to permit his nephew to visit at his house. Thus he and Theodora were for ever separated; she submitted dutifully to her father's will, but remained faithful to her love, watching over the life of her cousin with tender interest; helping him with anonymous gifts, and refusing ever to give him a successor in her affections. She carefully preserved the poems he had addressed to her; and near the close of her life deposited them in a sealed packet with her dearest lady-friend, directing that the contents should not be inspected till after her death. Her friend and herself died the same year, 1824, and the executors of the former sent the packet to Mr. James Croft, whose relation, Sir Archer Croft, had married Theodora's youngest sister. He published from this collection a little volume of "Early Poems," in 1825.

The afflictions of Cowper "fell in showers." Next to Theodora he loved young William Russell, who had since their school days succeeded to his hereditary baronetage, and held a commission in the Guards. Suddenly, while bathing in the Thames, that poor young man was drowned.

Cowper's spirits sank under these repeated trials, and his cousin Lady Hesketh, who sometimes saw him, tried to cheer him by playful banter. He answered her in lines of such deep pathos that she never forgot them, but years afterwards, when they had been long lost, could remember, and write them out. Our readers will find them at page 15, under the heading of "Disappointment."

As we have said, Dr. Cowper left but a small provision for his sons; it was therefore a boon to Cowper when his family obtained for him the post of a Commissioner of Bankrupts, which gave him a yearly income of 60*l*. He now bought chambers in the Inner Temple, and renewed his Westminster associations by joining the "Nonsense Club," which consisted of old Westminsters. The president of it was Bonnell Thornton, Hill (who induced him to join it), Lloyd, and Colman. The latter and Thornton edited the *Connoisseur*, to which Cowper soon contributed.

The "Nonsense Club" met and dined together every Thursday, and doubtless the wit and kindly fellowship of his old friends were of infinite benefit to the melancholy young man. His taste for literature was awakened—a taste to which he owed much relief and consolation in his future years.

He contributed five articles (which are known) to the *Connoisseur*, amongst them is one on Conversation—the subject afterwards of one of his best poems. He produced also at this time several halfpenny ballads, two or three of which became popular, but they have been lost, to our great regret. He contributed to the *St. James's Chronicle*; joined his brother in translating two books of Voltaire's *Henriade*, said to have been

published in a magazine; and assisted the Duncombes in a translation of Horace.

But these literary occupations and social pleasures were about to terminate in an awful affliction. Pecuniary difficulties threatened the briefless barrister, and his near relative, Major Cowper, desirous of benefiting him, offered him two vacant offices to which he had the right of presentation—those of Reading Clerk and Clerk of Committees to the House of Lords. The office of Clerk of the Journals of the House of Lords was also vacant, and in Major Cowper's gift; but as it was less lucrative than the two former, he designed it for a friend, a Mr. Arnold, and offered the best to his cousin.

At first Cowper gladly and gratefully accepted the kindness, but almost the next minute repented. Wild fancies seized on him, that he had wished for the death of the former holder, and was therefore at heart a murderer, though he—Mr. De Grey—had resigned and was not dead; he had also a conviction that he could never speak or act in public. After a week's hesitation and mental struggles he begged Major Cowper to give the two lucrative offices to his friend Mr. Arnold, and the less lucrative, but more private one, of Clerk of the Journals, to himself. His cousin, with some hesitation, yielded to his wishes. But a new difficulty arose, a strong party in the House of Lords contested the right of Major Cowper to nominate. Inquiry and discussion followed, and the Clerk of the Journals-elect was informed that he must prepare for an examination at the bar of the House to test his qualifications for the office. "A thunderbolt," he remarks, "would have been as welcome to me as this intelligence."

He was now obliged to visit the office of the House of Lords to learn his future duties, and he tried for more than half a year to prepare for his examination; but in vain! In the autumn of 1763 a visit to Margate revived his sinking spirits for a time, but as soon as he returned to town his reason failed. Three times he attempted suicide; then, sending for Major Cowper, he told him what he had suffered, and returned him his deputation. His brother was sent for and came to him, but could not console or calm him; his cousin, Lady Hesketh, visited him, but he would neither look at nor speak to her. A visit from his cousin, Martin Madan, a strong Calvinistic preacher, served only to increase the agonies of his horror and despair. He wrote the terrible lines

"Hatred and vengeance, my eternal portion,"*

and his distressed friends at length judged it expedient to place him in a lunatic asylum, to which he was removed December, 1763. The asylum was at St. Albans, the proprietor was Dr. Nathaniel Cotton, a man of great professional skill, moral worth, and some literary talent, whose "Visions" were then popular poems.

Under the care of Dr. Cotton, Cowper slowly recovered his reason; but it was not possible (he felt) for him to fulfil any longer conscientiously his duties as a Commissioner of Bankrupts, so the office was resigned. He thus lost nearly all his income, but his family subscribed to make him an annual allowance.

* See page 27.

His brother was, as we have said, a Fellow of St. Benet's College, Cambridge, and to be near him was now Cowper's great desire. No place, nearer than Huntingdon could, however, be found suited to him. Thither he removed in 1765, attended by a faithful lad who had waited on and watched over him at St. Albans, and who having formed a strong attachment to the poor patient, besought Dr. Cotton to let him go with him. Huntingdon suited Cowper. "I do really think," he wrote, "it the most agreeable neighbourhood I ever saw." He attended the daily services at the church, bathed in the Ouse, walked, and began that correspondence with his friends which has given him a high place in literature, independent of that which he holds as a poet. For three months he lived happily at Huntingdon, then he wearied of solitude, and it was to be feared that he would have suffered from a renewal of his malady had he not happily made the acquaintance of the Unwins, the family of a clergyman who took pupils in Huntingdon. Mr. Unwin had formerly been master of the Huntingdon Grammar School, but had in 1742 received the college living of Grimstone. He then married Mary Cawthorne, a young, pretty, and clever woman, daughter of a draper at Ely. She, however, disliked Grimstone; and to please her Mr. Unwin returned to Huntingdon, where he took a large house in the High Street, and prepared pupils for Cambridge. The Unwins had two children, a son, who at the time Cowper met him, had just taken his A.B. degree at Cambridge, and a daughter of eighteen years of age. Cowper's constant attendance at the daily services in Huntingdon Church attracted the notice of young William Unwin, and one day, after morning prayers, perceiving the stranger taking a solitary walk under some trees, he approached and addressed him. Cowper returned the greeting kindly, and was persuaded by his new acquaintance to visit his family, with whom the poet was charmed. The acquaintance grew into an intimacy, and finally Cowper persuaded the Unwins to let him board with them. This arrangement was every way advantageous to him; he was absurdly ignorant of domestic economy and good management, and had spent his twelve months' whole income in one quarter. He was considerably in debt also to Dr. Cotton. The Cowper family generously came to his assistance, and without consulting him agreed to subscribe annually for his support, paying the money for his use into the hands of his kind and thoughtful friend, Hill. At the same time they remonstrated with him through his uncle Ashley on his imprudence in retaining the servant lad he had brought from St. Albans, and also a destitute child, the offspring of profligate parents, which he had adopted and put to school; Cowper refused to abandon his protégés, however, and was threatened with the withdrawal of part of his income. At this stage of the correspondence he received an anonymous letter, it is believed, from Theodora, telling him that the writer approved of his conduct, and promised that if any part of his income were withdrawn the defect should be supplied "by a person who loved him tenderly."

While the correspondence on this subject was going on, his new friends also manifested great generosity. Mrs. Unwin assured him that if the threatened reduction were made he should still share their home, and

enjoy the same accommodation for half the sum previously agreed on between them. Nothing, however, came of his friends' remonstrances; they did *not* withdraw their assistance, and Cowper spent a happy year and a half with his new friends. He has given the following details of his daily life during this period:—"We breakfast commonly between eight and nine; till eleven, we read either the Scriptures, or the sermons of some faithful preacher of those holy mysteries; at eleven, we attend divine service, which is performed here twice every day; and from twelve to three we separate, and amuse ourselves as we please. During that interval I either read in my own apartment, or walk or ride, or work in the garden. We seldom sit an hour after dinner, but, if the weather permits, adjourn to the garden, where, with Mrs. Unwin and her son, I have generally the pleasure of religious conversation till tea-time. If it rains, or is too windy for walking, we either converse within doors, or sing some hymns of Martin's collection, and by the help of Mrs. Unwin's harpsichord make up a tolerable concert, in which our hearts, I hope, are the best and most musical performers. After tea, we sally forth to walk in good earnest. Mrs. Unwin is a good walker, and we have generally travelled about four miles before we see home again. When the days are short we make this excursion in the former part of the day, between church-time and dinner. At night, we read and converse as before till supper, and commonly finish the evening either with hymns or a sermon, and last of all the family are called to prayers. I need not tell *you* that such a life as this is consistent with the utmost cheerfulness; accordingly we are all happy, and dwell together in unity as brethren."

During this period young Unwin left home to take a curacy, and his sister married the Rev. Matthew Powley, afterwards Vicar of Dewsbury. A more serious change was coming. On the 28th of June, 1767, Mr. Unwin was thrown from his horse, his skull was fractured, and he died four days afterwards.

Mr. Unwin had expressed a wish that if his wife survived him, Cowper might still dwell with her; therefore the two mourners resolved not to separate, and the Rev. John Newton (having just at that time been introduced to Mrs. Unwin by Dr. Conyers, of Helmsley) invited them to reside in his own parish, and offered to find a house for them. In consequence they removed to Olney on the 14th of September, 1767, but as their own house was not ready, Newton received them for a time as his guests at the Vicarage.

From this moment Cowper became the friend and assistant of the energetic curate, who devoted his life to his flock. Olney lies on the Ouse, in the north of Buckinghamshire. Owing to frequent overflowings of the river, the place was cold, damp, and aguish. The people were wretchedly poor, subsisting by lace-making and straw plaiting, and no educated person resided in the town except Mr. Newton, the curate. No place less favourable to poor Cowper's health of mind and body could have been found, but for a time all went well. Inspired by the enthusiasm of the ardent evangelical clergyman, he visited, read, and prayed with the sick, he attended prayer-meetings, and even himself

conducted the extempore prayer—a terrible effort for so shy a man. His exercise was also lost, for they had “sermon, or lecture, every evening which lasted till supper-time.” A great contrast to the peace and holy repose of the daily life whose details we gave on the last page.

This great religious excitement was followed by its inevitable reaction. Melancholy again seized on Cowper, as his desponding letters prove, and a real grief came to wound his affectionate heart in 1770, when he was called to attend the death-bed of his beloved brother John, who died at Cambridge.

In 1771, Cowper, at Mr. Newton’s suggestion, began the *Olney Hymns*, but before the composition had advanced far he became a second time insane.

“I was suddenly reduced,” he remarked, writing in 1786, “from my wonted rate of understanding to an almost childish imbecility. I did not lose my senses, but I lost the power to exercise them. I could return a rational answer even to a difficult question, but a question was necessary, or I never spoke at all. This state of mind was accompanied, as I suppose it to be in most instances of the kind, with misapprehension of things and persons, that made me a very intractable patient. I believed that everybody hated me, and that Mrs. Unwin hated me most of all; was convinced that all my food was poisoned, together with ten thousand megrims of the same stamp.”

This affliction was the more terrible because he was at that time about to be married to Mrs. Unwin.* This fact, long doubted, is now well known. It was naturally to be expected that such a result would follow the closeness of their intimacy, and the similarity of their tastes and opinions. Cowper’s madness took a most painful turn with regard to religion. The Calvinistic doctrine of the need of “assurance of salvation,” was a peculiarly painful and dangerous one for his mind. His first illness had been one full of despair of his own salvation; the same terrible impression now overwhelmed him.

He believed that God required him to sacrifice his own life, and several times attempted suicide. He refused to pray, or to attend Divine service, nor would he visit the rectory, till one day having been induced to go there, he refused to leave it, and besought Newton with tears of anguish to let him remain. The generous curate consented, though the expense of the poor lunatic’s living fell heavily on him; but Newton† was assisted in all his good works by one of the most liberal and benevolent

* *Vide* Mr. Bull’s memorials of Cowper, in “John Newton.”

† The Rev. John Newton had been a sailor—a wild, dissipated one—and had been flogged for desertion. He had suffered horribly on a slave plantation in Sierra Leone, and was shipwrecked on his return. This event completely changed him. He styled it his “Great Deliverance,” and from that time became an enthusiastic Calvinist; afterwards he commanded a slave-ship; then he became a tide-surveyor at Liverpool, where he became acquainted with Whitefield and Wesley, and in 1764 he entered the Church, being ordained to the curacy of Olney. The same year he became acquainted with Thornton, who continued his staunch, never-changing friend, perceiving how much good there was in him.

of men, Mr. Thornton, who had long allowed him 200*l.* a year to spend in Christian hospitality, and on his poor.

Newton treated his unhappy guest with great affection, and hailed with delight the first smile of the melancholy man.

Then he proposed that Cowper should return to his own home, and the patient eagerly consented.

During the whole period of his derangement Mrs. Unwin had manifested the most affectionate devotion to him. Her watchful care had preserved him from self-destruction, and day and night she had watched over him till he went to Newton's. Even then her tender care was continued for him, and on his return to her house she shared her small income with him, and did all that was possible to cheer and sustain him.

Gradually he grew better; occupied himself with gardening and carpentering, and amused himself with petting animals. He had, besides his three famous hares, five rabbits, two guinea-pigs, two dogs, a magpie, a jay, and other birds.

In September, 1779, Mr. Thornton presented Newton with the living of St. Mary Woolnoth, and the friends were separated; before Newton left he introduced Cowper to a Mr. Bull, an Independent preacher, who resided at Newport Pagnell, five miles from Olney.

And now by degrees Cowper resumed his correspondence and began occasionally to write short poems. About this time his cousin, Mr. Madan, chaplain of the Lock Hospital, published a treatise called "*Thelyphthora, or a Treatise on Marriage*," recommending polygamy! and asserting that it was sanctioned by God Himself in the Holy Scriptures. Cowper and Newton were both greatly shocked by this development of Mr. Madan's views, and the former wrote, in answer to it, his little known, and very inferior poem, *Antithelyphthora*, which *as his* is inserted in this edition, but is quite unworthy of a place with his generally charming poems. It was published anonymously, 1781, and he never included it in his works himself.

To Mrs. Unwin posterity is obliged for suggesting to him a worthier theme, and urging him to far superior endeavours. She suggested the "*Progress of Error*," a moral satire, and Cowper at once began, and continued it enthusiastically. Then he wrote "*Truth*," "*Table Talk*," and "*Expostulation*," all these poems being completed in three months. He requested Newton to find him a publisher, and Newton carried the MSS. to John Johnson, his own publisher, who accepted them, and took all the risk; but he suggested that the book would require to be *lighter*, and Cowper, at his request, wrote two more poems, "*Hope*," and "*Charity*." While the work was in the press he wrote "*Conversation*," and "*Retirement*." He requested Newton to write a preface, but the publisher refused to print it, as too serious in tone; it was, however, inserted in the fifth edition.

When the volume of poems had issued from the press, Cowper sent copies to his former old friends and schoolfellows, Lord Thurlow—now, as he had prophesied, Lord Chancellor—and Colman; but neither of them acknowledged the receipt of the gift, and some months after the poet,

very indignant at their unkind neglect, wrote the "Valediction." The book was not popular, and did not sell; it was destined to wait for its successor.

A new acquaintance came to brighten Cowper's life, and inspire his Muse in 1781. While he was correcting the press of his first volume of poems, he observed from his window two ladies shopping at Olney in the heat of a summer afternoon. With one of them he was slightly acquainted; she was a Mrs. Jones, the wife of a clergyman residing at Clifton Reynes, about a mile from Olney; but the lady who was with her was so distinguished-looking, that she immediately attracted Cowper's notice. He heard that she was sister to Mrs. Jones, and the widow of a baronet, and he requested that Mrs. Unwin would ask them in to tea. The hospitality was gladly accepted—the ladies came, and though, afterwards, the poet was shy and reluctant to go into the room where they were, he was no sooner introduced to Lady Austen, than he was captivated by her grace and wit, and from this period began an intimacy to which we owe "Johnny Gilpin" and the "Task."

One day, when Cowper was suffering from one of his fits of depression, his charming friend told him the story of "Johnny Gilpin," which actually kept him awake at night with convulsions of laughter, and which he the next morning turned into a ballad. It was sent to William Unwin, and printed soon after in the *Public Advertiser*. Three years afterwards Mr. Sharp saw it, and recommended it to Henderson, the actor, for "a reading." He perceived its capabilities—read it, and enchanted his audience, amongst whom was Mrs. Siddons.

Lady Austen then entreated Cowper to try his power at writing blank verse, and gave him for a subject the "Sofa" on which she was sitting. He accepted the suggestion, and began his great poem; but before it was finished his friendship with Lady Austen ended. Once before there had been coolness and estrangement, caused by some dissension between the ladies. Now the same cause led, it is believed, to this sad result for Cowper—for the friendship of this brilliant woman had been a source of mental health to him. That he sacrificed it to his gratitude to Mrs. Unwin for her former devotion we can have little doubt. We should have been glad if she had nobly forgotten self in this instance, and sought only the good of her friend. Hayley gives the following account of this circumstance:—

"Cowper perceived the painful necessity of sacrificing a great portion of his present gratifications. He felt that he must relinquish that ancient friend, whom he regarded as a venerable parent; or the new associate, whom he idolised as a sister, of a heart and mind peculiarly congenial to his own. His gratitude for past services of unexampled magnitude and weight would not allow him to hesitate; with a resolution and delicacy, that do the highest honour to his feelings, he wrote a farewell letter to Lady Austen, explaining and lamenting the circumstances that forced him to renounce the society of a friend, whose enchanting talents and kindness had proved so agreeably instrumental to the revival of his spirits, and to the exercise of his fancy.

"In those very interesting conferences with which I was honoured by Lady Austen, I was irresistibly led to express an anxious desire for the sight of a letter written by Cowper in a situation that must have called forth all the finest powers of his eloquence as a monitor and a friend. The lady confirmed me in my opinion, that a more admirable letter could not be written; and had it existed at that time, I am persuaded, from her noble frankness and zeal for the honour of the departed poet, she would have given me a copy; but she ingenuously confessed that in a moment of natural mortification, she burnt this very tender, yet resolute letter. I mention the circumstance, because a literary correspondent, whom I have great reason to esteem, has recently expressed to me a wish (which may perhaps be general) that I could introduce into this compilation the letter in question. Had it been confided to my care, I am persuaded I should have thought it very proper for publication, as it displayed both the tenderness and the magnanimity of Cowper; nor could I have deemed it a want of delicacy towards the memory of Lady Austen to exhibit a proof that, animated by the warmest admiration of the great poet, whose fancy she could so successfully call forth, she was willing to devote her life and fortune to his service and protection. The sentiment is to be regarded as honourable to the lady; it is still more honourable to the poet, that with such feelings as rendered him perfectly sensible of all Lady Austen's fascinating powers, he could return her tenderness with innocent gallantry, and yet resolutely preclude himself from her society, when he could no longer enjoy it without appearing deficient in gratitude towards the compassionate and generous guardian of his sequestered life." Lady Austen afterwards married a Frenchman, M. de Tardieu.

About the time of Cowper's separation from Lady Austen he made the acquaintance of the Throckmortons, a family residing at Weston Underwood, a village about two miles from Olney.

The "Task" was published by Johnson, who, in spite of the failure of the poet's first production, recognised and believed in his genius; but as it was again insufficient for a volume, the "Tirocinium," "John Gilpin," and an Epistle to his excellent friend Hill, were added. The new poems were published June, 1785, and the author was at once acknowledged as the first poet of the age. It was the already famous "John Gilpin" at first which attracted readers; then the excellence of the serious poems confirmed their admiration of the comic writer. The book rapidly passed into a second edition, and next year the two volumes were published together.

His success as a poet revived his relations with his family, who had been for some time estranged from him; and Cowper was in wild delight when at last he received a letter from Lady Hesketh—the first received for nineteen years! His friends—his old schoolfellows—all were won back by his genius; those who had shrunk from the (supposed) gloomy fanatic returned ardently to the Christian poet.

He rejoiced in this new sunshine of life, and frankly accepted their kindnesses and their renewed affection. He received at this period an anonymous letter, advising him not to overwork himself, and announcing the intention of sending him 50*l.* a year.

There is no doubt it came from his faithful cousin Theodora. He probably knew it did, as he told his cousin Harriet (Lady Hesketh) that he would not seek to penetrate the secret. He thus speaks of his relatives' kindness in a letter to Unwin, dated July 10, 1786:—

"Within this twelvemonth my income has received an addition of a clear 100*l.* per annum. For a considerable part of it I am indebted to my dear cousin (Lady Hesketh) now on the other side of the Orchard. At Florence she obtained me 20*l.* a year from Lord Cowper; since he came home she has recommended me with such good effect to his notice that he has added twenty more; twenty she has added herself, and ten she has procured me from the William of my name whom you saw at Hertingfordbury. From my anonymous friend who insists on not being known or guessed at, and never shall by me, I have an annuity of 50*l.* All these sums have accrued within this year, except the first, making together, as you perceive, an exact century of pounds annually poured into the replenished purse of your once poor poet of Olney."

He began now to find Olney dull, and urged by Lady Hesketh, left it and proceeded to a house at Weston-Underwood belonging to Mr. Throckmorton. A fortnight after they had entered their new residence a terrible grief once more broke in on the returning happiness of the poet. Poor William Unwin died of typhus fever. He had been the dearest of Cowper's friends, and the mother's loss called also on his sympathy. But Mrs. Unwin bore sorrow calmly, and Cowper was in a short time restored to composure, and laboured at his task of translating Homer, which he had begun twelve months before.

Another short attack of insanity in which he again attempted self-destruction occurred, but he recovered in about the space of eight months. After this illness he made a singular acknowledgment to Newton in one of his letters, that he had for *thirteen years doubted Newton's identity*, a fact which accounted for any apparent coolness to his former friend.

In January, 1790, a relative on his mother's side sought out the poet, and Cowper warmly welcomed his cousin John Johnson, to whom he was destined to owe the chief comfort of his last days. This young man, a Cambridge undergraduate, was the grandson of the Rev. Roger Donne, of Catfield, in Norfolk, Cowper's mother's brother.

On his return to his kindred in Norfolk, John Johnson was full of his love and admiration for Cowper; and on telling his aunt, Mrs. Bodham, that she was still affectionately remembered by her old playfellow and cousin, she wrote to the poet and sent him the picture of his mother, which inspired the beautiful elegy so universally popular.

Cowper had just previously gained a new friend in Mr. Rose; he also began a correspondence with a Mrs. King, and renewed his old acquaintance with Lord Thurlow. His translation of Homer was published in 1791. Johnson gave him 1000*l.* for it, the copyright remaining with Cowper. His publisher next invited him to undertake an edition of Milton, to match Boydell's Shakespeare. He was to translate Milton's Latin and Italian poems, and add notes. Fuseli was to illustrate the work. But this task proved very painful and distasteful to him.

In 1791 Mrs. Unwin was seized with paralysis, and the effect on Cowper of her illness, and lengthened recovery from it, was very sad. He began to fancy he heard voices speaking to him when he woke in the morning. Mrs. Unwin's intellect, weakened by her illness, succumbed to the same delusion, and a schoolmaster at Olney, Samuel Teedon, actually undertook to explain the meaning of the imagined sounds to Cowper. This man gained great influence over the unhappy poet, who paid him large sums of money at different times. From this period the life of Cowper became clouded and hopeless. Poor Mrs. Unwin, weak in mind and body, had grown fretful and very exacting. He had no companion now but this suffering, imbecile woman, and the equally mad or knavish schoolmaster, Lady Hesketh being at Bath for her health. When she returned she was so shocked and alarmed, that she wrote at once for Mr. Hayley (a friend whom Cowper had lately made in consequence of their being *both* employed—of course, by different publishers—on an edition of Milton), begging him to come at once to Olney. He complied. They induced the celebrated Dr. Willis to see Cowper, but he could do nothing for the now restless madman.

A pension of 300*l.* a year was granted to the poet by the king, but he was incapable of understanding his good fortune. Dr. Willis had suggested change of air and scene, and clinging to this last hope, Mr. Johnson succeeded in persuading him to go (with Mrs. Unwin) to North Tuddenham, then to Mundesley, on the coast, and finally to Dunham Lodge, near Swaffham. Here Mrs. Unwin died. Cowper was taken to see her. He uttered an exclamation of sorrow and left the room, but became quite calm directly afterwards, and suffered Johnson to resume the reading which had lately been their only means of pleasing him—that of Miss Burney's novels.

After the death of Mrs. Unwin, Cowper had glimpses of reason. In March, 1799, he continued his revision of his Homer, wrote the Latin poem, "*Montes Glaciales*," and a few days afterwards "*The Castaway*." He liked being read to, and would listen to his own poems, except to "*John Gilpin*," which he disliked.

An excellent woman, Miss Perowne, had in a degree taken Mrs. Unwin's former place beside him, and assisted the loving efforts of his kinsman to cheer and help him. But care and love were alike vain.

In the helpless gloom of melancholy madness his life closed. He died April 25, 1800.

"From that moment" (of his death), says his kinsman, "until the coffin was closed, the expression into which his countenance had settled was that of calmness and composure, mingled, as it were, with a holy surprise."

He had emphatically "entered into his rest," and was at peace. He was buried in Dereham Church, in St. Edmund's Chapel. Mrs. Unwin lies in the south aisle.



THE POETICAL WORKS
OF
WILLIAM COWPER.

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*Early Poems.*

VERSES WRITTEN AT BATH,

ON FINDING THE HEEL OF A SHOE, IN 1748.

FORTUNE! I thank thee: gentle goddess, thanks!  
Not that my Muse, though bashful, shall deny  
She would have thank'd thee rather, hadst thou cast  
A treasure in her way; for neither meed  
Of early breakfast, to dispel the fumes  
And bowel-raking pains of emptiness,  
Nor noontide feast, nor evening's cool repast,  
Hopes she from this, presumptuous—though perhaps  
The cobbler, leather-carving artist, might.  
Nathless she thanks thee, and accepts thy boon,  
Whatever; not as erst the fabled cock,  
Vain-glorious fool, unknowing what he found,  
Spurn'd the rich gem thou gavest him. Wherefore ah!  
Why not on me that favour (worthier sure!)  
Confer'dst thou, goddess? Thou art blind, thou sayest:  
Enough!—thy blindness shall excuse the deed.

Nor does my Muse no benefit exhale  
From this thy scant indulgence;—even here,  
Hints, worthy sage philosophy, are found,  
Illustrious hints to moralize my song.  
This ponderous Heel of perforated hide  
Compact, with pegs indented many a row,  
Haply, (for such its massy form bespeaks,)  
The weighty tread of some rude peasant clown  
Urbore: on this supported oft he stretch'd,  
With uncouth strides, along the furrow'd glebe,

## OF HIMSELF.

Flattening the stubborn clod, till cruel time  
 (What will not cruel time?) on awry step,  
 Sever'd the strict cohesion; when, alas!  
 He, who could erst with even equal pace,  
 Pursue his destined way with symmetry  
 And some proportion form'd, now, on one side,  
 Curtail'd and maim'd, the sport of vagrant boys,  
 Cursing his frail supporter, treacherous prop!  
 With toilsome steps, and difficult, moves on.  
 Thus fares it oft with other than the feet  
 Of humble villager:—the statesman thus,  
 Up the steep road where proud ambition leads,  
 Aspiring, first uninterrupted winds  
 His prosperous way; nor fears miscarriage foul,  
 While policy prevails and friends prove true:  
 But that support soon failing, by him left  
 On whom he most depended,—basely left,  
 Betray'd, deserted,—from his airy height  
 Headlong he falls, and through the rest of life  
 Drags the dull load of disappointment on.

## OF HIMSELF.

WILLIAM was once a bashful youth;  
 His modesty was such,  
 That one might say (to say the truth),  
 He rather had too much.

Some said that it was want of sense,  
 And others, want of spirit  
 (So blest a thing is impudence),  
 While others could not bear it.

But some a different notion had,  
 And at each other winking,  
 Observed that though he little said,  
 He paid it off with thinking.

Howe'er, it happened, by degrees,  
 He mended and grew perter;  
 In company was more at ease,  
 And dressed a little smarter;

Nay, now and then would look quite gay,  
 As other people do;  
 And sometimes said, or tried to say,  
 A witty thing or so.

He eyed the women, and made free  
To comment on their shapes;  
So that there was, or seemed to be  
No fear of a relapse.

The women said, who thought him rough,  
But now no longer foolish,  
"The creature may do well enough,  
"But wants a deal of polish."

At length, improved from head to heel,  
"Twere scarce too much to say,  
No dancing bear was so genteel,  
Or half so *dégagé*.

Now that a miracle so strange  
May not in vain be shown  
Let the dear maid\* who wrought the change  
E'en claim him for her own.

## POEMS TO DELIA.

Catfield,† July, 1752.

AN APOLOGY FOR NOT SHOWING HER WHAT I HAD WROTE.

DID not my Muse (what can she less?)  
Perceive her own unworthiness,  
Could she by some well-chosen theme,  
But hope to merit your esteem,  
She would not thus conceal her lays,  
Ambitious to deserve your praise.  
But should my Delia take offence,  
And frown on her impertinence,  
In silence, sorrowing and forlorn,  
Would the despairing trifler mourn,  
Curse her ill-tuned, unpleasing lute,  
Then sigh and sit for ever mute.  
In secret therefore let her play,  
Squandering her idle notes away,  
In secret as she chants along,  
Cheerful and careless in her song;

\* His cousin, Theodora Cowper.

† "Cutfield;" Ed. 1825, probably "Catfield," the parish in Norfolk of which Cowper's maternal uncle, the Rev. Roger Donne, was rector. The Delia of the Poet was his cousin, Theodora Jane Cowper, to whom he was much attached. His love was returned, but her father, Mr. Ashley Cowper, refused to consent to their union. "Delia" died unmarried in 1824.

# *APOLOGY TO DELIA.*

Nor heeds she whether harsh or clear,  
 Free from each terror, every fear,  
 From that, of all most dreaded, free,  
 The terror of offending thee.

## *APOLOGY TO DELIA,*

FOR DESIRING A LOCK OF HER HAIR.

DELIA, the unkindest girl on earth,  
 When I besought the fair,  
 That favour of intrinsic worth  
 A ringlet of her hair,

Refused that instant to comply  
 With my absurd request,  
 For reasons she could specify,  
 Some twenty score at least.

Trust me, my dear, however odd  
 It may appear to say,  
 I sought it merely to defraud  
 Thy spoiler of his prey.

Yes! when its sister locks shall fade,  
 As quickly fade they must,  
 When all their beauties are decayed,  
 Their gloss, their colour, lost—

Ah then! if haply to my share  
 Some slender pittance fall,  
 If I but gain one single hair,  
 Nor age usurp them all;—

When you behold it still as sleek,  
 As lovely to the view,  
 As when it left thy snowy neck,  
 That Eden where it grew,

Then shall my Delia's self declare  
 That I professed the truth,  
 And have preserved my little share  
 In everlasting youth.

At the same place.

## THE SYMPTOMS OF LOVE.

Would my Delia know if I love, let her take  
 My last thought at night, and the first when I wake;  
 When my prayers and best wishes preferr'd for her sake.

Let her guess what I muse on, when rambling alone  
 I stride o'er the stubble each day with my gun,  
 Never ready to shoot till the covey is flown.

Let her think what odd whimsies I have in my brain,  
 When I read one page over and over again,  
 And discover at last that I read it in vain.

Let her say why so fix'd and so steady my look,  
 Without ever regarding the person who spoke,  
 Still affecting to laugh, without hearing the joke.

Or why, when with pleasure her praises I hear,  
 (That sweetest of melody sure to my ear,)  
 I attend, and at once inattentive appear.

And lastly, when summon'd to drink to my flame,  
 Let her guess why I never once mention her name,  
 Though herself and the woman I love are the same.

---

 AN ATTEMPT AT THE MANNER OF WALLER.

DID not thy reason and thy sense,  
 With most persuasive eloquence,  
 Convince me that obedience due,  
 None may so justly claim as you,  
 By right of beauty you would be  
 Mistress o'er my heart and me.

Then fear not I should e'er rebel  
 My gentle love! I might as well  
 A froward peevishness put on,  
 And quarrel with the mid-day sun;  
 Or question who gave him a right  
 To be so fiery and so bright.

Nay, this were less absurd and vain  
 Than disobedience to thy reign;  
 His beams are often too severe;  
 But thou art mild, as thou art fair;  
 First from necessity we own your sway,  
 Then scorn our freedom, and by choice obey.

Drayton, March, 1753.

## WRITTEN IN A QUARREL.

(THE DELIVERY OF IT PREVENTED BY A RECONCILIATION.)

THINK, Delia, with what cruel haste  
 Our fleeting pleasures move,  
 Nor heedless thus in sorrow waste  
 The moments due to love;

Be wise, my fair, and gently treat  
 These few that are our friends;  
 Think thus abused, what sad regret  
 Their speedy flight attends!

Sure in those eyes I loved so well,  
 And wish'd so long to see,  
 Anger I thought could never dwell,  
 Or anger aim'd at me.

No bold offence of mine I knew  
 Should e'er provoke your hate;  
 And, early taught to think you true  
 Still hoped a gentler fate.

With kindness bless the present hour,  
 Or oh! we meet in vain!  
 What can we do in absence more  
 Than suffer and complain?

Fated to ills beyond redress,  
 We must endure our woe;  
 The days allow'd us to possess,  
 'Tis madness to forego.

## RECONCILIATION.

THIS evening, Delia, you and I  
 Have managed most delightfully,  
 For with a frown we parted;  
 Having contrived some trifle that  
 We both may be much troubled at,  
 And sadly disconcerted.

Yet well as each performed their part,  
 We might perceive it was but art;

And that we both intended  
To sacrifice a little ease ;  
For all such petty flaws as these  
Are made but to be mended.

You knew, dissembler ! all the while,  
How sweet it was to reconcile  
After this heavy pelt ;  
That we should gain by this allay  
When next we met, and laugh away  
The care we never felt.

Happy ! when we but seek to endure  
A little pain, then find a cure  
By double joy requited ;  
For friendship, like a severed bone,  
Improves and gains a stronger tone  
When aptly reunited.

At Cutfield.

---

APPEAL TO DELIA FOR FORGIVENESS.

SEE where the Thames, the purest stream  
That wavers to the noonday beam,  
Divides the vale below ;  
While like a vein of liquid ore  
His waves enrich the happy shore,  
Still shining as they flow.

Nor yet, my Delia, to the main  
Runs the sweet tide without a stain,  
Unsullied as it seems ;  
The Nymphs of many a sable flood  
Deform with streaks of oozy mud  
The bosom of the Thames.

Some idle rivulets, that feed  
And suckle every noisome weed,  
A sandy bottom boast ;  
For ever bright, for ever clear  
The trifling shallow rills appear  
In their own channel lost.

Thus fares it with the human soul,  
Where copious floods of passion roll,  
By genuine love supplied ;  
Fair in itself the current shows,  
But ah ! a thousand anxious woe  
Pollute the noble tide.



## TO DELIA.

These are emotions known to few;  
 For where at most a vapoury dew  
     Surrounds the tranquil heart,  
 Then as the triflers never prove  
 The glad excess of real love,  
     They never prove the smart.

Oh then, my life, at last relent!  
 Though cruel the reproach I sent,  
     My sorrow was unfeigned:  
 Your passion, had I loved you not,  
 You might have scorned, renounced, forgot,  
     And I had ne'er complained.

While you indulge a groundless fear,  
 The imaginary woes you bear,  
     Are real woes to me:  
 But thou art kind, and good thou art,  
 Nor wilt, by wronging thine own heart,  
     Unjustly punish me.

---

 TO DELIA.

HIS HAPPINESS DEPENDS ON DELIA'S FAVOUR, NOT ON THE  
 GIFTS OF FORTUNE.

How blessed the youth whom Fate ordains  
 A kind relief from all his pains,  
     In some admired fair;  
 Whose tenderest wishes find expressed  
 Their own resemblance in her breast,  
     Exactly copied there!

What good soe'er the gods dispense,  
 The enjoyment of its influence  
     Still on her love depends;  
 Her love the shield that guards his heart,  
 Or wards the blow, or blunts the dart,  
     That peevish Fortune sends.

Thus, Delia, while thy love endures,  
 The flame my happy breast secures  
     From Fortune's fickle power;  
 Change as she list, she may increase,  
 But not abate my happiness,  
     Confirm'd by thee before.

### DELIA'S ABSENCE.

9

Thus while I share her smiles with thee,  
Welcome, my love, shall ever be  
The favours she bestows;  
Yet not on those I found my bliss,  
But in the noble ecstasies.  
The faithful bosom knows.

And when she prunes her wings for flight,  
And flutters nimbly from my sight,  
Contented I resign  
Whate'er she gave; thy love alone  
I can securely call my own,  
Happy while that is mine.

---

### DELIA'S ABSENCE.

Bid adieu, my sad heart, bid adieu to thy peace!  
Thy pleasure is past, and thy sorrows increase;  
See the shadows of evening how far they extend,  
And a long night is coming, that never may end;  
For the sun is now set that enliven'd the scene,  
And an age must be past ere it rises again.

Already deprived of its splendour and heat,  
I feel thee more slowly, more heavily beat;  
Perhaps, overstrain'd with the quick pulse of pleasure,  
Thou art glad of this respite to beat at thy leisure;  
But the sigh of distress shall now weary thee more  
Than the flutter and tumult of passion before.

The heart of a lover is never at rest,  
With joy overwhelm'd, or with sorrow oppress'd:  
When Delia is near, all is ecstasy then,  
And I even forget I must lose her again:  
When absent, as wretched as happy before,  
Despairing I cry, "I shall see her no more!"

Berkhamstead.

---

### WRITTEN AFTER LEAVING HER AT NEW BURNS.

How quick the change from joy to woe!  
How chequered is our lot below!  
Seldom we view the prospect fair,  
Dark clouds of sorrow, pain, and care.

(Some pleasing intervals between,)  
 Scowl over more than half the scene.  
 Last night with Delia, gentle maid,  
 Far hence in happier fields I strayed,  
 While on her dear enchanting tongue  
 Soft sounds of grateful welcome hung,  
 For absence had withheld it long.  
 "Welcome, my long-lost love," she said,  
 "E'er since our adverse fates decreed  
 "That we must part, and I must mourn  
 "Till once more blessed by thy return,  
 "Love, on whose influence I relied  
 "For all the transports I enjoyed,  
 "Has played the cruel tyrant's part  
 "And turned tormentor to my heart.  
 "But let me hold thee to my breast,  
 "Dear partner of my joy and rest,  
 "And not a pain, and not a fear,  
 "Or anxious doubt shall enter there."  
 Happy, thought I, the favoured youth,  
 Blessed with such undissembled truth!  
 Five suns successive rose and set,  
 And saw no monarch in his state,  
 Wrapped in the blaze of majesty,  
 So free from every care as I.

Next day the scene was overcast;  
 Such day till then I never passed,  
 For on that day, relentless fate!  
 Delia and I must separate.  
 Yet ere we looked our last farewell,  
 From her dear lips this comfort fell:  
 "Fear not that time, where'er we rove,  
 "Or absence shall abate my love."  
 And can I doubt, my charming maid,  
 As unsincere what you have said?  
 Banished from thee to what I hate,  
 Dull neighbours and insipid chat,  
 No joy to cheer me, none in view,  
 But the dear hope of meeting you;  
 And that through passion's optic scene,  
 With ages interposed between;  
 Blessed with the kind support you give,  
 'Tis by your promised truth I live;  
 How deep my woes, how fierce my flame,  
 You best may tell, who feel the same.

At Berkhamstead.

ON HER ENDEAVOURING TO CONCEAL HER GRIEF  
AT PARTING.

Ah ! wherefore should my weeping maid suppress  
Those gentle signs of undissembled woe ?  
When from soft love proceeds the deep distress,  
Ah ! why forbid the willing tears to flow ?

Since for my sake each dear translucent drop  
Breaks forth, best witness of thy truth sincere,  
My lips should drink the precious mixture up,  
And, ere it falls, receive the trembling tear.

Trust me, these symptoms of thy faithful heart,  
In absence shall my dearest hope sustain ;  
Delia ! since such thy sorrow that we part,  
Such when we meet thy joy shall be again.

Hard is that heart, and unsubdued by love  
That feels no pain, nor ever heaves a sigh ;  
Such hearts the fiercest passions only prove,  
Or freeze in cold insensibility.

Oh ! then indulge thy grief, nor fear to tell,  
The gentle source from whence thy sorrows flow  
Nor think it weakness when we love to feel,  
Nor think it weakness what we feel to show.

DESPAIR AT HIS SEPARATION FROM DELIA.

HOPE, like the short-lived ray that gleams awhile  
Through wintry skies, upon the frozen waste,  
Cheers e'en the face of misery to a smile ;  
But soon the momentary pleasure's past.

How oft, my Delia, since our last farewell,  
(Years that have rolled since that distressful hour !)  
Grieved I have said, when most our hopes prevail,  
Our promised happiness is least secure.

Oft I have thought the scene of troubles closed,  
And hoped once more to gaze upon your charms ;  
As oft some dire mischance has interposed,  
And snatched the expected blessing from my arms.

The seaman thus, his shattered vessel lost,  
 Still vainly strives to shun the threatening death;  
 And while he thinks to gain the friendly coast,  
 And drops his feet, and feels the sands beneath,

Borne by the wave steep-sloping from the shore,  
 Back to the inclement deep, again he beats  
 The surge aside, and seems to tread secure;  
 And now the reflux wave his baffled toil defeats.

Had you, my love, forbade me to pursue  
 My fond attempt, disdainfully retired,  
 And with proud scorn compelled me to subdue  
 The ill-fated passion by yourself inspired;

Then haply to some distant spot removed,  
 Hopeless to gain, unwilling to molest  
 With fond entreaties whom I dearly loved,  
 Despair or absence had redeemed my rest.

But now, sole partner in my Delia's heart,  
 Yet doomed far off in exile to complain,  
 Eternal absence cannot ease my smart,  
 And hope subsists but to prolong my pain.

Oh then, kind Heaven, be this my latest breath!  
 Here end my life, or make it worth my care;  
 Absence from whom we love is worse than death,  
 And frustrate hope severer than despair.

---

R. S. S.

ALL-WORSHIPPED Gold! Thou mighty mystery!  
 Say by what name shall I address thee rather,  
 Our blessing, or our bane? Without thy aid,  
 The generous pangs of pity but distress  
 The human heart, that fain would feel the bliss  
 Of blessing others; and enslaved by thee,  
 Far from relieving woes which others feel,  
 Misers oppress themselves. Our blessing then,  
 With virtue when possessed; without, our bane!  
 If in my bosom unperceived there lurk  
 The deep-sown seeds of avarice or ambition,  
 Blame me, ye great ones, (for I scorn your censure)  
 But let the generous and the good commend me,  
 That to my Delia I direct them all,  
 The worthiest object of a virtuous love.  
 Oh! to some distant scene, a willing exile

From the wild uproar of this busy world,  
 Were it my fate with Delia to retire;  
 With her to wander through the sylvan shade,  
 Each morn, or o'er the moss imbrown'd turf,  
 Where, blessed as the prime parents of mankind  
 In their own Eden, we would envy none;  
 But, greatly pitying whom the world calls happy,  
 Gently spin out the silken thread of life;  
 While from her lips attentive I receive  
 The tenderest dictates of the purest flame,  
 And from her eyes (where soft complacence sits  
 Illumined with the radiant beams of sense,)  
 Tranquillity beyond a monarch's reach.  
 Forgive me, Heaven, this only avarice  
 My soul indulges; I confess the crime,  
 (If to esteem, to covet such perfection  
 Be criminal,) oh grant me, Delia! grant me wealth!  
 Wealth to alleviate, not increase my wants;  
 And grant me virtue, without which nor wealth  
 Nor Delia can avail to make me blessed.

---

WRITTEN IN A FIT OF ILLNESS.

R. S. S.

In these sad hours, a prey to ceaseless pain,  
 While feverish pulses leap in every vein,  
 When each faint breath the last short effort seems  
 Of life just parting from my feeble limbs;  
 How wild soe'er my wandering thoughts may be,  
 Still, gentle Delia, still they turn on thee!  
 At length if, slumbering to a short repose,  
 A sweet oblivion frees me from my woes,  
 Thy form appears, thy footsteps I pursue,  
 Through springy vales, and meadows washed in dew;  
 Thy arm supports me to the fountain's brink,  
 Where by some secret power forbid to drink,  
 Gasping with thirst, I view the tempting flood  
 That flies my touch, or thickens into mud;  
 Till thine own hand immersed the goblet dips,  
 And bears it streaming to my burning lips.  
 There borne aloft on Fancy's wing we fly,  
 Like souls embodied to their native sky;  
 Now every rock, each mountain, disappears;  
 And the round earth an even surface wears;  
 When lo! the force of some resistless weight  
 Bears me straight down from that pernicious height;

## TO DELIA.

Parting, in vain our struggling arms we close;  
 Abhorred forms, dire phantoms interpose;  
 With trembling voice on thy loved name I call;  
 And gulfs yawn ready to receive my fall.  
 From these fallacious visions of distress  
 I wake; nor are my real sorrows less.  
 Thy absence, Delia, heightens every ill,  
 And gives e'en trivial pains the power to kill.  
 Oh! wert thou near me; yet that wish forbear!  
 'Twere vain, my love,—'twere vain to wish me near;  
 Thy tender heart would heave with anguish too,  
 And by partaking, but increase my woe.  
 Alone I'll grieve, till gloomy sorrow past,  
 Health, like the cheerful day-spring, comes at last,—  
 Comes fraught with bliss to banish every pain,  
 Hope, joy, and peace, and Delia in her train!

## TO DELIA.

1755.

ME to whatever state the gods assign,  
 Believe, my love, whatever state be mine,  
 Ne'er shall my breast one anxious sorrow know,  
 Ne'er shall my heart confess a real woe;  
 If to thy share Heaven's choicest blessings fall,  
 As thou hast virtue to deserve them all;  
 Yet vain, alas! that idle hope would be  
 That builds on happiness remote from thee.  
 Oh! may thy charms, whate'er our fate decrees,  
 Please, as they must, but let them only please—  
 Not like the sun with equal influence shine,  
 Nor warm with transport any heart but mine.  
 Ye who from wealth the ill-grounded title boast  
 To claim whatever beauty charms you most;  
 Ye sons of fortune, who consult alone  
 Her parents' will, regardless of her own,  
 Know that a love like ours, a generous flame,  
 No wealth can purchase, and no power reclaim,  
 The soul's affection can be only given  
 Free, unextorted, as the grace of Heaven.

Is there whose faithful bosom can endure  
 Pangs fierce as mine, nor ever hope a cure?  
 Who sighs in absence of the dear-loved maid,  
 Nor summons once Indifference to his aid?

Who can, like me, the nice resentment prove,  
 The thousand soft disquietudes of love;  
 The trivial strifes that cause a real pain;  
 The real bliss when reconciled again?  
 Let him alone dispute the real prize,  
 And read his sentence in my Delia's eyes;  
 There shall he read all gentleness and truth,  
 But not himself, the dear distinguish'd youth;  
 Pity for him perhaps they may express—  
 Pity, that will but heighten his distress.  
 But, wretched rival! he must sigh to see  
 The sprightlier rays of love directed all to me.

And thou, dear Antidote of every pain  
 Which fortune can inflict, or love ordain,  
 Since early love has taught me to despise  
 What the world's worthless votaries only prize,  
 Believe, my love! no less the generous god  
 Rules in my breast, his ever blest abode;  
 There has he driven each gross desire away,  
 Directing every wish and every thought to thee!  
 Then can I ever leave my Delia's arms,  
 A slave, devoted to inferior charms?  
 Can e'er my soul her reason so disgrace?  
 For what blest minister of heavenly race  
 Would quit that Heaven to find a happier place?

---

 DISAPPOINTMENT.

[WRITTEN AFTER THE LAST MEETING BETWEEN COWPER AND HIS DELIA.]

DOOM'D, as I am, in solitude to waste  
 The present moments, and regret the past;  
 Deprived of every joy I valued most,  
 My friend torn from me,\* and my mistress lost,  
 Call not this gloom I wear, this anxious mien,  
 The dull effect of humour, or of spleen!  
 Still, still I mourn, with each returning day,  
 Him snatch'd by fate in early youth away;  
 And her—through tedious years of doubt and pain,  
 Fix'd in her choice, and faithful—but in vain!  
 Oh prone to pity, generous, and sincere,  
 Whose eye ne'er yet refused the wretch a tear;  
 Whose heart the real claim of friendship knows,  
 Nor thinks a lover's are but fancied woes;

---

\* Sir William Russell, accidentally drowned, 1757.



## UPON A VENERABLE RIVAL.

See me—ere yet my destined course half done,  
 Cast forth a wanderer on a world unknown!  
 See me neglected on the world's rude coast,  
 Each dear companion of my voyage lost!  
 Nor ask why clouds of sorrow shade my brow,  
 And ready tears wait only leave to flow!  
 Why all that soothes a heart from anguish free,  
 And that delights the happy—palls with me!

## UPON A VENERABLE RIVAL.

FULL thirty frosts since thou wert young  
 Have chill'd the wither'd grove,  
 Thou wretch! and hast thou lived so long,  
 Nor yet forgot to love!

Ye Sages! spite of your pretences  
 To wisdom, you must own  
 Your folly frequently commences  
 When you acknowledge none.

Not that I deem it weak to love,  
 Or folly to admire;  
 But ah! the pangs we lovers prove  
 Far other years require.

Unheeded on the youthful brow  
 The beams of Phœbus play;  
 But unsupported Age stoops low  
 Beneath the sultry ray.

For once, then, if untutor'd youth,  
 Youth unapproved by years,  
 May chance to deviate into truth,  
 When your experience errs;

For once attempt not to despise  
 What I esteem a rule:  
 Who early loves, though young, is wise,—  
 Who old, though grey, a fool.

## AN ODE ON READING "SIR CHARLES GRANDISON."

1753.\*

SAY, ye apostate and profane,  
 Wretches who blush not to disdain  
     Allegiance to your God,  
 Did e'er your idly-wasted love  
 Of virtue for her sake remove  
     And lift you from the crowd?

Would you the race of glory run,  
 Know, the devout, and they alone,  
     Are equal to the task:  
 The labours of the illustrious course  
 Far other than the unaided force  
     Of human vigour ask.

To arm against repeated ill  
 The patient heart, too brave to feel  
     The tortures of despair;  
 Nor safer yet high-crested Pride,  
 When wealth flows in with every tide  
     To gain admittance there.

To rescue from the tyrant's sword  
 The oppress'd;—unseen and unimplored,  
     To cheer the face of woe;  
 From lawless insult to defend  
 An orphan's right, a fallen friend,  
     And a forgiven foe;

These, these distinguish from the crowd,  
 And these alone, the great and good,  
     The guardians of mankind;  
 Whose bosoms with these virtues heave,  
 Oh, with what matchless speed, they leave  
     The multitude behind!

Then ask ye, from what cause on earth  
 Virtues like these derive their birth?  
     Derived from Heaven alone,  
 Full on that favour'd breast they shine,  
 Where faith and resignation join  
     To call the blessing down.

---

\* Published by Richardson, in 1753.

## ODE ON THE MARRIAGE OF A FRIEND.

Such is that heart ;—but while the Muse  
 Thy theme, O Richardson, pursues,  
 Her feebler spirits faint ;  
 She cannot reach, and would not wrong  
 That subject for an angel's song,  
 The hero, and the saint !

---

## IN A LETTER TO C. P., ESQ.

ILL WITH THE RHEUMATISM.

GRANT me the Muse, ye gods ! whose humble flight  
 Seeks not the mountain-top's pernicious height ;  
 Who can the tall Parnassian cliff forsake,  
 To visit of the still Lethean lake ;  
 Now her slow pinions brush the silent shore,  
 Now gently skim the unwrinkled waters o'er,  
 There dips her downy plumes, thence upward flies,  
 And sheds soft slumbers on her votary's eyes.

---

## IN A LETTER TO THE SAME.

IN IMITATION OF SHAKESPEARE.

Trust me, the meed of praise, dealt thriftily  
 From the nice scale of judgment, honours more  
 Than does the lavish and o'erbearing tide  
 Of profuse courtesy. Not all the gems  
 Of India's richest soil at random spread  
 O'er the gay vesture of some glittering dame,  
 Give such alluring vantage to the person,  
 As the scant lustre of a few, with choice  
 And comely guise of ornament disposed.

---

ODE, SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN ON THE  
MARRIAGE OF A FRIEND.

THOU magic lyre, whose fascinating sound  
 Seduced the savage monsters from their cave,  
 Drew rocks and trees, and forms uncouth around,  
 And bade wild Hebrus hush his listening wave ;  
 No more thy undulating warblings flow  
 O'er Thracian wilds of everlasting snow !

Awake to sweeter sounds, thou magic lyre,  
 And paint a lover's bliss—a lover's pain!  
 Far nobler triumphs now thy notes inspire,  
 For see, Eurydice attends thy strain;  
 Her smile, a prize beyond the conjurer's aim,  
 Superior to the cancelled breath of fame.

From her sweet brow to chase the gloom of care,  
 To check the tear that dims the beaming eye,  
 To bid her heart the rising sigh forbear,  
 And flush her orient cheek with brighter joy,  
 In that dear breast soft sympathy to move,  
 And touch the springs of rapture and of love.

Ah me! how long bewildered and astray,  
 Lost and benighted, did my footsteps rove,  
 Till sent by Heaven to cheer my pathless way,  
 A star arose—the radiant star of love.  
 The God propitious joined our willing hands,  
 And Hymen wreathed us in his rosy bands.

Yet not the beaming eye, or placid brow,  
 Or golden tresses, hid the subtle dart;  
 To charms superior far than those I bow,  
 And nobler worth enslaves my vanquished heart;  
 The beauty, elegance, and grace combined,  
 Which beam transcendent from that angel mind.

While vulgar passions, meteors of a day,  
 Expire before the chilling blasts of age,  
 Our holy flame with pure and steady ray,  
 Its gloom shall brighten, and its pangs assuage;  
 By Virtue (sacred vestal) fed, shall shine,  
 And warm our fainting souls with energy divine.

---

AN EPISTLE TO ROBERT LLOYD, ESQ.\*

1754.

'Tis not that I design to rob  
 Thee of thy birthright, gentle Bob,  
 For thou art born sole heir and single  
 Of dear Mat Prior's easy jingle;  
 Nor that I mean, while thus I knit  
 My threadbare sentiments together,  
 To shew my genius or my wit,

When God and you know, I have  
 neither;  
 Or such, as might be better shown  
 By letting poetry alone.  
 'Tis not with either of these views,  
 That I presume to address the Muse:  
 But to divert a fierce banditti,

---

\* Son of Dr. Pierson Lloyd, one of the Masters of Westminster School. Robert Lloyd edited the *Connoisseur* and *St. James's Magazines*.

(Sworn foes to everything that's witty.)

That, with a black infernal train,  
Make cruel inroads in my brain,  
And daily threaten to drive thence  
My little garrison of sense:  
The fierce banditti which I mean,  
Are gloomy thoughts led on by  
Spleen.

Then there's another reason yet,  
Which is, that I may fairly quit  
The debt which justly became due  
The moment when I heard from you:  
And you might grumble, crony mine,  
If paid in any other coin;  
Since twenty sheets of lead, God  
knows,

(I would say twenty sheets of prose,)  
Can ne'er be deem'd worth half so  
much

As one of gold, and yours was such.  
Thus the preliminaries settled,  
I fairly find myself pitch-kettled;\*  
And cannot see, though few see  
better,

How I shall hammer out a letter.

First, for a thought—since all  
agree—

A thought—I have it—let me see—  
'Tis gone again—plague on't! I  
thought

I had it—but I have it not.

D me Gurton thus, and Hodge  
her son,

That useful thing, her needle, gone,  
Rake well the cinders, sweep the floor,  
And sift the dust behind the door;  
While eager Hodge beholds the prize  
In old grimalkin's glaring eyes;  
And Gammer finds it on her knees  
In every shining straw she sees.

This simile were apt enough,  
But I've another, critic-proof.  
The virtuoso thus at noon,  
Broiling beneath a July sun,  
The gilded butterfly pursues

O'er hedge and ditch, through gaps  
and mews,

And after many a vain essay  
To captivate the tempting prey,  
Gives him at length the lucky pat,  
And has him safe beneath his hat;  
Then lifts it gently from the ground;  
But ah! 'tis lost as soon as found;  
Culprit his liberty regains;  
Flits out of sight and mocks his  
pains,

The sense was dark, 'twas therefore fit  
With simile to illustrate it;  
But as too much obscures the sight,  
As often as too little light,  
We have our similes cut short,  
For matters of more grave import.  
That Matthew's numbers run with  
ease

Each man of common sense agrees;  
All men of common sense allow,  
That Robert's lines are easy too;  
Where then the preference shall we  
place,

Or how do justice in this case?

Matthew (says Fame) with endless  
pains [strains,

Smoothed and refined the meanest  
Nor suffer'd one ill-chosen rhyme  
To escape him at the idlest time;  
And thus o'er all a lustre cast,  
That while the language lives shall  
last,

An't please your ladyship (quoth I,—  
For 'tis my business to reply;)   
Sure so much labour, so much toil,  
Bespeak at last a stubborn soil.  
Theirs be the laurel-wreath decreed,  
Who both write well and write full  
speed;

Who throw their Helicon about  
As freely as a conduit spout.  
Friend Robert, thus like *chienscavant*,  
Lets fall a poem *en passant*,  
Nor needs his genuine ore refine;  
'Tis ready polish'd from the mine.

\* A slang word for puzzled.

## THE CERTAINTY OF DEATH.

MORTALS! around your destined heads  
 Thick fly the shafts of Death,  
 And lo! the savage spoiler spreads  
 A thousand toils beneath.

In vain we trifle with our fate;  
 Try every art in vain;  
 At best we but prolong the date,  
 And lengthen out our pain.

Fondly we think all danger fled,  
 For Death is ever nigh;  
 Outstrips our unavailing speed,  
 Or meets us as we fly.

Thus the wreck'd mariner may strive  
 Some desert shore to gain,  
 Secure of life, if he survive  
 The fury of the main.

But there, to famine doom'd a prey  
 Finds the mistaken wretch  
 He but escaped the troubled sea,  
 To perish on the beach.

Since then in vain we strive to guard  
 Our frailty from the foe,  
 Lord, let me live not unprepared  
 To meet the fatal blow!

## A COMPARISON.

THE lapse of time and rivers is the same,  
 Both speed their journey with a restless stream;  
 The silent pace with which they steal away,  
 No wealth can bribe, no prayers persuaded to stay;  
 Alike irrevocable both when past,  
 And a wide ocean swallows both at last.  
 Though each resemble each in every part,  
 A difference strikes at length the musing heart;  
 Streams never flow in vain; where streams abound  
 How laughs the land with various plenty crowned!  
 But time, that should enrich the nobler mind,  
 Neglected, leaves a dreary waste behind.

## THE STREAM.

ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY.

SWEET stream, that winds through yonder glade,  
 Apt emblem of a virtuous maid !  
 Silent and chaste she steals along,  
 Far from the world's gay busy throng,  
 With gentle yet prevailing force,  
 Intent upon her destined course ;  
 Graceful and useful all she does,  
 Blessing and blessed where'er she goes ;  
 Pure-bosomed as that watery glass,  
 And heaven reflected in her face !

## A SONG.

THE sparkling eye, the mantling cheek,  
 The polished front, the snowy neck,  
 How seldom we behold in one !  
 Glossy locks, and brow serene,  
 Venus' smiles, Diana's mien,  
 All meet in you, and you alone.

Beauty, like other powers, maintains  
 Her empire, and by union reigns ;  
 Each single feature faintly warms :  
 But where at once we view displayed  
 Unblemished grace, the perfect maid  
 Our eyes, our ears, our heart alarms.

So when on earth the god of day  
 Obliquely sheds his tempered ray,  
 Through convex orbs the beams transmit,  
 The beams that gently warmed before,  
 Collected, gently warm no more,  
 But glow with more prevailing heat.

## SONG.

No more shall hapless Celia's ears  
 Be flattered with the cries  
 Of lovers drowned in floods of tears,  
 Or murdered by her eyes ;  
 No serenade to break her rest,  
 Nor songs her slumbers to molest,  
 With my fa, la, la.

The fragrant flowers that once would bloom  
 And flourish in her hair,  
 Since she no longer breathes perfume  
 Their odours to repair,  
 Must fade, alas! and wither now,  
 As placed on any common brow,  
 With my fa, la, la.

Her lip, so winning and so meek,  
 No longer has its charms;  
 As well she might by whistling seek  
 To lure us to her arms;  
 Affected once, 'tis real now,  
 As her forsaken gums may show,  
 With my fa, la, la.

The down that on her chin so smooth  
 So lovely once appeared,  
 That, too, has left her with her youth,  
 Or sprouts into a beard;  
 As fields, so green when newly sown,  
 With stubble stiff are overgrown,  
 With my fa, la, la.

Then, Celia, leave your apish tricks,  
 And change your girlish airs,  
 For ombre, snuff, and politics,  
 Those joys that suit your years;  
 No patches can lost youth recall,  
 Nor whitewash prop a tumbling wall,  
 With my fa, la, la.

---

A SONG.

On the green margin of the brook  
 Despairing Phyllida reclined,  
 Whilst every sigh and every look  
 Declared the anguish of her mind.

"Am I less lovely then? (she cries,  
 And in the waves her form surveyed;)  
 Oh yes, I see my languid eyes,  
 My faded cheek, my colour fled:  
 These eyes no more like lightning pierced,  
 These cheeks grew pale, when Damon first  
 His Phylida betrayed.



## ADDRESS TO MISS MACARTNEY.

"The rose he in his bosom wore,  
 How oft upon my breast was seen !  
 And when I kissed the drooping flower  
 'Behold,' he cried, 'it blooms again !'  
 The wreaths that bound my braided hair,  
 Himself next day was proud to wear  
 At church, or on the green."

While thus sad Phyllida lamented,  
 Chance brought unlucky Thyrsis on ;  
 Unwillingly the nymph consented,  
 But Damon first the cheat begun.  
 She wiped the fallen tears away,  
 Then sighed and blushed, as who should say,  
 "Ah ! Thyrsis, I am won."

## ADDRESS TO MISS MACARTNEY,

AFTERWARDS MRS. GREVILLE, ON READING HER "PRAYER FOR INDIFFERENCE."\*

1762.

AND dwells there in a female heart,  
 By bounteous Heaven design'd  
 The choicest raptures to impart,  
 To feel the most refined ;

Dwells there a wish in such a breast  
 Its nature to forego,  
 To smother in ignoble rest  
 At once both bliss and woe ?

Far be the thought, and far the  
 strain,  
 Which breathes the low desire,  
 How sweet soe'er the verse complain,  
 Though Phœbus string the lyre.

Come then, fair maid, (in nature wise,)  
 Who, knowing them, can tell  
 From generous sympathy what joys  
 The glowing bosom swell ;

In justice to the various powers  
 Of pleasing, which you share,  
 Join me, amid your silent hours,  
 To form the better prayer.

With lenient balm may Oberon hence  
 To fairy-land be driven,  
 With every herb that blunts the sense  
 Mankind received from Heaven.

"Oh, if my Sovereign Author please,  
 Far be it from my fate,  
 To live unblest in torpid ease,  
 And slumber on in state ;

"Each tender tie of life defied,  
 Whence social pleasures spring ;  
 Unmoved with all the world beside,  
 A solitary thing."

Some Alpinemountain wraptinsnow,  
 Thus braves the whirling blast,  
 Eternal winter doomed to know,  
 No genial spring to taste ;

In vain warm suns their influence  
 shed,  
 The zephyrs sport in vain,  
 He rears unchanged his barren head,  
 Whilst beauty decks the plain.

\* The prayer was addressed to Oberon, King of the Fairies.

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| <p>What though in scaly armour<br/>dress'd,<br/>Indifference may repel<br/>The shafts of woe, in such a breast<br/>No joy can ever dwell.</p> <p>'Tis woven in the world's great plan,<br/>And fix'd by Heaven's decree,<br/>That all the true delights of man<br/>Should spring from sympathy.</p> <p>'Tis nature bids, and whilst the laws<br/>Of nature we retain,<br/>Our self-approving bosom draws<br/>A pleasure from its pain.</p> <p>Thus grief itself has comforts dear,<br/>The sordid never know;<br/>And ecstasy attends the tear,<br/>When virtue bids it flow.</p> <p>For when it streams from that pure<br/>source,<br/>No bribes the heart can win,<br/>To check, or alter from its course<br/>The luxury within.</p> <p>Peace to the phlegm of sullen elves,<br/>Who, if from labour eased,<br/>Extend no care beyond themselves,<br/>Unpleasing and unpleased.</p> <p>Let no low thought suggest the<br/>prayer!<br/>Oh! grant, kind Heaven, to me,<br/>Long as I draw ethereal air,<br/>Sweet Sensibility!</p> <p>Where'er the heavenly nymph is<br/>seen,<br/>With lustre-beaming eye,<br/>A train, attendant on their queen,<br/>(Her rosy chorus) fly.</p> | <p>The jocund Loves in Hymen's band,<br/>With torches ever bright,<br/>And generous Friendship hand in<br/>hand,<br/>With Pity's watery sight.</p> <p>The gentler Virtues too are join'd<br/>In youth immortal warm,<br/>The soft relations which combined<br/>Give life her every charm.</p> <p>The Arts come smiling in the close,<br/>And lend celestial fire;<br/>The marble breathes, the canvass<br/>glows,<br/>The Muses sweep the lyre.</p> <p>"Still may my melting bosom<br/>cleave<br/>To sufferings not my own;<br/>And still the sigh responsive heave,<br/>Where'er is heard a groan.</p> <p>"So Pity shall take Virtue's part,<br/>Her natural ally,<br/>And fashioning my soften'd heart,<br/>Prepare it for the sky."</p> <p>This artless vow may Heaven rece<br/>And you, fond maid, approve;<br/>So may your guiding angel give<br/>Whate'er you wish or love.</p> <p>So may the rosy-finger'd hours<br/>Lead on the various year,<br/>And every joy, which now is yours,<br/>Extend a larger sphere.</p> <p>And suns to come, as round they<br/>wheel,<br/>Your golden moments bless,<br/>With all a tender heart can feel,<br/>Or lively fancy guess.</p> |
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## AN ODE.\*

## SECUNDUM ARTEM.

## I.

SHALL I begin with *Ah*, or *Oh*?  
 Be sad? *Oh*! yes. Be glad? *Ah*! no.  
 Light subjects suit not grave Pindaric ode,  
 Which walks in metre down the Strophic road.  
 But let the sober matron wear  
 Her own mechanic sober air:  
*Ah me*! ill suits, *alas*! the sprightly jig,  
 Long robes of ermine, or Sir Cloudesley's wig.  
 Come, placid Dulness, gently come,  
 And all my faculties benumb;  
 Let thought turn exile, while the vacant mind  
 To tricke words and pretty phrase confined,  
 Pumping for trim description's art,  
 To win the ear, neglects the heart.  
 So shall thy sister Taste's peculiar sons,  
 Lineal descendants from the Goths and Huns,  
 Struck with the true and grand sublime  
 Of *rhythm* converted into *rime*,  
 Court the quaint muse, and con her lessons o'er,  
 When sleep the sluggish waves by Granta's shore:  
 There shall each poet share and trim,  
 Stretch, cramp, or lop the verse's limb,  
 While rebel Wit beholds them with disdain,  
 And Fancy flies aloft, nor heeds their servile chain.

## II.

O Fancy, bright ærial maid!  
 Where have thy vagrant footsteps stray'd!  
 For, *ah*! I miss thee 'midst thy wonted haunt,  
 Since silent now the enthusiastic chaunt,  
 Which erst like frenzy roll'd along,  
 Driven by the impetuous tide of song;  
 Rushing secure where native genius bore,  
 Not cautious coasting by the shelving shore.  
 Hail to the sons of modern Rime,  
 Mechanic dealers in sublime,  
 Whose lady Muse full wantonly is drest,  
 In light expression quaint, and tinsel vest,  
 Where swelling epithets are laid  
 (Art's ineffectual parade)

---

\* Written in ridicule of the Pindarics of Mason.

As varnish on the cheek of harlot light;  
 The rest thin sown with profit or delight,  
 But ill compares with ancient song,  
 Where Genius pour'd its flood along;  
 Yet such is Art's presumptuous idle claim,  
 She marshals out the way to modern fame;  
 From Grecian fable's pompous lore  
 Description's studied, glittering store,  
 Smooth, soothing sounds, and sweet alternate rime,  
 Clinking, like change of bells, in tingle tangle chime.

III.

The lark shall soar in every Ode,  
 With flowers of light description strew'd;  
 And sweetly, warbling Philomel, shall flow  
 Thy soothing sadness in mechanic woe.  
 Trim epithets shall spread their gloss,  
 While every cell's o'ergrown with moss:  
 Here oaks shall rise in chains of ivy bound,  
 There smouldering stones o'erspread the rugged ground.  
 Here forests brown, and azure hills,  
 There babbling founts, and prattling rills;  
 Here some gay river floats in crisped streams,  
 While the bright sun now gilds his morning beams,  
 Or sinking on his Thetis' breast,  
 Drives in description down the west.  
 Oh let me boast, with pride becoming skill,  
 I crown the summit of Parnassus' hill:  
 While Taste and Genius shall dispense,  
 And sound shall triumph over sense;  
 O'er the gay mead with curious steps I'll stray,  
 And, like the bee, steal all the sweets away;  
 Extract its beauty, and its power,  
 From every new poetic flower,  
 And sweets collected may a wreath compose,  
 To bind the poet's brow, or please the critic's nose.

LINES WRITTEN DURING A PERIOD OF INSANITY.

HATRED and vengeance,—my eternal portion  
 Scarce can endure delay of execution,—  
 Wait with impatient readiness to seize my  
 Soul in a moment.

28 *LINES WRITTEN DURING A PERIOD OF INSANITY.*

Damn'd below Judas; more abhorr'd than he was,  
Who for a few pence sold his holy Master!  
Twice betray'd, Jesus me, the last delinquent,  
Deems the profanest.

Man disavows, and Deity disowns me,  
Hell might afford my miseries a shelter;  
Therefore, Hell keeps her ever-hungry mouths all  
Bolted against me.

Hard lot! encompassed with a thousand dangers;  
Weary, faint, trembling with a thousand terrors,  
I'm call'd, if vanquish'd! to receive a sentence  
Worse than Abiram's.

Him the vindictive rod of angry Justice  
Sent quick and howling to the centre headlong;  
I, fed with judgment, in a fleshy tomb, am  
Buried above ground.

---

*LINES WRITTEN DURING THE AUTHOR'S SECOND  
PERIOD OF INSANITY.*

1774.

HEU! quam remotus vescor ab omnibus  
Quibus fruebar sub lare patrio,  
Quam nescius jucunda quondam  
Arva, domum, socios, reliqui,  
Et præter omnes te mihi flebilem,  
Te chariorem luce vel artubus,  
Te vinculo nostram jugali  
Deserui tremulam sub ense.

Sed nec ferocem me genuit pater,  
Nec vagientem nutriti ubere  
Læna dumoso sub antro,  
Fata sed hoc voluere nostra.  
Et fluctuosum ceu mare volvitur,  
Dum commovebar mille timoribus,  
Coactus, in fauces Averni,  
Totus atro peri sub amne.

ON OBSERVING SOME NAMES OF LITTLE NOTE  
RECORDED IN THE BIOGRAPHIA BRITANNICA.\*

Oh, fond attempt to give a deathless lot  
To names ignoble, born to be forgot!  
In vain recorded in historic page,  
They court the notice of a future age :  
Those twinkling, tiny lustres of the land  
Drop one by one from Fame's neglecting hand ;  
Lethæan gulfs receive them as they fall,  
And dark oblivion soon absorbs them all.

So when a child, as playful children use,  
Has burnt to tinder a stale last year's news,  
The flame extinct, he views the roving fire—  
There goes my lady, and there goes the squire,  
There goes the parson—O illustrious spark !  
And there, scarce less illustrious, goes the clerk.

---

\* Written in 1780, and sent to the Rev. W. Unwin in a letter dated Sept. 3, in that year.



## Olney Hymns.

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### I. WALKING WITH GOD. *Gen. v. 24.*

OH! for a closer walk with God,  
A calm and heavenly frame;  
A light to shine upon the road  
That leads me to the Lamb!

Where is the blessedness I knew  
When first I saw the Lord?  
Where is the soul-refreshing view  
Of Jesus and his word?

What peaceful hours I once enjoyed!  
How sweet their memory still!  
But they have left an aching void,  
The world can never fill.

Return, O holy Dove, return!  
Sweet messenger of rest!  
I hate the sins that made thee mourn,  
And drove thee from my breast.

The dearest idol I have known,  
Whate'er that idol be,  
Help me to tear it from thy throne,  
And worship only thee.

So shall my walk be close with God,  
Calm and serene my frame;  
So purer light shall mark the road  
That leads me to the Lamb.

### II. JEHOVAH-JIREH. THE LORD WILL PROVIDE. *Gen. xxii. 14.*

THE saints should never be dismay'd,  
Nor sink in hopeless fear;  
For when they least expect His aid,  
The Saviour will appear.

This Abraham found: he raised the knife;  
God saw, and said, "Forbear!  
Yon ram shall yield his meaner life;  
Behold the victim there."

Once David seem'd Saul's certain prey,  
But hark! the foe's at hand;\*  
Saul turns his arms another way,  
To save the invaded land.

When Jonah sunk beneath the wave,  
He thought to rise no more;†  
But God prepared a fish to save,  
And bear him to the shore.

Blest proofs of power and grace divine,  
That meet us in His Word!  
May every deep-felt care of mine  
Be trusted with the Lord.

Wait for His seasonable aid,  
And though it tarry, wait:  
The promise may be long delay'd,  
But cannot come too late.

III. JEHOVAH-ROPHI. I AM THE LORD THAT HEALETH THEE.  
*Exod. xv. 26.*

HEAL us, Emmanuel! here we are,  
Waiting to feel Thy touch:  
Deep-wounded souls to Thee repair,  
And, Saviour, we are such.

Our faith is feeble, we confess,  
We faintly trust Thy word;  
But wilt Thou pity us the less?  
Be that far from Thee, Lord!

Remember him who once applied,  
With trembling, for relief;  
"Lord, I believe," with tears he cried,‡  
"Oh, help my unbelief!"

She too, who touch'd Thee in the press,  
And healing virtue stole,  
Was answer'd, "Daughter, go in peace,§  
Thy faith hath made thee whole."

Conceal'd amid the gathering throng,  
She would have shunn'd Thy view;  
And if her faith was firm and strong,  
Had strong misgivings too.

\* 1 Sam. xxiii. 27.  
‡ Mark ix. 24.

† Jonah i. 17.  
§ Mark v. 34.



## OLNEY HYMNS.

Like her, with hopes and fears we come,  
 To touch Thee, if we may;  
 Oh! send us not despairing home.  
 Send none unheal'd away!

IV. JEHOVAH-NISSI. THE LORD MY BANNE  
*Exod. xvii. 15.*

By whom was David taught  
 To aim the deadly blow,  
 When he Goliath fought,  
 And laid the Gittite low?  
 Nor sword nor spear the stripling took,  
 But chose a pebble from the brook.

'Twas Israel's God and King  
 Who sent him to the fight;  
 Who gave him strength to sling,  
 And skill to aim aright.  
 Ye feeble saints, your strength endures,  
 Because young David's God is yours.

Who order'd Gideon forth,  
 To storm the invaders' camp,  
 With arms of little worth,  
 A pitcher and a lamp?\*

The trumpets made his coming known  
 And all the host was overthrown.

Oh! I have seen the day,  
 When with a single word,  
 God helping me to say,  
 "My trust is in the Lord,"  
 My soul hath quell'd a thousand foes,  
 Fearless of all that could oppose.

But unbelief, self-will,  
 Self-righteousness, and pride,  
 How often do they steal  
 My weapon from my side!  
 Yet David's Lord, and Gideon's friend,  
 Will help his servant to the end.

V. JEHOVAH-SHALOM. THE LORD SEND PEACE.  
*Judges vi. 24.*

JESUS! whose blood so freely stream'd  
 To satisfy the law's demand;  
 By Thee from guilt and wrath redeem'd,  
 Before the Father's face I stand.

---

\* Judges vii. 16 and 20.

To reconcile offending man,  
Make Justice drop her angry rod;  
What creature could have form'd the plan,  
Or who fulfil it but a God?

No drop remains of all the curse,  
For wretches who deserved the whole;  
No arrows dipt in wrath to pierce  
The guilty, but returning soul.

Peace by such means so dearly bought,  
What rebel could have hoped to see?  
Peace, by his injured Sovereign wrought,  
His Sovereign fasten'd to a tree.

Now, Lord, Thy feeble worm prepare!  
For strife with earth and hell begins;  
Confirm and gird me for the war;  
They hate the soul that hates his sins.

Let them in horrid league agree!  
They may assault, they may distress;  
But cannot quench Thy love to me,  
Nor rob me of the Lord my peace.

VI. WISDOM. *Prov. viii. 22-31.*

"ERE God had built the mountains,  
Or raised the fruitful hills;  
Before he fill'd the fountains  
That feed the running rills;  
In me from everlasting,  
The wonderful I AM,  
Found pleasures never wasting,  
And WISDOM is my name.

"When, like a tent to dwell in,  
He spread the skies abroad,  
And swathed about the swelling  
Of Ocean's mighty flood;  
He wrought by weight and measure,  
And I was with Him then;  
Myself the Father's pleasure,  
And mine, the sons of men."

Thus Wisdom's words discover  
Thy glory and Thy grace,  
Thou everlasting lover  
Of our unworthy race!

## OLNEY HYMNS.

Thy gracious eye survey'd us  
 Ere stars were seen above ;  
 In wisdom thou hast made us,  
 And died for us in love.

And couldst Thou be delighted  
 With creatures such as we,  
 Who, when we saw Thee, slighted,  
 And nail'd Thee to a tree ?  
 Unfathomable wonder,  
 And mystery divine !  
 The voice that speaks in thunder,  
 Says, " Sinner, I am thine !"

## VII. VANITY OF THE WORLD.

God gives His mercies to be spent ;  
 Your hoard will do your soul no good ;  
 Gold is a blessing only lent,  
 Repaid by giving others food.  
 The world's esteem is but a bribe,  
 To buy their peace you sell your own ;  
 The slave of a vainglorious tribe,  
 Who hate you while they make you known.  
 The joy that vain amusements give,  
 Oh ! sad conclusion that it brings !  
 The honey of a crowded hive,  
 Defended by a thousand stings.  
 'Tis thus the world rewards the fools  
 That live upon her treacherous smiles :  
 She leads them blindfold by her rules,  
 And ruins all whom she beguiles.  
 God knows the thousands who go down  
 From pleasure into endless woe ;  
 And with a long despairing groan  
 Blaspheme their Maker as they go.  
 Oh fearful thought ! be timely wise ;  
 Delight but in a Saviour's charms,  
 And God shall take you to the skies,  
 Embraced in everlasting arms.

VIII. O LORD, I WILL PRAISE THEE. *Isaiah xii. 1.*

I will praise Thee every day,  
 Now Thine anger's turn'd away ;  
 Comfortable thoughts arise  
 From the bleeding sacrifice.

Here, in the fair gospel-field,  
Wells of free salvation yield  
Streams of life, a plenteous store,  
And my soul shall thirst no more.

Jesus is become at length  
My salvation and my strength;  
And His praises shall prolong,  
While I live, my pleasant song.

Praise ye, then, His glorious name,  
Publish His exalted fame!  
Still His worth your praise exceeds;  
Excellent are all His deeds.

Raise again the joyful sound,  
Let the nations roll it round!  
Zion, shout! for this is He;  
God the Saviour dwells in thee.

IX. THE CONTRITE HEART. *Isaiah lvii. 15.*

THE Lord will happiness divine  
On contrite hearts bestow;  
Then tell me, gracious God, is mine  
A contrite heart, or no?

I hear, but seem to hear in vain,  
Insensible as steel;  
If aught is felt, 'tis only pain,  
To find I cannot feel.

I sometimes think myself inclined  
To love Thee, if I could;  
But often feel another mind,  
Averse to all that's good.

My best desires are faint and few,  
I fain would strive for more;  
But when I cry, "My strength renew!"  
Seem weaker than before.

Thy saints are comforted, I know,  
And love Thy house of prayer;  
I therefore go where others go,  
But find no comfort there.

Oh make this heart rejoice or ache;  
Decide this doubt for me;  
And if it be not broken, break—  
And heal it, if it be

## OLNEY HYMNS.

X. THE FUTURE PEACE AND GLORY OF THE CHURCH  
*Isaiah lx. 15-20.*

HEAR what God the Lord hath spoken,  
 "O my people, faint and few,  
 Comfortless, afflicted, broken,  
 Fair abodes I build for you.  
 Thorns of heartfelt tribulation  
 Shall no more perplex your ways:  
 You shall name your walls, Salvation,  
 And your gates shall all be Praise.

"There, like streams that feed the garden,  
 Pleasures without end shall flow,  
 For the Lord, your faith rewarding,  
 All His bounty shall bestow;  
 Still in undisturb'd possession  
 Peace and righteousness shall reign;  
 Never shall you feel oppression,  
 Hear the voice of war again.

"Ye no more your suns descending,  
 Waning moons no more shall see;  
 But, your griefs for ever ending,  
 Find eternal noon in me:  
 God shall rise, and shining o'er ye,  
 Change to day the gloom of night;  
 He, the Lord, shall be your glory,  
 God your everlasting light."

XI. JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. *Jer. xxiii. 6.*

MY God, how perfect are thy ways!  
 But mine polluted are;  
 Sin twines itself about my praise,  
 And slides into my prayer.

When I would speak what Thou hast done  
 To save me from my sin,  
 I cannot make Thy mercies known,  
 But self-applause creeps in.

Divine desire, that holy flame  
 Thy grace creates in me;  
 Alas! impatience is its name,  
 When it returns to Thee.

This heart, a fountain of vile thoughts,  
 How does it overflow,  
 While self upon the surface floats,  
 Still bubbling from below.

Let others in the gaudy dress  
Of fancied merit shine;  
The Lord shall be my righteousness,  
The Lord for ever mine.

XII. EPHRAIM REPENTING. *Jer. xxxi. 18-20.*

My God, till I receive Thy stroke,  
How like a beast was I!  
So unaccustom'd to the yoke,  
So backward to comply.

With grief my just reproach I bear;  
Shame fills me at the thought,  
How frequent my rebellions were,  
What wickedness I wrought.

Thy merciful restraint I scorn'd,  
And left the pleasant road;  
Yet turn me, and I shall be turn'd;  
Thou art the Lord my God.

"Is Ephraim banish'd from my thoughts,  
Or vile in my esteem?  
No," saith the Lord, "with all his faults,  
I still remember him.

"Is he a dear and pleasant child?  
Yes, dear and pleasant still;  
Though sin his foolish heart beguiled,  
And he withstood my will.

"My sharp rebuke has laid him low,  
He seeks my face again;  
My pity kindles at his woe,  
He shall not seek in vain."

XIII. THE COVENANT. *Ezek. xxxvi. 25-28.*

THE Lord proclaims His grace abroad!  
"Behold, I change your hearts of stone;  
Each shall renounce his idol-god,  
And serve, henceforth, the Lord alone.

"My grace, a flowing stream, proceeds  
To wash your filthiness away;  
Ye shall abhor your former deeds,  
And learn my statutes to obey.

## OLNEY HYMNS.

" My truth the great design ensures,  
I give myself away to you ;  
You shall be mine, I will be yours,  
Your God unalterably true.

" Yet not unsought, or unimplored,  
The plenteous grace I shall confer ;\*  
No—your whole hearts shall seek the Lord,  
I'll put a praying spirit there.

" From the first breath of life divine  
Down to the last expiring hour,  
The gracious work shall all be mine,  
Begun and ended in my power."

XIV. JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH. *Ezek. xlviii. 35.*

As birds their infant brood protect,†  
And spread their wings to shelter them,  
Thus saith the Lord to His elect,  
" So will I guard Jerusalem."

And what then is Jerusalem,  
This darling object of His care ?  
Where is its worth in God's esteem ?  
Who built it ? who inhabits there ?

Jehovah founded it in blood,  
The blood of His incarnate Son ;  
There dwell the saints, once foes to God,  
The sinners whom He calls His own.

There, though besieged on every side,  
Yet much beloved and guarded well,  
From age to age they have defied  
The utmost force of earth and hell.

Let earth repent, and hell despair,  
This city has a sure defence ;  
Her name is call'd, " The Lord is there,"  
And who has power to drive Him thence ?

XV. PRAISE FOR THE FOUNTAIN OPENED. *Zech. xiii. 1.*

THERE is a fountain fill'd with blood,  
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins ;  
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,  
Lose all their guilty stains.

\* *Ezek. xxxvi. 37.*† *Isaiah xxxi. 5.*

The dying thief rejoiced to see  
That fountain in his day;  
And there have I, as vile as he,  
Wash'd all my sins away.

Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood  
Shall never lose its power,  
Till all the ransom'd church of God  
Be saved, to sin no more.

E'er since, by faith, I saw the stream  
Thy flowing wounds supply,  
Redeeming love has been my theme,  
And shall be till I die.

Then in a nobler, sweeter song,  
I'll sing Thy power to save;  
When this poor lisping stammering tongue  
Lies silent in the grave.

Lord, I believe Thou hast prepared  
(Unworthy though I be)  
For me a blood-bought free reward,  
A golden harp for me!

'Tis strung and tuned for endless years,  
And form'd by power divine,  
To sound in God the Father's ears  
No other name but Thine.

XVI. THE SOWER. *Matt. xiii. 3.*

YE sons of earth prepare the plough,  
Break up your fallow ground;  
The sower is gone forth to sow,  
And scatter blessings round.

The seed that finds a stony soil  
Shoots forth a hasty blade;  
But ill repays the sower's toil,  
Soon wither'd, scorch'd, and dead.

The thorny ground is sure to balk  
All hopes of harvest there;  
We find a tall and sickly stalk,  
But not the fruitful ear.

The beaten path and highway side,  
Receive the trust in vain;  
The watchful birds the spoil divide,  
And pick up all the grain.



## OLNEY HYMNS.

But where the Lord of grace and power  
Has bless'd the happy field,  
How plenteous is the golden store  
The deep-wrought furrows yield!

Father of mercies, we have need  
Of Thy preparing grace;  
Let the same Hand that gives the seed  
Provide a fruitful place!

XVII. THE HOUSE OF PRAYER. *Mark xi. 17.*

THY mansion is the Christian's heart,  
O Lord, Thy dwelling place secure!  
Bid the unruly throng depart,  
And leave the consecrated door.

Devoted as it is to Thee,  
A thievish swarm frequents the place;  
They steal away my joys from me,  
And rob my Saviour of His praise.

There, too, a sharp designing trade  
Sin, Satan, and the World maintain;  
Nor cease to press me, and persuade  
To part with ease, and purchase pain.

I know them, and I hate their din;  
And weary of the bustling crowd;  
But while their voice is heard within,  
I cannot serve Thee as I would.

Oh! for the joy Thy presence gives,  
What peace shall reign when Thou art there;  
Thy presence makes this den of thieves  
A calm delightful house of prayer.

And if Thou make Thy temple shine,  
Yet, self-abased, will I adore;  
The gold and silver are not mine;  
I give Thee what was Thine before.

XVIII. LOVEST THOU ME? *John xxi. 16.*

HARK, my soul! it is the Lord;  
'Tis thy Saviour, hear His word;  
Jesus speaks, and speaks to thee,  
"Say, poor sinner, lovest thou me?"

"I deliver'd thee when bound,  
And when bleeding, heal'd thy wound;  
Sought thee wandering, set thee right,  
Turn'd thy darkness into light.

"Can a woman's tender care  
Cease towards the child she bare?  
Yes, she may forgetful be,  
Yet will I remember thee.

"Mine is an unchanging love,  
Higher than the heights above,  
Deeper than the depths beneath,  
Free and faithful, strong as death.

"Thou shalt see my glory soon,  
When the work of grace is done;  
Partner of my throne shalt be;—  
Say, poor sinner, lovest thou me?"

Lord it is my chief complaint,  
That my love is weak and faint;  
Yet I love Thee and adore,—  
Oh! for grace to love Thee more!

XIX. CONTENTMENT. *Phil.* iv. 11.

FIERCE passions discompose the mind,  
As tempests vex the sea;  
But calm content and peace we find,  
When, Lord, we turn to Thee.

In vain by reason and by rule  
We try to bend the will;  
For none but in the Saviour's school  
Can learn the heavenly skill.

Since at His feet my soul has sate,  
His gracious words to hear,  
Contented with my present state,  
I cast on Him my care.

"Art thou a sinner, soul?" He said,  
"Then how canst thou complain?  
How light thy troubles here, if weigh'd  
With everlasting pain!

"If thou of murmuring wouldst be cured,  
Compare thy griefs with mine;  
Think what my love for thee endured,  
And thou wilt not repine.

"Tis I appoint thy daily lot,  
And I do all things well;  
Thou soon shalt leave this wretched spot,  
And rise with me to dwell.

"In life my grace shall strength supply,  
Proportion'd to thy day;  
At death thou [still] shalt find me nigh,  
To wipe thy tears away."

Thus I, who once my wretched days  
In vain repinings spent,  
Taught in my Saviour's school of grace,  
Have learnt to be content.

XX. OLD TESTAMENT GOSPEL. *Heb. iv. 2.*

ISRAEL in ancient days  
Not only had a view  
Of Sinai in a blaze,  
But learn'd the Gospel too;  
The types and figures were a glass,  
In which they saw a Saviour's face.

The paschal sacrifice  
And blood-besprinkled door,\*  
Seen with enlighten'd eyes,  
And once applied with power,  
Would teach the need of other blood,  
To reconcile an angry God.

The Lamb, the Dove, set forth  
His perfect innocence,†  
Whose blood of matchless worth  
Should be the soul's defence;  
For He who can for sin atone,  
Must have no failings of His own.

The scape-goat on his head‡  
The people's trespass bore,  
And to the desert led,  
Was to be seen no more:  
In him our Surety seem'd to say,  
"Behold, I bear your sins away."

\* Exod. xii. 13.

† Lev. xii. 6.

‡ Lev. xvi. 21.

Dipt in his fellow's blood,  
 The living bird went free ;  
 The type, well understood,  
 Express'd the sinner's plea ;  
 Described a guilty soul enlarged,  
 And by a Saviour's death discharged.

Jesus, I love to trace,  
 Throughout the sacred page,  
 The footsteps of Thy grace,  
 The same in every age !  
 Oh grant that I may faithful be  
 To clearer light vouchsafed to me !

XXI. SARDIS. *Rev. iii. 1-6.*

"WRITE to Sardis," saith the Lord,  
 "And write what He declares,  
 He whose Spirit, and whose word,  
 Upholds the seven stars :  
 All thy works and ways I search,  
 Find thy zeal and love decay'd ;  
 Thou art call'd a living church,  
 But thou art cold and dead.

"Watch, remember, seek, and strive,  
 Exert thy former pains ;  
 Let thy timely care revive,  
 And strengthen what remains ;  
 Cleanse thine heart, thy works amend,  
 Former times to mind recall,  
 Lest my sudden stroke descend,  
 And smite thee once for all.

"Yet I number now in thee  
 A few that are upright ;  
 These my Father's face shall see,  
 And walk with me in white.  
 When in judgment I appear,  
 They for mine shall be confess'd ;  
 Let my faithful servants hear,—  
 And woe be to the rest !"

## XXII. PRAYER FOR CHILDREN.

BESTOW, dear Lord, upon our youth,  
 The gift of saving grace ;  
 And let the seed of sacred truth  
 Fall in a fruitful place.

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\* Lev. xiv. 51-53.

## OLNEY HYMNS.

Grace is a plant, where'er it grows,  
Of pure and heavenly root;  
But fairest in the youngest shows,  
And yields the sweetest fruit.

Ye careless ones, O hear betimes  
The voice of sovereign love!  
Your youth is stain'd with many crimes,  
But mercy reigns above.

True, you are young, but there's a stone  
Within the youngest breast;  
Or half the crimes which you have done  
Would rob you of your rest.

For you the public prayer is made:  
Oh! join the public prayer!  
For you the secret tear is shed:  
Oh shed yourselves a tear!

We pray that you may early prove  
The Spirit's power to teach;  
You cannot be too young to love  
That Jesus whom we preach.

## XXIII. PLEADING FOR AND WITH YOUTH.

SIN has undone our wretched race;  
But Jesus has restored,  
And brought the sinner face to face  
With his forgiving Lord.

This we repeat from year to year,  
And press upon our youth;  
Lord, give them an attentive ear,  
Lord, save them by Thy truth!

Blessings upon the rising race!  
Make this a happy hour,  
According to Thy richest grace,  
And thine Almighty power.

We feel for your unhappy state,  
(May you regard it too,)  
And would a while ourselves forget  
To pour out prayer for you.

We see, though you perceive it not,  
The approaching awful doom;  
Oh tremble at the solemn thought,  
And flee the wrath to come!

Dear Saviour, let this new-born year  
Spread an alarm abroad ;  
And cry in every careless ear,  
“ Prepare to meet thy God ! ”

## XXIV. PRAYER FOR CHILDREN.

GRACIOUS Lord, our children see,  
By Thy mercy we are free ;  
But shall these, alas ! remain  
Subjects still of Satan's reign ?  
Israel's young ones, when of old  
Pharaoh threaten'd to withhold,\*  
Then Thy messenger said, “ No ;  
Let the children also go ! ”

When the angel of the Lord,  
Drawing forth his dreadful sword,  
Slew with an avenging hand,  
All the first-born of the land ; †  
Then Thy people's doors he pass'd,  
Where the bloody sign was placed :  
Hear us, now, upon our knees,  
Plead the blood of Christ for these !

Lord, we tremble, for we know  
How the fierce malicious foe,  
Wheeling round his watchful flight,  
Keeps them ever in his sight :  
Spread Thy pinions, King of kings !  
Hide them safe beneath Thy wings ;  
Lest the ravenous bird of prey  
Stoop and bear the brood away.

## XXV. JEHOVAH JESUS.

My song shall bless the Lord of all,  
My praise shall climb to His abode ;  
Thee, Saviour, by that name I call,  
The great Supreme, the mighty God.

Without beginning or decline,  
Object of faith and not of sense ;  
Eternal ages saw Him shine,  
He shines eternal ages hence.

---

Exod. x. 9.

† Exod. xii. 12.

## OLNEY HYMNS.

As much when in the manger laid,  
 Almighty Ruler of the sky,  
 As when the six days' work He made  
 Fill'd all the morning stars with joy.

Of all the crowns Jehovah bears,  
 Salvation is His dearest claim;  
 That gracious sound well pleased He hears,  
 And owns Emmanuel for His name.

A cheerful confidence I feel,  
 My well placed hopes with joy I see;  
 My bosom glows with heavenly zeal,  
 To worship Him who died for me.

As man, He pities my complaint,  
 His power and truth are all divine;  
 He will not fail, He cannot faint;  
 Salvation's sure, and must be mine.

## XXVI. ON OPENING A PLACE FOR SOCIAL PRAYER.

JESUS! where'er Thy people meet,  
 There they behold Thy mercy seat;  
 Where'er they seek Thee, Thou art found,  
 And every place is hallow'd ground.

For Thou, within no walls confined,  
 Inhabitest the humble mind;  
 Such ever bring Thee where they come,  
 And going, take Thee to their home.

Dear Shepherd of Thy chosen few!  
 Thy former mercies here renew;  
 Here to our waiting hearts proclaim  
 The sweetness of Thy saving name.

Here may we prove the power of prayer.  
 To strengthen faith, and sweeten care;  
 To teach our faint desires to rise,  
 And bring all Heaven before our eyes.

Behold, at Thy commanding word  
 We stretch the curtain and the cord;\*  
 Come Thou, and fill this wider space,  
 And bless us with a large increase.

---

\* Isaiah liv. 2.

Lord, we are few, but Thou art near:  
Nor short Thine arm, nor deaf Thine ear;  
Oh rend the heavens, come quickly down,  
And make a thousand hearts Thine own.

XXVII. WELCOME TO THE TABLE.

THIS is the feast of heavenly wine,  
And God invites to sup;  
The juices of the living Vine  
Were press'd to fill the cup.

Oh! bless the Saviour, ye that eat,  
With royal dainties fed;  
Not heaven affords a costlier treat,  
For Jesus is the bread.

The vile, the lost, He calls to them;  
Ye trembling souls, appear!  
The righteous in their own esteem  
Have no acceptance here.

Approach, ye poor, nor dare refuse  
The banquet spread for you;  
Dear Saviour, this is welcome news,  
Then I may venture too.

If guilt and sin afford a plea,  
And may obtain a place,  
Surely the Lord will welcome me,  
And I shall see his face.

XXVIII. JESUS HASTING TO SUFFER.

THE Saviour, what a noble flame  
Was kindled in His breast,  
When hasting to Jerusalem,  
He march'd before the rest.

Good will to men, and zeal for God,  
His every thought engross;  
He longs to be baptized with blood,\*  
He pants to reach the cross!

With all His suffering full in view,  
And woes to us unknown,  
Forth to the task His spirit flew  
T'was love that urged Him on.

---

\* Luke xii. 50.



## OLNEY HYMNS.

Lord, we return Thee what we can :  
 Our hearts shall sound abroad,  
 Salvation to the dying Man,  
 And to the rising God !

And while Thy bleeding glories here  
 Engage our wondering eyes,  
 We learn our lighter cross to bear,  
 And hasten to the skies.

## XXIX. EXHORTATION TO PRAYER.

WHAT various hindrances we meet  
 In coming to a mercy seat !  
 Yet who that knows the worth of prayer,  
 But wishes to be often there ?

Prayer makes the darken'd cloud withdraw  
 Prayer climbs the ladder Jacob saw,  
 Gives exercise to faith and love,  
 Brings every blessing from above.

Restraining prayer, we cease to fight ;  
 Prayer makes the Christian's armour bright ;  
 And Satan trembles when he sees  
 The weakest saint upon his knees.

While Moses stood with arms spread wide,  
 Success was found on Israel's side ;  
 But when through weariness they fail'd,  
 That moment Amalek prevail'd.\*

Have you no words ? Ah, think again,  
 Words flow apace when you complain,  
 And fill your fellow-creature's ear  
 With the sad tale of all your care.

Were half the breath thus vainly spent  
 To heaven in supplication sent,  
 Your cheerful song would oftener be  
 "Hear what the Lord has done for me."

## XXX. THE LIGHT AND GLORY OF THE WORD.

THE Spirit breathes upon the word,  
 And brings the truth to sight ;  
 Precepts and promises afford  
 A sanctifying light.

---

\* Exodus xvii. 11, 12.

A glory gilds the sacred page,  
Majestic like the sun;  
It gives a light to every age,  
It gives, but borrows none.

The hand that gave it still supplies  
The gracious light and heat;  
His truths upon the nations rise,  
They rise, but never set.

Let everlasting thanks be thine,  
For such a bright display,  
As makes a world of darkness shine  
With beams of heavenly day.

My soul rejoices to pursue  
The steps of Him I love,  
Till glory break upon my view  
In brighter worlds above.

XXXI. ON THE DEATH OF A MINISTER.

His master taken from his head,  
Elisha saw him go;  
And in desponding accents said,  
"Ah, what must Israel do?"

But he forgot the Lord who lifts  
The beggar to the throne;  
Nor knew that all Elijah's gifts  
Would soon be made his own.

What! when a Paul has run his course,  
Or when Apollos dies,  
Is Israel left without resource,  
And have we no supplies?

Yes, while the dear Redeemer lives,  
We have a boundless store,  
And shall be fed with what He gives,  
Who lives for evermore.

XXXII. THE SHINING LIGHT.

My former hopes are fled,  
My terror now begins;  
I feel, alas! that I am dead  
In trespasses and sins.

## OLNEY HYMNS.

Ah, whither shall I fly?  
 I hear the thunder roar;  
 The Law proclaims Destruction nigh,  
 And Vengeance at the door.

When I review my ways,  
 I dread impending doom:  
 But sure a friendly whisper says,  
 "Flee from the wrath to come."

I see, or think I see,  
 A glimmering from afar;  
 A beam of day, that shines for me,  
 To save me from despair.

Forerunner of the sun,\*  
 It marks the pilgrim's way;  
 I'll gaze upon it while I run,  
 And watch the rising day.

## XXXIII. THE WAITING SOUL.

BREATHE from the gentle south, O Lord,  
 And cheer me from the north;  
 Blow on the treasures of thy word,  
 And call the spices forth!

I wish, Thou knowest, to be resign'd,  
 And wait with patient hope;  
 But hope delay'd fatigues the mind,  
 And drinks the spirits up.

Help me to reach the distant goal;  
 Confirm my feeble knee;  
 Pity the sickness of a soul  
 That faints for love of Thee!

Cold as I feel this heart of mine,  
 Yet, since I feel it so,  
 It yields some hope of life divine  
 Within, however low.

I seem forsaken and alone,  
 I hear the lion roar;  
 And every door is shut but one,  
 And that is Mercy's door.

There, till the dear Deliverer come,  
 I'll wait with humble prayer;  
 And when He calls His exile home,  
 The Lord shall find him there.

---

\* Psalm cxxx. 6.

XXXIV. SEEKING THE BELOVED.

To those who love the Lord I speak;  
Is my Beloved near?  
The Bridegroom of my soul I seek,  
Oh! when will He appear?

Though once a man of grief and shame,  
Yet now He fills a throne,  
And bears the greatest, sweetest name,  
That earth or heaven have known.

Grace flies before, and love attends  
His steps where'er he goes;  
Though none can see Him but His friends,  
And they were once his foes

He speaks;—obedient to His call  
Our warm affections move:  
Did He but shine alike on all,  
Then all alike would love.

Then love in every heart would reign,  
And war would cease to roar;  
And cruel and bloodthirsty men  
Would thirst for blood no more.

Such Jesus is, and such His grace;  
Oh, may He shine on you!  
And tell him, when you see His face,  
I long to see Him too.\*

XXXV. WELCOME CROSS.

'Tis my happiness below  
Not to live without the cross,  
But the Saviour's power to know,  
Sanctifying every loss:  
Trials must and will befall;  
But with humble faith to see  
Love inscribed upon them all,  
This is happiness to me.

God in Israel sows the seeds  
Of affliction, pain, and toil;  
These spring up and choke the weeds  
Which would else o'erspread the soil:

---

\* Cant. v. 8.

## OLNEY HYMNS.

Trials make the promise sweet,  
Trials give new life to prayer;  
Trials bring me to His feet,  
Lay me low, and keep me there.

Did I meet no trials here,  
No chastisement by the way,  
Might I not with reason fear  
I should prove a castaway?  
Bastards may escape the rod,\*  
Sunk in earthly vain delight;  
But the true-born child of God  
Must not—would not, if he might.

## XXXVI. AFFLICTIONS SANCTIFIED BY THE WORD.

Oh how I love Thy holy Word,  
Thy gracious covenant, O Lord!  
It guides me in the peaceful way;  
I think upon it all the day.

What are the mines of shining wealth,  
The strength of youth, the bloom of health!  
What are all joys compared with those  
Thine everlasting Word bestows!

Long unafflicted, undismay'd,  
In pleasure's path secure I stray'd;  
Thou mad'st me feel thy chast'ning rod,†  
And straight I turned unto my God.

What though it pierced my fainting heart,  
I bless'd Thine hand that caused the smart:  
It taught my tears awhile to flow,  
But saved me from eternal woe.

Oh! hadst Thou left me unchastised,  
Thy precepts I had still despised;  
And still the snare in secret laid  
Had my unwary feet betray'd.

I love Thee, therefore, O my God,  
And breathe towards Thy dear abode;  
Where, in Thy presence fully blest,  
Thy chosen saints for ever rest.

\* Hebrews xii. 8.

† Psalm cxix. 71.

## XXXVII. TEMPTATION.

THE billows swell, the winds are high,  
Clouds overcast my wintry sky ;  
Out of the depths to Thee I call,—  
My fears are great, my strength is small.

O Lord, the pilot's part perform,  
And guard and guide me through the storm ;  
Defend me from each threatening ill,  
Control the waves,—say, " Peace ! be still."

Amidst the roaring of the sea  
My soul still hangs her hope on Thee ;  
Thy constant love, thy faithful care,  
Is all that saves me from despair.

Dangers of every shape and name  
Attend the followers of the Lamb,  
Who leave the world's deceitful shore,  
And leave it to return no more.

Though tempest-toss'd and half a wreck,  
My Saviour through the floods I seek ;  
Let neither winds nor stormy main  
Force back my shatter'd bark again.

## XXXVIII. LOOKING UPWARDS IN A STORM.

God of my life, to Thee I call,  
Afflicted at Thy feet I fall ;  
When the great water-floods prevail,\*  
Leave not my trembling heart to fail !

Friend of the friendless and the faint,  
Where should I lodge my deep complaint,  
Where but with Thee, whose open door  
Invites the helpless and the poor !

Did ever mourner plead with Thee,  
And Thou refuse that mourner's plea ?  
Does not the word still fix'd remain,  
That none shall seek Thy face in vain ?

That were a grief I could not bear,  
Didst Thou not hear and answer prayer :  
But a prayer-hearing, answering God  
Supports me under every load.

---

\* Psalm lxi. 15.

## OLNEY HYMNS.

Fair is the lot that's cast for me;  
 I have an Advocate with Thee;  
 They whom the world caresses most  
 Have no such privilege to boast.

Poor though I am, despised, forgot,\*  
 Yet God, my God, forgets me not:  
 And he is safe, and must succeed,  
 For whom the Lord vouchsafes to plead.

## XXXIX. THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH.

My soul is sad, and much dismay'd;  
 See, Lord, what legions of my foes,  
 With fierce Apollyon at their head,  
 My heavenly pilgrimage oppose

See, from the ever-burning lake,  
 How like a smoky cloud they rise!  
 With horrid blasts my soul they shake,  
 With storms of blasphemies and lies.

Their fiery arrows reach the mark,†  
 My throbbing heart with anguish tear;  
 Each lights upon a kindred spark,  
 And finds abundant fuel there.

I hate the thought that wrongs the Lord;  
 Oh! I would drive it from my breast,  
 With Thy own sharp two-edged sword,  
 Far as the east is from the west.

Come, then, and chase the cruel host,  
 Heal the deep wounds I have received!  
 Nor let the power of darkness boast,  
 That I am foil'd, and Thou art grieved!

## XL. PEACE AFTER A STORM.

WHEN darkness long has veil'd my mind,  
 And smiling day once more appears,  
 Then, my Redeemer, then I find  
 The folly of my doubts and fears.

Straight I upbraid my wandering heart,  
 And blush that I should ever be  
 Thus prone to act so base a part,  
 Or harbour one hard thought of Thee!

\* Psalm xl. 17.

† Eph. vi. 16.

Oh! let me then at length be taught  
What I am still so slow to learn,  
That God is love, and changes not,  
Nor knows the shadow of a turn.

Sweet truth, and easy to repeat!  
But when my faith is sharply tried,  
I find myself a learner yet,  
Unskilful, weak, and apt to slide.

But, O my Lord, one look from Thee  
Subdues the disobedient will,  
Drives doubt and discontent away,  
And Thy rebellious worm is still.

Thou art as ready to forgive  
As I am ready to repine;  
Thou, therefore, all the praise receive;  
Be shame and self-abhorrence mine.

#### XLI. MOURNING AND LONGING.

THE Saviour hides His face;  
My spirit thirsts to prove  
Renew'd supplies of pardoning grace,  
And never-fading love.

The favour'd souls who know  
What glories shine in Him,  
Pant for His presence as the roe  
Pants for the living stream.

What trifles tease me now!  
They swarm like summer flies;  
They cleave to everything I do,  
And swim before my eyes.

How dull the Sabbath day,  
Without the Sabbath's Lord!  
How toilsome then to sing and pray,  
And wait upon the Word!

Of all the truths I hear,  
How few delight my taste!  
I glean a berry here and there,  
But mourn the vintage past.

Yet let me (as I ought)  
Still hope to be supplied;  
No pleasure else is worth a thought,  
Nor shall I be denied.



## OLNEY HYMNS.

Though I am but a worm,  
Unworthy of His care,  
The Lord will my desire perform,  
And grant me all my prayer.

## XLII. SELF-ACQUAINTANCE.

DEAR Lord! accept a sinful heart,  
Which of itself complains,  
And mourns, with much and frequent smart,  
The evil it contains.

There fiery seeds of anger lurk,  
Which often hurt my frame;  
And wait but for the tempter's work,  
To fan them to a flame.

Legality holds out a bribe  
To purchase life from Thee;  
And Discontent would fain prescribe  
How Thou shalt deal with me.

While Unbelief withstands Thy grace,  
And puts the mercy by;  
Presumption, with a brow of brass,  
Says, "Give me, or I die!"

How eager are my thoughts to roam,  
In quest of what they love!  
But ah! when duty calls them home,  
How heavily they move!

Oh, cleanse me in a Saviour's blood,  
Transform me by Thy power,  
And make me Thy beloved abode,  
And let me roam no more.

## XLIII. PRAYER FOR PATIENCE.

LORD, who hast suffer'd all for me,  
My peace and pardon to procure,  
The lighter cross I bear for Thee,  
Help me with patience to endure.

The storm of loud repining hush;  
I would in humble silence mourn;  
Why should the unburnt, though burning bush,  
Be angry as the crackling thorn?



Man should not faint at Thy rebuke,  
Like Joshua falling on his face,\*  
When the cursed thing that Achan took  
Brought Israel into just disgrace.

Perhaps some golden wedge suppress'd,  
Some secret sin offends my God ;  
Perhaps that Babylonish vest,  
Self-righteousness, provokes the rod.

Ah ! were I buffeted all day,  
Mock'd, crown'd with thorns, and spit upon,  
I yet should have no right to say,  
My great distress is mine alone.

Let me not angrily declare  
No pain was ever sharp like mine,  
Nor murmur at the cross I bear,  
But rather weep, remembering Thine.

## XLIV. SUBMISSION.

O LORD, my best desire fulfil,  
And help me to resign  
Life, health, and comfort to Thy will,  
And make Thy pleasure mine.

Why should I shrink at Thy command,  
Whose love forbids my fears ?  
Or tremble at the gracious hand  
That wipes away my tears ?

No, rather let me freely yield  
What most I prize to Thee ;  
Who never hast a good withheld,  
Or wilt withhold, from me.

Thy favour, all my journey through,  
Thou art engaged to grant ;  
What else I want, or think I do,  
'Tis better still to want.

Wisdom and mercy guide my way,  
Shall I resist them both ?  
A poor blind creature of a day,  
And crush'd before the moth !

---

\* Joshua vii. 10, 11.

## OLNEY HYMNS.

But ah ! my inward spirit cries,  
 Still bind me to Thy sway ;  
 Else the next cloud that veils the skies  
 Drives all these thoughts away.

## XLV. THE HAPPY CHANGE.

How bless'd Thy creature is, O God,  
 When with a single eye,  
 He views the lustre of Thy Word,  
 The dayspring from on high !  
 Through all the storms that veil the skies  
 And frown on earthly things,  
 The Sun of Righteousness he eyes,  
 With healing on His wings.  
 Struck by that light, the human heart,  
 A barren soil no more,  
 Sends the sweet smell of grace abroad,  
 Where serpents lurk'd before.\*  
 The soul, a dreary province once  
 Of Satan's dark domain,  
 Feels a new empire form'd within,  
 And owns a heavenly reign.  
 The glorious orb whose golden beams  
 The fruitful year control,  
 Since first obedient to Thy Word,  
 He started from the goal,  
 Has cheer'd the nations with the joys  
 His orient rays impart ;  
 But, Jesus, 'tis Thy light alone  
 Can shine upon the heart.

## XLVI. RETIREMENT.

FAR from the world, O Lord, I flee,  
 From strife and tumult far ;  
 From scenes where Satan wages still  
 His most successful war.  
 The calm retreat, the silent shade,  
 With prayer and praise agree ;  
 And seem, by Thy sweet bounty made,  
 For those who follow Thee.  
 There if Thy Spirit touch the soul,  
 And grace her mean abode,  
 Oh, with what peace, and joy, and love,  
 She communes with her God !

---

\* Isaiah xxxv. 7.

There like the nightingale she pours  
 Her solitary lays;  
 Nor asks a witness of her song,  
 Nor thirsts for human praise.  
 Author and Guardian of my life,  
 Sweet source of light Divine,  
 And,—all harmonious names in one,—  
 My Saviour! Thou art mine!  
 What thanks I owe Thee, and what love,  
 A boundless, endless store,  
 Shall echo through the realms above,  
 When time shall be no more.

## XLVII. THE HIDDEN LIFE.

To tell the Saviour all my wants,  
 How pleasing is the task!  
 Nor less to praise Him when He grants  
 Beyond what I can ask.  
 My labouring spirit vainly seeks  
 To tell but half the joy,  
 With how much tenderness He speaks,  
 And helps me to reply.  
 Nor were it wise, nor should I choose,  
 Such secrets to declare;  
 Like precious wines their taste they lose,  
 Exposed to open air.  
 But this with boldness I proclaim,  
 Nor care if thousands hear,  
 Sweet is the ointment of His name,  
 Not life is half so dear.  
 And can you frown, my former friends,  
 Who knew what once I was,  
 And blame the song that thus commends  
 The Man who bore the cross?  
 Trust me, I draw the likeness true,  
 And not as fancy paints;  
 Such honour may He give to you,  
 For such have all His saints.

## XLVIII. JOY AND PEACE IN BELIEVING.

SOMETIMES a light surprises  
 The Christian while he sings;  
 It is the Lord who rises  
 With healing on His wings:

## OLNEY HYMNS.

When comforts are declining,  
 He grants the soul again  
 A season of clear shining,  
 To cheer it after rain.

In holy contemplation  
 We sweetly then pursue  
 The theme of God's salvation,  
 And find it ever new ;  
 Set free from present sorrow,  
 We cheerfully can say,  
 E'en let the unknown to-morrow \*  
 Bring with it what it may !

It can bring with it nothing,  
 But He will bear us through ;  
 Who gives the lilies clothing,  
 Will clothe His people too ;  
 Beneath the spreading heavens  
 No creature but is fed ;  
 And He who feeds the ravens  
 Will give His children bread.

Though vine nor fig tree neither †  
 Their wonted fruit shall bear,  
 Though all the field should wither,  
 Nor flocks nor herds be there :  
 Yet God the same abiding,  
 His praise shall tune my voice ;  
 For, while in Him confiding,  
 I cannot but rejoice.

## XLIX. TRUE PLEASURES.

LORD, my soul with pleasure springs  
 When Jesu's name I hear ;  
 And when God the Spirit brings  
 The word of promise near :  
 Beauties too, in holiness,  
 Still delighted I perceive ;  
 Nor have words that can express  
 The joys Thy precepts give.

Clothed in sanctity and grace,  
 How sweet it is to see  
 Those who love Thee as they pass,  
 Or when they wait on Thee.

\* Matthew vi. 34.

† Habakkuk iii. 17, 18.



Pleasant too to sit and tell  
What we owe to love Divine;  
Till our bosoms grateful swell,  
And eyes begin to shine.

Those the comforts I possess,  
Which God shall still increase,  
All His ways are pleasantness,\*  
And all His paths are peace.  
Nothing Jesus did or spoke,  
Henceforth let me ever slight;  
For I love His easy yoke,†  
And find His burden light.

## L. THE CHRISTIAN.

HONOUR and happiness unite  
To make the Christian's name a praise;  
How fair the scene, how clear the light,  
That fills the remnant of His days!

A kingly character He bears,  
No change His priestly office knows;  
Unfading is the crown He wears,  
His joys can never reach a close.

Adorn'd with glory from on high,  
Salvation shines upon His face;  
His robe is of the ethereal dye,  
His steps are dignity and grace.

Inferior honours He disdains,  
Nor stoops to take applause from earth;  
The King of kings Himself maintains  
The expenses of His heavenly birth.

The noblest creature seen below,  
Ordain'd to fill a throne above;  
God gives him all He can bestow,  
His kingdom of eternal love!

My soul is ravish'd at the thought!  
Methinks from earth I see Him rise!  
Angels congratulate His lot,  
And shout Him welcome to the skies!

\* Prov. iii. 17.

† Matt. xi. 30.

## OLNEY HYMNS.

## LI. LIVELY HOPE AND GRACIOUS FEAR.

I was a grovelling creature once,  
And basely cleaved to earth;  
I wanted spirit to renounce  
The clod that gave me birth.

But God hath breathed upon a worm,  
And sent me from above  
Wings such as clothe an angel's form,  
The wings of joy and love.

With these to Pisgah's top I fly  
And there delighted stand,  
To view, beneath a shining sky,  
The spacious promised land.

The Lord of all the vast domain  
Has promised it to me,  
The length and breadth of all the plain  
As far as faith can see.

How glorious is my privilege!  
To Thee for help I call;  
I stand upon a mountain's edge,  
Oh save me, lest I fall!

Though much exalted in the Lord,  
My strength is not my own;  
Then let me tremble at His word,  
And none shall cast me down.

## LII. FOR THE POOR

WHEN Hagar found the bottle spent  
And wept o'er Ishmael,  
A message from the Lord was sent  
To guide her to a well.\*

Should not Elijah's cake and cruset†  
Convince us at this day,  
A gracious God will not refuse  
Provisions by the way?

His saints and servants shall be fed,  
The promise is secure;  
"Bread shall be given them," as He said,  
"Their water shall be sure."‡

\* Genesis xxi. 19.

† 1 Kings xvii. 14.

‡ Isaiah xxxiii. 16.

Repasts far richer they shall prove,  
 Than all earth's dainties are;  
 'Tis sweet to taste a Saviour's love,  
 Though in the meanest fare.

To Jesus then your trouble bring,  
 Nor murmur at your lot;  
 While you are poor and He is King,  
 You shall not be forgot.

LIII. MY SOUL THIRSTETH FOR GOD.

I THIRST, but not as once I did,  
 The vain delights of earth to share;  
 Thy wounds, Emmanuel, all forbid  
 That I should seek my pleasures there.

It was the sight of Thy dear cross  
 First wean'd my soul from earthly things;  
 And taught me to esteem as dross  
 The mirth of fools and pomp of kings.

I want that grace that springs from Thee,  
 That quickens all things where it flows,  
 And makes a wretched thorn like me  
 Bloom as the myrtle, or the rose.

Dear fountain of delight unknown!  
 No longer sink below the brim;  
 But overflow, and pour me down  
 A living and life-giving stream!

For sure of all the plants that share  
 The notice of thy Father's eye,  
 None proves less grateful to His care,  
 Or yields him meaner fruit than I.

LIV. LOVE CONSTRAINED TO OBEDIENCE.

No strength of nature can suffice  
 To serve the Lord aright:  
 And what she has she misapplies,  
 For want of clearer light.

How long beneath the law I lay  
 In bondage and distress;  
 I toil'd the precept to obey,  
 But toil'd without success.

Then, to abstain from outward sin  
 Was more than I could do;  
 Now, if I feel its power within,  
 I feel I hate it too.



## OLNEY HYMNS.

Then all my servile works were done  
 A righteousness to raise;  
 Now, freely chosen in the Son,  
 I freely choose His ways.  
 "What shall I do," was then the word,  
 "That I may worthier grow?"  
 "What shall I render to the Lord?"  
 Is my inquiry now.  
 To see the law by Christ fulfill'd  
 And hear His pardoning voice,  
 Changes a slave into a child,\*  
 And duty into choice.

## LV. THE HEART HEALED AND CHANGED BY MERCY.

SIN enslaved me many years,  
 And led me bound and blind;  
 Till at length a thousand fears  
 Came swarming o'er my mind.  
 "Where," said I, in deep distress,  
 "Will these sinful pleasures end?"  
 How shall I secure my peace,  
 And make the Lord my friend?"  
 Friends and ministers said much  
 The gospel to enforce;  
 But my blindness still was such,  
 I chose a legal course:  
 Much I fasted, watch'd, and strove,  
 Scarce would shew my face abroad,  
 Fear'd almost to speak or move,  
 A stranger still to God.  
 Thus afraid to trust His grace,  
 Long time did I rebel;  
 Till despairing of my case,  
 Down at His feet I fell:  
 Then my stubborn heart He broke,  
 And subdued me to His sway;  
 By a simple word He spoke,  
 "Thy sins are done away."

## LVI. HATRED OF SIN.

HOLY Lord God! I love Thy truth,  
 Nor dare Thy least commandment slight;  
 Yet pierced by sin, the serpent's tooth,  
 I mourn the anguish of the bite.

---

\* Romans viii. 14.

But though the poison lurks within,  
 Hope bids me still with patience wait;  
 Till death shall set me free from sin,  
 Free from the only thing I hate.

Had I a throne above the rest,  
 Where angels and archangels dwell,  
 One sin, unslain, within my breast,  
 Would make that heaven as dark as hell.

The prisoner sent to breathe fresh air,  
 And blest with liberty again,  
 Would mourn were he condemn'd to wear  
 One link of all his former chain.

But, oh! no foe invades the bliss,  
 When glory crowns the Christian's head;  
 One view of Jesus as He is  
 Will strike all sin for ever dead.

LVII. THE NEW CONVERT.

THE new-born child of gospel grace,  
 Like some fair tree when summer's nigh,  
 Beneath Emmanuel's shining face  
 Lifts up his blooming branch on high.

No fears he feels, he sees no foes,  
 No conflict yet his faith employs,  
 Nor has he learnt to whom he owes  
 The strength and peace his soul enjoys.

But sin soon darts its cruel sting,  
 And comforts sinking day by day,  
 What seem'd his own, a self-fed spring,  
 Proves but a brook that glides away.

When Gideon arm'd his numerous host,  
 The Lord soon made his numbers less;  
 And said, "Lest Israel vainly boast,\*  
 My arm procured me this success!"

Thus will He bring our spirits down,  
 And draw our ebbing comforts low,  
 That saved by grace, but not our own,  
 We may not claim the praise we owe.

\* Judges vii. 2.

## OLNEY HYMNS.

## LVIII. TRUE AND FALSE COMFORTS.

O GOD, whose favourable eye,  
The sin-sick soul revives,  
Holy and heavenly is the joy  
Thy shining presence gives.

Not such as hypocrites suppose,  
Who with a graceless heart  
Taste not of Thee, but drink a dose,  
Prepared by Satan's art.

Intoxicating joys are theirs,  
Who while they boast their light,  
And seem to soar above the stars,  
Are plunging into night.

Lull'd in a soft and fatal sleep,  
They sin and yet rejoice;  
Were they indeed the Saviour's sheep,  
Would they not hear his voice?

Be mine the comforts that reclaim  
The soul from Satan's power;  
That make me blush for what I am,  
And hate my sin the more.

'Tis joy enough, my All in All,  
At Thy dear feet to lie;  
Thou wilt not let me lower fall,  
And none can higher fly.

## LIX. A LIVING AND A DEAD FAITH.

THE Lord receives his highest praise  
From humble minds and hearts sincere;  
While all the loud professor says  
Offends the righteous Judge's ear.

To walk as children of the day,  
To mark the precepts' holy light,  
To wage the warfare, watch, and pray,  
Show who are pleasing in His sight.

Not words alone it cost the Lord,  
To purchase pardon for His own;  
Nor will a soul by grace restored  
Return the Saviour words alone.

With golden bells, the priestly vest,  
And rich pomegranates border'd round,\*  
The need of holiness express'd,  
And call'd for fruit as well as sound.

---

\* Exodus xxviii. 33.

Easy indeed it were to reach  
A mansion in the courts above,  
If swelling words and fluent speech  
Might serve instead of faith and love.

But none shall gain the blissful place,  
Or God's unclouded glory see,  
Who talks of free and sovereign grace,  
Unless that grace has made him free!

LX. ABUSE OF THE GOSPEL.

Too many, Lord, abuse Thy grace  
In this licentious day,  
And while they boast they see Thy face,  
They turn their own away.

Thy book displays a gracious light  
That can the blind restore;  
But these are dazzled by the sight,  
And blinded still the more.

The pardon such presume upon,  
They do not beg but steal;  
And when they plead it at Thy throne,  
Oh! where's the Spirit's seal?

Was it for this, ye lawless tribe,  
The dear Redeemer bled?  
Is this the grace the saints imbibe  
From Christ the living head?

Ah, Lord, we know Thy chosen few  
Are fed with heavenly fare;  
But these,—the wretched husks they chew,  
Proclaim them what they are.

The liberty our hearts implore  
Is not to live in sin;  
But still to wait at Wisdom's door,  
Till Mercy calls us in.

LXI. THE NARROW WAY.

What thousands never knew the road!  
What thousands hate it when 'tis known!  
None but the chosen tribes of God  
Will seek or choose it for their own.

A thousand ways in ruin end,  
One only leads to joys on high;  
By that my willing steps ascend,  
Pleased with a journey to the sky.

## OLNEY HYMNS.

No more I ask or hope to find  
 Delight or happiness below ;  
 Sorrow may well possess the mind  
 That feeds where thorns and thistles grow.

The joy that fades is not for me,  
 I seek immortal joys above ;  
 There glory without end shall be  
 The bright reward of faith and love.

Cleave to the world, ye sordid worms,  
 Contented lick your native dust !  
 But God shall fight with all his storms,  
 Against the idol of your trust.

## LXII. DEPENDENCE.

To keep the lamp alive,  
 With oil we fill the bowl ;  
 'Tis water makes the willow thrive,  
 And grace that feeds the soul.

The Lord's unsparing hand  
 Supplies the living stream ;  
 It is not at our own command,  
 But still derived from Him.

Beware of Peter's word,\*  
 Nor confidently say,  
 "I never will deny Thee, Lord,"—  
 But,—“Grant I never may.”

Man's wisdom is to seek  
 His strength in God alone ;  
 And e'en an angel would be weak,  
 Who trusted in his own.

Retreat beneath His wings,  
 And in His grace confide !  
 This more exalts the King of kings,†  
 Than all your works beside.

In Jesus is our store,  
 Grace issues from His throne ;  
 Whoever says, “I want no more,”  
 Confesses he has none.

---

\* Matthew xxvi. 33.

† John vi. 29.

LXIII. NOT OF WORKS.

GRACE, triumphant in the throne,  
Scorns a rival, reigns alone;  
Come and bow beneath her sway!  
Cast your idol works away!  
Works of man, when made his plea,  
Never shall accepted be;  
Fruits of pride (vain-glorious worm!)  
Are the best he can perform.

Self, the god his soul adores,  
Influences all his powers;  
Jesus is a slighted name,  
Self-advancement all his aim:  
But when God the Judge shall come,  
To pronounce the final doom,  
Then for rocks and hills to hide  
All his works and all his pride!

Still the boasting heart replies,  
What the worthy and the wise,  
Friends to temperance and peace,  
Have not these a righteousness?  
Banish every vain pretence  
Built on human excellence;  
Perish every thing in man,  
But the grace that never can.

LXIV. PRAISE FOR FAITH.

Of all the gifts Thine hand bestows,  
Thou Giver of all good!  
Not heaven itself a richer knows  
Than my Redeemer's blood.

Faith too, the blood-receiving grace,  
From the same hand we gain;  
Else, sweetly as it suits our case,  
That gift had been in vain.

Till Thou Thy teaching power apply,  
Our hearts refuse to see,  
And weak, as a distemper'd eye,  
Shut out the view of Thee.

Blind to the merits of Thy Son,  
What misery we endure!  
Yet fly that Hand from which alone  
We could expect a cure.

## OLNEY HYMNS.

We praise Thee, and would praise Thee more,  
 To Thee our all we owe;  
 The precious Saviour, and the power  
 That makes Him precious too.

## LXV. GRACE AND PROVIDENCE.

ALMIGHTY KING! whose wondrous hand  
 Supports the weight of sea and land;  
 Whose grace is such a boundless store,  
 No heart shall break that sighs for more.

Thy providence supplies my food,  
 And 'tis Thy blessing makes it good;  
 My soul is nourish'd by Thy Word,  
 Let soul and body praise the Lord!

My streams of outward comfort came  
 From Him who built this earthly frame;  
 Whate'er I want His bounty gives,  
 By whom my soul for ever lives.

Either His hand preserves from pain,  
 Or, if I feel it, heals again;  
 From Satan's malice shields my breast,  
 Or overrules it for the best.

Forgive the song that falls so low  
 Beneath the gratitude I owe!  
 It means Thy praise, however poor,  
 An angel's song can do no more.

## LXVI. I WILL PRAISE THE LORD AT ALL TIMES.

WINTER has a joy for me,  
 While the Saviour's charms I read,  
 Lowly, meek, from blemish free,  
 In the snowdrop's pensive head.

Spring returns, and brings along  
 Life-invigorating suns:  
 Hark! the turtle's plaintive song  
 Seems to speak His dying groans!

Summer has a thousand charms,  
 All expressive of His worth;  
 'Tis His sun that lights and warms,  
 His the air that cools the earth.

What! has autumn left to say  
 Nothing of a Saviour's grace?  
 Yes, the beams of milder day  
 Tell me of His smiling face.

Light appears with early dawn,  
While the sun makes haste to rise;  
See His bleeding beauties drawn  
On the blushes of the skies.

Evening with a silent pace,  
Slowly moving in the west,  
Shews an emblem of His grace,  
Points to an eternal rest.

## LXVII. LONGING TO BE WITH CHRIST

To Jesus, the crown of my hope,  
My soul is in haste to be gone;  
Oh bear me, ye cherubim, up,  
And waft me away to His throne!

My Saviour, whom absent I love,  
Whom, not having seen I adore;  
Whose name is exalted above  
All glory, dominion, and power;

Dissolve thou these bonds that detain  
My soul from her portion in thee,  
Ah! strike off this adamant chain,  
And make me eternally free.

When that happy era begins,  
When arrayed in Thy glories I shine,  
Nor grieve any more, by my sins,  
The bosom on which I recline.

Oh then shall the veil be removed,  
And round me Thy brightness be pour'd,  
I shall meet Him whom absent I loved,  
Shall see Him whom unseen I adored.

And then, never more shall the fears,  
The trials, temptations, and woes,  
Which darken this valley of tears,  
Intrude on my blissful repose.

Or, if yet remember'd above,  
Remembrance no sadness shall raise,  
They will be but new signs of Thy love,  
New themes for my wonder and praise.

Thus the strokes which from sin and from pain  
Shall set me eternally free,  
Will but strengthen and rivet the chain  
Which binds me, my Saviour, to Thee.



## OLNEY HYMNS.

## LXVIII. LIGHT SHINING OUT OF DARKNESS.\*

GOD moves in a mysterious way  
 His wonders to perform ;  
 He plants His footsteps in the sea,  
 And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines  
 Of never-failing skill,  
 He treasures up His bright designs,  
 And works His sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,  
 The clouds ye so much dread  
 Are big with mercy, and shall break  
 In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,  
 But trust Him for His grace ;  
 Behind a frowning providence  
 He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,  
 Unfolding every hour ;  
 The bud may have a bitter taste,  
 But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,†  
 And scan His work in vain :  
 God is His own interpreter,  
 And He will make it plain.

---

\* Composed June, 1773, on the eve of Cowper's renewed insanity.

† John xiii. 7.



# ANTI-THELYPHTHORA.

A TALE IN VERSE\*

1781.

*Printed anonymously.*

Ah miser

Quantâ laboras in Charybdi!

HORACE, lib. 1. Ode 27.

AIRY DEL CASTRO was as bold a knight  
As ever earn'd a lady's love in fight.  
Many he sought, but one above the rest  
His tender heart victoriously impress'd :  
In fairy land was born the matchless dame,  
The land of dreams, Hypothesis her name.  
There Fancy nursed her in ideal bowers,  
And laid her soft in amaranthine flowers ;  
Delighted with her babe, the enchantress smiled,  
And graced with all her gifts the favourite child.  
Her wooed Sir Airy, by meandering streams,  
In daily musings and in nightly dreams ;  
With all the flowers he found, he wove in haste  
Wreaths for her brow, and girdles for her waist ;  
His time, his talents, and his ceaseless care  
All consecrated to adorn the fair ;  
No pastime but with her he deign'd to take,  
And,—if he studied, studied for her sake.  
And, for Hypothesis was somewhat long,  
Nor soft enough to suit a lover's tongue,  
He call'd her Posy, with an amorous art,  
And graved it on a gem, and wore it next his heart.  
But she, inconstant as the beams that play  
On rippling waters in an April day,  
With many a freakish trick deceived his pains,  
To pathless wilds and unfrequented plains

\* A cousin of Cowper's, the Rev. Martin Madan, had published a book called "Thelyphtora," advocating polygamy! It was severely criticised in the "Monthly Review," by the Rev. Mr. Badcock. Madan answered him, and received a reply in the "Review." Cowper in this poem represents the disputants as two knights jousting.

## ANTI-THELYPHTHORA.

Enticed him from his oaths of knighthood far,  
Forgetful of the glorious toils of war.

'Tis thus the tenderness that love inspires  
Too oft betrays the votaries of his fires;  
Borne far away on elevated wings,  
They sport like wanton doves in airy rings,  
And laws and duties are neglected things.

Nor he alone address'd the wayward fair;  
Full many a knight had been entangled there.  
But still, whoever wooed her or embraced,  
On every mind some mighty spell she cast,  
Some she would teach (for she was wondrous wise,  
And made her dupes see all things with her eyes,)  
That forms material, whatsoe'er we dream,  
Are not at all, or are not what they seem;  
That substances and modes of every kind  
Are mere impressions on the passive mind:  
And he that splits his cranium, breaks at most  
A fancied head against a fancied post;  
Others, that earth, ere sin had drown'd it all,  
Was smooth and even as an ivory ball;  
That all the various beauties we survey,  
Hills, valleys, rivers, and the boundless sea,  
Are but departures from the first design,  
Effects of punishment and wrath divine.  
She tutor'd some in Dædalus's art,  
And promised they should act his wildgoose part,  
On waxen pinions soar without a fall,  
Swift as the proudest gander of them all.

But fate reserved Sir Airy to maintain  
The wildest project of her teeming brain;—  
That wedlock is not rigorous as supposed,  
But man, within a wider pale enclosed,  
May rove at will, where appetite shall lead,  
Free as the lordly bull that ranges o'er the mead;  
That forms and rites are tricks of human law,  
As idle as the chattering of a daw;  
That lewd incontinence, and lawless rape,  
Are marriage in its true and proper shape;  
That man by faith and truth is made a slave,  
The ring a bauble, and the priest a knave.

"Fair fall the deed!" the knight exulting cried,

"Now is the time to make the maid a bride!"

'Twas on the noon of an autumnal day,  
October hight, but mild and fair as May;  
When scarlet fruits the russet hedge adorn,  
And floating films envelop every thorn;

When gently as in June, the rivers glide,  
 And only miss the flowers that graced their side;  
 The linnet twitter'd out his parting song,  
 With many a chorister the woods among;  
 On southern banks the ruminating sheep  
 Lay snug and warm;—'twas summer's farewell peep.  
 Propitious to his fond intent there grew,  
 An arbour near at hand of thickest yew,  
 With many a boxen bush, close clipt between,  
 And phillyrea of a gild'd green.

But what old Chaucer's merry page befits,  
 The chaster muse of modern days omits.  
 Suffice it then in decent terms to say,  
 She saw,—and turn'd her rosy cheek away.  
 Small need of prayer-book or of priest, I ween,  
 Where parties are agreed, retired the scene,  
 Occasion prompt, and appetite so keen.  
 Hypothesis (for with such magic power  
 Fancy endued her in her natal hour,)   
 From many a steaming lake and reeking bog,  
 Bade rise in haste a dank and drizzling fog,  
 That curtain'd round the scene where they reposed,  
 And wood and lawn in dusky folds enclosed.

Fear seiz'd the trembling sex; in every grove  
 They wept the wrongs of honourable love,  
 "In vain," they cried, "are hymeneal rites,  
 Vain our delusive hope of constant knights;  
 The marriage bond has lost its powers to bind,  
 And flutters loose, the sport of every wind.  
 The bride, while yet her bride's attire is on,  
 Shall mourn her absent lord, for he is gone,  
 Sate of her, and weary of the same,  
 To distant wilds in quest of other game.  
 Ye fair Circassians! all your lutes employ,  
 Seraglios sing, and harems dance for joy!  
 For British nymphs whose lords were lately true,  
 Nymphs quite as fair, and happier once than you,  
 Honour, esteem, and confidence forgot,  
 Feel all the meanness of your slavish lot.  
 O curst Hypothesis! your hellish arts  
 Seduce our husbands, and estrange their hearts.—  
 Will none arise? no knight who still retains  
 The blood of ancient worthies in his veins,  
 To assert the charter of the chaste and fair,  
 Find out her treacherous heart, and plant a dagger there?"  
 A knight—(can he that serves the fair do less?)  
 Starts at the call of beauty in distress;

## ANTI-THELYPHTHORA.

And he that does not, whatsoe'er occurs,  
Is recreant, and unworthy of his spurs.\*

Full many a champion, bent on hardy deed,  
Call'd for his arms and for his princely steed.  
So swarm'd the Sabine youth, and grasp'd the shield,  
When Roman rapine, by no laws withheld,  
Lest Rome should end with her first founders' lives,  
Made half their maids, *sans* ceremony, wives.  
But not the mitred few; the soul their charge;  
They left these bodily concerns at large;  
Forms or no forms, pluralities or pairs,  
Right reverend sirs! was no concern of theirs.  
The rest, alert and active as became

A courteous knighthood, caught the generous flame:  
One was accoutred when the cry began,  
Knight of the Silver Moon, Sir Marmadan.†

Oft as his patroness, who rules the night,  
Hangs out her lamp in yon cerulean height,  
His vow was, (and he well perform'd his vow,)  
Arm'd at all points, with terror on his brow,  
To judge the land, to purge atrocious crimes,  
And quell the shapeless monsters of the times.  
For cedars famed, fair Lebanon supplied  
The well-poised lance that quiver'd at his side;  
Truth arm'd it with a point so keen, so just,  
No spell or charm was proof against the thrust.  
He couch'd it firm upon his puissant thigh,  
And darting through his helm an eagle's eye,  
On all the wings of chivalry advanced  
To where the fond Sir Airy lay entranced.

He dreamt not of a foe, or if his fear  
Foretold one, dreamt not of a foe so near.  
Far other dreams his feverish mind employ'd,  
Of rights restored, variety enjoy'd:  
Of virtue too well fenced to fear a flaw;  
Vice passing current by the stamp of law;  
Large population on a liberal plan,  
And woman trembling at the foot of man;  
How simple wedlock fornication works,  
And Christians marrying may convert the Turks.  
The trumpet now spoke Marmadan at hand,  
A trumpet that was heard through all the land.  
His high-bred steed expands his nostrils wide,  
And snorts aloud to cast the mist aside;

\* When a knight was degraded, his spurs were chopped off.—C.  
† Mr. Badcock in *Monthly Review* for October, 1780.—C.

But he, the virtues of his lance to show,  
Struck thrice the point upon his saddle-bow;  
Three sparks ensued that chased it all away,  
And set the unseemly pair in open day.  
"To horse!" he cried, "or, by this good right hand  
And better spear, I smite you where you stand."

Sir Airy, not a whit dismay'd or scared,  
Buckled his helm, and to his steed repair'd;  
Whose bridle, while he cropp'd the grass below,  
Hung not far off upon a myrtle bough.  
He mounts at once,—such confidence infused  
The insidious witch that had his wits abused;  
And she, regardless of her softer kind,  
Seized fast the saddle and sprang up behind.  
"Oh shame to knighthood!" his assailant cried;  
"Oh shame!" ten thousand echoing nymphs replied.  
Placed with advantage at his listening ear,  
She whisper'd still that he had nought to fear;  
That he was cased in such enchanted steel,  
So polish'd and compact from head to heel,  
'Come ten, come twenty, should an army call  
Thee to the field, thou shouldst withstand them all."

"By Dian's beams," Sir Marmadan exclaim'd,  
"The guiltless still are ever least ashamed!  
But guard thee well, expect no feign'd attack;  
And guard beside the sorceress at thy back!"

He spoke indignant, and his spurs applied,  
Though little need, to his good palfrey's side:  
The barb sprang forward, and his lord, whose force  
Was equal to the swiftness of his horse,  
Rush'd with a whirlwind's fury on the foe,  
And, Phineas like, transfix'd them at a blow.

Then sang the married and the maiden throng,  
Love graced the theme, and harmony the song;  
The Fauns and Satyrs, a lascivious race,  
Shriek'd at the sight, and, conscious, fled the place:  
And Hymen, trimming his dim torch anew,  
His snowy mantle o'er his shoulders threw;  
He turn'd, and view'd it oft on every side,  
And reddening with a just and generous pride,  
Bless'd the glad beams of that propitious day,  
The spot he loathed so much for ever cleansed away.\*

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\* Cowper never included this poem in his works. Southey discovered it by finding a note (in a book he was reading) from S. Rose, a friend of Cowper's, stating that such a poem had been written by the "Author of The Task."

## LOVE ABUSED;

THE THOUGHT SUGGESTED BY THELYPHTHORA.

WHAT is there in the vale of life  
Half so delightful as a Wife,  
When friendship, love, and peace combine  
To stamp the marriage-bond divine?  
The stream of pure and genuine love  
Derives its current from above;  
And earth a second Eden shows,  
Where'er the healing water flows:  
But ah! if from the dykes and drains  
Of sensual nature's feverish veins,  
Lust, like a lawless headstrong flood,  
Impregnated with ooze and mud,  
Descending fast on every side,  
Once mingles with the sacred tide,  
Farewell the soul-enlivening scene!  
The banks that wore a smiling green,  
With rank defilement overspread,  
Bewail their flowery beauties dead.  
The stream polluted, dark, and dull,  
Diffused into a Stygian pool,  
Through life's last melancholy years  
Is fed with ever-flowing tears:  
Complaints supply the zephyr's part,  
And sighs that heave a breaking heart.



## THE PROGRESS OF ERROR.

*Si quid loquar audiendum.*—HOR. lib. iv. Od. 2.

SING, Muse, (if such a theme, so dark, so long,  
May find a Muse to grace it with a song)  
By what unseen and unsuspected arts  
The serpent Error twines round human hearts;  
Tell where she lurks, beneath what flowery shades,  
That not a glimpse of genuine light pervades,  
The poisonous, black, insinuating worm  
Successfully conceals her loathsome form.  
Take, if you can, ye careless and supine,  
Counsel and caution from a voice like mine!  
Truths that the theorist could never reach,  
And observation taught me. I would teach.

Not all whose eloquence the fancy fills,  
Musical as the chime of tinkling rills,  
Weak to perform, though mighty to pretend,  
Can trace her mazy windings to their end.  
Discern the fraud beneath the specious lure,  
Prevent the danger, or prescribe the cure.  
The clear harangue, and cold as it is clear,  
Falls soporific on the listless ear;  
Like quicksilver, the rhetoric they display  
Shines as it runs, but grasped at, slips away.

Placed for his trial on this bustling stage,  
From thoughtless youth to ruminating age,  
Free in his will to choose or to refuse,  
Man may improve the crisis, or abuse;  
Else, on the fatalist's unrighteous plan,  
Say to what bar amenable were man?  
With naught in charge, he could betray no trust,  
And if he fell, would fall because he must;  
If Love reward him, or if Vengeance strike,  
His recompense in both unjust alike.  
Divine authority within his breast  
Brings every thought, word, action, to the test;  
Warns him or prompts, approves him or restrains,  
As Reason, or as Passion, takes the reins.  
Heaven from above, and Conscience from within,  
Cry in his startled ear, "Abstain from sin!"



*THE PROGRESS OF ERROR.*

The world around solicits his desire,  
And kindles in his soul a treacherous fire,  
While, all his purposes and steps to guard,  
Peace follows Virtue as its sure reward,  
And Pleasure brings as surely in her train,  
Remorse, and Sorrow, and vindictive Pain.

Man thus endued with an elective voice,  
Must be supplied with objects of his choice;  
Where'er he turns, enjoyment and delight,  
Or present, or in prospect, meet his sight;  
These open on the spot their honeyed store,  
Those call him loudly to pursuit of more.  
His unexhausted mine, the sordid vice  
Avarice shows, and virtue is the price;  
Here various motives his ambition raise,  
Power, Pomp, and Splendour, and the Thirst of Praise;  
There Beauty woos him with expanded arms;  
Even Bacchanalian Madness has its charms.

Nor these alone, whose pleasures less refined  
Might well alarm the most unguarded mind,  
Seek to supplant his inexperienced youth,  
Or lead him devious from the path of truth;  
Hourly allurements on his passions press,  
Safe in themselves, but dangerous in the excess.

Hark! how it floats upon the dewy air!  
Oh what a dying, dying close was there!  
'Tis Harmony from yon sequester'd bower,  
Sweet Harmony that soothes the midnight hour;  
Long ere the charioteer of day had run  
His morning course, the enchantment was begun,  
And he shall gild yon mountain's height again,  
Ere yet the pleasing toil becomes a pain.

Is this the rugged path, the steep ascent,  
That Virtue points to? Can a life thus spent  
Lead to the bliss she promises the wise,  
Detach the soul from earth, and speed her to the skies?  
Ye devotees to your adored employ,  
Enthusiasts drunk with an unreal joy,  
Love makes the music of the blest above,  
Heaven's harmony is universal love,  
And earthly sounds, though sweet and well combined,  
And lenient as soft opiates to the mind,  
Leave Vice and Folly unsubdued behind.

Grey dawn appears; the sportsman and his train  
Speckle the bosom of the distant plain;  
'Tis he, the Nimrod of the neighbouring lairs,—  
Save that his scent is less acute than theirs,

For persevering chase, and headlong leaps,—  
 True beagle as the staunchest hound he keeps.  
 Charged with the folly of his life's mad scene,  
 He takes offence, and wonders what you mean;  
 The joy, the danger and the toil o'er pays;  
 'Tis exercise, and health, and length of days;  
 Again impetuous to the field he flies,  
 Leaps every fence but one, there falls and dies;  
 Like a slain deer, the tumbril brings him home,  
 Unmissed but by his dogs and by his groom.  
 Ye clergy, while your orbit is your place,  
 Lights of the world, and stars of human race;  
 But if eccentric ye forsake your sphere,  
 Prodigies ominous, and viewed with fear;  
 The comet's baneful influence is a dream,  
 Yours real, and pernicious in the extreme.  
 What then!—are appetites and lusts laid down  
 With the same ease the man puts on his gown?  
 Will Avarice and Concupiscence give place,  
 Charmed by the sounds, "Your Reverence," or "Your Grace?"  
 No. But his own engagement binds him fast,  
 Or, if it does not, brands him to the last  
 What atheists call him, a designing knave,  
 A mere church-juggler, hypocrite, and slave.  
 Oh laugh or mourn with me, the rueful jest,  
 A cassocked huntsman, and a fiddling priest!  
 He from Italian songsters takes his cue;  
 Set Paul to music, he shall quote him too.  
 He takes the field, the master of the pack  
 Cries—"Well done, Saint!" and claps him on the back.  
 Is this the path of sanctity? Is this  
 To stand a way-mark in the road to bliss?  
 Himself a wanderer from the narrow way,  
 His silly sheep, what wonder if they stray?  
 Go, cast your orders at your Bishop's feet,  
 Send your dishonoured gown to Monmouth Street,\*  
 The sacred function, in your hands is made—  
 Sad sacrilege! no function, but a trade!  
 Occiduus is a pastor of renown;  
 When he has prayed and preached the Sabbath down,  
 With wire and catgut he concludes the day,  
 Quavering and semiquavering care away.  
 The full concerto swells upon your ear;  
 All elbows shake. Look in, and you would swear  
 The Babylonian tyrant with a nod

\* Here lived the dealers in old clothes.

## THE PROGRESS OF ERROR.

Had summoned them to serve his golden god;  
 So well that thought the employment seems to suit,  
 Psaltery and sackbut, dulcimer and flute.  
 Oh fie! 'Tis evangelical and pure;  
 Observe each face, how sober and demure!  
 Ecstasy sets her stamp on every mien,  
 Chins fallen, and not an eye-ball to be seen.  
 Still I insist, though music heretofore  
 Has charmed me much (not even Occiduus more)  
 Love, joy, and peace make harmony more meet  
 For sabbath evenings, and perhaps as sweet.

Will not the sickliest sheep of every flock  
 Resort to this example as a rock,  
 There stand, and justify the foul abuse  
 Of sabbath hours with plausible excuse?  
 If apostolic gravity be free  
 To play the fool on Sundays, why not we?  
 If he the tinkling harpsichord regards  
 As inoffensive, what offence in cards?  
 Strike up the fiddles, let us all be gay!  
 Laymen have leave to dance, if parsons play.

O Italy!—Thy sabbaths will be soon  
 Our sabbaths, closed with mummary and buffoon;  
 Preaching and pranks will share the motley scene.  
 Ours parcelled out, as thine have ever been,  
 God's worship and the mountebank between.  
 What says the prophet? Let that day be blest  
 With holiness and consecrated rest;  
 Pastime and business both, it should exclude,  
 And bar the door the moment they intrude;  
 Nobly distinguished above all the six,  
 By deeds in which the world must never mix.  
 Hear him again. He calls it a delight,  
 A day of luxury, observed aright,  
 When the glad soul is made Heaven's welcome guest,  
 Sits banqueting, and God provides the feast.  
 But triflers are engaged and cannot come;  
 Their answer to the call is—"Not at home."

O the dear pleasures of the velvet plain,  
 The painted tablets, dealt and dealt again!  
 Cards, with what rapture, and the polished die,  
 The yawning chasm of indolence supply!  
 Then to the dance, and make the sober moon  
 Witness of joys that shun the sight of noon.  
 Blame, cynic, if you can, quadrille or ball,  
 The snug, close party, or the splendid hall,  
 Where Night, down-stooping from her ebon throne,

Views constellations brighter than her own.  
 'Tis innocent, and harmless, and refined,  
 The balm of care, Elysium of the mind.  
 Innocent! Oh! if venerable Time  
 Slain at the foot of Pleasure be no crime,  
 Then, with his silver beard and magic wand,  
 Let Comus rise Archbishop of the land,  
 Let him your rubric and your feasts prescribe,  
 Grand Metropolitan of all the tribe.

Of manners rough, and coarse athletic cast,  
 The rank debauch suits Clodio's filthy taste,  
 Rufillus, exquisitely formed by rule,  
 Not of the moral, but the dancing school,  
 Wonders at Clodio's follies, in a tone  
 As tragical, as others at his own.  
 He cannot drink five bottles, bilk the score,  
 Then kill a constable, and drink five more,  
 But he can draw a pattern, make a tart,  
 And has the Ladies' Etiquette by heart.  
 Go, fool; and, arm in arm with Clodio, plead  
 Your cause before a bar you little dread;  
 But know, the law that bids the drunkard die,  
 Is far too just to pass the trifier by.  
 Both baby-featured, and of infant size,  
 Viewed from a distance, and with heedless eyes,  
 Folly and Innocence are so alike,  
 The difference, though essential, fails to strike.  
 Yet Folly ever has a vacant stare,  
 A simpering countenance, and a trifling air;  
 But Innocence, sedate, serene, erect,  
 Delights us, by engaging our respect.

Man, Nature's guest by invitation sweet,  
 Receives from her both appetite and treat;  
 But, if he play the glutton and exceed,  
 His benefactress blushes at the deed,  
 For Nature, nice, as liberal to dispense,  
 Made nothing but a brute, the slave of sense.  
 Daniel ate pulse by choice—example rare!  
 Heaven blessed the youth, and made him fresh and fair;  
 Gorgonius sits, abdominous and wan,  
 Like a fat squab upon a Chinese fan;  
 He snuffs far off the anticipated joy,  
 Turtle and venison all his thoughts employ  
 Prepares for meals as jockeys take a sweat,  
 O nauseous!—an emetic for a whet!  
 Will Providence o'erlook the wasted good?  
 Temperance were no virtue if He could.

# THE PROGRESS OF ERROR.

That pleasures, therefore, or what such we call,  
 Are hurtful is a truth confessed by all;  
 And some that seem to threaten virtue less,  
 Still hurtful in the abuse, or by the excess.  
 Is man then only for his torment placed,  
 The centre of delights he may not taste?  
 Like fabled Tantalus, condemned to hear  
 The precious stream still purling in his ear,  
 Lip-deep in what he longs for, and yet curst  
 With prohibition and perpetual thirst?  
 No, wrangler,—destitute of shame and sense,  
 The precept that enjoins him abstinence,  
 Forbids him none but the licentious joy,  
 Whose fruit, though fair, tempts only to destroy.  
 Remorse, the fatal egg by Pleasure laid  
 In every bosom where her nest is made,  
 Hatched by the beams of truth, denies him rest,  
 And proves a raging scorpion in his breast.  
 No pleasure! Are domestic comforts dead?  
 Are all the nameless sweets of friendship fled?  
 Has time worn out, or fashion put to shame,  
 Good sense, good health, good conscience, and good fame?  
 All these belong to virtue, and all prove  
 That virtue has a title to your love.  
 Have you no touch of pity that the poor  
 Stand starved at your inhospitable door?  
 Or if yourself, too scantily supplied,  
 Need help, let honest industry provide.  
 Earn, if you want; if you abound, impart;  
 These both are pleasures to the feeling heart.  
 No pleasure! Has some sickly eastern waste  
 Sent us a wind to parch us at a blast?  
 Can British Paradise no scenes afford  
 To please her sated and indifferent lord?  
 Are sweet philosophy's enjoyments run  
 Quite to the lees? And has religion none?  
 Brutes capable would tell you 'tis a lie,  
 And judge you from the kennel and the sty.  
 Delights like these, ye sensual and profane,  
 Ye are bid, begged, besought to entertain;  
 Called to these crystal streams, do ye turn off,  
 Obscene, to swill and swallow at a trough?  
 Envy the beast, then, on whom Heaven bestows  
 Your pleasures, with no curses in the close.  
 Pleasure admitted in undue degree  
 Enslaves the will, nor leaves the judgment free.  
 'Tis not alone the grape's enticing juice

Unnerves the moral powers, and mars their use ;  
Ambition, avarice, and the lust of fame,  
And woman, lovely woman, does the same.  
The heart, surrendered to the ruling power  
Of some ungoverned passion every hour,  
Finds, by degrees, the truths that once bore sway,  
And all their deep impression, wear away ;  
So coin grows smooth, in traffic current passed,  
Till Cæsar's image is effaced at last.

The breach, though small at first, soon opening wide,  
In rushes Folly with a full moon tide,  
Then welcome errors, of whatever size,  
To justify it by a thousand lies.  
As creeping ivy clings to wood or stone,  
And hides the ruin that it feeds upon,  
So sophistry cleaves close to and protects  
Sin's rotten trunk, concealing its defects.  
Mortals whose pleasures are their only care,  
First wish to be imposed on, and then are.  
And lest the fulsome artifice should fail,  
Themselves will hide its coarseness with a veil.  
Not more industrious are the just and true  
To give to Virtue what is Virtue's due ;  
The praise of wisdom, comeliness, and worth,  
And call her charms to public notice forth ;  
Than Vice's mean and disingenuous race  
To hide the shocking features of her face ;  
Her form with dress and lotion they repair,  
Then kiss their idol, and pronounce her fair.

The sacred implement I now employ  
Might prove a mischief, or at best a toy ;  
A trifle if it move but to amuse ;  
But if to wrong the judgment and abuse,  
Worse than a poniard in the basest hand,  
It stabs at once the morals of a land.

Ye writers of what none with safety reads,  
Footing it in the dance that fancy leads,  
Ye novelists, who mar what ye would mend,  
Snivelling and drivelling folly without end,  
Whose corresponding misses fill the ream  
With sentimental frippery and dream,  
Caught in a delicate, soft, silken net,  
By some lewd earl, or rakehell baronet ;  
Ye pimps, who, under virtue's fair pretence,  
Steal to the closet of young innocence,  
And teach her, inexperienced yet and green,  
To scribble as you scribbled at fifteen

## THE PROGRESS OF ERROR.

Who, kindling a combustion of desire,  
 With some cold moral think to quench the fire ;  
 Though all your engineering proves in vain,  
 The dribbling stream ne'er puts it out again :  
 Oh that a verse had power, and could command  
 Far, far away, these flesh-flies of the land,  
 Who fasten without mercy on the fair,  
 And suck and leave a craving maggot there !  
 Howe'er disguised the inflammatory tale,  
 And covered with a fine-spun, specious veil,  
 Such writers, and such readers, owe the gust  
 And relish of their pleasure all to lust.

But the Muse, eagle-pinioned, has in view  
 A quarry more important still than you ;  
 Down, down the wind, she swims, and sails away,  
 Now stoops upon it, and now grasps the prey.

Petronius !\* all the Muses weep for thee ;  
 But every tear shall scald thy memory :  
 The Graces too, while Virtue at their shrine  
 Lay bleeding under that soft hand of thine,  
 Felt each a mortal stab in her own breast,  
 Abhorred the sacrifice, and cursed the priest.  
 Thou polished and high-finished foe to truth,  
 Greybeard corrupter of our listening youth,  
 To purge and skim away the filth of vice,  
 That, so refined, it might the more entice.  
 Then pour it on the morals of thy son,  
 To taint his heart, was worthy of thine own !  
 Now, while the poison all high life pervades,  
 Write, if thou canst, one letter from the snades,  
 One, and one only, charged with deep regret,  
 That thy worst part, thy principles, live yet ;  
 One sad epistle thence, may cure mankind  
 Of the plague spread by bundles left behind.

'Tis granted, and no plainer truth appears,  
 Our most important are our earliest years ;  
 The Mind, impressible and soft, with ease  
 Imbibes and copies what she hears and sees,  
 And through life's labyrinth holds fast the clue  
 That Education gives her, false or true.  
 Plants raised with tenderness are seldom strong :  
 Man's coltish disposition asks the thong,  
 And without discipline the favourite child,  
 Like a neglected forester, runs wild.  
 But we, as if good qualities would grow

\* Lord Chesterfield, - Cowper alludes in the following passage to the "Letters to his Son."

Spontaneous, take but little pains to sow ;  
We give some Latin, and a smatch of Greek,  
Teach him to fence and figure twice a week,  
And having done, we think, the best we can,  
Praise his proficiency, and dub him man.

From school to Cam or Isis, and thence home,  
And thence with all convenient speed to Rome,  
With reverend tutor, clad in habit lay,  
To tease for cash, and quarrel with all day ;  
With memorandum-book for every town,  
And every post, and where the chaise broke down ;  
His stock, a few French phrases got by heart,  
With much to learn, but nothing to impart,  
The youth, obedient to his sire's commands,  
Sets off a wanderer into foreign lands ;  
Surprised at all they meet, the gosling pair,  
With awkward gait, stretched neck, and silly stare,  
Discover huge cathedrals built with stone,  
And steeples towering high, much like our own,  
But show peculiar light, by many a grin  
At Popish practices observed within.

Ere long some bowing, smirking, smart Abbé  
Remarks two loiterers that have lost their way,  
And being always primed with *politesse*  
For men of their appearance and address,  
With much compassion undertakes the task  
To tell them more than they have wit to ask ;  
Points to inscriptions wheresoe'er they tread,  
Such as, when legible, were never read,  
But being cankered now, and half worn out,  
Craze antiquarian brains with endless doubt ;  
Some headless hero, or some Cæsar, shows—  
Defective only in his Roman nose ;  
Exhibits elevations, drawings, plans,  
Models of Herculanean pots and pans,  
And sells them medals, which, if neither rare  
Nor ancient, will be so, preserved with care,  
Strange the recital ! from whatever cause  
His great improvement and new lights he draws,  
The squire, once bashful, is shamefaced no more,  
But teems with powers he never felt before ;  
Whether increased momentum, and the force  
With which from clime to clime he sped his course,  
As axles sometimes kindle as they go,  
Chafed him, and brought dull nature to a glow ;  
Or whether clearer skies and softer air,  
That make Italian flowers so sweet and fair,



## THE PROGRESS OF ERROR.

Freshening his lazy spirits as he ran,  
 Unfolded genially and spread the man,  
 Returning, he proclaims, by many a grace,  
 By shrugs and strange contortions of his face,  
 How much a dunce that has been sent to roam,  
 Excels a dunce that has been kept at home.

Accomplishments have taken Virtue's place,  
 And Wisdom falls before exterior grace ;  
 We slight the precious kernel of the stone,  
 And toil to polish its rough coat alone.  
 A just deportment, manners graced with ease,  
 Elegant phrase, and figure formed to please,  
 Are qualities that seem to comprehend  
 Whatever parents, guardians, schools, intend ;  
 Hence an unfurnished and a listless mind,  
 Though busy, trifling ; empty, though refined ;  
 Hence all that interferes, and dares to clash  
 With indolence and luxury, is trash ;  
 While learning, once the man's exclusive pride,  
 Seems verging fast towards the female side.  
 Learning itself, received into a mind  
 By nature weak, or viciously inclined,  
 Serves but to lead philosophers astray,  
 Where children would with ease discern the way ;  
 And of all arts sagacious dupes invent,  
 To cheat themselves and gain the world's assent,  
 The worst is—Scripture warped from its intent.  
 The carriage bowls along and all are pleased,  
 If Tom be sober, and the wheels well greased,  
 But if the rogue be gone a cup too far,  
 Left out his linchpin, or forgot his tar,\*  
 It suffers interruption and delay,  
 And meets with hindrance in the smoothest way.  
 When some hypothesis absurd and vain,  
 Has filled with all its fumes a critic's brain,  
 The text that sorts not with his darling whim,  
 Though plain to others, is obscure to him.  
 The Will made subject to a lawless force,  
 All is irregular, and out of course,  
 And Judgment drunk, and bribed to lose his way,  
 Winks hard, and talks of darkness at noonday.  
 A critic on the sacred book should be  
 Candid and learned, dispassionate and free ;  
 Free from the wayward bias bigots feel,

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\* Wheels were greased with tar in the days of Cowper ; the coachman was expected to take some with him on a journey.

From Fancy's influence, and intemperate Zeal;  
But above all (or let the wretch refrain,  
Nor touch the page he cannot but profane),  
Free from the domineering power of Lust;  
A lewd interpreter is never just.

How shall I speak thee, or thy power address,  
Thou god of our idolatry, the Press?  
By thee, Religion, Liberty, and Laws,  
Exert their influence, and advance their cause:  
By thee, worse plagues than Pharaoh's land befell,  
Diffused, make Earth the vestibule of Hell;  
Thou fountain at which drink the good and wise,  
Thou ever bubbling spring of endless lies,  
Like Eden's dread probationary tree,  
Knowledge of good and evil is from thee.

No wild enthusiast ever yet could rest,  
Till half mankind were like himself possessed.  
Philosophers, who darken and put out  
Eternal truth by everlasting doubt,  
Church-quacks, with passions under no command,  
Who fill the world with doctrines contraband,  
Discoverers of they know not what, confined  
Within no bounds—the blind that lead the blind,  
To streams of popular opinion drawn,  
Deposit in those shallows all their spawn.  
The wriggling fry soon fill the creeks around,  
Poisoning the waters where their swarms abound;  
Scorned by the nobler tenants of the flood,  
Minnows and gudgeons gorge the unwholesome food;  
The propagated myriads spread so fast,  
E'en Leeuwenhoek\* himself would stand aghast,  
Employed to calculate the enormous sum,  
And own his crab-computing powers o'ercome.  
Is this hyperbole? The world well known,  
Your sober thoughts will hardly find it one.  
Fresh confidence the speculatist takes  
From every hair-brained proselyte he makes,  
And therefore prints; himself but half deceived,  
Till others have the soothing tale believed.  
Hence comment after comment, spun as fine  
As bloated spiders draw the flimsy line;  
Hence the same word, that bids our lusts obey,  
Is misapplied to sanctify their sway.  
If stubborn Greek refuse to be his friend,

\* Antony Von Leeuwenhoek, remarkable for the observations he made with the microscope. He lived from 1632 to 1723.

Hebrew, or Syriac, shall be forced to bend;  
 If languages and copies all cry "No!"  
 Somebody proved it centuries ago.  
 Like trout pursued, the critic in despair  
 Darts to the mud, and finds his safety there.  
 Women, whom custom has forbid to fly  
 The scholar's pitch (the scholar best knows why)  
 With all the simple and unlettered poor,  
 Admire his learning, and almost adore;  
 Whoever errs, the priest can ne'er be wrong,  
 With such fine words familiar to his tongue.  
 Ye ladies! (for, indifferent in your cause,  
 I should deserve to forfeit all applause)  
 Whatever shocks, or gives the least offence  
 To virtue, delicacy, truth, or sense,  
 (Try the criterion, 'tis a faithful guide),  
 Nor has, nor can have, Scripture on its side.

None but an author knows an author's cares,  
 Or Fancy's fondness for the child she bears.  
 Committed once into the public arms,  
 The baby seems to smile with added charms.  
 Like something precious ventured far from shore,  
 'Tis valued for the danger's sake the more.  
 He views it with complacency supreme,  
 Solicits kind attention to his dream,  
 And daily more enamoured of the cheat,  
 Kneels and asks Heaven to bless the dear deceit;  
 So one,\* whose story serves at least to show  
 Men loved their own productions long ago,  
 Wooed an unfeeling statue for his wife,  
 Nor rested till the Gods had given it life.  
 If some mere driveller suck the sugared fib,  
 One that still needs his leading string and bib,  
 And praise his genius, he is soon repaid  
 In praise applied to the same part—his head;  
 For 'tis a rule that holds for ever true,  
 Grant me discernment, and I grant it you.

Patient of contradiction as a child,  
 Affable, humble, diffident, and mild,  
 Such was Sir Isaac,† and such Boyle and Locke,  
 Your blunderer is as sturdy as a rock.  
 The creature is so sure to kick and bite,  
 A muleteer's the man to set him right.

\* Pygmalion, a sculptor of Cyprus, who fell in love with a statue he had made. At his request Venus endowed it with life.

† Newton

First Appetite enlists him Truth's sworn foe,  
 Then obstinate Self-will confirms him so.  
 Tell him he wanders, that his error leads  
 To fatal ills; that though the path he treads  
 Be flowery, and he see no cause of fear,  
 Death and the pains of Hell attend him there;  
 In vain: the slave of arrogance and pride,  
 He has no hearing on the prudent side.  
 His still-refuted quirks he still repeats,  
 New raised objections with new quibbles meets,  
 Till sinking in the quicksand he defends,  
 He dies disputing, and the contest ends;  
 But not the mischiefs: they still left behind,  
 Like thistle-seeds, are sown by every wind.

Thus men go wrong with an ingenious skill,  
 Bend the straight rule to their own crooked will,  
 And with a clear and shining lamp supplied,  
 First put it out, then take it for a guide.  
 Halting on crutches of unequal size,  
 One leg by truth supported, one by lies,  
 They sidle to the goal with awkward pace,  
 Secure of nothing, but to lose the race.

Faults in the life breed errors in the brain,  
 And these, reciprocally, those again.  
 The mind and conduct mutually imprint  
 And stamp their image in each other's mint;  
 Each sire and dam, of an infernal race,  
 Begetting and conceiving all that's base.

None sends his arrow to the mark in view,  
 Whose hand is feeble, or his aim untrue.  
 For though, ere yet the shaft is on the wing  
 Or when it first forsakes the elastic string,  
 It err but little from the intended line,  
 It falls at last, far wide of his design;  
 So he who seeks a mansion in the sky,  
 Must watch his purpose with a stedfast eye,  
 That prize belongs to none but the sincere,  
 The least obliquity is fatal here.

With caution taste the sweet Circean cup,  
 He that sips often, at last drinks it up.  
 Habits are soon assumed, but when we strive  
 To strip them off, 'tis being flayed alive.  
 Called to the temple of impure delight,  
 He that abstains, and he alone, does right.  
 If a wish wander that way, call it home,  
 He cannot long be safe whose wishes roam.  
 But if you pass the threshold, you are caught,

Die then, if power Almighty save you not.  
There hardening by degrees, till double steel'd,  
Take leave of nature's God, and God revealed,  
Then laugh at all you trembled at before,  
And joining the freethinkers' brutal roar,  
Swallow the two grand nostrums they dispense—  
That Scripture lies, and blasphemy is sense.  
If clemency revolted by abuse  
Be damnable, then damned without excuse.

Some dream that they can silence, when they will,  
The storm of passion, and say, "Peace, be still!"  
But, "Thus far and no farther," when addressed  
To the wild wave, or wilder human breast,  
Implies authority that never can,  
That never ought to be the lot of man.

But, Muse, forbear; long flights forbode a fall,  
Strike on the deep-toned chord the sum of all.

Hear the just law—the judgment of the skies!  
He that hates truth shall be the dupe of lies;  
And he that will be cheated to the last,  
Delusions strong as Hell shall bind him fast.  
But if the wanderer his mistake discern,  
Judge his own ways, and sigh for a return,  
Bewildered once, must he bewail his loss  
For ever and for ever? No—the Cross!  
There, and there only, (though the deist rave,  
And atheist, if Earth bear so base a slave)  
There, and there only, is the power to save.  
There no delusive hope invites despair,  
No mockery meets you, no deception there;  
The spells and charms that blinded you before,  
All vanish there, and fascinate no more.

I am no preacher; let this hint suffice—  
The Cross once seen is death to every vice;  
Else He that hung there suffered all his pain,  
Bled, groaned, and agonized, and died in vain.



# TRUTH.

## ARGUMENT.

The pursuit of error leads to destruction—Grace leads the right way—Its direction despised—The self-sufficient Pharisee compared with the peacock—The pheasant compared with the Christian—Heaven abhors affected sanctity—The hermit and his penances—The self-torturing Brahmin—Pride the ruling principle of both—Picture of a sanctimonious Prude—Picture of a saint—Freedom of a Christian—Importance of motives, illustrated by the conduct of two servants—The traveller overtaken by a storm likened to the sinner dreading the vengeance of the Almighty—Dangerous state of those who are just in their own conceit—The last moments of the infidel—Content of the ignorant but believing cottager—The rich, the wise, and the great, neglect the means of winning heaven—Poverty the best soil for religion—What man really is, and what in his own esteem—Unbelief often terminates in suicide—Scripture the only cure of woe—Pride the passion most hostile to truth—Danger of slighting the mercy offered by the Gospel—Plea for the virtuous heathen—Commands given by God on Sinai—The judgment-day—Plea of the believer.

“Pensantur trutinâ.”—HOR., lib. ii. Ep. 1.

MAN on the dubious waves of error toss'd,  
His ship half-founder'd and his compass lost,  
Sees, far as human optics may command,  
A sleeping fog, and fancies it dry land ;  
Spreads all his canvas, every sinew phes,  
Pants for it, aims at it, enters it, and dies.  
Then farewell all self-satisfying schemes,  
His well-built systems, philosophic dreams,  
Deceitful views of future bliss, farewell !  
He reads his sentence at the flames of hell.

Hard lot of man ! to toil for the reward  
Of virtue, and yet lose it !—Wherefore hard ?  
He that would win the race must guide his horse  
Obedient to the customs of the course,  
Else, though unequal'd to the goal he flies,  
A meaner than himself shall gain the prize.  
Grace leads the right way,—if you choose the wrong,  
Take it, and perish, but restrain your tongue ;  
Charge not, with light sufficient and left free,  
Your wilful suicide on God's decree.

Oh, how unlike the complex works of man,  
Heaven's easy, artless, unencumber'd plan !  
No meretricious graces to beguile,  
No clustering ornaments to clog the pile ;

## TRUTH.

From ostentation as from weakness free,  
 It stands like the cerulean arch we see,  
 Majestic in its own simplicity.  
 Inscribed above the portal, from afar  
 Conspicuous as the brightness of a star,  
 Legible only by the light they give,  
 Stand the soul-quickenings words—BELIEVE, AND LIVE.  
 Too many, shock'd at what should charm them most,  
 Despise the plain direction and are lost.  
 Heaven on such terms! they cry with proud disdain,  
 Incredible, impossible, and vain!—  
 Rebel because 'tis easy to obey,  
 And scorn for its own sake the gracious way.  
 These are the sober, in whose cooler brains  
 Some thought of immortality remains;  
 The rest, too busy or too gay to wait  
 On the sad theme, their everlasting state,  
 Sport for a day, and perish in a night;  
 The foam upon the waters not so light.

Who judg'd the Pharisee? What odious cause  
 Exposed him to the vengeance of the laws?  
 Had he seduced a virgin, wrong'd a friend,  
 Or stabb'd a man to serve some private end?  
 Was blasphemy his sin? Or did he stray  
 From the strict duties of the sacred day?  
 Sit long and late at the carousing board?  
 (Such were the sins with which he charged his Lord)  
 No—the man's morals were exact. What then?  
 'Twas his ambition to be seen of men.

His virtues were his pride; and that one vice  
 Made all his virtues gewgaws of no price;  
 He wore them as fine trappings for a show,  
 A praying, synagogue-frequenting beau.

The self-applauding bird, the peacock, see—  
 Mark what a sumptuous pharisee is he!  
 Meridian sunbeams tempt him to unfold  
 His radiant glories, azure, green, and gold:  
 He treads as if, some solemn music near,  
 His measured step were govern'd by his ear,  
 And seems to say—"Ye meaner fowl, give place;  
 I am all splendour, dignity, and grace!"

Not so the pheasant on his charms presumes,  
 Though he, too, has a glory in his plumes.  
 He, Christian-like, retreats with modest mien  
 To the close copse or far-sequester'd green,  
 And shines without desiring to be seen.  
 The plea of works, as arrogant and vain,

Heaven turns from with abhorrence and disdain ;  
 Not more affronted by avow'd neglect,  
 Than by the mere dissembler's feign'd respect.  
 What is all righteousness that men devise  
 What, but a sordid bargain for the skies ?  
 But Christ as soon would abdicate His own,  
 As stoop from heaven to sell the proud a throne.

His dwelling a recess in some rude rock ;  
 Book, beads, and maple dish, his meagre stock ;  
 In shirt of hair and weeds of canvas dress'd,  
 Girt with a bell-rope that the Pope has bless'd ;  
 Adust with stripes told out for every crime,  
 And sore tormented, long before his time ;  
 His prayer preferred to saints that cannot aid ;  
 His praise postponed, and never to be paid ;  
 See the sage hermit, by mankind admired,  
 With all that bigotry adopts inspired,  
 Wearing out life in his religious whim,  
 Till his religious whimsy wears out him.  
 His works, his abstinence, his zeal allow'd,  
 You think him humble—God accounts him proud.  
 High in demand, though lowly in pretence,  
 Of all his conduct this the genuine sense—  
 "My penitential stripes, my streaming blood,  
 Have purchased heaven, and prove my title good."

Turn eastward now, and fancy shall apply  
 To your weak sight her telescopic eye.  
 The Brahmin kindles on his own bare head  
 The sacred fire, self-torturing his trade ;  
 His voluntary pains, severe and long,  
 Would give a barbarous air to British song.  
 No grand inquisitor could worse invent  
 Than he contrives to suffer, well content.

Which is the saintlier worthy of the two ?  
 Past all dispute, yon anchorite, say you.  
 Your sentence and mine differ. What's a name ?  
 I say the Brahmin has the fairer claim.  
 If sufferings Scripture nowhere recommends,  
 Devised by self to answer selfish ends,  
 Give saintship, then all Europe must agree  
 Ten starveling hermits suffer less than he.

The truth is, (if the truth may suit your ear,  
 And prejudice have left a passage clear,)  
 Pride has attain'd its most luxuriant growth,  
 And poison'd every virtue in them both.  
 Pride may be pamper'd while the flesh grows lean ;  
 Humility may clothe an English dean :



That grace was Cowper's\*—his, confess'd by all—  
 Though placed in golden Durham's second stall.  
 Not all the plenty of a bishop's board,  
 His palace, and his lacqueys, and "my Lord!"  
 More nourish pride, that condescending vice,  
 Than abstinence, and beggary, and lice;  
 It thrives in misery, and abundant grows,  
 In misery fools upon themselves impose.

But why before us Protestants produce  
 An Indian mystic or a French recluse?  
 Their sin is plain; but what have we to fear,  
 Reform'd and well-instructed? You shall hear.

Yon ancient prude,† whose wither'd features show  
 She might be young, some forty years ago,  
 Her elbows pinion'd close upon her hips,  
 Her head erect, her fan upon her lips,  
 Her eyebrows arch'd, her eyes both gone astray  
 To watch yon amorous couple in their play,  
 With bony and unkerchief'd neck defies  
 The rude inclemency of wintry skies,  
 And sails with lappet head and mincing airs  
 Duly at clink of bell to morning prayers.  
 To thrift and parsimony much inclined,  
 She yet allows herself that boy behind;  
 The shivering urchin, bending as he goes,  
 With slipshod heels, and dewdrop at his nose,  
 His predecessor's coat advanced to wear,  
 Which future pages yet are doom'd to share,  
 Carries her Bible tuck'd beneath his arm,  
 And hides his hands to keep his fingers warm.  
 She, half an angel in her own account,  
 Doubts not hereafter with the saints to mount,  
 Though not a grace appears on strictest search,  
 But that she fasts, and *item*, goes to church.  
 Conscious of age, she recollects her youth,  
 And tells, not always with an eye to truth,  
 Who spann'd her waist, and who, where'er he came,  
 Scrawl'd upon glass Miss Bridget's lovely name,  
 Who stole her slipper, fill'd it with tokay,  
 And drank the little bumper every day.  
 Of temper as envenom'd as an asp,  
 Censorious, and her every word a wasp,  
 In faithful memory she records the crimes,

\* Spencer Cowper, second cousin of the poet. He was Dean of Durham from 1746 to his death in 1774.

† This picture is taken from Hogarth's "Morning."

Or real, or fictitious, of the times  
Laughs at the reputations she has torn,  
And holds them dangling at arm's length in scorn.

Such are the fruits of sanctimonious pride,  
Of malice fed while flesh is mortified :  
Take, madam, the reward of all your prayers,  
Where hermits and where Brahmins meet with theirs ;  
Your portion is with them ; nay, never frown,  
But, if you please, some fathoms lower down.

Artist, attend !—your brushes and your paint—  
Produce them—take a chair—now draw a Saint.  
Oh, sorrowful and sad ! the streaming tears  
Channel her cheeks—a Niobe appears !  
Is this a saint ? Throw tints and all away—  
True piety is cheerful as the day,  
Will weep, indeed, and heave a pitying groan  
For other's woes, but smiles upon her own.

What purpose has the King of saints in view ?  
Why falls the Gospel like a gracious dew ?  
To call up plenty from the teeming earth,  
Or curse the desert with a tenfold dearth ?  
Is it that Adam's offspring may be saved  
From servile fear, or be the more enslaved ?  
To loose the links that gall'd mankind before,  
Or bind them faster on, and add still more ?  
The free-born Christian has no chains to prove,  
Or, if a chain, the golden one of love :  
No fear attends to quench his glowing fires,  
What fear he feels his gratitude inspires.  
Shall he, for such deliverance freely wrought,  
Recompense ill ? He trembles at the thought.  
His master's interest and his own combined  
Prompt every movement of his heart and mind :  
Thought, word, and deed, his liberty evince,  
His freedom is the freedom of a prince.

Man's obligations infinite, of course  
His life should prove that he perceives their force ;  
His utmost he can render is but small,  
The principle and motive all in all.  
You have two servants,—Tom, an arch sly rogue,  
From top to toe the Geta\* now in vogue,  
Genteel in figure, easy in address,  
Moves without noise, and swift as an express,  
Reports a message with a pleasing grace,

\* Geta was a roguish servant in two of Terence's comedies. Molière's  
"Scapin" answers to him.

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## TRUTH.

Expert in all the duties of his place;  
 Say, on what hinge does his obedience move?  
 Has he a world of gratitude and love?  
 No, not a spark,—'tis all mere sharper's play;  
 He likes your house, your housemaid, and your pay;  
 Reduce his wages, or get rid of her,  
 Tom quits you, with—"Your most obedient, sir."

The dinner served, Charles takes his usual stand,  
 Watches your eye, anticipates command,  
 Sighs, if perhaps your appetite should fail,  
 And if he but suspects a frown, turns pale;  
 Consults all day your interest and your ease,  
 Richly rewarded if he can but please,  
 And, proud to make his firm attachment known,  
 To save your life would nobly risk his own.

Now which stands highest in your serious thought?  
 Charles, without doubt, say you—and so he ought;  
 One act, that from a thankful heart proceeds,  
 Excels ten thousand mercenary deeds.  
 Thus Heaven approves as honest and sincere  
 The work of generous love and filial fear;  
 But with averted eyes the omniscient Judge  
 Scorns the base hireling and the slavish drudge.

Where dwell these matchless saints? old Curio cries;  
 Even at your side, sir, and before your eyes:  
 The favour'd few—the enthusiasts you despise.  
 And pleased at heart because on holy ground  
 Sometimes a canting hypocrite is found,  
 Reproach a people with his single fall,  
 And cast his filthy raiment at them all.  
 Attend,—an apt similitude shall show  
 Whence springs the conduct that offends you so.

See where it smokes along the sounding plain,  
 Blown all aslant, a driving, dashing rain,  
 Peal upon peal redoubling all around,  
 Shakes it again and faster to the ground;  
 Now, flashing wide, now glancing as in play,  
 Swift beyond thought the lightnings dart away.  
 Ere yet it came the traveller urged his steed,  
 And hurried, but with unsuccessful speed;  
 Now drench'd throughout, and hopeless of his case,  
 He drops the rein, and leaves him to his pace.  
 Suppose, unlook'd for in a scene so rude,  
 Long hid by interposing hill or wood,  
 Some mansion neat and elegantly dress'd,  
 By some kind hospitable heart possess'd,  
 Offer him warmth, security, and rest;

Think, with what pleasure, safe, and at his ease,  
 He hears the tempest howling in the trees,  
 What glowing thanks his lips and heart employ,  
 While danger past is turn'd to present joy.  
 So fares it with the sinner, when he feels  
 A growing dread of vengeance at his heels:  
 His conscience, like a glassy lake before,  
 Lash'd into foaming waves, begins to roar;  
 The law grown clamorous, though silent long,  
 Arraigns him, charges him with every wrong,  
 Asserts the right of his offended Lord,  
 And death, or restitution, is the word:  
 The last impossible, he fears the first,  
 And, having well deserved, expects the worst.  
 Then welcome refuge and a peaceful home,  
 Oh for a shelter from the wrath to come!  
 Crush me, ye rocks! ye falling mountains, hide!  
 Or bury me in ocean's angry tide!—  
 The scrutiny of those all-seeing eyes  
 I dare not—And you need not, God replies;  
 The remedy you want I freely give;  
 The Book shall teach you—read, believe, and live!  
 'Tis done—the raging storm is heard no more,  
 Mercy receives him on her peaceful shore,  
 And Justice, guardian of the dread command,  
 Drops the red vengeance from his willing hand.  
 A soul redeem'd demands a life of praise;  
 Hence the complexion of his future days,  
 Hence a demeanour holy and unspeck'd,  
 And the world's hatred, as its sure effect.

Some lead a life unblameable and just,  
 Their own dear virtue their unshaken trust:  
 They never sin—or if (as all offend)  
 Some trivial slips their daily walk attend,  
 The poor are near at hand, the charge is small,  
 A light gratuity atones for all.  
 For though the Pope has lost his interest here,  
 And pardons are not sold as once they were,  
 No Papist more desirous to compound,  
 Than some grave sinners upon English ground.  
 That plea refuted, other quirks they seek—  
 Mercy is infinite, and man is weak;  
 The future shall obliterate the past,  
 And Heaven no doubt shall be their home at last.  
 Come, then—a still, small whisper in your ear—  
 He has no hope who never had a fear;  
 And he that never doubted of his state,

## TRUTH.

He may perhaps—perhaps he may—too late.

The path to bliss abounds with many a snare;  
 Learning is one, and wit, however rare.  
 The Frenchman, first in literary fame,  
 (Mention him, if you please. Voltaire? The same,)  
 With spirit, genius, eloquence supplied,  
 Lived long, wrote much, laugh'd heartily, and died;  
 The Scripture was his jest-book, whence he drew  
*Bon-mots* to gall the Christian and the Jew;  
 An infidel in health, but what when sick?  
 Oh—then a text would touch him to the quick;  
 View him at Paris in his last career,  
 Surrounding throngs the demigod revere;  
 Exalted on his pedestal of pride,  
 And fumed with frankincense on every side,  
 He begs their flattery with his latest breath,  
 And smother'd in 't at last, is praised to death.

Yon cottager, who weaves at her own door,  
 Pillow and bobbins all her little store;  
 Content though mean, and cheerful if not gay,  
 Shuffling her threads about the livelong day,  
 Just earns a scanty pittance, and at night  
 Lies down secure, her heart and pocket light;  
 She, for her humble sphere by nature fit,  
 Has little understanding, and no wit;  
 Receives no praise, but, though her lot be such,  
 (Toilsome and indigent,) she renders much;  
 Just knows, and knows no more, her Bible true—  
 A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew:  
 And in that charter reads, with sparkling eyes,  
 Her title to a treasure in the skies.

O happy peasant! O unhappy bard!  
 His the mere tinsel, hers the rich reward;  
 He praised perhaps for ages yet to come,  
 She never heard of half-a-mile from home:  
 He lost in errors his vain heart prefers,  
 She safe in the simplicity of hers.

Not many wise, rich, noble, or profound  
 In science, win one inch of heavenly ground:  
 And is it not a mortifying thought  
 The poor should gain it, and the rich should not?  
 No—the voluptuaries, who ne'er forget  
 One pleasure lost, lose heaven without regret;  
 Regret would rouse them, and give birth to prayer,  
 Prayer would add faith, and faith would fix them there.

Not that the Former of us all in this,  
 Or aught He does, is govern'd by caprice;

The supposition is replete with sin,  
 And bears the brand of blasphemy burnt in.  
 Not so—the silver trumpet's heavenly call  
 Sounds for the poor, but sounds alike for all;  
 Kings are invited, and would kings obey,  
 No slaves on earth more welcome were than they;  
 But royalty, nobility, and state,  
 Are such a dead preponderating weight,  
 That endless bliss, (how strange soe'er it seem,)  
 In counterpoise, flies up and kicks the beam.  
 'Tis open, and ye cannot enter—why?  
 Because ye will not, Conyers\* would reply—  
 And he says much that many may dispute  
 And cavil at with ease, but none refute.  
 Oh, bless'd effect of penury and want,  
 The seed sown there, how vigorous is the plant!  
 No soil like poverty for growth divine,  
 As leanest land supplies the richest wine.  
 Earth gives too little, giving only bread,  
 To nourish pride, or turn the weakest head:  
 To them the sounding jargon of the schools  
 Seems what it is—a cap and bells for fools:  
 The light they walk by, kindled from above,  
 Shews them the shortest way to life and love:  
 They, strangers to the controversial field,  
 Where deists, always foil'd, yet scorn to yield,  
 And never check'd by what impedes the wise,  
 Believe, rush forward, and possess the prize.  
 Envy, ye great, the dull unletter'd small:  
 Ye have much cause for envy—but not all.  
 We boast some rich ones whom the gospel sways,  
 And one† who wears a coronet and prays;  
 Like gleanings of an orange-tree, they show  
 Here and there one upon the topmost bough.  
 How readily, upon the gospel plan,  
 That question has its answer,—What is man?  
 Sinful and weak, in every sense a wretch,  
 An instrument whose chords upon the stretch,  
 And strain'd to the last screw that he can bear,  
 Yield only discord in his Maker's ear;  
 Once the blest residence of truth divine,  
 Glorious as Solyma's interior shrine,  
 Where, in his own oracular abode,  
 Dwelt visibly the light-creating God;

\* Dr. R. Conyers, rector of S. Paul's, Deptford, a celebrated evangelical clergyman.

† William Earl of Dartmouth, Newton's patron.

## TRUTH.

But made long since, like Babylon of old,  
 A den of mischiefs never to be told :  
 And she, once mistress of the realms around,  
 Now scatter'd wide and nowhere to be found,  
 As soon shall rise and reascend the throne,  
 By native power and energy her own,  
 As Nature, at her own peculiar cost,  
 Restore to man the glories he has lost.  
 Go, bid the winter cease to chill the year,  
 Replace the wandering comet in his sphere,  
 Then boast, (but wait for that unhop'd for hour)  
 The self-restoring arm of human power.  
 But what is man in his own proud esteem ?  
 Hear him, himself the poet and the theme :  
 A monarch clothed with majesty and awe,  
 His mind his kingdom, and his will his law ;  
 Grace in his mien, and glory in his eyes,  
 Supreme on earth, and worthy of the skies,  
 Strength in his heart, dominion in his nod,  
 And, thunderbolts excepted, quite a god !  
 So sings he, charm'd with his own mind and form,  
 The song magnificent—the theme a worm !  
 Himself so much the source of his delight,  
 His Maker has no beauty in his sight.  
 See where he sits, contemplative and fixed,  
 Pleasure and wonder in his features mix'd,  
 His passions tamed and all at his control,  
 How perfect the composure of his soul !  
 Complacency has breathed a gentle gale  
 O'er all his thoughts, and swell'd his easy sail.  
 His books well trimm'd and in the gayest style,  
 Like regimental coxcombs rank and file,  
 Adorn his intellects as we'll as shelves,  
 And teach him notions splendid as themselves :  
 The Bible only stands neglected there,  
 Though that of all most worthy of his care ;  
 And, like an infant troublesome awake,  
 Is left to sleep for peace and quiet sake.  
 What shall the man deserve of humankind,  
 Whose happy skill and industry combined  
 Shall prove (what argument could never yet)  
 The Bible an imposture and a cheat ?  
 The praises of the libertine profess'd,  
 The worst of men, and curses of the best.  
 Where should the living, weeping o'er his woes,  
 The dying, trembling at the awful close,  
 Where the betray'd, forsaken, and oppress'd,

The thousands whom the world forbids to rest,  
 Where should they find, (those comforts at an end  
 The Scripture yields,) or hope to find a friend?  
 Sorrow might muse herself to madness then,  
 And, seeking exile from the sight of men,  
 Bury herself in solitude profound,  
 Grow frantic with her pangs, and bite the ground.  
 Thus often Unbelief, grown sick of life,  
 Flies to the tempting pool, or felon knife;  
 The jury meet, the coroner is short,  
 And lunacy the verdict of the court.  
 Reverse the sentence, let the truth be known,  
 Such lunacy is ignorance alone;  
 They knew not, what some bishops may not know,  
 That Scripture is the only cure of woe:  
 That field of promise, how it flings abroad  
 Its odour o'er the Christian's thorny road!  
 The soul, reposing on assured relief,  
 Feels herself happy amidst all her grief,  
 Forgets her labour as she toils along,  
 Weeps tears of joy, and bursts into a song.

But the same word that, like the polish'd share  
 Ploughs up the roots of a believer's care,  
 Kills too the flowery weeds, where'er they grow,  
 That bind the sinner's bacchanalian brow.  
 Oh, that unwelcome voice of heavenly love,  
 Sad messenger of mercy from above,  
 How does it grate upon his thankless ear,  
 Crippling his pleasures with the cramp of fear!  
 His will and judgment at continual strife,  
 That civil war embitters all his life;  
 In vain he points his powers against the skies,  
 In vain he closes or averts his eyes,  
 Truth will intrude—she bids him yet beware—  
 And shakes the sceptic in the scorner's chair.  
 Though various foes against the Truth combine,  
 Pride above all opposes her design:  
 Pride, of a growth superior to the rest,  
 The subtlest serpent with the loftiest crest,  
 Swells at the thought, and, kindling into rage,  
 Would hiss the cherub Mercy from the stage.  
 And is the soul indeed so lost?—she cries,  
 Fallen from her glory, and too weak to rise?  
 Torpid and dull beneath a frozen zone,  
 Has she no spark that may be deem'd her own?  
 Grant her indebted to what zealots call,  
 Grace undeserved, yet surely not for all;



Some beams of rectitude she yet displays,  
 Some love of virtue, and some power to praise  
 Can lift herself above corporeal things,  
 And, soaring on her own unborrow'd wings,  
 Possess herself of all that's good or true,  
 Assert the skies, and vindicate her due.  
 Past indiscretion is a venial crime;  
 And if the youth, unmellow'd yet by time,  
 Bore on his branch, luxuriant then and rude,  
 Fruits of a blighted size, austere and crude,  
 Maturer years shall happier stores produce,  
 And meliorate the well-concocted juice.  
 Then, conscious of her meritorious zeal,  
 To Justice she may make a bold appeal,  
 And leave to Mercy, with a tranquil mind,  
 The worthless and unfruitful of mankind.  
 Hear, then, how Mercy, slighted and defied,  
 Retorts the affront against the crown of Pride.

Perish the virtue, as it ought, abhorr'd,  
 And the fool with it who insults his Lord.  
 The atonement a Redeemer's love has wrought  
 Is not for you—the righteous need it not.  
 Seest thou yon harlot, wooing all she meets,  
 The worn-out nuisance of the public streets,  
 Herself from morn to night, from night to morn,  
 Her own abhorrence, and as much your scorn :  
 The gracious shower, unlimited and free,  
 Shall fall on her, when Heaven denies it thee,  
 Of all that wisdom dictates, this the drift—  
 That man is dead in sin, and life a gift.

Is virtue, then, unless of Christian growth,  
 Mere fallacy, or foolishness, or both ?  
 Ten thousand sages lost in endless woe,  
 For ignorance of what they could not know ?  
 That speech betrays at once a bigot's tongue ;  
 Charge not a God with such outrageous wrong !  
 Truly, not I—the partial light men have,  
 My creed persuades me, well employ'd; may save ;  
 While he that scorns the noonday beam, perverse,  
 Shall find the blessing unimproved a curse.  
 Let heathen worthies, whose exalted min  
 Left sensuality and dross behind,  
 Possess for me their undisputed lot,  
 And take unenvied the reward they sought.  
 But still in virtue of a Saviour's plea,  
 Not blind by choice, but destined not to see.  
 Their fortitude and wisdom were a flame,

Celestial, though they knew not whence it came,  
 Derived from the same source of light and grace,  
 That guides the Christian in his swifter race,  
 Their judge was conscience, and her rule their law :  
 That rule, pursued with reverence and with awe,  
 Led them, however faltering, faint, and slow,  
 From what they knew to what they wish'd to know.  
 But let not him that shares a brighter day,  
 Traduce the splendour of a noontide ray,  
 Prefer the twilight of a darker time,  
 And deem his base stupidity no crime ;  
 The wretch, who slights the bounty of the skies,  
 And sinks while favour'd with the means to rise,  
 Shall find them rated at their full amount,  
 The good he scorn'd all carried to account.

Marshalling all His terrors as He came,  
 Thunder, and earthquake, and devouring flame,  
 From Sinai's top Jehovah gave the law—  
 Life for obedience, death for every flaw.  
 When the great Sovereign would His will express,  
 He gives a perfect rule, what can He less ?  
 And guards it with a sanction as severe  
 As vengeance can inflict, or sinners fear :  
 Else His own glorious rights He would disclaim,  
 And man might safely trifle with His name.  
 He bids him glow with unremitting love  
 To all on earth, and to Himself above ;  
 Condemns the injurious deed, the slanderous tongue,  
 The thought that meditates a brother's wrong :  
 Brings not alone the more conspicuous part,  
 His conduct, to the test, but tries his heart.

Hark ! universal nature shook and groan'd,  
 'Twas the last trumpet—see the Judge enthroned !  
 Rouse all your courage at your utmost need,  
 Now summon every virtue, stand and plead.  
 What ! silent ? Is your boasting heard no more ?  
 That self-renouncing wisdom, learn'd before,  
 Had shed immortal glories on your brow,  
 That all your virtues cannot purchase now.

All joy to the believer ! He can speak,  
 Trembling yet happy, confident yet meek.  
 " Since the dear hour that brought me to Thy foot,  
 And cut up all my follies by the root,  
 I never trusted in an arm but Thine,  
 Nor hoped but in Thy righteousness divine :  
 My prayers and alms, imperfect and defiled,  
 Were but the feeble efforts of a child ;

Howe'er perform'd, it was their brightest part,  
That they proceeded from a grateful heart ;  
Cleansed in Thine own all-purifying blood,  
Forgive their evil, and accept their good :  
I cast them at Thy feet—my only plea  
Is what it was, dependance upon Thee :  
While struggling in the vale of tears below,  
That never fail'd, nor shall it fail me now.”  
Angelic gratulations rend the skies,  
Pride falls unpitied, never more to rise,  
Humility is crown'd, and Faith receives the prize.



## TABLE TALK.

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### ARGUMENT.

False glory—Attributes of royalty in England—Quevedo's satire on kings—Kings objects of pity—Inquiry concerning the cause of Englishmen's scorn of arbitrary rule—Character of the English and the French—Freedom—Freedom sometimes needs the restraints of discipline—Reference to the Gordon riots in London—Lord Chatham—Political state of England—The vices that debase her portend her downfall—Political events the instruments of Providence—The poet disclaims prophetic inspiration—The choice of a subject—Reference to Homer, Virgil, and Milton—Progress of poetry—The poet laments that religion is not more frequently united with poetry.

"Si te fortè meæ gravis uret sarcina chartæ,  
Abjicito."

HOR. lib. i. Ep. 13.

A. You told me, I remember, glory, built  
On selfish principles, is shame and guilt :  
The deeds that men admire as half divine,  
Stark naught, because corrupt in their design.  
Strange doctrine this ! that without scruple tears  
The laurel that the very lightning spares ;\*  
Brings down the warrior's trophy to the dust,  
And eats into his bloody sword like rust.

B. I grant that men, continuing what they are,  
Fierce, avaricious, proud, there must be war ;  
And never meant the rule should be applied  
To him that fights with justice on his side.

Let laurels drench'd in pure Parnassian dew  
Reward his memory, dear to every muse,  
Who, with a courage of unshaken root,  
In honour's field advancing his firm foot,  
Plants it upon the line that Justice draws,  
And will prevail or perish in her cause.  
'Tis to the virtues of such men, man owes  
His portion in the good that Heaven bestows ;  
And when recording History displays  
Feats of renown, though wrought in ancient days,

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\* There is an old superstition that lightning never strikes the laurel-tree. Perhaps it proceeded from the idea of the heathen that the tree was consecrated to Apollo.

## TABLE TALK.

Tells of a few stout hearts that fought and died  
 Where duty placed them, at their country's side,  
 The man that is not moved with what he reads,  
 That takes not fire at their heroic deeds,  
 Unworthy of the blessings of the brave,  
 Is base in kind, and born to be a slave.

But let eternal infamy pursue  
 The wretch, to nought but his ambition true,  
 Who, for the sake of filling with one blast  
 The post-horns of all Europe, lays her waste.  
 Think yourself station'd on a towering rock,  
 To see a people scatter'd like a flock,  
 Some royal mastiff panting at their heels,  
 With all the savage thirst a tiger feels ;  
 Then view him self-proclaimed in a gazette  
 Chief monster that has plagued the nations yet !  
 The globe and sceptre in such hands misplaced,  
 Those ensigns of dominion, how disgraced !  
 The glass that bids man mark the fleeting hour,  
 And Death's own scythe, would better speak his power.  
 Then grace the bony phantom in their stead  
 With the king's shoulderknot and gay cockade ;  
 Clothe the twin brethren in each other's dress,  
 The same their occupation and success.

A. 'Tis your belief the world was made for man ;  
 Kings do but reason on the self-same plan :  
 Maintaining yours, you cannot theirs condemn,  
 Who think, or seem to think, man made for them.

B. Seldom, alas ! the power of logic reigns  
 With much sufficiency in royal brains ;  
 Such reasoning falls like an inverted cone,  
 Wanting its proper base to stand upon.  
 Man made for kings ! those optics are but dim  
 That tell you so—say, rather, they for him.  
 That were indeed a king-ennobling thought,  
 Could they, or would they, reason as they ought.  
 The diadem, with mighty projects lined,  
 To catch renown by ruining mankind,  
 Is worth, with all its gold and glittering store,  
 Just what the toy will sell for, and no more.

Oh ! bright occasions of dispensing good,  
 How seldom used, how little understood !  
 To pour in Virtue's lap her just reward ;  
 Keep Vice restrain'd behind a double guard ;  
 To quell the faction that affronts the throne  
 By silent magnanimity alone ;  
 To nurse with tender care the thriving arts,



Watch every beam philosophy imparts,  
 To give Religion her unbridled scope,  
 Nor judge by statute a believer's hope;  
 With close fidelity and love unfeigned  
 To keep the matrimonial bond unstain'd;  
 Covetous only of a virtuous praise;  
 His life a lesson to the land he sways;  
 To touch the sword with conscientious awe,  
 Nor draw it but when duty bids him draw;  
 To sheath it in the peace-restoring close  
 With joy beyond what victory bestows—  
 Blest country! where these kingly glories shine;  
 Blest England! if this happiness be thine.

A. Guard what you say: the patriotic tribe  
 Will sneer, and charge you with a bribe.

B.

A bribe?

The worth of his three kingdoms I defy,  
 To lure me to the baseness of a lie;  
 And, of all lies, (be that one poet's boast,)  
 The lie that flatters I abhor the most.  
 Those arts be theirs that hate his gentle reign,  
 But he that loves him has no need to feign.

A. Your smooth eulogium, to one crown address'd,  
 Seems to imply a censure on the rest.

B. Quevedo,\* as he tells his sober tale,  
 Ask'd when in hell to see the royal jail;  
 Approv'd their method in all other things,  
 "But where, good sir, do you confine your kings?"  
 "There," said his guide, "the group is in full view."  
 "Indeed!" replied the Don, "there are but few."  
 His black interpreter the charge disdain'd;—  
 "Few, fellow?—There are all that ever reign'd."

Wit, undistinguishing, is apt to strike  
 The guilty and not guilty, both alike.  
 I grant the sarcasm is too severe,  
 And we can readily refute it here,  
 While Alfred's name, the father of his age,  
 And the Sixth Edward's grace the historic page.

A. Kings then at last have but the lot of all:  
 By their own conduct they must stand or fall.

B. True. While they live, the courtly laureate pays  
 His quit-rent ode, his peppercorn of praise,  
 And many a dunce, whose fingers itch to write,  
 Adds as he can his tributary mite

\* Quevedo de Villegas, a Spanish writer of the seventeenth century. He wrote  
 "Visions of Hell."

## TABLE TALK.

A subject's faults a subject may proclaim,  
 A monarch's errors are forbidden game!  
 Thus, free from censure, overawed by fear,  
 And praised for virtues that they scorn to wear,  
 The fleeting forms of majesty engage  
 Respect, while stalking o'er life's narrow stage,  
 Then leave their crimes for history to scan,  
 And ask with busy scorn, Was this the man?

I pity kings whom worship waits upon  
 Obsequious from the cradle to the throne;  
 Before whose infant eyes the flatterer bows,  
 And binds a wreath about their baby brows;  
 Whom education stiffens into state,  
 And death awakens from that dream too late.  
 Oh! if servility with supple knees,  
 Whose trade it is to smile, to crouch, to please;  
 If smooth dissimulation, skill'd to grace  
 A devil's purpose with an angel's face;  
 If smiling peeresses and simpering peers,  
 Encompassing his throne a few short years;  
 If the gilt carriage and the pamper'd steed,  
 That wants no driving and disdains the lead;  
 If guards mechanically formed in ranks,  
 Playing at beat of drum their martial pranks,  
 Shouldering and standing, as if struck to stone,  
 While condescending majesty looks on;  
 If monarchy consists in such base things,  
 Sighing, I say again, I pity kings!

To be suspected, thwarted, and withstood,  
 Even when he labours for his country's good;  
 To see a band call'd patriot for no cause,  
 But that they catch at popular applause,  
 Careless of all the anxiety he feels,  
 Hook disappointment on the public wheels,  
 With all their flippant fluency of tongue,  
 Most confident, when palpably most wrong,—  
 If this be kingly, then farewell for me  
 All kingship, and may I be poor and free!

To be the Table Talk of clubs up-stairs,  
 To which the unwash'd artificer repairs,  
 To indulge his genius after long fatigue,  
 By diving into cabinet intrigue,  
 (For what kings deem a toil, as well they may,  
 To him is relaxation and mere play;)—  
 To win no praise when well-wrought plans prevail,  
 But to be rudely censured when they fail;  
 To doubt the love his favourites may pretend,

And in reality to find no friend ;  
 If he indulge a cultivated taste,  
 His galleries with the works of art well graced,  
 To hear it call'd extravagance and waste ;  
 If these attendants, and if such as these,  
 Must follow royalty, then welcome ease !  
 However humble and confined the sphere,  
 Happy the state that has not these to fear !

A. Thus men, whose thoughts contemplative have dwelt  
 On situations that they never felt,  
 Start up sagacious, cover'd with the dust  
 Of dreaming study and pedantic rust,  
 And prate and preach about what others prove,  
 As if the world and they were hand and glove.  
 Leave kingly backs to cope with kingly cares,  
 They have their weight to carry, subjects theirs ;  
 Poets, of all men, ever least regret  
 Increasing taxes and the nation's debt.  
 Could you contrive the payment, and rehearse  
 The mighty plan, oracular, in verse,  
 No bard, howe'er majestic, old or new,  
 Should claim my fix'd attention more than you.

B. Not Brindley nor Bridgewater would essay\*  
 To turn the course of Helicon that way :  
 Nor would the Nine consent the sacred tide  
 Should purl amidst the traffic of Cheapside,  
 Or tinkle in 'Change Alley, to amuse  
 The leathern ears of stock-jobbers and Jews.

A. Vouchsafe, at least, to pitch the key of rhyme  
 To themes more pertinent, if less sublime.  
 When ministers and ministerial arts—  
 Patriots, who love good places at their hearts—  
 When admirals, extoll'd for standing still,  
 Or doing nothing with a deal of skill—  
 Generals, who will not conquer when they may,  
 Firm friends to peace, to pleasure, and good pay—  
 When Freedom, wounded almost to despair,  
 Though discontent alone can find out where—  
 When themes like these employ the poet's tongue,  
 I hear—as mute as if a syren sung.  
 Or tell me, if you can, what power maintains  
 A Briton's scorn of arbitrary chains ?  
 That were a theme might animate the dead,  
 And move the lips of poets cast in lead.

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\* James Brindley was the inventor of inland navigation by means of canals. The Duke of Bridgewater was his patron.



B. The cause, though worth the search, may yet elude  
 Conjecture and remark, however shrewd.  
 They take, perhaps, a well-directed aim,  
 Who seek it in his climate and his frame.  
 Liberal in all things else, yet Nature here  
 With stern severity, deals out the year.  
 Winter invades the spring, and often pours  
 A chilling flood on summer's drooping flowers;  
 Unwelcome vapours quench autumnal beams,  
 Ungenial blasts attending, curl the streams;  
 The peasants urge their harvest, ply the fork  
 With double toil, and shiver at their work.  
 Thus with a rigour, for his good design'd,  
 She rears her favourite man of all mankind.  
 His form robust and of elastic tone,  
 Proportion'd well, half muscle and half bone,  
 Supplies with warm activity and force  
 A mind well lodged, and masculine of course.  
 Hence Liberty, sweet Liberty inspires  
 And keeps alive his fierce but noble fires.  
 Patient of constitutional control,  
 He bears it with meek manliness of soul;  
 But if authority grow wanton, woe  
 To him that treads upon his free-born toe!  
 One step beyond the boundary of the laws  
 Fires him at once in Freedom's glorious cause.  
 Thus proud Prerogative, not much revered,  
 Is seldom felt, though sometimes seen and heard;  
 And in his cage, like parrot fine and gay,  
 Is kept to strut, look big, and talk away.  
 Born in a climate softer far than ours,  
 Not form'd like us, with such Herculean powers,  
 The Frenchman, easy, debonair, and brisk,  
 Give him his lass, his fiddle, and his frisk,  
 Is always happy, reign whoever may,  
 And laughs the sense of misery far away.  
 He drinks his simple beverage with a gust,  
 And feasting on an onion and a crust,  
 We never feel the alacrity and joy  
 With which he shouts and carols, *Vive le Roi!*  
 Fill'd with as much true merriment and glee  
 As if he heard his king say—"Slave, be free!"  
 Thus happiness depends, as Nature shows,  
 Less on exterior things than most suppose.  
 Vigilant over all that He has made,  
 Kind Providence attends with gracious aid;  
 Bids equity throughout His works prevail,  
 And weighs the nations in an even scale;

He can encourage slavery to a smile,  
And fill with discontent a British isle.

A. Freeman and slave then, if the case be such,  
Stand on a level,—and you prove too much.  
If all men indiscriminately share  
His fostering power, and tutelary care,  
As well be yoked by despotism's hand,  
As dwell at large in Britain's charter'd land.

B. No. Freedom has a thousand charms to show,  
That slaves, howe'er contented, never know.  
The mind attains beneath her happy reign  
The growth that Nature meant she should attain;  
The varied field of science, ever new,  
Opening and wider opening on her view,  
She ventures onward with a prosperous force,  
While no base fear impedes her in her course.  
Religion, richest favour of the skies,  
Stands most reveal'd before the freeman's eyes;  
No shades of superstition blot the day,  
Liberty chases all that gloom away.  
The soul, emancipated, unoppress'd,  
Free to prove all things, and hold fast the best,  
Learns much, and to a thousand listening minds,  
Communicates with joy the good she finds.  
Courage in arms, and ever prompt to show  
His manly forehead to the fiercest foe;  
Glorious in war, but for the sake of peace,  
His spirits rising as his toils increase,  
Guards well what arts and industry have won,  
And Freedom claims him for her firstborn son.  
Slaves fight for what were better cast away,  
The chain that binds them, and a tyrant's sway;  
But they that fight for freedom, undertake  
The noblest cause mankind can have at stake,  
Religion, virtue, truth, whate'er we call  
A blessing, freedom is the pledge of all.  
O Liberty! the prisoner's pleasing dream,  
The poet's muse, his passion, and his theme,  
Genius is thine, and thou art Fancy's nurse,  
Lost without thee the ennobling powers of verse;  
Heroic song from thy free touch acquires  
Its clearest tone, the rapture it inspires.  
Place me where Winter breathes his keenest air,  
And I will sing, if Liberty be there;  
And I will sing at Liberty's dear feet,  
In Afric's torrid clime, or India's fiercest heat.  
A. Sing where you please; in such a cause I grant  
An English poet's privilege to rant.

## TABLE TALK.

But is not Freedom, at least is not ours,  
Too apt to play the wanton with her powers,  
Grow freakish, and, o'erleaping every mound,  
Spread anarchy and terror all around?

*B.* Agreed. But would you sell or slay your horse  
For bounding and curveting in his course?  
Or if, when ridden with a careless rein,  
He break away, and seek the distant plain?  
No. His high mettle, under good control,  
Gives him Olympic speed, and shoots him to the goal.

Let discipline employ her wholesome arts;  
Let magistrates alert perform their parts,\*  
Not skulk, or put on a prudential mask,  
As if their duty were a desperate task;  
Let active laws apply the needful curb,  
To guard the peace that riot would disturb;  
And Liberty, preserved from wild excess,  
Shall raise no feuds for armies to suppress.  
When Tumult lately burst his prison door,  
And set plebeian thousands in a roar;  
When he usurp'd authority's just place,  
And dared to look his master in the face,  
When the rude rabble's watchword was—Destroy!  
And blazing London seem'd a second Troy;  
Liberty blush'd, and hung her drooping head,  
Beheld their progress with the deepest dread,  
Blush'd that effects like these she should produce,  
Worse than the deeds of galley-slaves broke loose.  
She loses in such storms her very name,  
And fierce licentiousness should bear the blame.

Incomparable gem! thy worth untold;  
Cheap, though blood-bought, and thrown away when sold;  
May no foes ravage thee, and no false friend  
Betray thee, while professing to defend!  
Prize it, ye ministers; ye monarchs, spare;  
Ye patriots, guard it with a miser's care!

*A.* Patriots, alas! the few that have been found,  
Where most they flourish, upon English ground,  
The country's need have scantily supplied;  
And the last left the scene when Chatham died.

*B.* Not so—the virtue still adorns our age,  
Though the chief actor died upon the stage.†

\* Cowper is hinting here at the timid and dilatory conduct of the magistrates during the Lord George Gordon Riots in 1780, to which the following passage refers.

† Lord Chatham, who was struck down in a fit while addressing the House of Lords. It was his death-stroke.

In him, Demosthenes was heard again ;  
 Liberty taught him her Athenian strain ;  
 She clothed him with authority and awe,  
 Spoke from his lips, and in his looks gave law.  
 His speech, his form, his action, full of grace,  
 And all his country beaming in his face,  
 He stood, as some inimitable hand  
 Would strive to make a Paul or Tully stand.  
 No sycophant or slave that dared oppose  
 Her sacred cause, but trembled when he rose,  
 And every venal stickler for the yoke  
 Felt himself crush'd at the first word he spoke.

Such men are raised to station and command.  
 When Providence means mercy to a land,  
 He speaks, and they appear ; to Him they owe  
 Skill to direct, and strength to strike the blow,  
 To manage with address, to seize with power  
 The crisis of a dark decisive hour.

So Gideon earn'd a victory not his own,  
 Subserviency his praise, and that alone.

Poor England ! thou art a devoted deer,  
 Beset with every ill but that of fear.  
 The nations hunt : all mark thee for a prey ;  
 They swarm around thee, and thou stand'st at bay :  
 Undaunted still, though wearied and perplex'd,  
 Once Chatham saved thee ; but who saves thee next ?  
 Alas ! the tide of pleasure sweeps along  
 All that should be the boast of British song.  
 'Tis not the wreath that once adorn'd thy brow,  
 The prize of happier times, will serve thee now.  
 Our ancestry, a gallant Christian race,  
 Patterns of every virtue, every grace,  
 Confess'd a God : they kneel'd before they fought,  
 And praised Him in the victories He wrought.  
 Now from the dust of ancient days bring forth  
 Their sober zeal, integrity, and worth ;  
 Courage, ungraced by these, affronts the skies,  
 Is but the fire without the sacrifice.  
 The stream that feeds the well-spring of the heart  
 Not more invigorates life's noblest part,  
 Than virtue quickens with a warmth divine  
 The powers that sin has brought to a decline.

A. The inestimable estimate of Brown\*  
 Rose like a paper kite, and charmed the town :

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\* Dr. John Brown published in 1757 his "Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times." It was a very popular work at the time ; seven editions of it were published. The book has long been forgotten.

But measures, plann'd and executed well,  
Shifted the wind that raised it, and it fell.  
He trod the very self-same ground you tread,  
And victory refuted all he said.

B. And yet his judgment was not framed amiss;  
Its error, if it err'd, was merely this—  
He thought the dying hour already come,  
And a complete recovery\* struck him dumb.

But that effeminacy, folly, lust,  
Enervate and enfeeble, and needs must,  
And that a nation shamefully debased  
Will be despised and trampled on at last,  
Unless sweet penitence her powers renew,  
Is truth, if history itself be true.  
There is a time, and justice marks the date,  
For long-forbearing clemency to wait;  
That hour elapsed, the incurable revolt  
Is punish'd, and down comes the thunderbolt.  
If Mercy *then* put by the threatening blow,  
Must she perform the same kind office now?  
May she! and if offended Heaven be still  
Accessible, and prayer prevail, she will.  
'Tis not, however, insolence and noise,  
The tempest of tumultuary joys,  
Nor is it yet despondence and dismay  
Will win her visits, or engage her stay;  
Prayer only, and the penitential tear,  
Can call her smiling down, and fix her here.

But when a country (one that I could name)  
In prostitution sinks the sense of shame;  
When infamous venality, grown bold,  
Writes on his bosom, *To be let or sold*;  
When perjury, that heaven-defying vice,  
Sells oaths by tale, and at the lowest price,  
Stamps God's own name upon a lie just made,  
To turn a penny in the way of trade;  
When avarice starves (and never hides his face)  
Two or three millions of the human race,  
And not a tongue inquires how, where, or when,  
Though conscience will have twinges now and then  
When profanation of the sacred cause  
In all its parts, times, ministry, and laws,  
Bespeaks a land, once Christian, fallen and lost  
In all that wars against that title most;

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\* The revival of public spirit in 1757, and a succession of glorious victories.

What follows next, let cities of great name,  
 And regions long since desolate proclaim :  
 Nineveh, Babylon, and ancient Rome,  
 Speak to the present times, and times to come ;  
 They cry aloud in every careless ear,  
 " Stop, while ye may, suspend your mad career !  
 Oh, learn from our example and our fate—  
 Learn wisdom and repentance ere too late !"

Not only vice disposes and prepares  
 The mind that slumbers sweetly in her snares,  
 To stoop to tyranny's usurp'd command,  
 And bend her polish'd neck beneath his hand,  
 (A dire effect, by one of Nature's laws  
 Unchangeably connected with its cause,)  
 But Providence himself will intervene  
 To throw His dark displeasure o'er the scene.  
 All are His instruments ; each form of war,  
 What burns at home, or threatens from afar,  
 Nature in arms, her elements at strife,  
 The storms that upset the joys of life,  
 Are but His rods to scourge a guilty land,  
 And waste it at the bidding of His hand.  
 He gives the word, and mutiny soon roars  
 In all her gates, and shakes her distant shores ;  
 The standards of all nations are unfurl'd ;  
 She has one foe, and that one foe—the world.  
 And if He doom that people with a frown,  
 And mark them with a seal of wrath, press'd down,  
 Obduracy takes place ; callous and tough,  
 The reprobated race grows judgment-proof :  
 Earth shakes beneath them, and heaven roars above ;  
 But nothing scares them from the course they love.  
 To the lascivious pipe and wanton song,  
 That charm down fear, they frolic it along,  
 With mad rapidity and unconcern,  
 Down to the gulf from which is no return.  
 They trust in navies, and their navies fail—  
 God's curse can cast away ten thousand sail !  
 They trust in armies, and their courage dies ;  
 In wisdom, wealth, in fortune, and in lies ;  
 But all they trust in withers, as it must,  
 When He commands in whom they place no trust.  
 Vengeance at last pours down upon their coast,  
 A long-despised, but now victorious host ;  
 Tyranny sends the chain that must abridge  
 The noble sweep of all their privilege,  
 Gives liberty the last, the mortal shock,  
 Slips the slave's collar on, and snaps the lock.

A. Such lofty strains embellish what you teach,  
Mean you to prophesy, or but to preach?

B. I know the mind that feels indeed the fire  
The Muse imparts, and can command the lyre,  
Acts with a force, and kindles with a zeal,  
Whate'er the theme, that others never feel.  
If human woes her soft attention claim,  
A tender sympathy pervades the frame,  
She pours a sensibility divine  
Along the nerve of every feeling line.  
But if a deed not tamely to be borne,  
Fire indignation and a sense of scorn,  
The strings are swept with such a power, so loud,  
The storm of music shakes th' astonish'd crowd.  
So, when remote futurity is brought  
Before the keen inquiry of her thought,  
A terrible sagacity informs  
The poet's heart; he looks to distant storms,  
He hears the thunder ere the tempest lowers,  
And, armed with strength surpassing human powers,  
Seizes events as yet unknown to man,  
And darts his soul into the dawning plan.  
Hence, in a Roman mouth, the graceful name  
Of prophet and of poet\* was the same;  
Hence British poets too the priesthood shared,  
And every hallow'd Druid was a bard.  
But no prophetic fires to me belong;  
I play with syllables, and sport in song.

A. At Westminster, where little poets strive  
To set a distich upon six and five,  
Where Discipline helps opening buds of sense  
And makes his pupils proud with silver pence,†  
I was a poet too; but modern taste  
Is so refined, and delicate, and chaste,  
That verse, whatever fire the fancy warms,  
Without a creamy smoothness has no charms,  
Thus, all success depending on an ear,  
And thinking I might purchase it too dear,  
If sentiment were sacrificed to sound,  
And truth cut short to make a period round,  
I judged a man of sense could scarce do worse  
Than caper in the morris-dance of verse.

B. Thus reputation is a spur to wit,

\* Vates.

† "I was a schoolboy," says Cowper, "in high favour with the master, received a silver groat for my exercise, and had the pleasure of seeing it sent from form to form for the admiration of all who were able to understand it."

And some wits flag through fear of losing it.  
 Give me the line that ploughs its stately course,  
 Like a proud swan, conquering the stream by force;  
 That like some cottage beauty, strikes the heart,  
 Quite unindebted to the tricks of art.  
 When labour and when dulness, club in hand,  
 Like the two figures at St. Dunstan's stand,\*  
 Beating alternately, in measured time,  
 The clockwork tintinnabulum of rhyme,  
 Exact and regular the sounds will be ;  
 But such mere quarter-strokes are not for me.

From him who rears a poem lank and long,  
 To him who strains his all into a song,  
 Perhaps some bonny Caledonian air,  
 All birks and braes, though he was never there ;  
 Or, having whelp'd a prologue with great pains,  
 Feels himself spent, and fumbles for his brains ;  
 A prologue interdash'd with many a stroke,  
 An art contrived to advertise a joke,  
 So that the jest is clearly to be seen,  
 Not in the words—but in the gap between ;  
 Manner is all in all, whate'er is writ,  
 The substitute for genius, sense, and wit.

To dally much with subjects mean and low,  
 Proves that the mind is weak, or makes it so.  
 Neglected talents rust into decay,  
 And every effort ends in push-pin play.  
 The man that means success, should soar above  
 A soldier's feather, or a lady's glove ;  
 Else, summoning the muse to such a theme,  
 The fruit of all her labour is whipt-cream.  
 As if an eagle flew aloft, and then—  
 Stoop'd from its highest pitch to pounce a wren.  
 As if the poet, purposing to wed,  
 Should carve himself a wife in gingerbread.

Agès elapsed ere Homer's lamp appear'd,  
 And agès ere the Mantuan swan was heard ;  
 To carry nature lengths unknown before,  
 To give a Milton birth, ask'd agès more.  
 Thus genius rose and set at order'd times,  
 And shot a day-spring into distant climes,  
 Ennobling every region that he chose ;  
 He sunk in Greece, in Italy he rose ;  
 And, tedious years of Gothic darkness past,  
 Emerged all splendour in our isle at last.

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\* Two figures which struck the quarters on St. Dunstan's church clock. They have long since been removed.



Thus lovely halcyons dive into the main,  
Then shew far off their shining plumes again.

A. Is genius only found in epic lays?  
Prove this, and forfeit all pretence to praise.  
Make their heroic powers your own at once,  
Or candidly confess yourself a dunce.

B. These were the chief; each interval of night  
Was graced with many an undulating light;  
In less illustrious bards his beauty shone  
A meteor, or a star; in these, the sun.

The nightingale may claim the topmost bough  
While the poor grasshopper must chirp below.  
Like him unnoticed, I, and such as I,  
Spread little wings, and rather skip than fly;  
Perch'd on the meagre produce of the land,  
An ell or two of prospect we command,  
But never peep beyond the thorny bound,  
Or oaken fence, that hems the paddock round.

In Eden, ere yet innocence of heart  
Had faded, poetry was not an art;  
Language, above all teaching, or if taught,  
Only by gratitude and glowing thought,  
Elegant as simplicity, and warm  
As ecstasy, unmanacled by form,  
Not prompted, as in our degenerate days,  
By low ambition and the thirst of praise,  
Was natural as is the flowing stream,  
And yet magnificent—a God the theme!  
That theme on earth exhausted, though above  
'Tis found as everlasting as His love,  
Man lavish'd all his thoughts on human things,  
The feats of heroes and the wrath of kings;  
But still, while virtue kindled his delight,  
The song was moral, and so far was right.  
'Twas thus till luxury seduced the mind  
To joys less innocent, as less refined;  
Then Genius danced a bacchanal; he crown'd  
The brimming goblet, seized the thyrsus, bound  
His brows with ivy, rushed into the field  
Of wild imagination, and there reel'd,  
The victim of his own lascivious fires,  
And, dizzy with delight, profaned the sacred wires.

Anacreon, Horace, play'd in Greece and Rome  
This bedlam part; and others nearer home.  
When Cromwell fought for power, and while he reigned  
The proud protector of the power he gain'd,  
Religion, harsh, intolerant, austere,  
Parent of manners like herself severe,

Drew a rough copy of the Christian face,  
Without the smile, the sweetness, or the grace;  
The dark and sullen humour of the time  
Judged every effort of the Muse a crime;  
Verse, in the finest mould of fancy cast,  
Was lumber in an age so void of taste;  
But when the second Charles assumed the sway,  
And arts revived beneath a softer day,  
Then, like a bow long forced into a curve,  
The mind, released from too constrain'd a nerve,  
Flew to its first position with a spring  
That made the vaulted roofs of pleasure ring.  
His court, the dissolute and hateful school  
Of wantonness, where vice was taught by rule,  
Swarm'd with a scribbling herd, as deep inlaid  
With brutal lust as ever Circe made.

From these a long succession in the rage  
Of rank obscenity debauch'd their age,  
Nor ceased till, ever anxious to redress  
The abuses of her sacred charge, the press,  
The Muse instructed a well-nurtur'd train  
Of abler votaries to cleanse the stain,  
And claim the palm for purity of song,  
That lewdness had usurp'd and worn so long.  
Then decent pleasantry and sterling sense,  
That neither gave nor would endure offence,  
Whipp'd out of sight, with satire just and keen,  
The puppy pack that had defiled the scene.

In front of these came Addison. In him  
Humour in holiday and sightly trim,  
Sublimity and attic taste combined,  
To polish, furnish, and delight the mind.  
Then Pope, as harmony itself exact,  
In verse well disciplined, complete, compact,  
Gave virtue and morality a grace  
That, quite eclipsing pleasure's painted face,  
Levied a tax of wonder and applause,  
Even on the fools that trampled on their laws.  
But he (his musical finesse was such,  
So nice his ear, so delicate his touch)  
Made poetry a mere mechanic art,  
And every warbler had his tune by heart.  
Nature imparting her satiric gift,  
Her serious mirth, to Arbuthnot and Swift,  
With droll sobriety they raise a smile  
At folly's cost, themselves unmoved the while.  
That constellation set, the world in vain  
Must hope to look upon their like again.

A. Are we then left—B. Not wholly in the dark;  
 Wit now and then, struck smartly, shews a spark,  
 Sufficient to redeem the modern race  
 From total night and absolute disgrace.  
 While servile trick and imitative knack  
 Confine the million in the beaten track,  
 Perhaps some courser, who disdains the road,  
 Snuffs up the wind, and flings himself abroad.

Contemporaries all surpass'd, see one,  
 Short his career indeed, but ably run.  
 Churchill, himself unconscious of his powers,  
 In penury consumed his idle hours,  
 And, like a scatter'd seed at random sown,  
 Was left to spring by vigour of his own.  
 Lifted at length, by dignity of thought  
 And dint of genius, to an affluent lot,  
 He laid his head in luxury's soft lap,  
 And took too often there his easy nap.  
 If brighter beams than all he threw not forth,  
 'Twas negligence in him, not want of worth.  
 Surly and slovenly, and bold and coarse,  
 Too proud for art, and trusting in mere force,  
 Spendthrift alike of money and of wit,  
 Always at speed, and never drawing bit,  
 He struck the lyre in such a careless mood,  
 And so disdain'd the rules he understood,  
 The laurel seem'd to wait on his command,  
 He snatch'd it rudely from the Muse's hand.

Nature, exerting an unwearied power,  
 Forms, opens, and gives scent to every flower;  
 Spreads the fresh verdure of the field, and leads  
 The dancing Naiads through the dewy meads;  
 She fills profuse ten thousand little throats  
 With music, modulating all their notes,  
 And charms the woodland scenes and wilds unknown,  
 With artless airs and concerts of her own:  
 But seldom (as if fearful of expense)  
 Vouchsafes to man a poet's just pretence—  
 Fervency, freedom, fluency of thought,  
 Harmony, strength, words exquisitely sought;  
 Fancy, that from the bow that spans the sky  
 Brings colours, dipp'd in heaven, that never die;  
 A soul exalted above earth; a mind  
 Skill'd in the characters that form mankind;  
 And, as the sun, in rising beauty dress'd,  
 Looks to the westward from the dappled east,  
 And marks, whatever clouds may interpose  
 Ere yet his race begins, its glorious close,

An eye like his to catch the distant goal,  
 Or, ere the wheels of verse begin to roll,  
 Like his to shed illuminating rays  
 On every scene and subject it surveys,  
 Thus graced, the man asserts a poet's name,  
 And the world cheerfully admits the claim.

Pity Religion has so seldom found  
 A skilful guide into poetic ground !  
 The flowers would spring where'er she deign'd to stray,  
 And every Muse attend her in her way.  
 Virtue indeed meets many a rhyming friend,  
 And many a compliment politely penn'd ;  
 But, unattired in that becoming vest  
 Religion weaves for her, and half undress'd,  
 Stands in the desert, shivering and forlorn,  
 A wintry figure, like a wither'd thorn.  
 The shelves are full, all other themes are sped,  
 Hackney'd and worn to the last flimsy thread ;  
 Satire has long since done his best, and curst  
 And loathsome ribaldry has done his worst ;  
 Fancy has sported all her powers away  
 In tales, in trifles, and in children's play ;  
 And 'tis the sad complaint, and almost true,  
 Whate'er we write, we bring forth nothing new.  
 'Twere new indeed, to see a bard all fire,  
 Touch'd with a coal from Heaven, assume the lyre,  
 And tell the world, still kindling as he sung,  
 With more than mortal music on his tongue,  
 That He, who died below, and reigns above,  
 Inspires the song, and that His name is Love.

For, after all, if merely to beguile,  
 By flowing numbers and a flowery style,  
 The tedium that the lazy-rich endure,  
 Which now and then sweet poetry may cure ;  
 Or, if to see the name of idol self,  
 Stamp'd on the well-bound quarto, grace the shelf,  
 To float a bubble on the breath of fame,  
 Prompt his endeavour, and engage his aim,  
 Debased to servile purposes of pride,  
 How are the powers of genius misapplied !  
 The gift whose office is the Giver's praise,  
 To trace Him in His word, His works, His ways,  
 Then spread the rich discovery, and invite  
 Mankind to share in the divine delight ;  
 Distorted from its use and just design,  
 To make the pitiful possessor shine,  
 To purchase at the fool-frequented fair  
 Of vanity, a wreath for self to wear,

Is profanation of the basest kind—  
Proof of a trifling and a worthless mind.

A. Hail, Sternhold then, and Hopkins, hail !\*

B.

Amen.

If flattery, folly, lust, employ the pen ;  
If acrimony, slander, and abuse,  
Give it a charge to blacken and traduce ;  
Though Butler's wit, Pope's numbers, Prior's ease,  
With all that fancy can invent to please,  
Adorn the polish'd periods as they fall,  
One madrigal of theirs is worth them all.

A. 'Twould thin the ranks of the poetic tribe,  
To dash the pen through all that you proscribe.

B. No matter—we could shift when they were not ;  
And should, no doubt, if they were all forgot.

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\* Authors of the old version of the Psalms.



# EXPOSTULATION.

## ARGUMENT.

Expostulation with the Muse—England's apparently prosperous condition—State of Israel when the prophet wept over it—The Babylonian captivity—When nations decline, the evil commences in the Church—State of the Jews in the time of our Saviour—Evidences of their having been the most favoured of nations—Causes of their downfall—Lesson taught by it—Warning to Britain—The hand of Providence to be traced in adverse events—England's transgressions—Her vain-glory—Her conduct towards India—Abuse of the sacrament—Obduracy—Character of the Clergy—The poet adverts to the state of the ancient Britons—Beneficial influence of the Roman power—England under papal supremacy—Favours bestowed on her by Providence—Reasons for gratitude to God and for seeking to secure His favour—With that she may defy a world in arms. The poet anticipates little effect from his warning.

"Tantane, tam patiens, nullo certamine tolli  
Dona sines?"

VIRG.

WHY weeps the Muse for England? What appears  
In England's case to move the Muse to tears?  
From side to side of her delightful isle  
Is she not clothed with a perpetual smile?  
Can Nature add a charm, or Art confer,  
A new found luxury not seen in her?  
Where under heaven is pleasure more pursued,  
Or where does cold reflection less intrude?  
Her fields a rich expanse of wavy corn  
Pour'd out from Plenty's overflowing horn;  
Ambrosial gardens, in which art supplies  
The fervour and the force of Indian skies;  
Her peaceful shores, where busy Commerce waits  
To pour his golden tide through all her gates;  
Whom fiery suns that scorch the russet spice  
Of eastern groves, and oceans floor'd with ice,  
Forbid in vain to push his daring way  
To darker climes, or climes of brighter day  
Whom the winds waft where'er the billows roll,  
From the world's girdle to the frozen pole;  
The chariots bounding in her wheel-worn streets;  
Her vaults below, where every vintage meets;

## EXPOSTULATION.

Her theatres, her revels, and her sports,  
 The scenes to which not youth alone resorts,  
 But age, in spite of weakness and of pain,  
 Still haunts in hope to dream of youth again;  
 All speak her happy :—let the Muse look round  
 From east to west no sorrow can be found;  
 Or only what in cottages confined,  
 Sighs unregarded to the passing wind.  
 Then wherefore weep for England? What appears  
 In England's case to move the Muse to tears?  
 The prophet wept for Israel, wish'd his eyes  
 Were fountains fed with infinite supplies;  
 For Israel dealt in robbery and wrong;  
 There were the scorner's and the slanderer's tongue;  
 Oaths, used as playthings or convenient tools,  
 As interest biass'd knaves, or fashion fools;  
 Adultery, neighing at his neighbour's door;  
 Oppression, labouring hard to grind the poor;  
 The partial balance and deceitful weight;  
 The treacherous smile, a mask for secret hate;  
 Hypocrisy, formality in prayer,  
 And the dull service of the lip were there.  
 Her women, insolent and self-caress'd,  
 By Vanity's unwearied finger dress'd,  
 Forgot the blush that virgin fears impart  
 To modest cheeks, and borrow'd one from art;  
 Were just such trifles, without worth or use,  
 As silly pride and idleness produce;  
 Curl'd, scented, furbelow'd, and flounced around,  
 With feet too delicate to touch the ground,  
 They stretch'd the neck, and roll'd the wanton eye,  
 And sigh'd for every fool that flutter'd by.  
 He saw his people slaves to every lust,  
 Lewd, avaricious, arrogant, unjust;  
 He heard the wheels of an avenging God  
 Groan heavily along the distant road;  
 Saw Babylon set wide her two-leaved brass\*  
 To let the military deluge pass;  
 Jerusalem a prey, her glory soil'd,  
 Her princes captive, and her treasure spoil'd:  
 Wept till all Israel heard his bitter cry,  
 Stamp'd with his foot, and smote upon his thigh;  
 But wept, and stamp'd, and smote his thigh in vain,  
 Pleasure is deaf when told of future pain,  
 And sounds prophetic are too rough to suit  
 Ears long accusom'd to the pleasing lute:

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\* Her gates.

They scorn'd his inspiration and his theme,  
 Pronounc'd him frantic, and his fears a dream ;  
 With self-indulgence wing'd the fleeting hours,  
 Till the foe found them, and down fell the towers.

Long time Assyria bound them in her chain,  
 Till penitence had purg'd the public stain,  
 And Cyrus, with relenting pity moved,  
 Return'd them happy to the land they loved ;  
 There, proof against prosperity, awhile  
 They stood the test of her ensnaring smile,  
 And had the grace in scenes of peace to show  
 The virtue they had learned in scenes of woe.  
 But man is frail, and can but ill sustain  
 A long immunity from grief and pain ;  
 And, after all the joys that Plenty leads,  
 With tiptoe step Vice silently succeeds.

When He that ruled them with a shepherd's rod,  
 In form a man, in dignity a God,  
 Came; not expected in that humble guise,  
 To sift and search them with unerring eyes,  
 He found, conceal'd beneath a fair outside,  
 The filth of rottenness and worm of pride,  
 Their piety a system of deceit,  
 Scripture employ'd to sanctify the cheat,  
 The Pharisee the dupe of his own art,  
 Self-idolized, and yet a knave at heart.

When nations are to perish in their sins,  
 'Tis in the church the leprosy begins :  
 The priest, whose office is with zeal sincere,  
 To watch the fountain, and preserve it clear,  
 Carelessly nods, and sleeps upon the brink,  
 While others poison what the flock must drink ;  
 Or waking at the call of lust alone,  
 Infuses lies and errors of his own :  
 His unsuspecting sheep believe it pure ;  
 And tainted by the very means of cure,  
 Catch from each other a contagious spot,  
 The foul forerunner of a general rot.  
 Then Truth is hush'd, that heresy may preach ;  
 And all is trash that Reason cannot reach ;  
 Then God's own image on the soul impress'd  
 Becomes a mockery and a standing jest :  
 And faith, the root whence only can arise  
 The graces of a life that wins the skies,  
 Loses at once all value and esteem,  
 Pronounced by greybeards a pernicious dream ;  
 Then ceremony leads her bigots forth,  
 Prepared to fight for shadows of no worth,



While truths on which eternal things depend,  
 Find not, or hardly find a single friend :  
 As soldiers watch the signal of command,  
 They learn to bow, to kneel, to sit, to stand ;  
 Happy to fill religion's vacant place  
 With hollow form, and gesture, and grimace.  
 Such, when the Teacher of His Church was there,  
 People and priest, the sons of Israel were,  
 Stiff in the letter, lax in the design  
 And import of their oracles divine,  
 Their learning legendary, false, absurd,  
 And yet exalted above God's own Word,  
 They drew a curse from an intended good,  
 Puff'd up with gifts they never understood.  
 He judg'd them with as terrible a frown,  
 As if not love, but wrath had brought Him down :  
 Yet He was gentle as soft summer airs,  
 Had grace for others' sins, but none for theirs ;  
 Through all He spoke a noble plainness ran—  
 Rhetoric is artifice, the work of man ;  
 And tricks and turns that fancy may devise,  
 Are far too mean for Him that rules the skies.  
 The astonish'd vulgar trembled while He tore  
 The mask from faces never seen before ;  
 He stripp'd the impostors in the noontide sun,  
 Show'd that they follow'd all they seem'd to shun ;  
 Their prayers made public, their excesses kept  
 As private as the chambers where they slept ;  
 The temple and its holy rites profaned  
 By mummeries He that dwelt in it disdain'd ;  
 Uplifted hands, that, at convenient times,  
 Could act extortion and the worst of crimes,  
 Wash'd with a neatness scrupulously nice,  
 And free from every taint but that of vice.  
 Judgment, however tardy, mends her pace  
 When obstinacy once has conquer'd grace.  
 They saw distemper heal'd, and life restored,  
 In answer to the fiat of His word,  
 Confess'd the wonder, and with daring tongue  
 Blasphemed the authority from which it sprung.  
 They knew, by sure prognostics seen on high,  
 The future tone and temper of the sky ;  
 But, grave dissemblers, could not understand  
 That sin let loose speaks punishment at hand.  
 Ask now of history's authentic page,  
 And call up evidence from every age ;  
 Display with busy and laborious hand  
 The blessings of the most indebted land ;

What nation will you find whose annals prove  
 So rich an interest in Almighty love ?  
 Where dwell they now, where dwelt in ancient day,  
 A people planted, water'd, blest as they ?  
 Let Egypt's plagues and Canaan's woes proclaim  
 The favours pour'd upon the Jewish name ;  
 Their freedom purchased for them at the cost  
 Of all their hard oppressors valued most ;  
 Their title to a country not their own  
 Made sure by prodigies till then unknown ;  
 For them the states they left made waste and void,  
 For them the states to which they went destroy'd ;  
 A cloud to measure out their march by day,  
 By night a fire to cheer the gloomy way,  
 That moving signal summoning, when best  
 Their host to move, and when it stay'd, to rest ;  
 For them the rocks dissolved into a flood,  
 The dews condensed into angelic food,  
 Their very garments sacred, old yet new,  
 And Time forbid to touch them as he flew,  
 Streams, swell'd above the bank, enjoin'd to stand,  
 While they pass'd through to their appointed land ;  
 Their leader arm'd with meekness, zeal, and love,  
 And graced with clear credentials from above ;  
 Themselves secured beneath the Almighty wing ;  
 Their God their captain,\* lawgiver, and king ;  
 Crown'd with a thousand victories, and at last  
 Lords of the conquer'd soil, there rooted fast,  
 In peace possessing what they won by war,  
 Their name far publish'd, and revered as far ;  
 Where will you find a race like theirs, endow'd  
 With all that man e'er wished, or heaven bestow'd ?

They, and they only, amongst all mankind,  
 Received the transcript of the Eternal Mind,  
 Were trusted with His own engraven laws,  
 And constituted guardians of His cause ;  
 Theirs were the prophets, theirs the priestly call,  
 And theirs by birth the Saviour of us all.  
 In vain the nations, that had seen them rise  
 With fierce and envious, yet admiring eyes,  
 Had sought to crush them, guarded as they were,  
 By power divine and skill that could not err.  
 Had they maintain'd allegiance firm and sure,  
 And kept the faith immaculate and pure,  
 Then the proud eagles of all-conquering Rome  
 Had found one city not to be o'ercome,

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\* Joshua v. 14.



## EXPOSTULATION.

And the twelve standards of the tribes unfurl'd  
 Had bid defiance to the warring world.  
 But grace abused brings forth the foulest deeds,  
 As richest soil the most luxuriant weeds ;  
 Cured of the golden calves, their fathers' sin,  
 They set up self, that idol god within ;  
 View'd a Deliverer with disdain and hate,  
 Who left them still a tributary state ;  
 Seized fast His hand, held out to set them free  
 From a worse yoke, and nail'd it to the tree.  
 -There was the consummation and the crown,  
 The flower of Israel's infamy full blown ;  
 Thence date their sad declension, and their fall,  
 Their woes, not yet repeal'd ; thence date them all.

Thus fell the best instructed in her day,  
 And the most favour'd land, look where we may.  
 Philosophy indeed on Grecian eyes  
 Had pour'd the day, and cleared the Roman skies ;  
 In other climes perhaps creative art,  
 With power surpassing theirs, perform'd her part ;  
 Might give more life to marble, or might fill  
 The glowing tablets with a juster skill ;  
 Might shine in fable, and grace idle themes,  
 With all the embroidery of poetic dreams :  
 'Twas theirs alone to dive into the plan  
 That truth and mercy had reveal'd to man ;  
 And while the world beside, that plan unknown,  
 Deified useless wood or senseless stone,  
 They breathed in faith their well-directed prayers,  
 And the true God, the God of truth, was theirs.

Their glory faded, and their race dispersed,  
 The last of nations now, though once the first,  
 "They warn and teach the proudest, would they learn,  
 Keep wisdom, or meet vengeance in your turn :  
 If we escaped not, if Heaven spared not us,  
 Peel'd, scatter'd, and exterminated thus ;  
 If Vice received her retribution due,  
 When we were visited, what hope for you ?"  
 When God arises with an awful frown,  
 To punish lust, or pluck presumption down ;  
 When gifts perverted, or not duly prized,  
 Pleasure o'ervalued, and His grace despised ;  
 Provoke the vengeance of His righteous hand  
 To pour down wrath upon a thankless land ;  
 He will be found impartially severe,  
 Too just to wink, or speak the guilty clear.  
 O Israel, of all nations most undone !  
 Thy diadem displaced, thy sceptre gone,

Thy temple, once thy glory, fall'n and razed,  
 And thou a worshipper e'en where thou may'st ;  
 Thy services, once holy without spot,  
 Mere shadows now, their ancient pomp forgot ;  
 Thy Levites, once a consecrated host,  
 No longer Levites, and their lineage lost,  
 And thou thyself o'er every country sown,  
 With none on earth that thou canst call thine own ;  
 Cry aloud, thou that sittest in the dust,  
 Cry to the proud, the cruel, and unjust,  
 Knock at the gates of nations, rouse their fears,  
 Say wrath is coming, and the storm appears ;  
 But raise the shrillest cry in British ears.

What ails thee, restless as the waves that roar,  
 And fling their foam against thy chalky shore ?  
 Mistress, at least while Providence shall please,  
 And trident-bearing queen of the wide seas,—  
 Why, having kept good faith, and often shown  
 Friendship and truth to others, find'st thou none ?  
 Thou that hast set the persecuted free,  
 None interposes now to succour thee.  
 Countries indebted to thy power, that shine  
 With light derived from thee, would smother thine ;  
 Thy very children watch for thy disgrace,  
 A lawless brood, and curse thee to thy face ;  
 Thy rulers load thy credit, year by year,  
 With sums Peruvian mines could never clear,  
 As if, like arches built with skilful hand,  
 The more 'twere press'd the firmer it would stand.  
 The cry in all thy ships is still the same,  
 Speed us away to battle and to fame !  
 Thy mariners explore the wild expanse,  
 Impatient to descry the flags of France :  
 But, though they fight, as thine have ever fought,  
 Return ashamed without the wreaths they sought.  
 Thy senate is a scene of civil jar,  
 Chaos of contrarieties at war,  
 Where sharp and solid, phlegmatic and light,  
 Discordant atoms meet, ferment, and fight ;  
 Where Obstinacy takes his sturdy stand,  
 To disconcert what Policy has plann'd ;  
 Where Policy is busied all night long  
 In setting right what Faction has set wrong ;  
 Where flails of oratory thresh the floor,  
 That yields them chaff and dust, and nothing more.  
 Thy rack'd inhabitants repine, complain,  
 Tax'd till the brow of Labour sweats in vain ;  
 War lays a burden on the reeling state,



## EXPOSTULATION.

And peace does nothing to relieve the weight;  
 Successive loads succeeding broils impose,  
 And sighing millions prophesy the close.

Is adverse Providence, when ponder'd well,  
 So dimly writ or difficult to spell,  
 Thou canst not read with readiness and ease  
 Providence adverse in events like these?  
 Know then, that heavenly wisdom on this ball  
 Creates, gives birth to, guides, consummates all;  
 That, while laborious and quick-thoughted man  
 Snuffs up the praise of what he seems to plan,  
 He first conceives, then perfects his design,  
 As a mere instrument in hands divine:  
 Blind to the working of that secret power  
 That balances the wings of every hour,  
 The busy trifler dreams himself alone,  
 Frames many a purpose, and God works his own.  
 States thrive or wither as moons wax and wane,  
 Even as His will and His decrees ordain;  
 While honour, virtue, piety, bear sway,  
 They flourish; and, as these decline, decay.  
 In just resentment of His injured laws,  
 He pours contempt on them and on their cause;  
 Strikes the rough thread of error right athwart  
 The web of every scheme they have at heart;  
 Bids rottenness invade and bring to dust  
 The pillars of support in which they trust,  
 And do His errand of disgrace and shame  
 On the chief strength and glory of the frame.  
 None ever yet impeded what He wrought,  
 None bars Him out from his most secret thought;  
 Darkness itself before His eye is light,  
 And Hell's close mischief naked in His sight.  
 Stand now and judge thyself.—Hast thou incurr'd  
 His anger who can waste thee with a word,  
 Who poises and proportions sea and land,  
 Weighing them in the hollow of His hand,  
 And in whose awful sight all nations seem  
 As grasshoppers, as dust, a drop, a dream?  
 Hast thou (a sacrilege His soul abhors)  
 Claim'd all the glory of thy prosperous wars,  
 Proud of thy fleets and armies, stolen the gem  
 Of His just praise to lavish it on them?  
 Hast thou not learn'd, what thou art often told,  
 A truth still sacred, and believed of old,  
 That no success attends on spears and swords  
 Unbless'd, and that the battle is the Lord's?  
 That Courage in his creature; and Dismay

The post, that at His bidding speeds away,  
 Ghastly in feature, and his stammering tongue  
 With doleful rumour and sad presage hung,  
 To quell the valour of the stoutest heart,  
 And teach the combatants a woman's part ?  
 That He bids thousands fly when none pursue,  
 Saves as He will, by many or by few,  
 And claims for ever, as His royal right,  
 The event and sure decision of the fight ?

Hast thou, though suckled at fair Freedom's breast,  
 Exported slavery to the conquer'd East ?  
 Pull'd down the tyrants India served with dread,  
 And raised thyself, a greater, in their stead ?  
 Gone thither arm'd and hungry, return'd full,  
 Fed from the richest veins of the Mogul,  
 A despot big with power obtain'd by wealth,  
 And that obtain'd by rapine and by stealth ?  
 With Asiatic vices stored thy mind,  
 And left their virtues and thine own behind,  
 And, having truck'd thy soul, brought home the fee,  
 To tempt the poor to sell himself to thee ?

Hast thou by statute shoved from its design\*  
 The Saviour's feast, His own blest bread and wine,  
 And made the symbols of atoning grace  
 An office-key, a picklock to a place,  
 That infidels may prove their title good  
 By an oath dipp'd in sacramental blood ?  
 A blot that will be still a blot, in spite  
 Of all that grave apologists may write,  
 And though a bishop's toil to cleanse the stain,  
 He wipes and scours the silver cup in vain.  
 And hast thou sworn on every slight pretence,  
 Till perjuries are common as bad pence,  
 While thousands, careless of the damning sin,  
 Kiss the book's outside, who ne'er look within ?

Hast thou, when Heaven has clothed thee with disgrace,  
 And, long provoked, repaid thee to thy face,  
 (For thou hast known eclipses, and endured  
 Dimness and anguish, all thy beams obscured,  
 When sin has shed dishonour on thy brow ;  
 And never of a sabler hue than now ;)  
 Hast thou with heart perverse and conscience sear'd,

\* The Test Act, by which all persons holding any position of trust, civil or military, were obliged to receive the Holy Communion according to the usage of the Church of England. It was meant to exclude the Roman Catholics from office, and was repealed in 1828.

† Warburton, who wrote an essay called "The Necessity and Equity of a Test Law."

## EXPOSTULATION.

Despising all rebuke, still persevered;  
 And having chosen evil, scorn'd the voice  
 That cried Repent! and gloried in thy choice?  
 Thy fastings, when calamity at last  
 Suggests the expedient of a yearly fast,  
 What mean they? Canst thou dream there is a power  
 In lighter diet at a later hour,  
 To charm to sleep the threatening of the skies,  
 And hide past folly from all-seeing eyes?  
 The fast that wins deliverance, and suspends  
 The stroke that a vindictive God intends,  
 Is to renounce hypocrisy; to draw  
 Thy life upon the pattern of the law;  
 To war with pleasure, idolised before;  
 To vanquish lust, and wear its yoke no more.  
 All fasting else, whate'er be the pretence,  
 Is wooing mercy by renew'd offence.

Hast thou within thee sin, that in old time  
 Brought fire from heaven, the sex-abusing crime,  
 Whose horrid perpetration stamps disgrace  
 Baboons are free from, upon human race?  
 Think on the fruitful and well-water'd spot  
 That fed the flocks and herds of wealthy Lot,  
 Where Paradise seem'd still vouchsafed on earth,  
 Burning and scorch'd into perpetual dearth;  
 Or, in his words who damn'd the base desire,  
 Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire:  
 Then Nature injured, scandalised, defiled,  
 Unveil'd her blushing cheek, look'd on and smiled;  
 Beheld with joy the lovely scene defaced,  
 And praised the wrath that laid her beauties waste.

Far be the thought from any verse of mine,  
 And farther still the form'd and fix'd design,  
 To thrust the charge of deeds that I detest  
 Against an innocent unconscious breast;  
 The man that dares traduce, because he can  
 With safety to himself, is not a man.  
 An individual is a sacred mark,  
 Not to be pierc'd in play, or in the dark;  
 But public censure speaks a public foe,  
 Unless a zeal for virtue guide the blow.

The priestly brotherhood, devout, sincere,  
 From mean self-interest and ambition clear,  
 Their hope in Heaven, servility their scorn,  
 Prompt to persuade, expostulate, and warn,  
 Their wisdom pure, and given them from above,  
 Their usefulness ensured by zeal and love,  
 As meek as the man Moses, and withal

As bold as, in Agrippa's presence, Paul,  
Should fly the world's contaminating touch,  
Holy and unpolluted :—Are thine such ?  
Except a few with Eli's spirit blest,  
Hophni and Phinehas may describe the rest.

Where shall a teacher look, in days like these,  
For ears and hearts that he can hope to please ?  
Look to the poor—the simple and the plain  
Will hear perhaps thy salutary strain :  
Humility is gentle, apt to learn,  
Speak but the word, will listen and return.  
Alas, not so ! the poorest of the flock  
Are proud, and set their faces as a rock :  
Denied that earthly opulence they choose,  
God's better gift they scoff at and refuse.  
The rich, the produce of a nobler stem,  
Are more intelligent at least,—try them.  
Oh vain inquiry ! they without remorse  
Are altogether gone a devious course,  
Where beckoning Pleasure leads them, wildly stray ;  
Have burst the bands, and cast the yoke away.

Now, borne upon the wings of truth sublime,  
Review thy dim original and prime.  
This island spot of unreclaim'd rude earth,  
The cradle that received thee at thy birth,  
Was rock'd by many a rough Norwegian blast,  
And Danish howlings scared thee as they pass'd ;  
For thou wast born amid the din of arms,  
And suck'd a breast that panted with alarms.  
While yet thou wast a grovelling, puling chit,  
Thy bones not fashion'd, and thy joints not knit,  
The Roman taught thy stubborn knee to bow,  
Though twice a Cæsar could not bend thee now ;  
His victory was that of orient light,  
When the sun's shafts disperse the gloom of night.  
Thy language at this distant moment shows  
How much the country to the conqueror owes ;  
Expressive, energetic, and refined,  
It sparkles with the gems he left behind.  
He brought thy land a blessing when he came,  
He found thee savage, and he left thee tame ;  
Taught thee to clothe thy pink'd and painted hide,  
And grac'd thy figure with a soldier's pride ;  
He sow'd the seeds of order where he went,  
Improv'd thee far beyond his own intent,  
And while he ruled thee by the sword alone,  
Made thee at last a warrior like his own.  
Religion, if in heavenly truths attir'd,



Needs only to be seen to be admired ;  
 But thine, as dark as witcheries of the night,  
 Was form'd to harden hearts and shock the sight ;  
 Thy Druids struck the well-strung harps they bore  
 With fingers deeply dyed in human gore ;  
 And while the victim slowly bled to death,  
 Upon the tolling chords rung out his dying breath.

Who brought the lamp that with awaking beams  
 Dispell'd thy gloom, and broke away thy dreams,  
 Tradition, now decrepit, and worn out,  
 Babbler of ancient fables, leaves a doubt ;  
 But still light reach'd thee ; and those gods of thine,  
 Woden and Thor, each tottering in his shrine,  
 Fell, broken and defaced, at his own door,  
 As Dagon in Philistia long before.  
 But Rome with sorceries and magic wand  
 Soon raised a cloud that darken'd every land ;  
 And thine was smother'd in the stench and fog  
 Of Tiber's marshes and the Papal bog.  
 Then priests with bulls and briefs, and shaven crowns,  
 And gripping fists and unrelenting frowns,  
 Legates and delegates with powers from hell,  
 Though heavenly in pretension, fleeced thee well ;  
 And to this hour, to keep it fresh in mind,  
 Some twigs of that old scourge are left behind.\*  
 Thy soldiery, the Pope's well-managed pack,  
 Were train'd beneath his lash, and knew the smack,  
 And when he laid them on the scent of blood,  
 Would hunt a Saracen through fire and flood.  
 Lavish of life, to win an empty tomb,  
 That proved a mint of wealth, a mine to Rome,  
 They left their bones beneath unfriendly skies,  
 His worthless absolution all the prize.  
 Thou wast the veriest slave in days of yore,  
 That ever dragg'd a chain or tugg'd an oar ;  
 Thy monarchs arbitrary, fierce, unjust,  
 Themselves the slaves of bigotry or lust,  
 Disdain'd thy counsels, only in distress  
 Found thee a goodly sponge for Power to press.  
 Thy chiefs, the lords of many a petty fee,  
 Provoked and harass'd, in return plagued thee ;  
 Call'd thee away from peaceable employ,  
 Domestic happiness and rural joy,  
 To waste thy life in arms, or lay it down  
 In causeless feuds and bickerings of their own.  
 Thy Parliaments adored on bended knees

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\* Which may be found at Doctors' Commons.—C.

The sovereignty they were convened to please;  
 Whate'er was ask'd, too timid to resist,  
 Complied with, and were graciously dismiss'd;  
 And if some Spartan soul a doubt express'd,  
 And blushing at the tameness of the rest,  
 Dared to suppose the subject had a choice,  
 He was a traitor by the general voice.  
 Oh slave! with powers thou didst not dare exert,  
 Verse cannot stoop so low as thy desert!  
 It shakes the sides of splenetic Disdain,  
 Thou self-entitled ruler of the main,  
 To trace thee to the date when yon fair sea,  
 That clips thy shores, had no such charms for thee;  
 When other nations flew from coast to coast,  
 And thou had'st neither fleet nor flag to boast.

Kneel now, and lay thy forehead in the dust!  
 Blush if thou canst; not petrified thou must:  
 Act but an honest and a faithful part;  
 Compare what then thou wast with what thou art;  
 And God's disposing providence confess'd,  
 Obduracy itself must yield the rest.—  
 Then art thou bound to serve Him, and to prove,  
 Hour after hour, thy gratitude and love.

Has He not hid thee and thy favour'd land.  
 For ages, safe beneath His sheltering hand,  
 Given thee His blessing on the clearest proof,  
 Bid nations leagued against thee stand aloof.  
 And charged Hostility and Hate to roar  
 Where else they would, but not upon thy shore?  
 His power secured thee, when presumptuous Spain  
 Baptized her fleet Invincible in vain;  
 Her gloomy monarch, doubtful and resign'd  
 To every pang that racks an anxious mind,  
 Ask'd of the waves that broke upon his coast,  
 What tidings? and the surge replied—All lost!  
 And when the Stuart,\* leaning on the Scot,  
 Then too much fear'd, and now too much forgot,  
 Pierced to the very centre of the realm,†  
 And hoped to seize his abdicated helm,  
 'Twas but to prove how quickly, with a frown,  
 He that had raised thee could have pluck'd thee down.  
 Peculiar is the grace by thee possess'd,  
 Thy foes implacable, thy land at rest;  
 Thy thunders travel over earth and seas,  
 And all at home is pleasure, wealth, and ease.  
 'Tis thus, extending His tempestuous arm,

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\* Prince Charles Edward.

† Derby.

Of what He gives unsparing and profuse,  
Secure the favour and enhance the joy,  
That thankless waste and wild abuse destroy.

But above all reflect, how cheap soe'er  
Those rights that millions envy thee appear,  
And though resolved to risk them, and swim down  
The tide of pleasure, heedless of his frown,  
That blessings truly sacred, and when given,  
Mark'd with the signature and stamp of Heaven,  
The word of prophecy, those truths divine  
Which make that Heaven, if thou desire it, thine,  
(Awful alternative ! believed, beloved,  
Thy glory—and thy shame if unapproved,)  
Are never long vouchsafed, if push'd aside  
With cold disgust or philosophic pride ;  
And that judicially withdrawn, disgrace,  
Error, and darkness occupy their place.

A world is up in arms, and thou, a spot  
Not quickly found if negligently sought,  
Thy soul as ample as thy bounds are small,  
Endurest the brunt, and darest defy them all ;  
And wilt thou join to this bold enterprise  
A bolder still, a contest with the skies ?  
Remember, if He guard thee, and secure,  
Whoe'er assails thee, thy success is sure ;  
But if He leave thee, though the skill and power  
Of nations, sworn to spoil thee and devour,  
Were all collected in thy single arm,  
And thou could'st laugh away the fear of harm,  
That strength would fail, opposed against the push  
And feeble onset of a pigmy rush.

Say not (and if the thought of such defence  
Should spring within thy bosom, drive it thence)  
What nation amongst all my foes, is free  
From crimes as base as any charg'd on me ?  
Their measure fill'd, they too shall pay the debt,  
Which God, though long forborne, will not forget.  
But know that wrath divine, when most severe,  
Makes justice still the guide of his career,  
And will not punish in one mingled crowd,  
Them without light, and thee without a cloud.

Muse, hang this harp upon yon aged beech,  
Still murmuring with the solemn truths I teach ;  
And while at intervals a cold blast sings  
Through the dry leaves, and pants upon the strings,  
My soul shall sigh in secret, and lament  
A nation scourg'd, yet tardy to repent.  
I know the warning song is sung in vain,

That few will hear, and fewer heed the strain :  
But if a sweeter voice, and one design'd  
A blessing to my country and mankind,  
Reclaim the wandering thousands, and bring home  
A flock so scatter'd and so wont to roam,  
Then place it once again between my knees ;  
The sound of truth will then be sure to please ;  
And truth alone, where'er my life be cast,  
In scenes of plenty, or the pining waste,  
Shall be my chosen theme, my glory to the last.



But still the imputed tints are those alone  
 The medium represents, and not their own.  
 To rise at noon, sit slipshod and undress'd,  
 To read the news, or fiddle, as seems best,  
 Till half the world comes rattling at his door,  
 To fill the dull vacuity till four;  
 And just when evening turns the blue vault gray,  
 To spend two hours in dressing for the day;  
 To make the Sun a bauble without use,  
 Save for the fruits his heavenly beams produce;  
 Quite to forget, or deem it worth no thought,  
 Who bids him shine, or if he shine or not;  
 Through mere necessity to close his eyes  
 Just when the larks and when the shepherds rise;  
 Is such a life, so tediously the same,  
 So void of all utility or aim,  
 That poor Jonquil, with almost every breath,  
 Sighs for his exit, vulgarly call'd death:  
 For he, with all his follies, has a mind  
 Not yet so blank, or fashionably blind,  
 But now and then perhaps a feeble ray  
 Of distant wisdom shoots across his way,  
 By which he reads, that life without a plan,  
 As useless as the moment it began,  
 Serves merely as a soil for discontent  
 To thrive in; an incumbrance ere half svent.  
 Oh! weariness beyond what asses feel,  
 That tread the circuit of the cistern wheel;  
 A dull rotation, never at a stay,  
 Yesterday's face twin image of to-day,  
 While conversation, an exhausted stock,  
 Grows drowsy as the clicking of a clock.  
 No need, he cries, of gravity stuff'd out  
 With academic dignity devout,  
 To read wise lectures, vanity the text;  
 Proclaim the remedy, ye learned, next;  
 For truth self-evident, with pomp impress'd  
 Is vanity surpassing all the rest.  
 That remedy, not hid in deeps profound,  
 Yet seldom sought where only to be found,  
 While passion turns aside from its due scope  
 The inquirer's aim, that remedy is Hope.  
 Life is His gift, from whom whate'er life needs,  
 With every good and perfect gift, proceeds;  
 Bestow'd on man, like all that we partake,  
 Royally, freely, for His bounty's sake;  
 Transient, indeed, as is the fleeting hour,  
 And yet the seed of an immortal flower,

Design'd in honour of His endless love,  
 To fill with fragrance His abode above ;  
 No trifle, howsoever short it seem,  
 And, howsoever shadowy, no dream ;  
 Its value, what no thought can ascertain,  
 Nor all an angel's eloquence explain.

Men deal with life as children with their play,  
 Who first misuse, then cast their toys away ;  
 Live to no sober purpose, and contend  
 That their Creator had no serious end.  
 When God and man stand opposite in view,  
 Man's disappointment must, of course, ensue.  
 The just Creator condescends to write,  
 In beams of inextinguishable light,  
 His names of wisdom, goodness, power, and love,  
 On all that blooms below, or shines above,  
 To catch the wandering notice of mankind,  
 And teach the world, if not perversely blind,  
 His gracious attributes, and prove the share  
 His offspring hold in His paternal care.  
 If, led from earthly things to things divine,  
 His creature thwart not His august design,  
 Then praise is heard instead of reasoning pride,  
 And captious cavil and complaint subside.  
 Nature, employ'd in her allotted place,  
 Is handmaid to the purposes of Grace ;  
 By good vouchsafed makes known superior good,  
 And bliss not seen by blessings understood :  
 That bliss, reveal'd in Scripture, with a glow  
 Bright as the covenant-ensuring bow,  
 Fires all his feelings with a noble scorn  
 Of sensual evil, and thus Hope is born.

Hope sets the stamp of vanity on all  
 That men have deem'd substantial since the fall,  
 Yet has the wondrous virtue to educe  
 From emptiness itself a real use ;  
 And while she takes, as at a father's hand,  
 What health and sober appetite demand,  
 From fading good derives, with chemic art,  
 That lasting happiness, a thankful heart.  
 Hope with uplifted foot set free from earth,  
 Pants for the place of her ethereal birth,  
 On steady wings sails through the immense abyss,  
 Plucks amaranthine joys from bowers of bliss,  
 And crowns the soul, while yet a mourner here,  
 With wreaths like those triumphant spirits wear.  
 Hope, as an anchor, firm and sure, holds fast  
 The Christian vessel, and defies the blast.

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Hope ! nothing else can nourish and secure  
 His new-born virtues, and preserve him pure ;  
 Hope ! let the wretch, once conscious of the joy,  
 Whom now despairing agonies destroy,  
 Speak, for he can, and none so well as he,  
 What treasures centre, what delights in thee.  
 Had he the gems, the spices, and the land  
 That boasts the treasure, all at his command,  
 The fragrant grove, the inestimable mine,  
 Were light, when weigh'd against one smile of thine.

Though, clasp'd and cradled in his nurse's arms  
 He shines with all a cherub's artless charms,  
 Man is the genuine offspring of revolt,  
 Stubborn and sturdy, a wild ass's colt ;  
 His passions, like the watery stores that sleep  
 Beneath the smiling surface of the deep,  
 Wait but the lashes of a wintry storm,  
 To frown and roar, and shake his feeble form.  
 From infancy through childhood's giddy maze,  
 Froward at school, and fretful in his plays,  
 The puny tyrant burns to subjugate  
 The free republic of the whip-gig state.  
 If one, his equal in athletic frame,  
 Or, more provoking still, of nobler name,  
 Dare step across his arbitrary views,  
 An Iliad, only not in verse, ensues :  
 The little Greeks look trembling at the scales,  
 Till the best tongue, or heaviest hand prevails.

Now see him launch'd into the world at large ;  
 If priest, supinely droning o'er his charge,  
 Their fleece his pillow, and his weekly drawl,  
 Though short, too long, the price he pays for all.  
 If lawyer, loud whatever cause he plead,  
 But proudest of the worst, if that succeed.  
 Perhaps a grave physician, gathering fees,  
 Punctually paid for lengthening out disease ;  
 No Corron,\* whose humanity sheds rays  
 That make superior skill his second praise.  
 If arms engage him, he devotes to sport  
 His date of life, so likely to be short ;  
 A soldier may be anything, if brave,  
 So may a tradesman, if not quite a knave.  
 Such stuff the world is made of ; and mankind,  
 To passion, interest, pleasure, whim, resign'd,

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\* Dr. Nathaniel Cotton, author of the "Visions in Verse." He kept a lunatic asylum at St. Alban's, in which Cowper was cured of his first attack of insanity.

Insist on, as if each were his own Pope,  
 Forgiveness and the privilege of hope ;  
 But Conscience, in some awful silent hour,  
 When captivating lusts have lost their power,  
 Perhaps when sickness, or some fearful dream,  
 Reminds him of religion, hated theme !  
 Starts from the down, on which she lately slept,  
 And tells of laws despised, at least not kept,  
 Shews with a pointing finger, but no noise,  
 A pale procession of past sinful joys,  
 All witnesses of blessings foully scorn'd,  
 A life abused, and not to be suborn'd.  
 " Mark these," she says ; " these, summon'd from afar,  
 Begin their march to meet thee at the bar ;  
 There find a Judge, inexorably just,  
 And perish there, as all presumption must."

Peace be to those (such peace as earth can give)  
 Who live in pleasure, dead even while they live ;  
 Born capable indeed of heavenly truth,  
 But down to latest age, from earliest youth,  
 Their mind a wilderness through want of care,  
 The plough of wisdom never entering there.  
 Peace (if insensibility may claim  
 A right to the meek honours of her name)  
 To men of pedigree ; their noble race,  
 Emulous always of the nearest place  
 To any throne, except the throne of grace ;  
 Let cottagers and unenlighten'd swains  
 Revere the laws they dream that Heaven ordains,  
 Resort on Sundays to the house of prayer,  
 And ask, and fancy they find, blessings there ;  
 Themselves, perhaps, when weary they retreat  
 To enjoy cool nature in a country seat,  
 To exchange the centre of a thousand trades,  
 For clumps, and lawns, and temples, and cascades,  
 May now and then their velvet cushions take,  
 And seem to pray, for good example sake ;  
 Judging, in charity no doubt, the town  
 Pious enough, and having need of none.  
 Kind souls ! to teach their tenantry to prize  
 What they themselves, without remorse, despise :  
 Nor hope have they, nor fear, of aught to come,  
 As well for them had prophecy been dumb ;  
 They could have held the conduct they pursue,  
 Had Paul of Tarsus lived and died a Jew ;  
 And truth, proposed to reasoners wise as they,  
 Is a pearl cast—completely cast away.  
 They die.—Death lends them, pleased and as in sport,



All the grim honours of his ghastly court.  
 Far other paintings grace the chamber now,  
 Where late we saw the mimic landscape glow :  
 The busy heralds hang the sable scene  
 With mournful 'scutcheons, and dim lamps between ;  
 Proclaim their titles to the crowd around,  
 But they that wore them move not at the sound ;  
 The coronet, placed idly at their head,  
 Adds nothing now to the degraded dead,  
 And even the star that glitters on the bier,  
 Can only say—Nobility lies here.  
 Peace to all such !—'twere pity to offend  
 By useless censure whom we cannot mend ;  
 Life without hope can close but in despair,  
 'Twas there we found them, and must leave them there.

As when two pilgrims in a forest stray,  
 Both may be lost, yet each in his own way ;  
 So fares it with the multitudes beguiled  
 In vain opinion's waste and dangerous wild ;  
 Ten thousand rove the brakes and thorns among,  
 Some eastward, and some westward, and all wrong.  
 But here, alas ! the fatal difference lies,  
 Each man's belief is right in his own eyes ;  
 And he that blames what they have blindly chose  
 Incurs resentment for the love he shows.

Say, botanist ! within whose province fall  
 The cedar and the hyssop on the wall,  
 Of all that deck the lanes, the fields, the bowers,  
 What parts the kindred tribes of weeds and flowers ?  
 Sweet scent, or lovely form, or both combined,  
 Distinguish every cultivated kind ;  
 The want of both denotes a meaner breed,  
 And Chloe from her garland picks the weed.  
 Thus hopes of every sort, whatever sect  
 Esteem them, sow them, rear them, and protect.  
 If wild in nature, and not duly found,  
 Gethsemane ! in thy dear hallow'd ground,  
 That cannot bear the blaze of Scripture light,  
 Nor cheer the spirit, nor refresh the sight,  
 Nor animate the soul to Christian deeds,  
 (Oh, cast them from thee !) are weeds, arrant weeds.

Ethelred's house, the centre of six ways,  
 Diverging each from each, like equal rays,  
 Himself as bountiful as April rains,  
 Lord paramount of the surrounding plains,  
 Would give relief of bed and board to none,  
 But guests that sought it in the appointed ONE ;  
 And they might enter at his open door,

E'en till his spacious hall would hold no more.  
He sent a servant forth by every road,  
To sound his horn, and publish it abroad,  
That all might mark—knight, menial, high, and low,  
An ordinance it concern'd them much to know.  
If, after all, some headstrong hardy lout  
Would disobey, though sure to be shut out,  
Could he with reason murmur at his case,  
Himself sole author of his own disgrace?  
No! the decree was just, and without flaw,  
And he that made had right to make the law;  
His sovereign power and pleasure unrestrain'd,  
The wrong was his who wrongfully complain'd.

Yet half mankind maintain a churlish strife  
With Him, the Donor of eternal life,  
Because the deed, by which His love confirms  
The largess He bestows, prescribes the terms.  
Compliance with His will your lot ensures,  
Accept it only, and the boon is yours:  
And sure it is as kind to smile and give,  
As with a frown to say, "Do this, and live."  
Love is not pedlar's trumpery, bought and sold,  
He will give freely, or He will withhold;  
His soul abhors a mercenary thought,  
And him as deeply who abhors it not.  
He stipulates indeed, but merely this,  
That man will freely take an unbought bliss,  
Will trust Him for a faithful generous part,  
Nor set a price upon a willing heart.  
Of all the ways that seem to promise fair  
To place you where His saints His presence share,  
This only can; for this plain cause, express'd  
In terms as plain, Himself has shut the rest.  
But oh the strife, the bickering, and debate,  
The tidings of unpurchased heaven create!  
The fluted fan, the bridle, and the toss,  
All speakers, yet all language at a loss.  
From stuccoed walls smart arguments rebound;  
And beaus, adepts in everything profound,  
Die of disdain, or whistle off the sound.  
Such is the clamour of rooks, daws, and kites,  
The explosion of the levell'd tube excites,  
Where mouldering abbey walls o'erhang the glade,  
And oaks coeval spread a mournful shade;  
The screaming nations, hovering in mid air,  
Loudly resent the stranger's freedom there,  
And seem to warn him never to repeat  
His bold intrusion on their dark retreat.

"Adieu," Vinosa cries, ere yet he sips  
 The purple bumper trembling at his lips,  
 "Adieu to all morality ! if Grace  
 Make works a vain ingredient in the case.  
 The Christian hope is—Waiter, draw the cork—  
 If I mistake not—Blockhead ! with a fork !  
 Without good works, whatever some may boast,  
 Mere folly and delusion—Sir, your toast.  
 My firm persuasion is, at least sometimes,  
 That Heaven will weigh man's virtues and his crimes  
 With nice attention in a righteous scale,  
 And save, or damn, as these or those prevail.  
 I plant my foot upon this ground of trust,  
 And silence every fear with—God is just.  
 But if perchance on some dull drizzling day  
 A thought intrude, that says, or seems to say,  
 If thus the important cause is to be tried,  
 Suppose the beam should dip on the wrong side?  
 I soon recover from these needless frights,  
 And, God is merciful !—sets all to rights.  
 Thus between justice, as my prime support,  
 And mercy, fled to as the last resort,  
 I glide and steal along with heaven in view,  
 And,—pardon me, the bottle stands with you."  
 "I never will believe," the Colonel cries,  
 "The sanguinary schemes that some devise,  
 Who make the good Creator, on their plan,  
 A being of less equity than man.  
 If appetite, or what divines call lust,  
 Which men comply with, even because they must,  
 Be punish'd with perdition, who is pure ?  
 Then theirs, no doubt, as well as mine, is sure.  
 If sentence of eternal pain belong  
 To every sudden slip and transient wrong,  
 Then Heaven enjoins the fallible and frail  
 A hopeless task, and damns them if they fail.  
 My creed, (whatever some creed-makers mean  
 By Athanasian nonsense, or Nicene,)  
 My creed is, he is safe that does his best,  
 And death's a doom sufficient for the rest."  
 "Right," says an Ensign ; "and for aught I see,  
 Your faith and mine substantially agree ;  
 The best of every man's performance here  
 Is to discharge the duties of his sphere.  
 A lawyer's dealings should be just and fair,  
 Honesty shines with great advantage there ;  
 Fasting and prayer sit well upon a priest,  
 A decent caution and reserve at least ;

A soldier's best is, courage in the field,  
 With nothing here that wants to be conceal'd ;  
 Manly deportment, gallant, easy, gay ;  
 A hand as liberal as the light of day :  
 The soldier thus endow'd, who never shrinks,  
 Nor closets up his thought whate'er he thinks,  
 Who scorns to do an injury by stealth,  
 Must go to heaven—and I must drink his health.  
 Sir Smug !" he cries, " (for lowest at the board,  
 Just made fifth chaplain of his patron lord,  
 His shoulders witnessing by many a shrug  
 How much his feelings suffer'd, sat Sir Smug.)  
 " Your office is to winnow false from true ;  
 Come, prophet, drink, and tell us—What think you ?"  
 Sighing and smiling as he takes his glass,  
 Which they that woo preferment rarely pass,  
 " Fallible man," the church-bred youth replies,  
 " Is still found fallible, however wise ;  
 And differing judgments serve but to declare,  
 That truth lies somewhere, if we knew but where.  
 Of all it ever was my lot to read,  
 Of critics now alive or long since dead,  
 The book of all the world that charm'd me most  
 Was,—well-a-day, the title-page was lost,—  
 The writer well remarks, a heart that knows  
 To take with gratitude what Heaven bestows,  
 With prudence always ready at our call,  
 To guide our use of it, is all in all.  
 Doubtless it is. To which, of my own store,  
 I superadd a few essentials more ;  
 But these, excuse the liberty I take,  
 I waive just now, for conversation sake."—  
 Spoke like an oracle, they all exclaim,  
 And add Right Reverend to Smug's honour'd name.  
 And yet our lot is given us in a land  
 Where busy arts are never at a stand ;  
 Where Science points her telescopic eye,  
 Familiar with the wonders of the sky ;  
 Where bold Inquiry, diving out of sight,  
 Brings many a precious pearl of truth to light ;  
 Where nought eludes the persevering quest  
 That fashion, taste, or luxury suggest.  
 But, above all, in her own light array'd,  
 See Mercy's grand apocalypse display'd !  
 The sacred book no longer suffers wrong,  
 Bound in the fetters of an unknown tongue,  
 But speaks with plainness art could never mend,  
 What simplest minds can soonest comprehend.

God gives the word, the preachers throng around,  
 Live from His lips, and spread the glorious sound :  
 That sound bespeaks Salvation on her way,  
 The trumpet of a life-restoring day ;  
 'Tis heard where England's eastern glory shines,  
 And in the gulfs of her Cornubian mines,  
 And still it spreads. See Germany send forth  
 Her sons\* to pour it on the farthest north :  
 Fired with a zeal peculiar, they defy  
 The rage and rigour of a polar sky,  
 And plant successfully sweet Sharon's rose  
 On icy plains and in eternal snows.

Oh, blest within the enclosure of your rocks,  
 Nor herds have ye to boast, nor bleating flocks ;  
 No fertilising streams your fields divide,  
 That show reversed the villas on their side ;  
 No groves have ye ; no cheerful sound of bird,  
 Or voice of turtle in your land is heard ;  
 Nor grateful eglantine regales the smell  
 Of those that walk at evening where ye dwell ;  
 But Winter, arm'd with terrors here unknown,  
 Sits absolute on his unshaken throne ;  
 Piles up his stores amidst the frozen waste,  
 And bids the mountains he has built stand fast ;  
 Beckons the legions of his storms away  
 From happier scenes, to make your land a prey  
 Proclaims the soil a conquest he has won,  
 And scorns to share it with the distant sun.  
 —Yet Truth is yours, remote unenvied isle !  
 And Peace, the genuine offspring of her smile ;  
 The pride of letter'd ignorance, that binds  
 In chains of error our accomplish'd minds,  
 That decks with all the splendour of the true,  
 A false religion, is unknown to you.  
 Nature indeed vouchsafes for our delight  
 The sweet vicissitudes of day and night ;  
 Soft airs and genial moisture feed and cheer  
 Field, fruit, and flower, and every creature here :  
 But brighter beams than his who fires the skies  
 Have risen at length on your admiring eyes,  
 That shoot into your darkest caves the day  
 From which our nicer optics turn away.  
 Here see the encouragement Grace gives to vice,  
 The dire effect of mercy without price !  
 What were they ? what some fools are made by art,

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\* The Moravian Missionaries in Greenland. See Krantz's "History of Greenland."

They were by nature atheists, head and heart.  
 The gross idolatry blind heathens teach  
 Was too refined for them, beyond their reach.  
 Not even the glorious sun, though men revere  
 The monarch most that seldom will appear,  
 And though his beams that quicken where they shine,  
 May claim some right to be esteem'd divine,—  
 Not even the sun, desirable as rare,  
 Could bend one knee, engage one votary there ;  
 They were, what base credulity believes  
 True Christians are, dissemblers, drunkards, thieves.  
 The full-gorged savage at his nauseous feast,  
 Spent half the darkness, and snored out the rest,—  
 Was one whom justice, on an equal plan  
 Denouncing death upon the sins of man,  
 Might almost have indulged with an escape,  
 Chargeable only with a human shape.

What are they now ?—Morality may spare  
 Her grave concern, her kind suspicions there.  
 The wretch that once sang wildly, danced, and laugh'd,  
 And suck'd in dizzy madness with his draught,  
 Has wept a silent flood, reversed his ways,  
 Is sober, meek, benevolent, and prays ;  
 Feeds sparingly, communicates his store,  
 Abhors the craft he boasted of before,  
 And he that stole has learn'd to steal no more.  
 Well spake the prophet, " Let the desert sing,  
 Where sprang the thorn the spiry fir shall spring,  
 And where unsightly and rank thistles grew,  
 Shall grow the myrtle and luxuriant yew."

Go now, and with important tone demand  
 On what foundation virtue is to stand,  
 If self-exalting claims be turn'd adrift,  
 And grace be grace indeed, and life a gift ;  
 The poor reclaim'd inhabitant, his eyes  
 Glistening at once with pity and surprise,  
 Amazed that shadows should obscure the sight  
 Of one whose birth was in a land of light,  
 Shall answer ; " Hope, sweet Hope, has set me free,  
 And made all pleasures else mere dross to me."

These, amidst scenes as waste as if denied  
 The common care that waits on all beside,  
 Wild as if nature there, void of all good,  
 Play'd only gambols in a frantic mood,  
 (Yet charge not heavenly skill with having plann'd  
 A plaything world, unworthy of his hand.)  
 Can see His love, though secret evil lurks  
 In all we touch, stamp'd plainly on His works ;

## HOPE.

Deem life a blessing with its numerous woes,  
 Nor spurn away a gift a God bestows.  
 Hard task indeed o'er arctic seas to roam !  
 Is hope exotic ? grows it not at home ?  
 Yes ; but an object bright as orient morn  
 May press the eye too closely to be borne ;  
 A distant virtue we can all confess,  
 It hurts our pride and moves our envy less.

Leuconomus\* (beneath well-sounding Greek  
 I slur a name a poet must not speak)  
 Stood pilloried on infamy's high stage,  
 And bore the pelting scorn of half an age ;  
 The very butt of slander, and the blot  
 For every dart that malice ever shot.  
 The man that mention'd *him* at once dismiss'd  
 All mercy from his lips, and sneer'd and hiss'd ;  
 His crimes were such as Sodom never knew,  
 And perjury stood up to swear all true ;  
 His aim was mischief and his zeal pretence,  
 His speech rebellion against common sense ;  
 A knave when tried on honesty's plain rule,  
 And when by that of reason, a mere fool ;  
 The world's best comfort was, his doom was pass'd,  
 Die when he might, he must be damn'd at last.

Now, Truth, perform thine office ; waft aside  
 The curtain drawn by prejudice and pride,  
 Reveal (the man is dead)† to wondering eyes  
 This more than monster in his proper guise.  
 He loved the world that hated him ; the tear  
 That dropp'd upon his Bible was sincere.  
 Assail'd by scandal and the tongue of strife,  
 His only answer was a blameless life,  
 And he that forged and he that threw the dart  
 Had each a brother's interest in his heart.  
 Paul's love of Christ, and steadiness unbribed,  
 Were copied close in him, and well transcribed ;  
 He follow'd Paul ; his zeal a kindred flame,  
 His apostolic charity the same,  
 Like him, cross'd cheerfully tempestuous seas,  
 Forsaking country, kindred, friends, and ease ;  
 Like him he labour'd, and like him, content  
 To bear it, suffer'd shame where'er he went.  
 Blush, Calumny ! and write upon his tomb,  
 If honest eulogy can spare thee room,

\* Whittfield, t celebrated preacher and friend of Wesley.

† He died in America in 1770.

Thy deep repentance of thy thousand lies,  
Which aim'd at him, have pierc'd the offended skies ;  
And say, Blot out my sin, confess'd, deplored,  
Against thine image in thy saint, O Lord !

No blinder bigot, I maintain it still,  
Than he who must have pleasure, come what will :  
He laughs, whatever weapon truth may draw,  
And deems her sharp artillery mere straw.  
Scripture indeed is plain, but God and he  
On Scripture ground are sure to disagree ;  
Some wiser rule must teach him how to live,  
Than that his Maker has seen fit to give,  
Supple and flexible as Indian cane,  
To take the bend his appetites ordain,  
Contriv'd to suit frail Nature's crazy case,  
And reconcile his lusts with saving grace.  
By this with nice precision of design,  
He draws upon life's map a zigzag line,  
That shews how far 'tis safe to follow sin,  
And where his danger and God's wrath begin.  
By this he forms, as pleased he sports along,  
His well-pois'd estimate of right and wrong ;  
And finds the modish manners of the day,  
Though loose, as harmless as an infant's play.

Build by whatever plan caprice decrees,  
With what materials, on what ground you please,  
Your hope shall stand unblamed, perhaps admired.  
If not that hope the Scripture has required :  
The strange conceits, vain projects, and wild dreams,  
With which hypocrisy for ever teems,  
(Though other follies strike the public eye  
And raise a laugh,) pass unmolested by ;  
But if, unblameable in word and thought,  
A MAN arise, a man whom God has taught,  
With all Elijah's dignity of tone,  
And all the love of the beloved John,  
To storm the citadels they build in air,  
And smite the untemper'd wall, 'tis death to spare,  
To sweep away all refuges of lies,  
And place, instead of quirks themselves devise,  
LAMA SABACHTHANI before their eyes,—  
To prove that without Christ all gain is loss,  
All hope despair, that stands not on His cross,—  
Except the few his God may have impress'd,  
A tenfold frenzy seizes all the rest.

Throughout mankind, the Christian kind at least,  
There dwells a consciousness in every breast,  
That folly ends where genuine hope begins.



And he that finds his heaven must lose his sins.  
 Nature opposes with her utmost force  
 This riving stroke, this ultimate divorce,  
 And while Religion seems to be her view,  
 Hates with a deep sincerity the true :  
 For this, of all that ever influenced man,  
 Since Abel worshipp'd, or the world began,  
 This only spares no lust, admits no plea,  
 But makes him, if at all, completely free ;  
 Sounds forth the signal, as she mounts her car,  
 Of an eternal, universal war ;  
 Rejects all treaty, penetrates all wiles,  
 Scorns with the same indifference frowns and smiles,  
 Drives through the realms of Sin, where Riot reels,  
 And grinds his crown beneath her burning wheels !  
 Hence all that is in man—pride, passion, art,  
 Powers of the mind, and feelings of the heart,  
 Insensible of Truth's almighty charms,  
 Starts at her first approach, and sounds to arms !  
 While Bigotry, with well-dissembled fears,  
 His eyes shut fast, his fingers in his ears,  
 Mighty to parry and push by God's word  
 With senseless noise, his argument the sword,  
 Pretends a zeal for godliness and grace,  
 And spits abhorrence in the Christian's face.

Parent of Hope, immortal Truth, make known  
 Thy deathless wreaths and triumphs all thine own !  
 The silent progress of thy power is such,  
 Thy means so feeble, and despised so much,  
 That few believe the wonders thou hast wrought,  
 And none can teach them but whom thou hast taught.  
 Oh ! see me sworn to serve thee, and command  
 A painter's skill into a poet's hand ;  
 That while I trembling trace a word divine,  
 Fancy may stand aloof from the design,  
 And light and shade and every stroke be thine.

If ever thou hast felt another's pain,  
 If ever when he sigh'd, hast sigh'd again,  
 If ever on thy eyelid stood a tear  
 That pity had engender'd, drop one here.  
 This man was happy, had the world's good word,  
 And with it every joy it can afford ;  
 Friendship and love seem'd tenderly at strife,  
 Which most should sweeten his untroubled life ;  
 Politely learn'd, and of a gentle race,  
 Good breeding and good sense gave all a grace,  
 And whether at the toilet of the fair  
 He laughed and trifled, made him welcome there ;

Or if in masculine debate he shared,  
Ensured him mute attention and regard.  
Alas, how changed ! Expressive of his mind,  
His eyes are sunk, arms folded, head reclined ;  
Those awful syllables—hell, death, and sin,  
Though whispered, plainly tell what works within,  
That conscience there performs her proper part,  
And writes a doomsday sentence on his heart,  
Forsaking, and forsaken of all friends,  
He now perceives where earthly pleasure ends ;  
Hard task for one who lately knew no care,  
And harder still as learnt beneath despair :  
His hours no longer pass unmark'd away,  
A dark importance saddens every day ;  
He hears the notice of the clock perplex'd,  
And cries, " Perhaps eternity strikes next ! "  
Sweet music is no longer music here,  
And laughter sounds like madness in his ear ;  
His grief the world of all her power disarms,  
Wine has no taste, and beauty has no charms :  
God's holy word, once trivial in his view,  
Now by the voice of his experience true,  
Seems, as it is, the fountain whence alone  
Must spring that hope he pants to make his own.  
Now let the bright reverse be known abroad ;  
Say man's a worm, and power belongs to God.  
As when a felon whom his country's laws  
Have justly doom'd for some atrocious cause,  
Expects in darkness and heart-chilling fears,  
The shameful close of all his mis-spent years,  
If chance, on heavy pinions slowly borne,  
A tempest usher in the dreaded morn,  
Upon his dungeon walls the lightnings play,  
The thunder seems to summon him away,  
The warder at the door his key applies,  
Shoots back the bolt, and all his courage dies :  
If then, just then, all thoughts of mercy lost,  
When hope, long lingering, at last yields the ghost,  
The sound of pardon pierce his startled ear,  
He drops at once his fetters and his fear,  
A transport glows in all he looks and speaks,  
And the first thankful tears bedew his cheeks.  
Joy, far superior joy, that much outweighs  
The comfort of a few poor added days,  
Invades, possesses, and o'erwhelms the soul  
Of him whom Hope has with a touch made whole ;  
'Tis heaven, all heaven descending on the wings  
Of the glad legions of the King of kings ;

'Tis more,—'tis God diffused through every part,  
 'Tis God Himself triumphant in his heart.  
 Oh, welcome now the sun's once hated light,  
 His noon-day beams were never half so bright.  
 Not kin 'red minds alone are call'd to employ  
 Their hours, their days, in listening to his joy,  
 Unconscious nature, all that he surveys,  
 Rocks, groves, and streams, must join him in his praise.

These are thy glorious works, eternal Truth,  
 The scoff of wither'd age and beardless youth;  
 These move the censure and illiberal grin  
 Of fools that hate thee and delight in sin;  
 But these shall last when night has quench'd the pole,  
 And heaven is all departed as a scroll:  
 And when, as justice has long since decreed,  
 This earth shall blaze, and a new world succeed,  
 Then these thy glorious works, and they who share  
 That hope which can alone exclude despair,  
 Shall live exempt from weakness and decay,  
 The brightest wonders of an endless day.

Happy the bard (if that fair name belong  
 To him that blends no fable with his song)  
 Whose lines uniting by an honest art,  
 The faithful monitor's and poet's part,  
 Seek to delight that they may mend mankind,  
 And while they captivate, inform the mind;  
 Still happier, if he till a thankful soil,  
 And fruit reward his honourable toil:  
 But happier far who comfort those that wait  
 To hear plain truth at Judah's hallow'd gate:  
 Their language simple, as their manners meek,  
 No shining ornaments have they to seek;  
 Nor labour they, nor time nor talents waste,  
 In sorting flowers to suit a fickle taste;  
 But while they speak the wisdom of the skies,  
 Which art can only darken and disguise,  
 The abundant harvest, recompense divine,  
 Repays their work,—the gleanings only mine.



# CHARITY.\*

## ARGUMENT.

Invocation to Charity—Social ties—Tribute to the humanity of Captain Cook—His character contrasted with that of Cortez, the conqueror of Mexico—Degradation of Spain—Purpose of commerce—Gifts of art—The slave-trade and slavery—Slavery unnatural and unchristian—The duty of abating the woes of that state, and of enlightening the mind of the slave, enforced—Apostrophe to Liberty—Charity of Howard—Pursuits of Philosophy Reason learns nothing aright without the lamp of Revelation—True charity the offspring of Divine truth—Supposed case of a blind nation and an optician—Portrait of Charity—Beauty of the Apostle's definition of it—Alms as the means of lulling conscience—Pride and ostentation—Character of satire—True charity inculcated—Christian charity should be universal—Happy effects that would result from universal charity.

\* The following rhyming epistle from Cowper to Newton explains his views in writing "Charity:"—

July 12, 1781.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—I am going to send, what when you have read, you may scratch your head, and say, I suppose, there's nobody knows whether what I have got be verse or not;—by the tune and the time, it ought to be rhyme, but if it be, did you ever see, of late or of yore, such a ditty before?

I have writ *Charity*, not for popularity, but as well as I could, in hopes to do good; and if the reviewer should say "To be sure, the gentleman's muse wears Methodist shoes, you may know by his pace and talk about grace, that she and her bard have little regard for the taste and fashions, and ruling passions, and hoydening play, of the modern day; and though she assume a borrowed plume, and now and then wear a tittering air, 'tis only her plan to catch if she can, the giddy and gay, as they go that way, by a pro- duction on a new construction; she has baited her trap in hopes to snap all that may come with a sugar-plum." His opinion in this will not be amiss; 'tis what I intend, my principal end, and if I succeed, and folks should read, till a few are brought to a serious thought, I shall think I am paid for all I have said and all I have done, though I have run, many a time, after a rhyme, as far as from hence to the end of my sense, and by hook or by crook write another book, if I live and am here, another year.

I have heard before, of a room with a floor, laid upon springs and such like things, with so much art, in every part, that when you went in, you were forced to begin a minuet pace, with an air and a grace, swimming about, now in and now out, with a deal of state, in a figure of eight, without pipe or string, or any such thing: and now I have writ, in a rhyming fit, what will make you dance, and, as you advance, will keep you still, though against your will, dancing away, alert and gay, till you come to an end of what I have penned, which that you may do, ere madam and you are quite worn out with jigging about, I take my leave, and here you receive a bow profound, down to the ground, from your humble me.—W.C.

## CHARITY.

"Quo nihil majus meliusve terris  
Fata donavere, bonique divi;  
Nec dabunt, quamvis redeant in aurum  
Tempora priscum."

HOR. lib. iv. Ode 2.

FAIREST and foremost of the train that wait  
On man's most dignified and happiest state,  
Whether we name thee Charity or Love,  
Chief grace below, and all in all above,  
Prosper (I press thee with a powerful plea)  
A task I venture on, impell'd by thee:  
Oh! never seen but in thy blest effects,  
Or felt but in the soul that Heaven selects,  
Who seeks to praise thee, and to make thee known  
To other hearts, must have thee in his own.  
Come, prompt me with benevolent desires,  
Teach me to kindle at thy gentle fires,  
And though disgraced and slighted, to redeem  
A poet's name, by making thee the theme.

God, working ever on a social plan,  
By various ties attaches man to man:  
He made at first, though free and unconfined,  
One man the common father of the kind;  
That every tribe, though placed as He sees best,  
Where seas or deserts part them from the rest,  
Differing in language, manners, or in face,  
Might feel themselves allied to all the race.  
When Cook—lamented, and with tears as just  
As ever mingled with heroic dust,\*—  
Steer'd Britain's oak into a world unknown,  
And in his country's glory sought his own,  
Wherever he found man, to nature true,  
The rights of man were sacred in his view;  
He soothed with gifts, and greeted with a smile,  
The simple native of the new-found isle;  
He spurn'd the wretch that slighted or withstood  
The tender argument of kindred blood,  
Nor would endure that any should control  
His freeborn brethren of the southern pole.

But though some nobler minds a law respect,  
That none shall with impunity neglect,  
In baser souls unnumber'd evils meet,  
To thwart its influence, and its end defeat.  
While Cook is loved for savage lives he saved,  
See Cortez odious for a world enslaved!

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\* Captain Cook, the great navigator, was killed by savages at Hawaii, 1779.

Where wast thou then, sweet Charity, where then,  
 Thou tutelary friend of helpless men?  
 Wast thou in monkish cells and nunneries found,  
 Or building hospitals on English ground?  
 No!—Mammon makes the world his legatee  
 Through fear, not love; and Heaven abhors the fee.  
 Wherever found, (and all men need thy care,)  
 Nor age nor infancy could find thee there.  
 The hand that slew till it could slay no more  
 Was glued to the sword-hilt with Indian gore.  
 Their prince, as justly seated on his throne  
 As vain imperial Philip\* on his own,  
 Trick'd out of all his royalty by art,  
 That stripp'd him bare, and broke his honest heart,  
 Died, by the sentence of a shaven priest,  
 For scorning what they taught him to detest.  
 How dark the veil that intercepts the blaze  
 Of Heaven's mysterious purposes and ways!  
 God stood not, though He seem'd to stand, aloof,  
 And at this hour the conqueror feels the proof:  
 The wreath he won drew down an instant curse,  
 The fretting plague is in the public purse,  
 The canker'd spoil corrodes the pining state,  
 Starv'd by that indolence their mines create.

Oh, could their ancient Incas rise again,  
 How would they take up Israel's taunting strain!  
 "Art thou too fallen, Iberia? Do we see  
 The robber and the murderer weak as we?  
 Thou, that hast wasted earth, and dared despise  
 Alike the wrath and mercy of the skies,  
 Thy pomp is in the grave, thy glory laid  
 Low in the pits thine avarice has made.  
 We come with joy from our eternal rest,  
 To see the oppressor in his turn oppress'd.  
 Art thou the god the thunder of whose hand  
 Roll'd over all our desolated land,  
 Shook principalities and kingdoms down,  
 And made the mountains tremble at his frown?  
 The sword shall light upon thy boasted powers,  
 And waste them, as thy sword has wasted ours.  
 'Tis thus Omnipotence his law fulfils,  
 And vengeance executes what justice wills."

Again—the band of commerce was design'd  
 To associate all the branches of mankind;  
 And if a boundless plenty be the robe,  
 Trade is the golden girdle of the globe.

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\*The poet mistook: Cortez conquered Mexico in the reign of Charles V., not Philip II.

Wise to promote whatever end he means,  
 God opens fruitful Nature's various scenes;  
 Each climate needs what other climes produce,  
 And offers something to the general use;  
 No land but listens to the common call,  
 And in return receives supply from all.  
 This genial intercourse, and mutual aid,  
 Cheers what were else a universal shade,  
 Calls Nature from her ivy-mantled den,  
 And softens human rock-work into men.  
 Ingenious Art, with her expressive face,  
 Steps forth to fashion and refine the race,  
 Not only fills necessity's demand,  
 But overcharges her capacious hand:  
 Capricious taste itself can crave no more  
 Than she supplies from her abounding store:  
 She strikes out all that luxury can ask,  
 And gains new vigour at her endless task.  
 Hers is the spacious arch, the shapely spire,  
 The painter's pencil, and the poet's lyre;  
 From her the canvas borrows light and shade,  
 And verse, more lasting, hues that never fade.  
 She guides the finger o'er the dancing keys,  
 Gives difficulty all the grace of ease,  
 And pours a torrent of sweet notes around,  
 Fast as the thirsting ear can drink the sound.  
 These are the gifts of Art; and Art thrives most  
 Where Commerce has enrich'd the busy coast;  
 He catches all improvements in his flight,  
 Spreads foreign wonders in his country's sight,  
 Imports what others have invented well,  
 And stirs his own to match them or excel.  
 'Tis thus reciprocating each with each,  
 Alternately the nations learn and teach;  
 While Providence enjoins to every soul  
 A union with the vast terraqueous whole.  
 Heaven speed the canvas, gallantly unfurl'd  
 To furnish and accommodate a world,  
 To give the pole the produce of the sun,  
 And knit the unsocial climates into one!  
 Soft airs and gentle heavings of the wave  
 Impel the fleet, whose errand is to save,  
 To succour wasted regions, and replace  
 The smile of opulence in sorrow's face!  
 Let nothing adverse, nothing unforeseen,  
 Impede the bark that ploughs the deep serene,  
 Charged with a freight transcending in its worth  
 The gems of India, Nature's rarest birth,

That flies, like Gabriel on his Lord's commands,  
 A herald of God's love to pagan lands !  
 But ah ! what wish can prosper, or what prayer,  
 For merchants rich in cargoes of despair,  
 Who drive a loathsome traffic, gauge and span  
 And buy the muscles and the bones of man ?  
 The tender ties of father, husband, friend,  
 All bonds of nature in that moment end ;  
 And each endures, while yet he draws his breath,  
 A stroke as fatal as the scythe of death.  
 The sable warrior, frantic with regret  
 Of her he loves and never can forget,  
 Loses in tears the far-receding shore,  
 But not the thought that they must meet no more.  
 Deprived of her and freedom at a blow,  
 What has he left that he can yet forego ?  
 Yes, to deep sadness sullenly resign'd,  
 He feels his body's bondage in his mind ;  
 Puts off his generous nature ; and, to suit  
 His manners with his fate, puts on the brute.  
 Oh, most degrading of all ills that wait  
 On man, a mourner in his best estate !  
 All other sorrows virtue may endure,  
 And find submission more than half a cure ;  
 Grief is itself a medicine, and bestow'd  
 To improve the fortitude that bears the load,  
 To teach the wanderer, as his woes increase,  
 The path of wisdom, all whose paths are peace ;  
 But slavery !—Virtue dreads it as her grave :  
 Patience itself is meanness in a slave ;  
 Or if the will and sovereignty of God  
 Bid suffer it a while, and kiss the rod,  
 Wait for the dawning of a brighter day,  
 And snap the chain the moment when you may.  
 Nature imprints upon whate'er we see,  
 That has a heart and life in it, " Be free !"  
 The beasts are charter'd—neither age nor force  
 Can quell the love of freedom in a horse :  
 He breaks the cord that held him at the rack,  
 And, conscious of an unincumber'd back,  
 Snuffs up the morning air, forgets the rein,  
 Loose fly his forelock and his ample mane,  
 Responsive to the distant neigh he neighs,  
 Nor stops, till, overleaping all delays,  
 He finds the pasture where his fellows graze.  
 Canst thou, and honour'd with a Christian name,  
 Buy what is woman-born, and feel no shame ?  
 Trade in the blood of innocence, and plead



Expedience as a warrant for the deed ?  
 So may the wolf, whom famine has made bold  
 To quit the forest and invade the fold :  
 So may the ruffian, who with ghostly glide,  
 Dagger in hand, steals close to your bedside ;  
 Not he, but his emergence, forced the door,  
 He found it inconvenient to be poor.  
 Has God then given its sweetness to the cane,  
 Unless His laws be trampled on—in vain ?  
 Built a brave world, which cannot yet subsist,  
 Unless His right to rule it be dismiss'd ?  
 Impudent blasphemy ! So Folly pleads,  
 And Avarice being judge, with ease succeeds.

But grant the plea, and let it stand for just,  
 That man make man his prey, because he *must* ;  
 Still there is room for pity to abate  
 And soothe the sorrows of so sad a state.  
 A Briton knows, or if he knows it not,  
 The Scripture placed within his reach, he ought,  
 That souls have no discriminating hue,  
 Alike important in their Maker's view ;  
 That none are free from blemish since the fall,  
 And love divine has paid one price for all.  
 That wretch that works and weeps without relief  
 Has one that notices his silent grief.  
 He, from whose hand alone all power proceeds,  
 Ranks its abuse among the foulest deeds,  
 Considers *all* injustice with a frown ;  
 But *marks* the man that treads his fellow down.  
 Begone !—the whip and bell in that hard hand  
 Are hateful ensigns of usurp'd command ;  
 Not Mexico could purchase kings a claim  
 To scourge him, weariness his only blame.  
 Remember, Heaven has an avenging rod ;  
 To smite the poor is treason against God !

Trouble is grudgingly and hardly brook'd,  
 While life's sublimely joys are overlook'd :  
 We wander o'er a sunburnt thirsty soil,  
 Murmuring and weary of our daily toil,  
 Forget to enjoy the palm-tree's offer'd shade,  
 Or taste the fountain in the neighbouring glade :  
 Else who would lose, that had the power to improve  
 The occasion of transmuting fear to love ?  
 Oh, 'tis a godlike privilege to save,  
 And he that scorns it is himself a slave.  
 Inform his mind ; one flash of heavenly day  
 Would heal his heart, and melt his chains away.  
 'Beauty for ashes' is a gift indeed,

And slaves, by truth enlarged, are doubly freed.  
 Then would he say, submissive at thy feet,  
 While gratitude and love made service sweet,  
 "My dear deliverer out of hopeless night,  
 Whose bounty bought me but to give me light,  
 I was a bondman on my native plain,  
 Sin forged, and ignorance made fast, the chain;  
 Thy lips have shed instruction as the dew,  
 Taught me what path to shun, and what pursue;  
 Farewell my former joys! I sigh no more  
 For Africa's once loved, benighted shore;  
 Serving a benefactor, I am free;  
 At my best home, if not exiled from thee."

Some men make gain a fountain, whence proceeds  
 A stream of liberal and heroic deeds;  
 The swell of pity, not to be confined  
 Within the scanty limits of the mind,  
 Disdains the bank, and throws the golden sands  
 A rich deposit, on the bordering lands:  
 These have an ear for His paternal call,  
 Who makes some rich for the supply of all,  
 God's gift with pleasure in His praise employ;  
 And THORNTON is familiar with the joy.\*

Oh, could I worship aught beneath the skies,  
 That earth has seen, or fancy can devise,  
 Thine altar, sacred Liberty, should stand,  
 Built by no mercenary vulgar hand,  
 With fragrant turf, and flowers as wild and fair  
 As ever dress'd a bank, or scented summer air.  
 Duly, as ever on the mountain's height  
 The peep of morning shed a dawning light,  
 Again, when evening in her sober vest  
 Drew the grey curtain of the fading west,  
 My soul should yield thee willing thanks and praise,  
 For the chief blessings of my fairest days:  
 But that were sacrilege;—praise is not thine,  
 But His who gave thee, and preserves thee mine:  
 Else I would say, and as I spake bid fly  
 A captive bird into the boundless sky,  
 "This triple realm adores thee;—thou art come  
 From Sparta hither, and art here at home.  
 We feel thy force still active, at this hour  
 Enjoy immunity from priestly power,  
 While conscience, happier than in ancient years,  
 Owns no superior but the God she fears.  
 Propitious spirit! yet expunge a wrong

---

\* John Thornton, a London merchant, famous for his philanthropy.

## CHARITY.

Thy rights have suffer'd, and our land, too long.  
 Teach mercy to ten thousand hearts that share  
 The fears and hopes of a commercial care ;  
 Prisons expect the wicked, and were built  
 To bind the lawless and to punish guilt ;  
 But shipwreck, earthquake, battle, fire, and flood,  
 Are mighty mischiefs, not to be withstood ;  
 And honest merit stands on slippery ground,  
 Where covert guile and artifice abound.  
 Let just restraint, for public peace design'd,  
 Chain up the wolves and tigers of mankind ;  
 The foe of virtue has no claim to thee,  
 But let insolvent innocence go free."

Patron of else the most despised of men,  
 Accept the tribute of a stranger's pen ;  
 Verse, like the laurel its immortal meed,  
 Should be the guerdon of a noble deed ;  
 I may alarm thee, but I fear the shame  
 (Charity chosen as my theme and aim)  
 I must incur, forgetting HOWARD's name.\*  
 Blest with all wealth can give thee, to resign  
 Joys doubly sweet to feelings quick as thine,  
 To quit the bliss thy rural scenes bestow,  
 To seek a nobler amidst scenes of woe,  
 To traverse seas, range kingdoms, and bring home,  
 Not the proud monuments of Greece or Rome,  
 But knowledge such as only dungeons teach,  
 And only sympathy like thine could reach ;  
 That grief, sequester'd from the public stage,  
 Might smooth her feathers and enjoy her cage ;  
 Speaks a divine ambition, and a zeal,  
 The boldest patriot might be proud to feel.  
 Oh that the voice of clamour and debate,  
 That pleads for peace till it disturbs the state,  
 Were hush'd in favour of thy generous plea,  
 The poor thy clients, and Heaven's smile thy fee !

Philosophy that does not dream or stray,  
 Walks arm in arm with Nature all his way,  
 Compasses earth, dives into it, ascends  
 Whatever steep inquiry recommends.  
 Sees planetary wonders smoothly roll  
 Round other systems under her control,  
 Drinks wisdom at the milky stream of light  
 That cheers the silent journey of the night,  
 And brings at his return a bosom charged  
 With rich instruction, and a soul enlarged.

\* John Howard, the celebrated philanthropist and visitor of prisons.

The treasured sweets of the capacious plan  
That Heaven spreads wide before the view of man,  
All prompt his pleased pursuit, and to pursue  
Still prompt him, with a pleasure always new ;  
He too has a connecting power, and draws,  
Man to the centre of the common cause.  
Aiding a dubious and deficient sight  
With a new medium and a purer light.  
All truth is precious, if not all divine,  
And what dilates the powers must needs refine.  
He reads the skies, and, watching every change,  
Provides the faculties an ampler range,  
And wins mankind, as his attempts prevail,  
A prouder station on the general scale.  
But Reason still, unless divinely taught,  
Whate'er she learns, learns nothing as she ought ;  
The lamp of revelation only shows,  
What human wisdom cannot but oppose,  
That man in nature's richest mantle clad,  
And graced with all philosophy can add,  
Though fair without, and luminous within,  
Is still the progeny and heir of sin.  
Thus taught, down falls the plumage of his pride ;  
He feels his need of an unerring guide,  
And knows that falling he shall rise no more,  
Unless the power that bade him stand, restore.  
This is indeed philosophy ; this known,  
Makes wisdom, worthy of the name, his own ;  
And without this, whatever he discuss,  
Whether the space between the stars and us,  
Whether he measure earth, compute the sea,  
Weigh sunbeams, carve a fly, or spit a flea,  
The solemn trifter with his boasted skill  
Toils much, and is a solemn trifter still :  
Blind was he born, and his misguided eyes  
Grown dim in trifling studies, blind he dies.  
Self-knowledge truly learn'd, of course implies  
The rich possession of a nobler prize ;  
For self to self, and God to man, reveal'd,  
(Two themes to Nature's eye for ever seal'd,)  
Are taught by rays that fly with equal pace  
From the same centre of enlightening grace.  
Here stay thy foot ; how copious and how clear  
The o'erflowing well of Charity springs here !  
Hark ! 'tis the music of a thousand rills,  
Some through the groves, some down the sloping hills,  
Winding a secret or an open course,  
And all supplied from an eternal source.

The ties of nature do but feebly bind,  
 And commerce partially reclaims, mankind;  
 Philosophy, without his heavenly guide,  
 May blow up self-conceit, and nourish pride;  
 But while his province is the reasoning part,  
 Has still a veil of midnight on his heart :  
 'Tis Truth divine exhibited on earth,  
 Gives Charity her being and her birth.

Suppose (when thought is warm and fancy flows,  
 What will not argument sometimes suppose ?)  
 An isle possess'd by creatures of our kind,  
 Endued with reason, yet by nature blind.  
 Let supposition lend her aid once more,  
 And land some grave optician on the shore :  
 He claps his lens, if haply they may see,  
 Close to the part where vision ought to be ;  
 But finds that though his tubes assist the sight,  
 They cannot give it, or make darkness light.  
 He reads wise lectures, and describes aloud  
 A sense they know not to the wondering crowd ;  
 He talks of light and the prismatic hues,  
 As men of depth in erudition use ;  
 But all he gains for his harangue is—" Well,  
 What monstrous lies some travellers will tell !"

The soul, whose sight all-quickenning grace renews,  
 Takes the resemblance of the good she views,  
 As diamonds stripp'd of their opaque disguise,  
 Reflect the noonday glory of the skies.  
 She speaks of Him, her author, guardian, friend,  
 Whose love knew no beginning, knows no end,  
 In language warm as all that love inspires,  
 And, in the glow of her intense desires,  
 Pants to communicate her noble fires.  
 She sees a world stark blind to what employs  
 Her eager thought, and feeds her flowing joys ;  
 Though wisdom hail them, heedless of her call,  
 Flies to save some, and feels a pang for all :  
 Herself as weak as her support is strong,  
 She feels that frailty she denied so long,  
 And, from a knowledge of her own disease,  
 Learns to compassionate the sick she sees.  
 Here see, acquitted of all vain pretence,  
 The reign of genuine Charity commence :  
 Though scorn repay her sympathetic tears,  
 She still is kind, and still she perseveres ;  
 The Truth she loves, a sightless world blaspheme,  
 'Tis childish dotage, a delirious dream !  
 The danger they discern not they deny ;

Laugh at their only remedy, and die.  
 But still a soul thus touch'd can never cease,  
 Whoever threatens war, to speak of peace.  
 Pure in her aim and in her temper mild,  
 Her wisdom seems the weakness of a child :  
 She makes excuses where she might condemn,  
 Reviled by those that hate her, prays for them ;  
 Suspicion lurks not in her artless breast,  
 The worst suggested, she believes the best ;  
 Not soon provoked, however stung and teased,  
 And if perhaps made angry, soon appeased ;  
 She rather waives than will dispute her right :  
 And injured, makes forgiveness her delight.

Such was the portrait an apostle drew,\*  
 The bright original was one he knew ;  
 Heaven held his hand, the likeness must be true.

When one that holds communion with the skies  
 Has fill'd his urn where these pure waters rise,  
 And once more mingles with us meaner things,  
 'Tis even as if an angel shook his wings ;  
 Immortal fragrance fills the circuit wide,  
 That tells us whence his treasures are supplied.  
 So when a ship, well freighted with the stores  
 The sun matures on India's spicy shores,  
 Has dropp'd her anchor and her canvas furl'd,  
 In some safe haven of our western world,  
 'Twere vain inquiry to what port she went,  
 The gale informs us, laden with the scent.

Some seek, when queasy conscience has its qualms,  
 To lull the painful malady with alms ;  
 But Charity not feign'd intends alone  
 Another's good—theirs centres in their own ;  
 And too short-lived to reach the realms of peace,  
 Must cease for ever when the poor shall cease.  
 Flavia, most tender of her own good name,  
 Is rather careless of her sister's fame :  
 Her superfluity the poor supplies,  
 But if she touch a character, it dies.  
 The seeming virtue weigh'd against the vice,  
 She deems all safe, for she has paid the price :  
 No Charity but alms aught values she,  
 Except in porcelain on her mantle-tree.  
 How many deeds with which the world has rung,  
 From pride in league with ignorance have sprung !  
 But God o'errules all human follies still,  
 And bends the tough materials to His will.

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\* 1 Cor. xiii.

A conflagration, or a wintry flood,  
 Has left some hundreds without home or food :  
 Extravagance and Avarice shall subscribe,  
 While fame and self-complacence are the bribe.  
 The brief proclaim'd, it visits every pew,  
 But first the squire's, a compliment but due :  
 With slow deliberation he unties  
 His glittering purse, that envy of all eyes,  
 And while the clerk just puzzles out the psalm,  
 Slides guinea behind guinea in his palm ;  
 Till finding, what he might have found before,  
 A smaller piece amidst the precious store,  
 Pinch'd close between his finger and his thumb,  
 He half exhibits, and then drops the sum.  
 Gold to be sure ! — Throughout the town 'tis told  
 How the good squire gives never less than gold.  
 From motives such as his, though not the best,  
 Springs in due time supply for the distress'd ;  
 Not less effectual than what love bestows,  
 Except that Office clips it as it goes.

But lest I seem to sin against a friend,  
 And wound the grace I mean to recommend,  
 (Though vice derided with a just design  
 Implies no trespass against love divine,  
 Once more I would adopt the graver style ;  
 A teacher should be sparing of his smile.

Unless a love of virtue light the flame,  
 Satire is, more than those he brands, to blame ;  
 He hides behind a magisterial air  
 His own offences, and strips others bare ;  
 Affects indeed a most humane concern,  
 That men, if gently tutor'd, will not learn ;  
 That mulish folly, not to be reclaim'd  
 By softer methods, must be made ashamed ;  
 But (I might instance in St. Patrick's dean)\*  
 Too often rails to gratify his spleen.  
 Most satirists are indeed a public scourge ;  
 Their mildest physic is a farrier's purge ;  
 Their acrid temper turns, as soon as stirr'd,  
 The milk of their good purpose all to curd.  
 Their zeal begotten, as their works rehearse,  
 By lean despair upon an empty purse,  
 The wild assassins start into the street,  
 Prepared to poniard whomsoe'er they meet.  
 No skill in swordmanship, however just,  
 Can be secure against a madman's thrust ;

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\* Dean Swift.

And even virtue, so unfairly match'd,  
 Although immortal, may be prick'd or scratch'd.  
 When scandal has new minted an old lie,  
 Or tax'd invention for a fresh supply,  
 'Tis call'd a satire, and the world appears  
 Gathering around it with erected ears :  
 A thousand names are toss'd into the crowd,  
 Some whisper'd softly, and some twang'd aloud,  
 Just as the sapience of an author's brain  
 Suggests it safe or dangerous to be plain.  
 Strange ! how the frequent interjected dash  
 Quickens a market, and helps off the trash ;  
 The important letters that include the rest  
 Serve as a key to those that are suppress'd ;  
 Conjecture gripes the victims in his paw,  
 The world is charm'd, and Scrib escapes the law.  
 So when the cold damp shades of night prevail,  
 Worms may be caught by either head or tail ;  
 Forcibly drawn from many a close recess,  
 They meet with little pity, no redress ;  
 Plunged in the stream they lodge upon the mud,  
 Food for the famish'd rovers of the flood.  
 All zeal for a reform that gives offence  
 To peace and charity is mere pretence :  
 A bold remark, but which, if well applied,  
 Would humble many a towering poet's pride.  
 Perhaps the man was in a sportive fit,  
 And had no other play-place for his wit ;  
 Perhaps, enchanted with the love of fame,  
 He sought the jewel in his neighbour's shame ;  
 Perhaps—whatever end he might pursue,  
 The cause of virtue could not be his view.  
 At every stroke wit flashes in our eyes ;  
 The turns are quick, the polish'd points surprise,  
 But shine with cruel and tremendous charms,  
 That, while they please, possess us with alarms ;  
 So have I seen, (and hasten'd to the sight  
 On all the wings of holiday delight,)  
 Where stands that monument of ancient power,  
 Named with emphatic dignity, the Tower,  
 Guns, halberds, swords and pistols, great and small,  
 In starry forms disposed upon the wall :  
 We wonder, as we gazing stand below,  
 That brass and steel should make so fine a show ;  
 But though we praise the exact designer's skill,  
 Account them implements of mischief still.  
 No works shall find acceptance in that day  
 When all disguises shall be rent away,



That square not truly with the Scripture plan,  
Nor spring from love to God, or love to man.  
As He ordains things sordid in their birth,  
To be resolved into their parent earth,  
And though the soul shall seek superior orbs,  
Whate'er this world produces, it absorbs;  
So self starts nothing but what tends apace  
Home to the goal, where it began the race.  
Such as our motive is our aim must be,  
If this be servile, that can ne'er be free:  
If self employ us, whatsoe'er is wrought,  
We glorify that self, not Him we ought;  
Such virtues had need prove their own reward,  
The Judge of all men owes them no regard.  
True charity, a plant divinely nursed,  
Fed by the love from which it rose at first,  
Thrives against hope, and in the rudest scene,  
Storms but enliven its unfading green;  
Exuberant is the shadow it supplies,  
Its fruit on earth, its growth above the skies.  
To look on Him who form'd us, and redeem'd,  
So glorious now, though once so disesteem'd;  
To see a God stretch forth His human hand,  
To uphold the boundless scenes of His command;  
To recollect that in a form like ours  
He bruised beneath His feet the infernal powers,  
Captivity led captive, rose to claim  
The wreath He won so dearly in our name;  
That throned above all height He condescends  
To call the few that trust in Him His friends;  
That in the heaven of heavens, that space He deems  
Too scanty for the exertion of His beams,  
And shines, as if impatient to bestow  
Life and a kingdom upon worms below;  
That sight imparts a never-dying flame,  
Though feeble in degree, in kind the same.  
Like him the soul, thus kindled from above,  
Spreads wide her arms of universal love,  
And still enlarged as she receives the grace,  
Includes creation in her close embrace.  
Behold a Christian!—and without the fires,  
The founder of that name alone inspires,  
Though all accomplishment, all knowledge meet,  
To make the shining prodigy complete,  
Whoever boasts that name—behold a cheat!  
Were love, in these the world's last doting years,  
As frequent as the want of it appears,  
The churches warm'd, they would no longer hold

Such frozen figures, stiff as they are cold ;  
 Relenting forms would lose their power, or cease,  
 And even the dipp'd and sprinkled live in peace :  
 Each heart would quit its prison in the breast,  
 And flow in free communion with the rest.  
 The statesman skill'd in projects dark and deep,  
 Might burn his useless Machiavel,\* and sleep ;  
 His budget often fill'd, yet always poor,  
 Might swing at ease behind his study door,  
 No longer prey upon our annual rents,  
 Or scare the nation with its big contents :  
 Disbanded legions freely might depart,  
 And slaying man would cease to be an art.  
 No learnèd disputants would take the field,  
 Sure not to conquer, and sure not to yield :  
 Both sides deceived, if rightly understood,  
 Pelting each other for the public good.  
 Did Charity prevail, the press would prove  
 A vehicle of virtue, truth, and love ;  
 And I might spare myself the pains to snow  
 What few can learn, and all suppose they know.

Thus have I sought to grace a serious lay  
 With many a wild, indeed, but flowery spray,  
 In hopes to gain, what else I must have lost,  
 The attention pleasure has so much engross'd.  
 But if, unhappily deceived, I dream,  
 And prove too weak for so divine a theme,  
 Let Charity forgive me a mistake  
 That zeal, not vanity, has chanced to make,  
 And spare the poet for his subject's sake.

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\* An Italian writer, who published a work called "The Prince;" he inculcated in it great deceit and subtlety—hence the word "Machiavellian."



## CONVERSATION.\*

### ARGUMENT.

In conversation much depends on culture—Indecent language and oaths reprobated—The author's dislike of the clash of arguments—The noisy wrangler—The positive pronounce without hesitation—The point of honour condemned—Duelling with fists instead of weapons proposed—Effect of long tales—The retailer of prodigies and lies—Qualities of a judicious tale—Smoking condemned—The emphatic speaker—The perfumed beau—The grave coxcomb—Sickness made a topic of conversation—Picture of a fretful temper—The bashful speaker—An English company—The Sportsman—Influence of fashion on conversation—Converse of the two disciples going to Emmaus—Delights of religious conversation—Age mellowes the speech—True piety often branded as fanatic frenzy—Pleasure of communion with the good—Conversation should be unconstrained—Persons who make the Bible their companion charged with hypocrisy by the world—The charge repelled—The poet sarcastically surmises that his censure of the world may proceed from ignorance of its reformed manners—An apology for digression—Religion purifies and enriches conversation.

*Nam neque me tantum venientis sibilus atri,  
Nec percussa juvant fluctû tam litora, nec quæ  
Saxosas inter decurrunt flumina valles.*

VIRG., *Ecl. v.*

THOUGH Nature weigh our talents, and dispense  
To every man his modicum of sense,  
And Conversation in its better part  
May be esteem'd a gift, and not an art,  
Yet much depends, as in the tiller's toil,  
On culture, and the sowing of the soil.  
Words learn'd by rote, a parrot may rehearse,  
But talking is not always to converse;  
Not more distinct from harmony divine  
The constant creaking of a country sign.  
As alphabets in ivory employ  
Hour after hour the yet unletter'd boy,  
Sorting and puzzling with a deal of glee  
Those seeds of science call'd his A B C;  
So language in the mouths of the adult,  
(Witness its insignificant result,)

\* "My design," says Cowper, referring to this poem, "is to convince the world that they make but an indifferent use of their tongues, considering the intention of Providence when He endued them with the faculty of speech."

Too often proves an implement of play,  
 A toy to sport with and pass time away.  
 Collect at evening what the day brought forth,  
 Compress the sum into its solid worth,  
 And if it weigh the importance of a fly,  
 The scales are false, or algebra a lie.  
 Sacred interpreter of human thought,  
 How few respect or use thee as they ought!  
 But all shall give account of every wrong,  
 Who dare dishonour or defile the tongue,  
 Who prostitute it in the cause of vice,  
 Or sell their glory at a market-price;  
 Who vote for hire, or point it with lampoon,  
 The dear-bought placeman, and the cheap buffoon.  
 There is a prurience in the speech of some,  
 Wrath stays him, or else God would strike them dumb:  
 His wise forbearance has their end in view,  
 They fill their measure and receive their due.  
 The heathen lawgivers of ancient days,  
 Names almost worthy of a Christian's praise,  
 Would drive them forth from the resort of men,  
 And shut up every satyr in his den.  
 Oh come not ye near innocence and truth,  
 Ye worms that eat into the bud of youth!  
 Infectious as impure, your blighting power  
 Taints in its rudiments the promised flower,  
 Its odour perish'd and its charming hue,  
 Thenceforth 'tis hateful, for it smells of you.  
 Not even the vigorous and headlong rage  
 Of adolescence or a firmer age,  
 Affords a plea allowable or just  
 For making speech the pamperer of lust;  
 But when the breath of age commits the fault,  
 'Tis nauseous as the vapour of a vault.  
 So wither'd stumps disgrace the sylvan scene,  
 No longer fruitful and no longer green;  
 The sapless wood, divested of the bark,  
 Grows fungous, and takes fire at every spark.  
 Oaths terminate, as Paul observes, all strife,  
 Some men have surely then a peaceful life!  
 Whatever subject occupy discourse,  
 The feats of Vestris,\* or the naval force,  
 Asseveration blustering in your face  
 Makes contradiction such a hopeless case:

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\* Vestris was a famous dancer. The Vestrises continued on the stage as ballet-dancers or singers for much more than a century. The one here alluded to was the second famous dancer of that name. The first was called "Le Dieu de la Danse."

In every tale they tell, or false or true,  
 Well known, or such as no man ever knew,  
 They fix attention, heedless of your pain,  
 With oaths like rivets forced into the brain;  
 And even when sober truth prevails throughout,  
 They swear it, till affirmation breeds a doubt.

A Persian, humble servant of the sun,  
 Who, though devout, yet bigotry had none,  
 Hearing a lawyer, grave in his address,  
 With adjurations every word impress,  
 Supposed the man a bishop, or at least,  
 God's name so much upon his lips, a priest;  
 Bow'd at the close with all his graceful airs,  
 And begg'd an interest in his frequent prayers.

Go, quit the rank to which ye stood preferr'd,  
 Henceforth associate in one common herd;  
 Religion, virtue, reason, common sense,  
 Pronounce your human form a false pretence,—  
 A mere disguise in which a devil lurks,  
 Who yet betrays his secret by his works.  
 • Ye powers who rule the tongue, if such there are,  
 And make colloquial happiness your care,  
 Preserve me from the thing I dread and hate,—  
 A duel in the form of a debate.

The clash of arguments and jar of words,  
 Worse than the mortal brunt of rival swords,  
 Decide no question with their tedious length,  
 For opposition gives opinion strength,  
 Divert the champions prodigal of breath,  
 And put the peaceably disposed to death.  
 Oh thwart me not, Sir Soph, at every turn,  
 Nor carp at every flaw you may discern;  
 Though syllogisms hang not on my tongue,  
 I am not surely always in the wrong;  
 'Tis hard if all is false that I advance,  
 A fool must now and then be right by chance.  
 Not that all freedom of dissent I blame;  
 No—there I grant the privilege I claim.  
 A disputable point is no man's ground;  
 Rove where you please, 'tis common all around.  
 Discourse may want an animated—No,  
 To brush the surface and to make it flow;  
 But still remember, if you mean to please,  
 To press your point with modesty and ease.  
 The mark at which my juster aim I take,  
 Is contradiction for its own dear sake;  
 Set your opinion at whatever pitch,  
 Knots and impediments make something hitch.

Adopt his own, 'tis equally in vain,  
 Your thread of argument is snapp'd again;  
 The wrangler, rather than accord with you,  
 Will judge himself deceived,—and prove it too.  
 Vociferated logic kills me quite,—  
 A noisy man is always in the right;  
 I twirl my thumbs, fall back into my chair,  
 Fix on the wainscot a distressful stare,  
 And when I hope his blunders are all out,  
 Reply discreetly—"To be sure, no doubt!"

Dubius is such a scrupulous good man—  
 Yes, you may catch him tripping—if you can.  
 He would not with a peremptory tone  
 Assert the nose upon his face his own;  
 With hesitation admirably slow,  
 He humbly hopes—presumes—it may be so.  
 His evidence, if he were call'd by law  
 To swear to some enormity he saw,  
 For want of prominence and just relief,  
 Would hang an honest man and save a thief.  
 Through constant dread of giving truth offence,  
 He ties up all his hearers in suspense;  
 Knows what he knows as if he knew it not;  
 What he remembers seems to have forgot;  
 His sole opinion, whatsoe'er befall,  
 Centering at last in having none at all.  
 Yet though he tease and balk your listening ear,  
 He makes one useful point exceeding clear;  
 Howe'er ingenious on his darling theme  
 A sceptic in philosophy may seem,  
 Reduced to practice, his beloved rule  
 Would only prove him a consummate fool. •  
 Useless in him alike both brain and speech,  
 Fate having placed all truth above his reach;  
 His ambiguities his total sum,  
 He might as well be blind, and deaf, and dumb.

Where men of judgment creep and feel their way,  
 The positive pronounce without dismay,  
 Their want of light and intellect supplied  
 By sparks absurdity strikes out of pride;  
 Without the means of knowing right from wrong,  
 They always are decisive, clear, and strong;  
 Where others toil with philosophic force,  
 Their nimble nonsense takes a shorter course,  
 Flings at your head conviction in the lump,  
 And gains remote conclusions at a jump;  
 Their own defect, invisible to them,  
 Seen in another they at once condemn;

And though self-idolised in every case,  
 Hate their own likeness in a brother's face :  
 The cause is plain, and not to be denied,  
 The proud are always most provoked by pride ;  
 Few competitions but engender spite,  
 And those the most where neither has a right.

The Point of Honour has been deem'd of use,  
 To teach good manners and to curb abuse :  
 Admit it true, the consequence is clear,  
 Our polish'd manners are a mask we wear,  
 And at the bottom barbarous still and rude,  
 We are restrain'd indeed, but not subdued.  
 The very remedy, however sure,  
 Springs from the mischief it intends to cure,  
 And savage in its principle appears,  
 Tried, as it should be, by the fruit it bears.  
 'Tis hard, indeed, if nothing will defend  
 Mankind from quarrels but their fatal end ;  
 That now and then a hero must decease,  
 That the surviving world may live in peace  
 Perhaps at last close scrutiny may show  
 The practice dastardly, and mean, and low ;  
 That men engage in it compell'd by force,  
 And fear, not courage, is its proper source,  
 The fear of tyrant custom, and the fear  
 Lest fops should censure us, and fools should sneer.  
 At least to trample on our Maker's laws,  
 And hazard life for any or no cause,  
 To rush into a fix'd eternal state  
 Out of the very flames of rage and hate,  
 Or send another shivering to the bar  
 With all the guilt of such unnatural war,  
 Whatever use may urge or honour plead,  
 On reason's verdict is a madman's deed.  
 Am I to set my life upon a throw  
 Because a bear is rude and surly ? No—  
 A moral, sensible, and well-bred man  
 Will not affront me, and no other can.  
 Were I empower'd to regulate the lists,  
 They should encounter with well-loaded fists :  
 A Trojan combat would be something new,  
 Let Dares beat Entellus\* black and blue,  
 Then each might shew, to his admiring friends,  
 In honourable bumps his rich amends,

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\* Dares was a Trojan and Entellus a Sicilian, both famous athletes, whose contest is described in the *Æneid*, B. v. 362-472.

And carry in contusions of his skull,  
 A satisfactory receipt in full.  
 A story in which native humour reigns  
 Is often useful, always entertains;  
 A graver fact, enlisted on your side,  
 May furnish illustration, well applied;  
 But sedentary weavers of long tales  
 Give me the fidgets, and my patience fails.  
 'Tis the most asinine employ on earth,  
 To hear them tell of parentage and birth,  
 And echo conversations, dull and dry,  
 Embellish'd with—He said,—and, So said I.  
 At every interview their route the same,  
 The repetition makes attention lame:  
 We bustle up with unsuccessful speed,  
 And in the saddest part cry—"Droll indeed!"  
 The path of narrative with care pursue,  
 Still making probability your clue;  
 On all the vestiges of truth attend,  
 And let *them* guide you to a decent end.  
 Of all ambitions man may entertain,  
 The worst that can invade a sickly brain  
 Is that which angles hourly for surprise,  
 And baits its hook with prodigies and lies.  
 Credulous infancy, or age as weak,  
 Are fittest auditors for such to seek,  
 Who to please others will themselves disgrace,  
 Yet please not, but affront you to your face.  
 A great retailer of this curious ware,  
 Having unloaded, and made many stare,  
 "Can this be true?" an arch observer cries;  
 "Yes," (rather moved,) "I saw it with these eyes."  
 "Sir! I believe it on that ground alone;  
 I could not, had I seen it with my own."  
 A tale should be judicious, clear, succinct;  
 The language plain, and incidents well link'd.  
 Tell not as new what everybody knows,  
 And, new or old, still hasten to a close;  
 There centering in a focus, round and neat,  
 Let all your rays of information meet.  
 What neither yields us profit nor delight,  
 Is like a nurse's lullaby at night:  
 Guy Earl of Warwick and fair Eleanore,  
 Or giant-killing Jack would please me more.  
 The pipe, with solemn interposing puff,  
 Makes half a sentence at a time enough;  
 The dozing sages drop the drowsy strain,  
 Then pause, and puff—and speak, and pause again.



Such often, like the tube they so admire,  
 Important triflers! have more smoke than fire.  
 Pernicious weed! whose scent the fair annoys,  
 Unfriendly to society's chief joys,  
 Thy worst effect is banishing for hours  
 The sex whose presence civilises ours;  
 Thou art indeed the drug a gardener wants  
 To poison vermin that infests his plants;  
 But are we so to wit and beauty blind  
 As to despise the glory of our kind,  
 And shew the softest minds and fairest forms  
 As little mercy as the grubs and worms?  
 They dare not wait the riotous abuse  
 Thy thirst-creating steams at length produce,  
 When wine has given indecent language birth,  
 And forced the floodgates of licentious mirth;  
 For sea-born Venus her attachment shows  
 Still to that element from which she rose,  
 And with a quiet which no fumes disturb,  
 Sips meek infusions of a milder herb.

The emphatic speaker dearly loves to oppose,  
 In contact inconvenient, nose to nose,  
 As if the gnomon on his neighbour's phiz,  
 Touch'd with the magnet, had attracted his.  
 His whisper'd theme, dilated and at large,  
 Proves after all a wind-gun's airy charge,—  
 An extract of his diary,—no more,—  
 A tasteless journal of the day before.  
 He walk'd abroad, o'ertaken in the rain,  
 Call'd on a friend, drank tea, stepp'd home again,  
 Resumed his purpose, had a world of talk  
 With one he stumbled on, and lost his walk.  
 I interrupt him with a sudden bow,  
 "Adieu, dear Sir! lest you should lose it now."

I cannot talk with civet in the room,  
 A fine puss gentleman that's all perfume;  
 The sight's enough—no need to smell a beau—  
 Who thrusts his nose into a raree-show?  
 His odoriferous attempts to please  
 Perhaps might prosper with a swarm of bees;  
 But we that make no honey though we sting,  
 Poets, are sometimes apt to maul the thing.  
 'Tis wrong to bring into a mix'd resort,  
 What makes some sick, and others *à la mort*,  
 An argument of cogence, we may say,  
 Why such a one should keep himself away.  
 A graver coxcomb we may sometimes see  
 Quite as absurd, though not so light as he:

A shallow brain behind a serious mask,  
An oracle within an empty cask,  
The solemn fop; significant and budge;  
A fool with judges, amongst fools a judge,  
He says but little, and that little said  
Owes all its weight, like loaded dice, to lead.  
His wit invites you by his looks to come,  
But when you knock it never is at home:  
'Tis like a parcel sent you by the stage,  
Some handsome present, as your hopes presage,  
'Tis heavy, bulky, and bids fair to prove  
An absent friend's fidelity and love;  
But when unpack'd your disappointment groans  
To find it stuff'd with brickbats, earth, and stones.

Some men employ their health, an ugly trick,  
In making known how oft they have been sick,  
And give us, in recitals of disease,  
A doctor's trouble, but without the fees;  
Relate how many weeks they kept their bed,  
How an emetic or cathartic sped;  
Nothing is slightly touch'd, much less forgot,  
Nose, ears, and eyes seem present on the spot.  
Now the distemper, spite of draught or pill,  
Victorious seem'd, and now the doctor's skill;  
And now—alas, for unforeseen mishaps!  
They put on a damp nightcap and relapse;  
They thought they must have died, they were so bad;  
Their peevish hearers almost wish they had.

Some fretful tempers wince at every touch,  
You always do too little or too much:  
You speak with life in hopes to entertain,  
Your elevated voice goes through the brain;  
You fall at once into a lower key,  
That's worse—the drone-pipe of an humble bee.  
The southern sash admits too strong a light,  
You rise and drop the curtain—now 'tis night.  
He shakes with cold—you stir the fire and strive  
To make a blaze—that's roasting him alive.  
Serve him with venison, and he chooses fish;  
With sole—that's just the sort he would not wish.  
He takes what he at first profess'd to loathe,  
And in due time feeds heartily on both;  
Yet still o'erclouded with a constant frown,  
He does not swallow, but he gulps it down.  
Your hope to please him vain on every plan,  
Himself should work that wonder, if he can—  
Alas! his efforts double his distress,  
He likes yours little, and his own still less,

Thus always teasing others, always teased,  
His only pleasure is—to be displeased.

I pity bashful men, who feel the pain  
Of fancied scorn and undeserved disdain,  
And bear the marks upon a blushing face  
Of needless shame, and self-imposed disgrace.  
Our sensibilities are so acute,  
The fear of being silent makes us mute.  
We sometimes think we could a speech produce  
Much to the purpose if our tongues were loose,  
But, being tried, it dies upon the lip,  
Faint as a chicken's note that has the pip :  
Our wasted oil unprofitably burns,  
Like hidden lamps in old sepulchral urns.\*  
Few Frenchmen of this evil have complain'd ;  
It seems as if we Britons were ordain'd,  
By way of wholesome curb upon our pride,  
To fear each other, fearing none beside.  
The cause perhaps inquiry may descry,  
Self-searching with an introverted eye,  
Conceal'd within an unsuspected part,  
The vainest corner of our own vain heart :  
For ever aiming at the world's esteem,  
Our self-importance ruins its own scheme ;  
In other eyes our talents rarely shown,  
Become at length so splendid in our own,  
We dare not risk them into public view,  
Lest they miscarry of what seems their due.  
True modesty is a discerning grace,  
And only blushes in the proper place ;  
But counterfeit is blind, and skulks through fear,  
Where 'tis a shame to be ashamed to appear :  
Humility the parent of the first,  
The last by Vanity produced and nursed.  
The circle form'd, we sit in silent state,  
Like figures drawn upon a dial-plate ;  
Yes, ma'am, and No, ma'am, utter'd softly, show  
Every five minutes how the minutes go ;  
Each individual, suffering a constraint  
Poetry may, but colours cannot, paint,  
As if in close committee on the sky,  
Reports it hot or cold, or wet or dry,  
And finds a changing clime a happy source  
Of wise reflection and well-timed discourse.

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\* It was once supposed that the ancients had the secret of keeping sepulchral lamps constantly burning.

We next inquire, but softly and by stealth,  
 Like conservators of the public health,  
 Of epidemic throats, if such there are,  
 Of coughs and rheums, and phthisic and catarrh.  
 That theme exhausted, a wide chasm ensues,  
 Fill'd up at last with interesting news,  
 Who danced with whom, and who are like to wed,  
 And who is hang'd, and who is brought to bed :  
 But fear to call a more important cause,  
 As if 'twere treason against English laws.  
 The visit paid, with ecstasy we come,  
 As from a seven years' transportation, home,  
 And there resume an unembarrass'd brow,  
 Recovering what we lost we know not how,  
 The faculties that seem'd reduced to nought,  
 Expression and the privilege of thought.

The reeking, roaring hero of the chase,  
 I give him over as a desperate case.  
 Physicians write in hope to work a cure,  
 Never, if honest ones, when death is sure ;  
 And though the fox he follows may be tamed,  
 A mere fox-follower never is reclaim'd.  
 Some farrier should prescribe his proper course,  
 Whose only fit companion is his horse,  
 Or if, deserving of a better doom,  
 The noble beast judge otherwise, his groom.  
 Yet even the rogue that serves him, though he stand  
 To take his honour's orders cap in hand,  
 Prefers his fellow-grooms, with much good sense,  
 Their skill a truth, his master's a pretence.  
 If neither horse nor groom affect the squire,  
 Where can at last his jockeyship retire ?  
 Oh, to the club, the scene of savage joys,  
 The school of coarse good-fellowship and noise ;  
 There, in the sweet society of those  
 Whose friendship from his boyish years he chose,  
 Let him improve his talent if he can,  
 Till none but beasts acknowledge him a man.  
 Man's heart had been impenetrably seal'd,  
 Like theirs that cleave the flood or graze the field,  
 Had not his Maker's all-bestowing hand  
 Given him a soul, and bade him understand.  
 The reasoning power vouchsafed, of course infer'd  
 The power to clothe that reason with his word ;  
 For all is perfect that God works on earth,  
 And He that gives conception aids the birth.  
 If this be plain, 'tis plainly understood  
 What uses of His boon the Giver would.

The mind despatch'd upon her busy toil,  
 Should range where Providence has bless'd the soil ;  
 Visiting every flower with labour meet,  
 And gathering all her treasures sweet by sweet,  
 She should imbue the tongue with what she sips,  
 And shed the balmy blessing on the lips,  
 That good diffused may more abundant grow,  
 And speech may praise the power that bids it flow.  
 Will the sweet warbler of the livelong night,  
 That fills the listening lover with delight,  
 Forget his harmony, with rapture heard,  
 To learn the twittering of a meaner bird ?  
 Or make the parrot's mimicry his choice,  
 That odious libel on a human voice ?  
 No—Nature, unsophisticate by man,  
 Starts not aside from her Creator's plan ;  
 The melody that was at first design'd  
 To cheer the rude forefathers of mankind,  
 Is note for note deliver'd in our ears,  
 In the last scene of her six thousand years :  
 Yet Fashion, leader of a chattering train,  
 Whom man for his own hurt permits to reign,  
 Who shifts and changes all things but his shape,  
 And would degrade her votary to an ape,  
 The fruitful parent of abuse and wrong,  
 Holds a usurp'd dominion o'er his tongue ;  
 There sits and prompts him with his own disgrace,  
 Prescribes the theme, the tone, and the grimace,  
 And, when accomplish'd in her wayward school,  
 Calls gentleman whom she has made a fool.  
 'Tis an unalterable fix'd decree,  
 That none could frame or ratify but she,  
 That heaven and hell, and righteousness and sin,  
 Snares in his path, and foes that lurk within,  
 God and His attributes, (a field of day  
 Where 'tis an angel's happiness to stray,)  
 Fruits of His love, and wonders of His might,  
 Be never named in ears esteem'd polite ;  
 That he who dares, when she forbids, be grave,  
 Shall stand proscribed a madman or a knave,  
 A close designer not to be believed,  
 Or, if excused that charge, at least deceived.  
 Oh folly worthy of the nurse's lap,  
 Give it the breast, or stop its mouth with pap !  
 Is it incredible, or can it seem  
 A dream to any except those that dream,  
 That man should love his Maker, and that fire,  
 Warming his heart, should at his lips transpire ?

Know then, and modestly let fall your eyes,  
 And veil your daring crest that braves the skies,  
 That air of insolence affronts your God,  
 You need His pardon, and provoke His rod;  
 Now, in a posture that becomes you more  
 Than that heroic strut assumed before,  
 Know, your arrears with every hour accrue  
 For mercy shewn, while wrath is justly due.  
 The time is short, and there are souls on earth,  
 Though future pain may serve for present mirth,  
 Acquainted with the woes that fear or shame,  
 By fashion taught, forbade them once to name,  
 And having felt the pangs you deem a jest,  
 Have proved them truths too big to be express'd.  
 Go seek on revelation's hallow'd ground,  
 Sure to succeed, the remedy they found;  
 Touch'd by that power that you have dared to mock,  
 That makes seas stable, and dissolves the rock,  
 Your heart shall yield a life-renewing stream,  
 That fools, as you have done, shall call a dream.

It happen'd on a solemn eventide,\*  
 Soon after He that was our surety died,  
 Two bosom friends, each pensively inclined,  
 The scene of all those sorrows left behind,  
 Sought their own village,† busied as they went  
 In musings worthy of the great event:  
 They spake of Him they loved, of Him whose life,  
 Though blameless, had incurr'd perpetual strife,  
 Whose deeds had left, in spite of hostile arts,  
 A deep memorial graven on their hearts.  
 The recollection, like a vein of ore,  
 The farther traced, enrich'd them still the more;  
 They thought Him, and they justly thought Him, one  
 Sent to do more than He appear'd to have done;  
 To exalt a people, and to place them high  
 Above all else, and wonder'd He should die.  
 Ere yet they brought their journey to an end,  
 A stranger join'd them, courteous as a friend,  
 And ask'd them, with a kind engaging air,  
 What their affliction was, and begg'd a share.  
 Inform'd, He gather'd up the broken thread,  
 And, truth and wisdom gracing all He said,  
 Explain'd, illustrated, and search'd so well  
 The tender theme on which they chose to dwell,

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\* The evening of the Resurrection. St. Luke xxiv. 13 to 33.

† Emmaus.

It moves me more perhaps than folly ought,  
When some green heads as void of wit as thought,  
Suppose themselves monopolists of sense,  
And wiser men's ability pretence.  
Though time will wear us, and we must grow old,  
Such men are not forgot as soon as cold,  
Their fragrant memory will outlast their tomb,  
Embalm'd for ever in its own perfume.  
And to say truth, though in its early prime,  
And when unstain'd with any grosser crime,  
Youth has a sprightliness and fire to boast,  
That in the valley of decline are lost,  
And virtue with peculiar charms appears,  
Crown'd with the garland of life's blooming years;  
Yet age, by long experience well inform'd,  
Well read, well temper'd, with religion warm'd,  
That fire abated which impels rash youth,  
Proud of his speed, to overshoot the truth,  
As time improves the grape's authentic juice,  
Mellows and makes the speech more fit for use,  
And claims a reverence in its shortening day,  
That 'tis an honour and a joy to pay.  
The fruits of age, less fair, are yet more sound  
Than those a brighter season pours around,  
And, like the stores autumnal suns mature,  
Through wintry rigours unimpair'd endure.

What is fanatic frenzy, scorn'd so much,  
And dreaded more than a contagious touch?  
I grant it dangerous, and approve your fear;  
That fire is catching if you draw too near;  
But sage observers oft mistake the flame,  
And give true piety that odious name.  
To tremble (as the creature of an hour  
Ought at the view of an Almighty power)  
Before His presence, at whose awful throne  
All tremble in all worlds, except our own;  
To supplicate His mercy, love His ways,  
And prize them above pleasure, wealth, or praise,  
Though common sense, allow'd a casting voice,  
And free from bias, must approve the choice,  
Convicts a man fanatic in the extreme,  
And wild as madness in the world's esteem.  
But that disease, when soberly defined,  
Is the false fire of an o'erheated mind;  
It views the truth with a distorted eye,  
And either warps or lays it useless by;  
'Tis narrow, selfish, arrogant, and draws  
Its sordid nourishment from man's applause,

And, while at heart sin unrelinquish'd lies,  
 Presumes itself chief favourite of the skies.  
 'Tis such a light as putrefaction breeds  
 In fly-blown flesh, whereon the maggot feeds,  
 Shines in the dark, but usher'd into day,  
 The stench remains, the lustre dies away.

True bliss, if man may reach it, is composed  
 Of hearts in union mutually disclosed;  
 And, farewell else all hope of pure delight,  
 Those hearts should be reclaim'd, renew'd, upright.  
 Bad men, profaning friendship's hallow'd name,  
 Form, in its stead, a covenant of shame,  
 A dark confederacy against the laws  
 Of virtue, and religion's glorious cause:  
 They build each other up with dreadful skill,  
 As bastions set point-blank against God's will;  
 Enlarge and fortify the dread redoubt,  
 Deeply resolved to shut a Saviour out;  
 Call legions up from hell to back the deed,  
 And, cursed with conquest, finally succeed.  
 But souls that carry on a bless'd exchange  
 Of joys they meet with in their heavenly range,  
 And with a fearless confidence make known  
 The sorrows sympathy esteems its own,  
 Daily derive increasing light and force  
 From such communion in their pleasant course,  
 Feel less the journey's roughness and its length,  
 Meet their opposers with united strength,  
 And one in heart, in interest, and design,  
 Gird up each other to the race divine.

But Conversation, choose what theme we may,  
 And chiefly when religion leads the way,  
 Should flow like waters after summer showers,  
 Not as if raised by mere mechanic powers.  
 The Christian in whose soul, though now distress'd,  
 Lives the dear thought of joys he once possess'd,  
 When all his glowing language issued forth  
 With God's deep stamp upon its current worth,  
 Will speak without disguise, and must impart,  
 Sad as it is, his undissembling heart,  
 Abhors constraint, and dares not feign a zeal,  
 Or seem to boast a fire he does not feel.  
 The song of Sion is a tasteless thing,  
 Unless, when rising on a joyful wing,  
 The soul can mix with the celestial bands,  
 And give the strain the compass it demands.

Strange tidings these to tell a world, who treat  
 All but their own experience as deceit!



Will they believe, though credulous enough  
To swallow much upon much weaker proof,  
That there are bless'd inhabitants of earth,  
Partakers of a new ethereal birth,  
Their hopes, desires, and purposes estranged  
From things terrestrial, and divinely changed,  
Their very language of a kind that speaks  
The soul's sure interest in the good she seeks,  
Who deal with Scripture, its importance felt,  
As Tully with philosophy once dealt,  
And in the silent watches of the night,  
And through the scenes of toil-renewing light,  
The social walk, or solitary ride,  
Keep still the dear companion at their side?  
No—shame upon a self-disgracing age,  
God's work may serve an ape upon a stage  
With such a jest as fill'd with hellish glee  
Certain invisibles as shrewd as he;  
But veneration or respect finds none,  
Save from the subjects of that work alone.  
The World grown old her deep discernment shows,  
Claps spectacles on her sagacious nose,  
Peruses closely the true Christian's face,  
And finds it a mere mask of sly grimace,  
Usurps God's office, lays his bosom bare,  
And finds hypocrisy close lurking there,  
And serving God herself through mere constraint,  
Concludes his unfeign'd love of Him a feint.  
And yet, God knows, look human nature through,  
(And in due time the world shall know it too,)  
That since the flowers of Eden felt the blast,  
That after man's defection laid all waste,  
Sincerity towards the heart-searching God  
Has made the new-born creature her abode,  
Nor shall be found in unregenerate souls,  
Till the last fire burn all between the poles.  
Sincerity! why 'tis his only pride,  
Weak and imperfect in all grace beside,  
He knows that God demands his heart entire,  
And gives him all His just demands require.  
Without it, his pretensions were as vain  
As, having it, he deems the world's disdain;  
That great defect would cost him not alone  
Man's favourable judgment, but his own,  
His birthright shaken, and no longer clear  
Than while his conduct proves his heart sincere.  
Retort the charge, and let the World be told  
She boasts a confidence she does not hold;

That, conscious of her crimes, she feels instead  
A cold misgiving and a killing dread :  
That while in health, the ground of her support  
Is madly to forget that life is short ;  
That sick, she trembles, knowing she must die,  
Her hope presumption, and her faith a lie ;  
That while she dotes, and dreams that she believes,  
She mocks her Maker, and herself deceives ;  
Her utmost reach, historical assent,  
The doctrines warp'd to what they never meant ;  
The truth itself is in her head as dull  
And useless as a candle in a skull,  
And all her love of God a groundless claim,  
A trick upon the canvas, painted flame.  
Tell her again, the sneer upon her face,  
And all her censures of the work of grace,  
Are insincere, meant only to conceal  
A dread she would not, yet is forced to feel ;  
That in her heart the Christian she reveres,  
And while she seems to scorn him, only fears.

A poet does not work by square or line,  
As smiths and joiners perfect a design ;  
At least we moderns, our attention less,  
Beyond the example of our sires digress,  
And claim a right to scamper and run wide,  
Wherever chance, caprice, or fancy guide.  
The world and I fortuitously met,  
I owed a trifle and have paid the debt ;  
She did me wrong, I recompensed the deed,  
And, having struck the balance, now proceed.  
Perhaps, however, as some years have pass'd  
Since she and I conversed together last,  
And I have lived recluse in rural shades,  
Which seldom a distinct report pervades,  
Great changes and new manners have occur'd,  
And bless'd reforms that I have never heard.  
And she may now be as discreet and wise,  
As once absurd in all discerning eyes.  
Sobriety perhaps may now be found  
Where once intoxication press'd the ground ;  
The subtle and injurious may be just,  
And he grown chaste that was the slave of lust ;  
Arts once esteem'd may be with shame dismiss'd,  
Charity may relax the miser's fist,  
The gamester may have cast his cards away,  
Forgot to curse, and only kneel to pray.  
It has indeed been told me (with what weight  
How credibly, 'tis hard for me to state,)

That fables old, that seem'd for ever mute,  
 Revived, are hastening into fresh repute,  
 And gods and goddesses discarded long,  
 Like useless lumber or a stroller's song,  
 Are bringing into vogue their heathen train,  
 And Jupiter bids fair to rule again :  
 That certain feasts are instituted now,\*  
 Where Venus hears the lover's tender vow ;  
 That all Olympus through the country roves,  
 To consecrate our few remaining groves,  
 And Echo learns politely to repeat  
 The praise of names for ages obsolete ;  
 That having proved the weakness, it should seem,  
 Of revelation's ineffectual beam,  
 To bring the passions under sober sway,  
 And give the moral springs their proper play,  
 They mean to try what may at last be done  
 By stout substantial gods of wood and stone,  
 And whether Roman rites may not produce  
 The virtues of old Rome for English use.  
 May much success attend the pious plan,  
 May Mercury once more embellish man,  
 Grace him again with long-forgotten arts,  
 Reclaim his taste and brighten up his parts,  
 Make him athletic as in days of old,  
 Learn'd at the bar, in the palæstra bold,  
 Divest the rougher sex of female airs,  
 And teach the softer not to copy theirs.  
 The change shall please, nor shall it matter ought,  
 Who works the wonder, if it be but wrought.  
 'Tis time, however, if the case stands thus,  
 For us plain folks and all who side with us,  
 To build our altar, confident and bold,  
 And say as stern Elijah said of old,†  
 " The strife now stands upon a fair award,  
 If Israel's Lord be God, then serve the Lord,—  
 If He be silent, faith is all a whim,  
 Then Baal is the God, and worship him !"  
 Digression is so much in modern use,  
 Thought is so rare, and fancy so profuse,  
 Some never seem so wide of their intent,  
 As when returning to the theme they meant ;  
 As mendicants, whose business is to roam,  
 Make every parish but their own their home.

\* Alluding to the profane orgies held at Medmenham Abbey by Sir Francis Dashwood and his friends. See Timbs' "Century of Anecdote," p. 132.

† 1 Kings xviii. 21.

Though such continual zigzags in a book,  
Such drunken reelings have an awkward look,  
And I had rather creep to what is true,  
Than rove and stagger with no mark in view :  
Yet to consult a little seem'd no crime,  
The freakish humour of the present time;  
But now to gather up what seems dispersed,  
And touch the subject I designed at first,  
May prove, though much beside the rules of art,  
Best for the public, and my wisest part.  
And first let no man charge me that I mean  
To clothe in sables every social scene,  
And give good company a face severe,  
As if they met around a father's bier;  
For tell some men that, pleasure all their bent,  
And laughter all their work, is life misspent,  
Their wisdom bursts into this sage reply,  
Then mirth is sin, and we should always cry.  
To find the medium asks some share of wit,  
And therefore 'tis a mark fools never hit.  
But though life's valley be a vale of tears,  
A brighter scene beyond that vale appears,  
Whose glory with a light that never fades,  
Shoots between scatter'd rocks and opening shades,  
And while it shews the land the soul desires,  
The language of the land she seeks, inspires.  
Thus touch'd, the tongue receives a sacred cure  
Of all that was absurd, profane, in pure ;  
Held within modest bounds, the tide of speech  
Pursues the course that truth and nature teach,  
No longer labours merely to produce  
The pomp of sound, or tinkle without use :  
Where'er it winds, the salutary stream,  
Sprightly and fresh, enriches every theme,  
While all the happy man possess'd before,  
The gift of nature, or the classic store,  
Is made subservient to the grand design  
For which Heaven formed the faculty divine.  
So, should an idiot, while at large he strays,  
Find the sweet lyre on which an artist plays,  
With rash and awkward force the chords he shakes,  
And grins with wonder at the jar he makes ;  
But let the wise and well-instructed hand  
Once take the shell beneath his just command,  
In gentle sounds it seems as it complain'd  
Of the rude injuries it late sustain'd,  
Till tuned at length to some immortal song,  
It sounds Jehovah's name, and pours His praise along.

## RETIREMENT.

### ARGUMENT.

The busy universally desirous of retirement—Important purpose for which this desire was given to man—Musing on the works of the creation, a happy employment—The service of God not incompatible, however, with a life of business—Human life; its pursuits—Various motives for seeking retirement—The poet's delight in the study of nature—The lover's fondness for retirement—The hypochondriac—Melancholy, a malady that claims most compassion, but receives the least—Sufferings of the melancholy man—The statesman's retirement—His new mode of life—Soon weary of retirement, he returns to his former pursuits—Citizens' villas—Fashion of frequenting watering-places—The ocean—The spendthrift in forced retirement—The sportsman ostler—The management of leisure a difficult task—Man will be summoned to account for the employment of life—Books and friends requisite for the man of leisure; and divine communion to fill the remaining void—Religion not adverse to innocent pleasures—The poet concludes with a reference to his own pursuits.

. . . . . "studiis florens ignobilis oti."—VIRG. *Geor.*, lib. 4.

HACKNEY'D in business, wearied at that oar,  
Which thousands, once fast chain'd to, quit no more,  
But which, when life at ebb runs weak and low,  
All wish, or seem to wish, they could forego;  
The statesman, lawyer, merchant, man of trade,  
Pants for the refuge of some rural shade,  
Where all his long anxieties forgot,  
Amid the charms of a sequester'd spot,  
Or recollected only to gild o'er  
And add a smile to what was sweet before,  
He may possess the joys he thinks he sees,  
Lay his old age upon the lap of ease,  
Improve the remnant of his wasted span,  
And, having lived a trifter, die a man.  
Thus conscience pleads her cause within the breast,  
Though long rebell'd against, not yet suppress'd,  
And calls a creature form'd for God alone,  
For Heaven's high purposes and not his own,  
Calls him away from selfish ends and aims,  
From what debilitates and what inflames,  
From cities humming with a restless crowd,  
Sordid as active, ignorant as loud,  
Whose highest praise is that they live in vain,  
The dupes of pleasure, or the slaves of gain,

Where works of man are cluster'd close around  
And works of God are hardly to be found,  
To regions where in spite of sin and woe,  
Traces of Eden are still seen below,  
Where mountain, river, forest, field, and grove  
Remind him of his Maker's power and love.  
'Tis well if look'd for at so late a day,  
In the last scene of such a senseless play,  
True wisdom will attend his feeble call,  
And grace his action ere the curtain fall.  
Souls that have long despised their heavenly birth,  
Their wishes all impregnated with earth,  
For threescore years employ'd with ceaseless care,  
In catching smoke and feeding upon air;  
Conversant only with the ways of men,  
Rarely redeem the short remaining ten.  
Inveterate habits choke the unfruitful heart,  
Their fibres penetrate its tenderest part,  
And draining its nutritious powers to feed  
Their noxious growth, starve every better seed.

Happy if full of days—but happier far,  
If ere we yet discern life's evening star,  
Sick of the service of a world that feeds  
Its patient drudges with dry chaff and weeds,  
We can escape from custom's idiot sway,  
To serve the Sovereign we were born to obey.  
Then sweet to muse upon His skill display'd  
(Infinite skill) in all that He has made!  
To trace in Nature's most minute design  
The signature and stamp of power divine,  
Contrivance intricate express'd with ease,  
Where unassisted sight no beauty sees,  
The shapely limb and lubricated joint,  
Within the small dimensions of a point;  
Muscle and nerve miraculously spun,  
His mighty work who speaks and it is done,  
The Invisible in things scarce seen reveal'd,  
To whom an atom is an ample field;  
To wonder at a thousand insect forms,  
These hatch'd, and those resuscitated worms,  
New life ordain'd and brighter scenes to share,  
Once prone on earth, now buoyant upon air,  
Whose shape would make them, had they bulk and size,  
More hideous foes than fancy can devise;  
With helmet-heads and dragon scales adorn'd,  
The mighty myriads, now securely scorn'd,  
Would mock the majesty of man's high birth,  
Despise his bulwarks, and unpeople earth.

## RETIREMENT.

Then with a glance of fancy to survey,  
 Far as the faculty can stretch away,  
 Ten thousand rivers pour'd at His command  
 From urns that never fail, through every land,  
 These like a deluge with impetuous force,  
 Those winding modestly a silent course;  
 The cloud-surmounting Alps; the fruitful vales;  
 Seas, on which every nation spreads her sails;  
 The sun, a world whence other worlds drink light;  
 The crescent moon, the diadem of night;  
 Stars countless, each in his appointed place,  
 Fast anchor'd in the deep abyss of space;—  
 At such a sight to catch the poet's\* flame,  
 And with a rapture like his own exclaim,  
 "These are Thy glorious works, thou Source of good,  
 How dimly seen, how faintly understood!  
 Thine, and upheld by Thy paternal care,  
 This universal frame, thus wondrous fair;  
 Thy power divine, and bounty beyond thought,  
 Adored and praised in all that Thou hast wrought,  
 Absorb'd in that immensity I see,  
 I shrink abased, and yet aspire to Thee;  
 Instruct me, guide me to that heavenly day,  
 Thy words more clearly than Thy works, display,  
 That while Thy truths my grosser thoughts refine,  
 I may resemble Thee and call Thee mine."

O blest proficiency! surpassing all  
 That men erroneously their glory call,  
 The recompence that arts or arms can yield,  
 The bar, the senate, or the tented field.  
 Compared with this sublimest life below,  
 Ye kings and rulers, what have courts to show?  
 Thus studied, used, and consecrated thus,  
 Whatever is, seems form'd indeed for us!  
 Not as the plaything of a froward child,  
 Fretful unless diverted and beguiled,  
 Much less to feed and fan the fatal fires  
 Of pride, ambition, or impure desires;  
 But as a scale by which the soul ascends  
 From mighty means to more important ends,  
 Securely, though by steps but rarely trod,  
 Mounts from inferior beings up to God,  
 And sees by no fallacious light or dim,  
 Earth made for man, and man himself for Him.  
 Not that I mean to approve, or would enforce,  
 A superstitious and monastic course:

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\* Milton, in *Paradise Lost*.

Truth is not local ; God alike pervades  
And fills the world of traffic and the shades,  
And may be feared amidst the busiest scenes,  
Or scorn'd where business never intervenes.  
But 'tis not easy with a mind like ours,  
Conscious of weakness in its noblest powers,  
And in a world where, other ills apart,  
The roving eye misleads the careless heart,  
To limit thought, by nature prone to stray  
Wherever freakish fancy points the way :  
To bid the pleadings of self-love be still,  
Resign our own and seek our Maker's will ;  
To spread the page of Scripture, and compare  
Our conduct with the laws engraven there ;  
To measure all that passes in the breast,  
Faithfully, fairly, by that sacred test ;  
To dive into the secret deeps within,  
To spare no passion and no favourite sin,  
And search the themes, important above all,  
Ourselves and our recovery from our fall.  
But leisure, silence, and a mind released  
From anxious thoughts how wealth may be increased,  
How to secure in some propitious hour,  
The point of interest or the post of power,  
A soul serene, and equally retired  
From objects too much dreaded or desired,  
Safe from the clamours of perverse dispute,  
At least are friendly to the great pursuit. -  
Opening the map of God's extensive plan,  
We find a little isle, this life of man ;  
Eternity's unknown expanse appears  
Circling around and limiting his years ;  
The busy race examine and explore  
Each creek and cavern of the dangerous shore,  
With care collect what in their eyes excels,  
Some shining pebbles, and some weeds and shells ;  
Thus laden, dream that they are rich and great,  
And happiest he that groans beneath his weight.  
The waves o'ertake them in their serious play,  
And every hour sweeps multitudes away ;  
They shriek and sink, survivors start and weep,  
Pursue their sport, and follow to the deep.  
A few forsake the throng, with lifted eyes  
Ask wealth of Heaven, and gain a real prize,  
Truth, wisdom, grace, and peace like that above,  
Seal'd with His signet whom they serve and love ;  
Scorn'd by the rest, with patient hope they wait  
A kind release from their imperfect state,



And unregretted are soon snatch'd away  
From scenes of sorrow into glorious day.

Nor these alone prefer a life recluse,  
Who seek retirement for its proper use;  
The love of change that lives in every breast,  
Genius, and temper, and desire of rest,  
Discordant motives in one centre meet,  
And each inclines its votary to retreat.  
Some minds by nature are averse to noise,  
And hate the tumult half the world enjoys,  
The lure of avarice, or the pompous prize  
That courts display before ambitious eyes,  
The fruits that hang on pleasure's flowery stem,  
Whate'er enchants them are no snares to them.  
To them the deep recess of dusky groves,  
Or forest where the deer securely roves,  
The fall of waters and the song of birds,  
And hills that echo to the distant herds,  
Are luxuries excelling all the glare  
The world can boast and her chief favourites share  
With eager step, and carelessly array'd,  
For such a cause the poet seeks the shade,  
From all he sees he catches new delight,  
Pleased Fancy claps her pinions at the sight;  
The rising or the setting orb of day,  
The clouds that fit, or slowly float away,  
Nature in all the various shapes she wears,  
Frowning in storms, or breathing gentle airs,  
The snowy robe her wintry state assumes,  
Her summer heats, her fruits, and her perfumes,  
All, all alike transport the glowing bard,  
Success in rhyme his glory and reward.  
O Nature! whose Elysian scenes disclose  
His bright perfections at whose word they rose,  
Next to that Power who form'd thee and sustains,  
Be thou the great inspirer of my strains.  
Still as I touch the lyre, do thou expand  
Thy genuine charms, and guide an artless hand,  
That I may catch a fire but rarely known,  
Give useful light though I should miss renown,  
And poring on thy page, whose every line  
Bears proof of an intelligence divine,  
May feel a heart enrich'd by what it pays,  
That builds its glory on its Maker's praise.  
Woe to the man whose wit disclaims its use,  
Glittering in vain, or only to seduce,  
Who studies nature with a wanton eye,  
Admires the work, but slips the lesson by;

His hours of leisure and recess employs  
In drawing pictures of forbidden joys,  
Retires to blazon his own worthless name,  
Or shoot the careless with a surer aim.  
The lover too shuns business and alarms,  
Tender idolater of absent charms.  
Saints offer nothing in their warmest prayers,  
That he devotes not with a zeal like theirs ;  
'Tis consecration of his heart, soul, time,  
And every thought that wanders is a crime.  
In sighs he worships his supremely fair,  
And weeps a sad libation in despair,  
Adores a creature, and devout in vain,  
Wins in return an answer of disdain.  
As woodbine weds the plant within her reach,  
Rough elm, or smooth-grain'd ash, or glossy beech,  
In spiral rings ascends the trunk, and lays  
Her golden tassels on the leafy sprays,  
But does a mischief while she lends a grace,  
Straitening its growth by such a strict embrace,  
So love, that clings around the noblest minds,  
Forbids the advancement of the soul he binds ;  
The suitor's air indeed he soon improves,  
And forms it to the taste of her he loves,  
Teaches his eyes a language, and no less  
Refines his speech and fashions his address ;  
But farewell promises of happier fruits,  
Manly designs, and learning's grave pursuits,  
Girt with a chain he cannot wish to break,  
His only bliss is sorrow for her sake ;  
Who will may pant for glory and excel,  
Her smile his aim, all higher aims farewell !  
Thyrsis, Alexis, or whatever name  
May least offend against so pure a flame,  
Though sage advice of friends the most sincere  
Sounds harshly in so delicate an ear,  
And lovers, of all creatures, tame or wild,  
Can least brook management, however mild,  
Yet let a poet (poetry disarms  
The fiercest animals with magic charms)  
Risk an intrusion on thy pensive mood,  
And woo and win thee to thy proper good.  
Pastoral images and still retreats,  
Umbrageous walks and solitary seats,  
Sweet birds in concert with harmonious streams,  
Soft airs, nocturnal vigils, and day-dreams,  
Are all enchantments in a case like thine,  
Conspire against thy peace with one design.

*RETIREMENT.*

Soothe thee to make thee but a surer prey,  
 And feed the fire that wastes thy powers away.  
 Up—God has form'd thee with a wiser view,  
 Not to be led in chains, but to subdue;  
 Calls thee to cope with enemies, and first  
 Points out a conflict with thyself, the worst.  
 Woman indeed, a gift He would bestow  
 When He design'd a Paradise below,  
 The richest earthly boon His hands afford,  
 Deserves to be beloved, but not adored.  
 Post away swiftly to more active scenes,  
 Collect the scatter'd truths that study gleans,  
 Mix with the world, but with its wiser part,  
 No longer give an image all thine heart;  
 Its empire is not hers, nor is it thine,  
 'Tis God's just claim, prerogative divine.

Virtuous and faithful *HEBERDEN*,\* whose skill  
 Attempts no task it cannot well fulfil,  
 Gives melancholy up to nature's care,  
 And sends the patient into purer air.  
 Look where he comes—in this embower'd alcove,  
 Stand close conceal'd, and see a statue move:  
 Lips busy, and eyes fix'd, foot falling slow,  
 Arms hanging idly down, hands clasp'd below,  
 Interpret to the marking eye distress,  
 Such as its symptoms can alone express.  
 That tongue is silent now,—that silent tongue  
 Could argue once, could jest, or join the song,  
 Could give advice, could censure or commend,  
 Or charm the sorrows of a drooping friend.  
 Renounced alike its office and its sport,  
 Its brisker and its graver strains fall short;  
 Both fail beneath a fever's secret sway,  
 And like a summer brook are pass'd away.  
 This is a sight for pity to peruse  
 Till she resembles faintly what she views,  
 Till sympathy contract a kindred pain,  
 Pierced with the woes that she laments in vain.  
 This of all maladies that man infest,  
 Claims most compassion and receives the least:  
 Job felt it when he groan'd beneath the rod,  
 And the barbed arrows of a frowning God;  
 And such emollients as his friends could spare,  
 Friends such as his for modern Jobs prepare.

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\* Dr. William Heberden, a distinguished physician, who was Cowper's medical friend.  
 He died in 1801.

Bless'd, rather cursed, with hearts that never feel,  
Kept snug in caskets of close-hammer'd steel,  
With mouths made only to grin wide and eat,  
And minds that deem derided pain a treat ;  
With limbs of British oak, and nerves of wire,  
And wit that puppet prompters might inspire,  
Their sovereign nostrum is a clumsy joke  
On pangs enforced with God's severest stroke.  
But with a soul that ever felt the sting  
Of sorrow, sorrow is a sacred thing :  
Not to molest, or irritate, or raise  
A laugh at his expense, is slender praise ;  
He that has not usurp'd the name of man  
Does all, and deems too little all, he can,  
To assuage the throbbings of the fester'd part,  
And staunch the bleedings of a broken heart.  
'Tis not, as heads that never ache suppose,  
Forgery of fancy, and a dream of woes ;  
Man is a harp, whose chords elude the sight,  
Each yielding harmony, disposed aright ;  
The screws reversed, (a task which if He please  
God in a moment executes with ease,)  
Ten thousand thousand strings at once go loose,  
Lost, till he tune them, all their power and use.  
Then neither heathy wilds, nor scenes as fair  
As ever recompensed the peasant's care,  
Nor soft declivities with tufted hills,  
Nor view of waters turning busy mills,  
Parks in which Art preceptress Nature weds,  
Nor gardens interspersed with flowery beds,  
Nor gales, that catch the scent of blooming groves,  
And waft it to the mourner as he roves,  
Can call up life into his faded eye,  
That passes all he sees unheeded by :  
No wounds like those a wounded spirit feels,  
No cure for such, till God, who makes them, heals.  
And thou sad sufferer under nameless ill,  
That yields not to the touch of human skill,  
Improve the kind occasion, understand  
A Father's frown, and kiss His chastening hand.  
To thee the dayspring and the blaze of noon,  
The purple evening and resplendent moon,  
The stars that, sprinkled o'er the vault of night,  
Seem drops descending in a shower of light,  
Shine not, or undesired and hated shine,  
Seen through the medium of a cloud like thine :  
Yet seek Him, in His favour life is found,  
All bliss beside, a shadow or a sound ;

## RETIREMENT.

Then Heaven, eclipsed so long, and this dull earth,  
 Shall seem to start into a second birth ;  
 Nature assuming a more lovely face,  
 Borrowing a beauty from the works of grace,  
 Shall be despised and overlook'd no more,  
 Shall fill thee with delights unfelt before,  
 Impart to things inanimate a voice,  
 And bid her mountains and her hills rejoice ;  
 The sound shall run along the winding vales,  
 And thou enjoy an Eden ere it fails.

“ Ye groves,” (the statesman at his desk exclaims,  
 Sick of a thousand disappointed aims,)

“ My patrimonial treasure and my pride,  
 Beneath your shades your gray possessor hide !  
 Receive me languishing for that repose  
 The servant of the public never knows.

Ye saw me once (ah, those regretted days  
 When boyish innocence was all my praise !)  
 Hour after hour delightfully allot

To studies then familiar, since forgot,  
 And cultivate a taste for ancient song,  
 Catching its ardour as I mused along ;

Nor seldom, as propitious Heaven might send,  
 What once I valued and could boast, a friend,  
 Were witnesses how cordially I press'd

His undissembling virtue to my breast ;  
 Receive me now, not uncorrupt as then,  
 Nor guiltless of corrupting other men,

But versed in arts that while they seem to stay  
 A falling empire, hasten its decay.

To the fair haven of my native home,

The wreck of what I was, fatigued I come ;

For once I can approve the patriot's voice,

And make the course he recommends my choice :

We meet at last in one sincere desire,—

His wish and mine both prompt me to retire.”

'Tis done ;—he steps into the welcome chaise,

Lolls at his ease behind four handsome bays,

That whirl away from business and debate

The disencumber'd Atlas of the state.

Ask not the boy, who, when the breeze of morn,

First shakes the glittering drops from every thorn,

Unfolds his flock, then under bank or bush

Sits linking cherry-stones, or plating rush,

How fair is freedom ?—he was always free ;

To carve his rustic name upon a tree,

To snare the mole, or with ill-fashion'd hook

To draw the incautious minnow from the brook,

Are life's prime pleasures in his simple view,  
His flock the chief concern he ever knew ;  
She shines but little in his heedless eyes,  
The good we never miss we rarely prize.  
But ask the noble drudge in state affairs,  
Escaped from office and its constant cares,  
What charms he sees in Freedom's smile express'd,  
In freedom lost so long, now repossess'd ;  
The tongue whose strains were cogent as commands,  
Revered at home, and felt in foreign lands,  
Shall own itself a stammerer in that cause,  
Or plead its silence as its best applause.  
He knows indeed that whether dress'd or rude,  
Wild without art, or artfully subdned,  
Nature in every form inspires delight,  
But never mark'd her with so just a sight.  
Her hedge-row shrubs, a variegated store,  
With woodbine and wild roses mantled o'er,  
Green balks and furrow'd lands, the stream that spreads  
Its cooling vapour o'er the dewy meads,  
Downs that almost escape the inquiring eye,  
That melt and fade into the distant sky,  
Beauties he lately slighted as he pass'd,  
Seem all created since he travell'd last.  
Master of all the enjoyments he design'd,  
No rough annoyance rankling in his mind,  
What early philosophic hours he keeps,  
How regular his meals, how sound he sleeps !  
Not sounder he that on the mainmast head,  
While morning kindles with a windy red,  
Begins a long look-out for distant land,  
Nor quits till evening watch his giddy stand,  
Then swift descending with a seaman's haste,  
Slips to his hammock, and forgets the blast.  
He chooses company, but not the squire's,  
Whose wit is rudeness, whose good breeding tires ;  
Nor yet the parson's, who would gladly come,  
Obsequious when abroad, though proud at home ;  
Nor can he much affect the neighbouring peer,  
Whose toe of emulation treads too near,  
But wisely seeks a more convenient friend,  
With whom, dismissing forms, he may unbend,—  
A man whom marks of condescending grace  
Teach, while they flatter him, his proper place,—  
Who comes when call'd, and at a word withdraws,  
Speaks with reserve, and listens with applause ;  
Some plain mechanic, who without pretence  
To birth or wit, nor gives nor takes offence,

On whom he rests well pleased his weary powers,  
And talks and laughs away his vacant hours.  
The tide of life, swift always in its course,  
May run in cities with a brisker force,  
But nowhere with a current so serene,  
Or half so clear as in the rural scene.  
Yet how fallacious is all earthly bliss,  
What obvious truths the wisest heads may miss!  
Some pleasures live a month, and some a year,  
But short the date of all we gather here;  
No happiness is felt except the true,  
That does not charm thee more for being new.  
This observation, as it chanced, not made,  
Or, if the thought occur'd not duly weigh'd,  
He sighs—for after all, by slow degrees,  
The spot he loved has lost the power to please;  
To cross his ambling pony day by day  
Seems at the best but dreaming life away;  
The prospect, such as might enchant despair,  
He views it not, or sees no beauty there;  
With aching heart, and discontented looks,  
Returns at noon to billiards or to books,  
But feels, while grasping at his faded joys,  
A secret thirst of his renounced employs.  
He chides the tardiness of every post,  
Pants to be told of battles won or lost,  
Blames his own indolence, observes, though late,  
'Tis criminal to leave a sinking state,  
Flies to the levee, and, received with grace,  
Kneels, kisses hands, and shines again in place.  
Suburban villas, highway-side retreats,  
That dread the encroachment of our growing streets,  
Tight boxes neatly sash'd, and in a blaze  
With all a July sun's collected rays,  
Delight the citizen, who, gasping there,  
Breathes clouds of dust, and calls it country air.  
O sweet retirement, who would balk the thought  
That could afford retirement, or could not?  
'Tis such an easy walk, so smooth and straight,  
The second milestone fronts the garden gate;  
A step if fair, and, if a shower approach,  
You find safe shelter in the next stage-coach.  
There prison'd in a parlour snug and small,  
Like bottled wasps upon a southern wall,  
The man of business and his friends compress'd,  
Forget their labours, and yet find no rest;  
But still 'tis rural—trees are to be seen  
From every window, and the fields are green

Ducks paddle in the pond before the door,  
 And what could a remoter scene show more?  
 A sense of elegance we rarely find  
 The portion of a mean or vulgar mind,  
 And ignorance of better things makes man,  
 Who cannot much, rejoice in what he can;  
 And he that deems his leisure well bestowed  
 In contemplation of a turnpike road,  
 Is occupied as well, employs his hours  
 As wisely, and as much improves his powers,  
 As he that slumbers in pavilions graced  
 With all the charms of an accomplish'd taste.  
 Yet hence, alas! insolvencies; and hence  
 The unpitied victim of ill-judged expense,  
 From all his wearisome engagements freed,  
 Shakes hands with business, and retires indeed.

Your prudent grandmamas, ye modern belles,  
 Content with Bristol, Bath, and Tunbridge Wells,  
 When health required it, would consent to roam,  
 Else more attach'd to pleasures found at home;  
 But now alike, gay widow, virgin, wife,  
 Ingenious to diversify dull life,  
 In coaches, chaises, caravans, and noys,  
 Fly to the coast for daily, nightly joys,  
 And all impatient of dry land agree  
 With one consent to rush into the sea.  
 Ocean exhibits, fathomless and broad,  
 Much of the power and majesty of God;  
 He swathes about the swelling of the deep,  
 That shines and rests as infants smile and sleep;  
 Vast as it is it answers as it flows,  
 The breathings of the lightest air that blows;  
 Curling and whitening over all the waste,  
 The rising waves obey the increasing blast,  
 Abrupt and horrid as the tempest roars,  
 Thunder and flash upon the steadfast shores,  
 Till He that rides the whirlwind checks the rein,  
 Then all the world of waters sleeps again.  
 Nereids or Dryads, as the fashion leads,  
 Now in the floods, now panting in the meads,  
 Votaries of Pleasure still, where'er she dwells,  
 Near barren rocks, in palaces, or cells,  
 Oh grant a poet leave to recommend  
 (A poet fond of Nature, and your friend)  
 Her slighted works to your admiring view;  
 Her works must needs excel, who fashion'd you.  
 Would ye, when rambling in your morning ride,  
 With some unmeaning coxcomb at your side,



Condemn the prattler for his idle pains,  
 To waste unheard the music of his strains,  
 And, deaf to all the impertinence of tongue,  
 That, while it courts, affronts and does you wrong,  
 Mark well the finish'd plan without a fault,  
 The seas globose and huge, the o'erarching vault,  
 Earth's millions daily fed, a world employ'd  
 In gathering plenty yet to be enjoy'd,  
 Till gratitude grew vocal in the praise  
 Of God, beneficent in all His ways;  
 Graced with such wisdom how would beauty shine!  
 Ye want but that to seem indeed divine.

Anticipated rents and bills unpaid  
 Force many a shining youth into the shade,  
 Not to redeem his time, but his estate,  
 And play the fool, but at a cheaper rate.  
 There, hid in loathed obscurity, removed  
 From pleasures left, but never more beloved,  
 He just endures, and with a sickly spleen  
 Sighs o'er the beauties of the charming scene.  
 Nature indeed looks prettily in rhyme;  
 Streams tinkle sweetly in poetic chime;  
 The warblings of the blackbird, clear and strong,  
 Are musical enough in Thomson's song;  
 And Cobham's groves, and Windsor's green retreats,  
 When Pope describes them, have a thousand sweets;  
 He likes the country, but in truth must own,  
 Most likes it when he studies it in town.

Poor Jack—no matter who—for when I blame,  
 I pity, and must therefore sink the name,—  
 Lived in his saddle, loved the chase, the course,  
 And always, ere he mounted, kiss'd his horse.  
 The estate his sires had own'd in ancient years,  
 Was quickly distanced, match'd against a peer's.  
 Jack vanish'd, was regretted, and forgot;  
 'Tis wild good nature's never failing lot.  
 At length, when all had long supposed him dead,  
 By cold submersion, razor, rope, or lead,  
 My lord, alighting at his usual place,  
 The Crown, took notice of an ostler's face.  
 Jack knew his friend, but hoped in that disguise  
 He might escape the most observing eyes,  
 And whistling, as if unconcern'd and gay,  
 Curried his nag and look'd another way.  
 Convinced at last, upon a nearer view,  
 'Twas he, the same, the very Jack he knew,  
 O'erwhelm'd at once with wonder, grief, and joy,  
 He press'd him much to quit his base employ;

His countenance, his purse, his heart, his hand,  
 Influence and power, were all at his command.  
 Peers are not always generous as well bred,  
 But Granby was,—meant truly what he said.  
 Jack bow'd, and was obliged ;—confessed 'twas strange,  
 That so retired he should not wish a change,  
 But knew no medium between guzzling beer,  
 And his old stint— three thousand pounds a year.

Thus some retire to nourish hopeless woe ;  
 Some seeking happiness not found below ;  
 Some to comply with humour, and a mind  
 To social scenes by nature disinclined ;  
 Some sway'd by fashion, some by deep disgust ;  
 Some self-impoverish'd, and because they must ;  
 But few, that court retirement, are aware  
 Of half the toils they must encounter there.

Lucrative offices are seldom lost  
 For want of powers proportion'd to the post :  
 Give e'en a dunce the employment he desires,  
 And he soon finds the talents it requires ;  
 A business with an income at its heels  
 Furnishes always oil for its own wheels.  
 But in his arduous enterprise to close  
 His active years with indolent repose,  
 He finds the labours of that state exceed  
 His utmost faculties, severe indeed.  
 'Tis easy to resign a toilsome place,  
 But not to manage leisure with a grace ;  
 Absence of occupation is not rest,  
 A mind quite vacant is a mind distress'd.  
 The veteran steed excused his task at length,  
 In kind compassion of his failing strength,  
 And turn'd into the park or mead to graze,  
 Exempt from future service all his days,  
 There feels a pleasure perfect in its kind,  
 Ranges at liberty, and snuffs the wind :  
 But when his lord would quit the busy road,  
 To taste a joy like that he has bestow'd,  
 He proves, less happy than his favour'd brute,  
 A life of ease a difficult pursuit.  
 Thought, to the man that never thinks, may seem  
 As natural as when asleep to dream ;  
 But reveries (for human minds will act)  
 Specious in show, impossible in fact,  
 Those flimsy webs that break as soon as wrought,  
 Attain not to the dignity of thought :  
 Nor yet the swarms that occupy the brain,  
 Where dreams of dress, intrigue, and pleasure reign,

Nor such as useless conversation breeds,  
 Or lust engenders, and indulgence feeds.  
 Whence, and what are we? To what end ordain'd?  
 What means the drama by the world sustained?  
 Business or vain amusement, care or mirth,  
 Divide the frail inhabitants of earth.  
 Is duty a mere sport, or an employ?  
 Life an entrusted talent, or a toy?  
 Is there, as reason, conscience, Scripture say,  
 Cause to provide for a great future day,  
 When, earth's assign'd duration at an end,  
 Man shall be summon'd, and the dead attend?  
 The trumpet—will it sound? the curtain rise?  
 And shew the august tribunal of the skies,  
 Where no prevarication shall avail,  
 Where eloquence and artifice shall fail,  
 The pride of arrogant distinctions fall,  
 And conscience and our conduct judge us all?  
 Pardon me, ye that give the midnight oil  
 To learned cares or philosophic toil,  
 Though I revere your honourable names,  
 Your useful labours, and important aims,  
 And hold the world indebted to your aid,  
 Enrich'd with the discoveries ye have made,  
 Yet let me stand excused, if I esteem  
 A mind employ'd on so sublime a theme,  
 Pushing her bold inquiry to the date  
 And outline of the present transient state,  
 And after poisoning her adventurous wings,  
 Settling at last upon eternal things,  
 Far more intelligent, and better taught  
 The strenuous use of profitable thought,  
 Than ye when happiest, and enlighten'd most,  
 And highest in renown, can justly boast.  
 A mind unnerved, or indisposed to bear  
 The weight of subjects worthiest of her care,  
 Whatever hopes a change of scene inspires,  
 Must change her nature, or in vain retires.  
 An idler is a watch that wants both hands;  
 As useless if it goes as when it stands.  
 Books therefore, not the scandal of the shelves,  
 In which lewd sensualists print out themselves,  
 Nor those in which the stage gives vice a blow,  
 (With what success let modern manners shew:)  
 Nor his who, for the bane of thousands born,  
 Built God a church, and laugh'd His Word to scorn,\*

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\* Voltaire: he built a church and inscribed on the porch *Deo erexit Voltaire*.

Skilful alike to seem devout and just,  
 And stab religion with a sly side-thrust;  
 Nor those of learn'd philologists, who chase  
 A panting syllable through time and space,  
 Start it at home, and hunt it in the dark,  
 To Gaul, to Greece, and into Noah's ark;  
 But such as learning without false pretence,  
 The friend of truth, the associate of sound sense,  
 And such as in the zeal of good design,  
 Strong judgment labouring in the Scripture mine,  
 All such as manly and great souls produce,  
 Worthy to live, and of eternal use;  
 Behold in these what leisure hours demand,  
 Amusement and true knowledge hand in hand.  
 Luxury gives the mind a childish cast,  
 And while she polishes, perverts the taste;  
 Habits of close attention, thinking heads,  
 Become more rare as dissipation spreads,  
 Till authors hear at length one general cry,  
 Tickle and entertain us, or we die!  
 The loud demand from year to year the same,  
 Beggars invention and makes fancy lame,  
 Till farce itself, most mournfully jejune,  
 Calls for the kind assistance of a tune,  
 And novels (witness every month's review)\*  
 Belie their name, and offer nothing new.  
 The mind relaxing into needful sport,  
 Should turn to writers of an abler sort,  
 Whose wit well managed, and whose classic style  
 Give truth a lustre, and make wisdom smile.  
 Friends, (for I cannot stint as some have done,  
 Too rigid in my view, that name to one,  
 Though one, I grant it, in the generous breast  
 Will stand advanced a step above the rest;  
 Flowers by that name promiscuously we call,  
 But one, the rose, the regent of them all;)   
 Friends, not adopted with a schoolboy's haste,  
 But chosen with a nice discerning taste,  
 Well born, well disciplined, who, placed apart  
 From vulgar minds, have honour much at heart,  
 And, though the world may think the ingredients odd,  
 The love of virtue, and the fear of God!  
 Such friends prevent what else would soon succeed,  
 A temper rustic as the life we lead,  
 And keep the polish of the manners clean,  
 As theirs who bustle in the busiest scene;

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\* The *Monthly*, a review of that period.

## RETIREMENT.

For solitude, however some may rave,  
 Seeming a sanctuary, proves a grave,  
 A sepulchre in which the living lie,  
 Where all good qualities grow sick and die.  
 I praise the Frenchman;\* his remark was shrewd,—  
 “How sweet, how passing sweet is solitude!  
 But grant me still a friend in my retreat,  
 Whom I may whisper—Solitude is sweet.”  
 Yet neither these delights, nor aught beside  
 That appetite can ask, or wealth provide,  
 Can save us always from a tedious day,  
 Or shine the dulness of still life away;  
 Divine communion carefully enjoy’d,  
 Or sought with energy, must fill the void.  
 O sacred art! to which alone life owes  
 Its happiest seasons, and a peaceful close,  
 Scorn’d in a world indebted to that scorn  
 For evils daily met and hardly borne,  
 Not knowing thee, we reap, with bleeding hands,  
 Flowers of rank odour upon thorny lands,  
 And while experience cautions us in vain,  
 Grasp seeming happiness, and find it pain.  
 Despondence, self-deserted in her grief,  
 Lost by abandoning her own relief;  
 Murmuring and ungrateful discontent,  
 That scorns afflictions mercifully meant;  
 Those humours tart as wines upon the fret,  
 Which idleness and weariness beget;  
 These and a thousand plagues that haunt the breast,  
 Fond of the phantom of an earthly rest,  
 Divine communion chases, as the day  
 Drives to their dens the obedient beasts of prey.  
 See Judah’s promised king,† bereft of all,  
 Driven out an exile from the face of Saul,  
 To distant caves‡ the lonely wanderer flies,  
 To seek that peace a tyrant’s frown denies.  
 Hear the sweet accents of his tuneful voice,  
 Hear him, o’erwhelm’d with sorrow, yet rejoice  
 No womanish or wailing grief has part,  
 No, not a moment, in his royal heart;  
 ’Tis manly music, such as martyrs make,  
 Suffering with gladness for a Saviour’s sake;  
 His soul exults, hope animates his lays,  
 The sense of mercy kindles into praise,  
 And wilds familiar with a lion’s roar,  
 Ring with ecstatic sounds unheard before.

\* La Bruyère.

† David.

‡ 1 Sam. xxii. 1; xxiv. 3.

'Tis love like his that can alone defeat  
The foes of man, or make a desert sweet.

Religion does not censure or exclude  
Unnumber'd pleasures harmlessly pursued.  
To study culture, and with artful toil  
To meliorate and tame the stubborn soil;  
To give dissimilar yet fruitful lands  
The grain, or herb, or plant that each demands;  
To cherish virtue in an humble state,  
And share the joys your bounty may create;  
To mark the matchless workings of the power  
That shuts within its seed the future flower,  
Bids these in elegance of form excel,  
In colour these, and those delight the smell,  
Sends Nature forth, the daughter of the skies,  
To dance on earth, and charm all human eyes;  
To teach the canvas innocent deceit,  
Or lay the landscape on the snowy sheet;  
These, these are arts pursued without a crime,  
That leave no stain upon the wing of time.

Me poetry (or, rather notes that aim  
Feebly and vainly at poetic fame)  
Employs, shut out from more important views,  
Fast by the banks of the slow-winding Ouse;  
Content if, thus sequester'd, I may raise  
A monitor's, though not a poet's praise,  
And while I teach an art too little known,  
To close life wisely, may not waste my own.



## THE DIVERTING HISTORY OF JOHN GILPIN.

SHOWING HOW HE WENT FARTHER THAN HE INTENDED, AND CAME

SAFE HOME AGAIN.

1782.

The story of John Gilpin's ride was related to Cowper by his friend, Lady Austen, who had heard it as a child. It caused the poet a sleepless night, we are told, as he was kept awake by laughter at it. During these restless hours he turned it into the famous ballad. It appeared in the *Public Advertiser*, November 14th, 1782, anonymously.

A celebrated actor named Henderson took it for one of his public recitations at Freemasons' Hall. It became immediately so popular that it was printed everywhere—in newspapers, magazines, and separately. It was even sung as a common ballad in the streets. It has preserved its popularity to the present date.

The original John Gilpin was, it is said, a Mr. Beyer, a linendraper, who lived at the Cheapside corner of Paternoster Row. He died in 1791, at the age of nearly a hundred years.

JOHN GILPIN was a citizen  
Of credit and renown,  
A trainband captain eke was he  
Of famous London town.

John Gilpin's spouse said to her dear,  
"Though wedded we have been  
These twice ten tedious years, yet we  
No holiday have seen.

To-morrow is our wedding day,  
And we will then repair  
Unto the Bell at Edmonton,  
All in a chaise and pair.

My sister, and my sister's child,  
Myself, and children three,  
Will fill the chaise; so you must ride  
On horseback after we."

He soon replied,—“I do admire  
Of womankind but one,  
And you are she, my dearest dear,  
Therefore it shall be done.

I am a linendraper bold,  
As all the world doth know,  
And my good friend the calender  
Will lend his horse to go."

Quoth Mrs. Gilpin,—“That’s well said ;  
And for that wine is dear,  
We will be furnished with our own,  
Which is both bright and clear.”

John Gilpin kissed his loving wife ;  
O’erjoyed was he to find,  
That, though on pleasure she was bent,  
She had a frugal mind.

The morning came, the chaise was brought,  
But yet was not allowed  
To drive up to the door, lest all  
Should say that she was proud.

So three doors off the chaise was stayed,  
Where they did all get in ;  
Six precious souls, and all agog  
To dash through thick and thin.

Smack went the whip, round went the wheels,  
Were never folk so glad,  
The stones did rattle underneath,  
As if Cheapside were mad.

John Gilpin at his horse’s side  
Seized fast the flowing mane,  
And up he got, in haste to ride,  
But soon came down again ;

For saddletree scarce reached had he,  
His journey to begin,  
When, turning round his head, he saw  
Three customers come in.

So down he came ; for loss of time,  
Although it grieved him sore,  
Yet loss of pence, full well he knew,  
Would trouble him much more.

’Twas long before the customers  
Were suited to their mind,  
When Betty screaming came down stairs,—  
“The wine is left behind !”

“Good lack !” quoth he, “yet bring it me,  
My leathern belt likewise,  
In which I bear my trusty sword  
When I do exercise.”



## THE HISTORY OF JOHN GILPIN.

Now Mistress Gilpin (careful soul!)  
Had two stone bottles found,

To hold the liquor that she loved,  
And keep it safe and sound.

Each bottle had a curling ear,

Through which the belt he drew,  
And hung a bottle on each side,  
To make his balance true.

Then over all, that he might be

Equipped from top to toe,  
His long red cloak, well brushed and neat,  
He manfully did throw.

Now see him mounted once again

Upon his nimble steed,  
Full slowly pacing o'er the stones,  
With caution and good heed.

But finding soon a smother road

Beneath his well-shod feet,  
The snorting beast began to trot,  
Which galled him in his seat.

So "Fair and softly," John he cried,

But John he cried in vain;  
That trot became a gallop soon,  
In spite of curb and rein.

So stooping down, as needs he must

Who cannot sit upright,  
He grasped the mane with both his hands,  
And eke with all his might.

His horse, who never in that sort

Had handled been before,  
What thing upon his back had got  
Did wonder more and more.

Away went Gilpin, neck or nought;

Away went hat and wig;  
He little dreamt, when he set out,  
Of running such a rig.

The wind did blow, the cloak did fly,

Like streamer long and gay,  
Till, loop and button failing both,  
At last it flew away.

Then might all people well discern

The bottles he had slung;  
A bottle swinging at each side,  
As hath been said or sung.

The dogs did bark, the children screamed,  
Up flew the windows all;  
And every soul cried out, "Well done!"  
As loud as he could bawl.

Away went Gilpin—who but he?  
His fame soon spread around;  
"He carries weight!" "He rides a race!"  
"Tis for a thousand pound!"

And still, as fast as he drew near,  
'Twas wonderful to view,  
How in a trice the turnpike men  
Their gates wide open threw.

And now, as he went bowing down  
His reeking head full low,  
The bottles twain behind his back  
Were shattered at a blow.

Down ran the wine into the road,  
Most piteous to be seen,  
Which made his horse's flanks to smoke  
As they had basted been.

But still he seemed to carry weight,  
With leathern girdle braced;  
For all might see the bottle necks  
Still dangling at his waist.

Thus all through merry Islington,  
These gambols he did play,  
Until he came unto the Wash  
Of Edmonton so gay;

And there he threw the Wash about,  
On both sides of the way,  
Just like unto a trundling mop,  
Or a wild goose at play.

At Edmonton, his loving wife  
From the balcony spied  
Her tender husband, wondering much  
To see how he did ride.

"Stop, stop, John Gilpin!—Here's the house!"  
They all at once did cry;  
"The dinner waits, and we are tired:"—  
Said Gilpin—"So am I!"

But yet his horse was not a whit  
Inclined to tarry there;  
For why?—his owner had a house  
Full ten miles off, at Ware,

*THE HISTORY OF JOHN GILPIN.*

So like an arrow swift he flew,  
Shot by an archer strong;  
So did he fly—which brings me to  
The middle of my song.

Away went Gilpin, out of breath,  
And sore against his will,  
Till, at his friend the calender's,  
His horse at last stood still.

The calender, amazed to see  
His neighbour in such trim,  
Laid down his pipe, flew to the gate,  
And thus accosted him:—

“What news? what news? your tidings tell;  
Tell me you must and shall—  
Say why bareheaded you are come,  
Or why you come at all?”

Now Gilpin had a pleasant wit,  
And loved a timely joke;  
And thus unto the calender,  
In merry guise, he spoke:

“I came because your horse would come;  
And, if I well forebode,  
My hat and wig will soon be here,—  
They are upon the road.”

The calender, right glad to find  
His friend in merry pin,  
Returned him not a single word,  
But to the house went in;

Whence straight he came with hat and wig;  
A wig that flowed behind,  
A hat not much the worse for wear,  
Each comely in its kind.

He held them up, and in his turn,  
Thus showed his ready wit:  
“My head is twice as big as yours,  
They therefore needs must fit.

But let me scrape the dirt away  
That hangs upon your face;  
And stop and eat, for well you may  
Be in a hungry case.”

Said John,—“It is my wedding day,  
And all the world would stare,  
If wife should dine at Edmonton,  
And I should dine at Ware.”

So turning to his horse, he said,  
"I am in haste to dine;  
'Twas for your pleasure you came here,  
You shall go back for mine."

Ah! luckless speech, and bootless boast,  
For which he paid full dear;  
For while he spake, a braying ass  
Did sing most loud and clear;

Whereat his horse did snort, as he  
Had heard a lion roar,  
And galloped off with all his might,  
As he had done before.

Away went Gilpin, and away  
Went Gilpin's hat and wig:  
He lost them sooner than at first,  
For why?—they were too big.

Now mistress Gilpin, when she saw  
Her husband posting down  
Into the country far away,  
She pulled out half-a-crown;

And thus unto the youth she said,  
That drove them to the Bell  
"This shall be yours, when you bring back  
My husband safe and well."

The youth did ride, and soon did meet  
John coming back amain;  
Whom in a trice he tried to stop  
By catching at his rein;

But not performing what he meant,  
And gladly would have done,  
The frightened steed he frightened more,  
And made him faster run.

Away went Gilpin, and away  
Went postboy at his heels,  
The postboy's horse right glad to miss  
The lumbering of the wheels.

Six gentlemen upon the road,  
Thus seeing Gilpin fly,  
With postboy scampering in the rear,  
They raised the hue and cry:—

"Stop thief! stop thief!—a highwayman!"  
Not one of them was mute;  
And all and each that passed that way  
Did join in the pursuit.

## THE HISTORY OF JOHN GILPIN.

And now the turnpike-gates again  
Flew open in short space;  
The toll-men thinking as before,  
That Gilpin rode a race.

And so he did, and won it too,  
For he got first to town;  
Nor stopped till where he had got up  
He did again get down.

Now let us sing long live the King,  
And Gilpin, long live he;  
And when he next doth ride abroad,  
May I be there to see!



# THE TASK.

IN SIX BOOKS.

1785.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

The history of the following production is briefly this: A lady, fond of blank verse, demanded a poem of that kind from the Author, and gave him the *SOFA* for a subject. He obeyed; and, having much leisure, connected another subject with it; and, pursuing the train of thought to which his situation and turn of mind led him, brought forth at length, instead of the trifles which he at first intended, a serious affair—a Volume.

In the poem on the subject of Education, he would be very sorry to stand suspected of having aimed his censure at any particular school. His objections are such as naturally apply themselves to schools in general. If there were not, as for the most part there is, wilful neglect in those who manage them, and an omission even of such discipline as they are susceptible of, the objects are yet too numerous for minute attention; and the aching hearts of ten thousand parents, mourning under the bitterest of all disappointments, attest the truth of the allegation. His quarrel, therefore, is with the mischief at large, and not with any particular instance of it.

## BOOK I.—THE SOFA.

### ARGUMENT.

Historical deduction of seats, from the stool to the sofa—A schoolboy's ramble—A walk in the country—The scene described—Rural sounds as well as sights delightful—Another walk—Mistake concerning the charms of solitude corrected—Colonnades commenced—Alcove, and the view from it—The wilderness—The grove—The thresher—The necessity and the benefits of exercise—The works of nature superior to, and in some instances inimitable by, art—The wearisomeness of what is commonly called a life of pleasure—Change of scene sometimes expedient—A common described, and the character of crazy Kate introduced—Gipsies—The blessings of civilized life—That state most favourable to virtue—The South Sea Islanders compassionate, but chiefly Omai—His present state of mind supposed—Civilized life friendly to virtue, but not great cities—Great cities, and London in particular, allowed their due praise, but censured—Fête champêtre—The book concludes with a reflection on the effects of dissipation and effeminacy upon our public measures.

I sing the Sofa. I who lately sang  
Truth, Hope, and Charity, and touch'd with awe  
The solemn chords, and with a trembling hand,  
Escaped with pain from that adventurous flight,  
Now seek repose upon an humbler theme;

## THE TASK—THE SOFA.

The theme though humble, yet august and proud  
The occasion—for the Fair\* commands the song.

Time was, when clothing sumptuous or for use,  
Save their own painted skins, our sires had none.  
As yet black breeches were not; satin smooth,  
Or velvet soft, or plush with shaggy pile:  
The hardy chief upon the rugged rock  
Wash'd by the sea, or on the gravelly bank  
Thrown up by wintry torrents roaring loud,  
Fearless of wrong, reposed his weary strength.  
Those barbarous ages past, succeeded next  
The birthday of Invention, weak at first,  
Dull in design, and clumsy to perform.  
Joint-stools were then created; on three legs  
Upborne they stood:—three legs upholding firm  
A massy slab, in fashion square or round.  
On such a stool immortal Alfred sat,  
And sway'd the sceptre of his infant realms;  
And such in ancient halls and mansions drear  
May still be seen, but perforated sore  
And drill'd in holes the solid oak is found,  
By worms voracious eating through and through.

At length a generation more refined  
Improved the simple plan; made three legs four,  
Gave them a twisted form vermicular,  
And o'er the seat with plenteous wadding stuff'd  
Induced a splendid cover, green and blue,  
Yellow and red, of tapestry richly wrought  
And woven close, or needlework sublime.  
There might ye see the piony spread wide,  
The full-blown rose, the shepherd and his lass,  
Lap-dog and lambkin with black staring eyes,  
And parrots with twin cherries in their beak.

Now came the cane from India, smooth and bright  
With Nature's varnish, sever'd into stripes  
That interlaced each other, these supplied  
Of texture firm a lattice-work, that braced  
The new machine, and it became a chair.  
But restless was the chair; the back erect  
Distress'd the weary loins, that felt no ease;  
The slippery seat betray'd the sliding part  
That pressed it, and the feet hung dangling down,  
Anxious in vain to find the distant floor.  
These for the rich; the rest, whom fate had placed  
In modest mediocrity, content  
With base materials, sat on well-tann'd hides

---

\* Lady Austen, who suggested the "Task."

Obdurate and unyielding, glassy smooth,  
 With here and there a tuft of crimson yarn,  
 Or scarlet crewel\* in the cushion fix'd:  
 If cushion might be call'd, what harder seem'd  
 Than the firm oak of which the frame was form'd.  
 No want of timber then was felt or fear'd  
 In Albion's happy isle. The lumber stood  
 Ponderous, and fix'd by its own massy weight.  
 But elbows still were wanting; these, some say,  
 An alderman of Cripplegate contrived,  
 And some ascribe the invention to a priest,  
 Burly and big, and studious of his ease.  
 But rude at first, and not with easy slope  
 Receding wide, they press'd against the ribs,  
 And bruised the side and elevated high  
 Taught the raised shoulders to invade the ears.  
 Long time elapsed or e'er our rugged sires  
 Complain'd, though incommodiously pent in,  
 And ill at ease behind. The ladies first  
 'Gan murmur, as became the softer sex.  
 Ingenious Fancy, never better pleased  
 Than when employ'd to accommodate the fair,  
 Heard the sweet moan with pity, and devised  
 The soft settee; one elbow at each end,  
 And in the midst an elbow, it received,  
 United yet divided, twain at once.  
 So sit two kings of Brentford on one throne;†  
 And so two citizens who take the air  
 Close pack'd and smiling, in a chaise and one.  
 But relaxation of the languid frame  
 By soft recumbency of outstretch'd limbs,  
 Was bliss reserved for happier days;—so slow  
 The growth of what is excellent, so hard  
 To attain perfection in this nether world.  
 Thus first Necessity invented stools,  
 Convenience next suggested elbow-chairs,  
 And Luxury the accomplish'd SOFA last.  
 The nurse sleeps sweetly, hired to watch the sick,  
 Whom snoring she disturbs. As sweetly he  
 Who quits the coach-box at the midnight hour  
 To sleep within the carriage more secure,  
 His legs depending at the open door.  
 Sweet sleep enjoys the curate in his desk,

---

\* Yarn or worsted.

† The two kings of Brentford, who sat on one throne and held a bouquet between them, were characters in the Duke of Buckingham's famous "Rehearsal," a comedy which without doubt suggested the "Critic."



## THE TASK—THE SOFA.

The tedious rector drawing o'er his head,  
 And sweet the clerk below : but neither sleep  
 Of lazy nurse, who snores the sick man dead,  
 Nor his who quits the box at midnight hour  
 To slumber in the carriage more secure,  
 Nor sleep enjoy'd by curate in his desk,  
 Nor yet the dozings of the clerk are sweet,  
 Compared with the repose the Sofa yields.

Oh may I live exempted (while I live  
 Guiltless of pamper'd appetite obscene)  
 From pangs arthritic that infest the toe  
 Of libertine excess. The Sofa suits  
 The gouty limb, 'tis true; but gouty limb,  
 Though on a Sofa, may I never feel:  
 For I have loved the rural walk through lanes  
 Of grassy swarth close cropp'd by nibbling sheep,  
 And skirted thick with intertexture firm  
 Of thorny boughs; have loved the rural walk  
 O'er hills, through valleys, and by rivers' brink,  
 E'er since a truant boy I pass'd my bounds  
 To enjoy a ramble on the banks of Thames.  
 And still remember, nor without regret,  
 Of hours, that sorrow since has much endear'd,  
 How oft, my slice of pocket store consumed,  
 Still hungering, penniless and far from home,  
 I fed on scarlet hips and stony haws,  
 Or blushing crabs, or berries that emboss  
 The bramble, black as jet, or sloes austere.  
 Hard fare! but such as boyish appetite  
 Disdains not, nor the palate undepraved  
 By culinary arts unsavoury deems.  
 No Sofa then awaited my return;  
 Nor Sofa then I needed. Youth repairs  
 His wasted spirits quickly, by long toil  
 Incurring short fatigue; and though our years,  
 As life declines, speed rapidly away,  
 And not a year but pilfers as he goes  
 Some youthful grace that age would gladly keep,  
 A tooth or auburn loc', and by degrees  
 Their length and colour from the locks they spare;  
 The elastic spring of an unwearied foot  
 That mounts the stile with ease, or leaps the fence,  
 That play of lungs, inhaling and again  
 Respiring freely the fresh air, that makes  
 Swift pace or steep ascent no toil to me,  
 Mine have not pilfer'd yet; nor yet impair'd  
 My relish of fair prospect; sences that soothed  
 Or charm'd me young, no longer young, I find

Still soothing, and of power to charm me still.  
 And witness, dear companion of my walks,\*  
 Whose arm this twentieth winter I perceive  
 Fast lock'd in mine, with pleasure such as love,  
 Confirm'd by long experience of thy worth  
 And well-tried virtues, could alone inspire,  
 Witness a joy that thou hast doubled long.  
 Thou knowest my praise of nature most sincere,  
 And that my raptures are not conjured up  
 To serve occasions of poetic pomp,  
 But genuine, and art partner of them all.  
 How oft upon yon eminence our pace  
 Has slacken'd to a pause, and we have borne  
 The ruffling wind, scarce conscious that it blew,  
 While admiration feeding at the eye,  
 And 'till unsated, dwelt upon the scene.  
 Thence with what pleasure have we just discern'd  
 The distant plough slow moving, and beside  
 His labouring team, that swerved not from the track  
 The sturdy swain diminish'd to a boy.  
 Here Ouse, slow winding through a level plain  
 Of spacious meads with cattle sprinkled o'er,  
 Conducts the eye along his sinuous course  
 Delighted. There, fast rooted in their bank  
 Stand, never overlook'd, our favourite elms,  
 That screen the herdsman's solitary hut;  
 While far beyond, and overthwart the stream,  
 That, as with milken glass, inlays the vale,  
 The sloping land recedes into the clouds;  
 Displaying on its varied side the grace  
 Of hedge-row beauties numberless, square tower,  
 Tall spire, from which the sound of cheerful bells  
 Just undulates upon the listening ear;  
 Groves, heaths, and smoking villages remote.  
 Scenes must be beautiful which daily view'd,  
 Please daily, and whose novelty survives  
 Long knowledge and the scrutiny of years:  
 Praise justly due to those that I describe.  
 Nor rural sights alone, but rural sounds  
 Exhilarate the spirit, and restore  
 The tone of languid nature. Mighty winds,  
 That sweep the skirt of some far-spreading wood  
 Of ancient growth, make music not unlike  
 The dash of Ocean on his winding shore,  
 And lull the spirit while they fill the mind;

---

\* Mrs. Unwin.

Unnumber'd branches waving in the blast,  
 And all their leaves fast fluttering, all at once.  
 Nor less composure waits upon the roar  
 Of distant floods, or on the softer voice  
 Of neighbouring fountain, or of rills that slip  
 Through the cleft rock, and chiming as they fall  
 Upon loose pebbles, lose themselves at length  
 In matted grass, that, with a livelier green,  
 Betrays the secret of their silent course.  
 Nature inanimate employs sweet sounds,  
 But animated nature sweeter still,  
 To soothe and satisfy the human ear.  
 Ten thousand warblers cheer the day, and one  
 The livelong night: nor these alone, whose notes  
 Nice-finger'd art must emulate in vain,  
 But cawing rooks, and kites that swim sublime  
 In still repeated circles, screaming loud;  
 The jay, the pie, and even the boding owl  
 That hails the rising moon, have charms for me.  
 Sounds inharmonious in themselves, and harsh,  
 Yet heard in scenes where peace for ever reigns,  
 And only there, please highly for their sake.

Peace to the artist, whose ingenious thought  
 Devised the weather-house, that useful toy!  
 Fearless of humid air and gathering rains  
 Forth steps the man, an emblem of myself,  
 More delicate, his timorous mate retires.  
 When winter soaks the fields, and female feet,  
 Too weak to struggle with tenacious clay,  
 Or ford the rivulets, are best at home,  
 The task of new discoveries falls on me.  
 At such a season, and with such a charge,  
 Once went I forth, and found, till then unknown,  
 A cottage, whither oft we since repair:  
 'Tis perch'd upon the green hill-top, but close  
 Environ'd with a ring of branching elms  
 That overhang the thatch, itself unseen  
 Peeps at the vale below; so thick beset  
 With foliage of such dark redundant growth,  
 I call'd the low-roof'd lodge the *peasant's nest*.  
 And hidden as it is, and far remote  
 From such unpleasing sounds as haunt the ear  
 In village or in town, the bay of curs  
 Incessant, clinking hammers, grinding wheels,  
 And infants clamorous whether pleas'd or pain'd,  
 Oft have I wish'd the peaceful covert mine.  
 Here, I have said, at least I should possess  
 The poet's treasure, silence, and indulge

The dreams of fancy, tranquil and secure.  
 Vain thought! the dweller in that still retreat  
 Dearly obtains the refuge it affords.  
 Its elevated site forbids the wretch  
 To drink sweet waters of the crystal well;  
 He dips his bowl into the weedy ditch,  
 And, heavy-laden, brings his beverage home,  
 Far-fetch'd and little worth; nor seldom waits,  
 Dependent on the baker's punctual call,  
 To hear his creaking panniers at the door,  
 Angry and sad, and his last crust consumed.  
 So farewell envy of the *peasant's nest*.  
 If solitude make scant the means of life,  
 Society for me!—Thou seeming sweet,  
 Be still a pleasing object in my view,  
 My visit still, but never mine abode.

Not distant far, a length of colonnade  
 Invites us: monument of ancient taste,  
 Now scorn'd, but worthy of a better fate.  
 Our fathers knew the value of a screen  
 From sultry suns, and in their shaded walks  
 And long protracted bowers, enjoy'd at noon  
 The gloom and coolness of declining day.  
 We bear our shades about us; self-depriv'd  
 Of other screen, the thin umbrella spread,  
 And range an Indian waste without a tree.  
 Thanks to Benevolus\*—he spares me yet  
 These chestnuts ranged in corresponding lines,  
 And, though himself so polish'd, still reprieves  
 The obsolete prolixity of shade.

Descending now (but cautious lest too fast,)  
 A sudden steep, upon a rustic bridge,  
 We pass a gulf, in which the willows dip  
 Their pendent boughs, stooping as if to drink.  
 Hence, ankle-deep in moss and flowery thyme,  
 We mount again, and feel at every step  
 Our foot half sunk in hillocks green and soft,  
 Raised by the mole, the miner of the soil.  
 He, not unlike the great ones of mankind,  
 Disfigures earth, and plotting in the dark,  
 Toils much to earn a monumental pile,  
 That may record the mischiefs he has done.

The summit gain'd, behold the proud alcove  
 That crowns it! yet not all its pride secures  
 The grand retreat from injuries impress'd

---

\* John Courtenay Throckmorton, Esq., of Weston-Underwood, a great friend of Cowper's.

By rural carvers, who with knives deface  
 The panels, leaving an obscure, rude name,  
 In characters uncouth, and spelt amiss.  
 So strong the zeal to immortalize himself  
 Beats in the breast of man, that even a few,  
 Few transient years, won from the abyss abhorr'd  
 Of blank oblivion, seem a glorious prize,  
 And even to a clown. Now roves the eye,  
 And posted on this speculative height  
 Exults in its command. The sheepfold here  
 Pours out its fleecy tenants o'er the glebe.  
 At first, progressive as a stream, they seek  
 The middle field; but scatter'd by degrees,  
 Each to his choice, soon whiten all the land.  
 There, from the sunburnt hay-field, homeward creeps  
 The loaded wain, while, lighten'd of its charge,  
 The wain that meets it passes swiftly by,  
 The boorish driver leaning o'er his team,  
 Vociferous, and impatient of delay.  
 Nor less attractive is the woodland scene,  
 Diversified with trees of every growth,  
 Alike, yet various. Here the gray, smooth trunks  
 Of ash, or lime, or beech, distinctly shine,  
 Within the twilight of their distant shades;  
 There lost behind a rising ground, the wood  
 Seems sunk, and shorten'd to its topmost boughs.  
 No tree in all the grove but has its charms,  
 Though each its hue peculiar; paler some,  
 And of a wannish grey; the willow such,  
 And poplar, that with silver lines his leaf,  
 And ash far stretching his umbrageous arm;  
 Of deeper green the elm; and deeper still,  
 Lord of the woods, the long-surviving oak.  
 Some glossy-leaved, and shining in the sun,  
 The maple, and the beech of oily nuts  
 Prolific, and the lime at dewy eve  
 Diffusing odours: nor unnoted pass  
 The sycamore, capricious in attire,  
 Now green, now tawny, and, ere autumn yet  
 Have changed the woods, in scarlet honours bright.  
 O'er these, but far beyond (a spacious map  
 Of hill and valley interposed between,)  
 The Ouse, dividing the well-water'd land,  
 Now glitters in the sun, and now retires,  
 As bashful, yet impatient to be seen.  
 Hence the declivity is sharp and short,  
 And such the re-ascent; between them weeps  
 A little naiad her impoverish'd urn

All summer long, which winter fills again.  
 The folded gates would bar my progress now,  
 But that the lord of this enclosed demesne,  
 Communicative of the good he owns,  
 Admits me to a share : the guiltless eye  
 Commits no wrong, nor wastes what it enjoys.  
 Refreshing change ! where now the blazing sun ?  
 By short transition we have lost his glare,  
 And stepp'd at once into a cooler clime.  
 Ye fallen avenues ! once more I mourn  
 Your fate unmerited, once more rejoice  
 That yet a remnant of your race survives.  
 How airy and how light the graceful arch,  
 Yet awful as the consecrated roof  
 Re-echoing pious anthems ! while beneath  
 The chequer'd earth seems restless as a flood  
 Brush'd by the wind. So sportive is the light  
 Shot through the boughs, it dances as they dance,  
 Shadow and sunshine intermingling quick,  
 And darkening, and enlightening, as the leaves  
 Play wanton, every moment, every spot.

And now, with nerves new-braced and spirits cheer'd,  
 We tread the wilderness, whose well-roll'd walks,  
 With curvature of slow and easy sweep—  
 Deception innocent—gives ample space  
 To narrow bounds. The grove receives us next ;  
 Between the upright shafts of whose tall elms  
 We may discern the thresher at his task.  
 Thump after thump resounds the constant flail,  
 That seems to swing uncertain, and yet falls  
 Full on the destined ear. Wide flies the chaff ;  
 The rustling straw sends up a frequent mist  
 Of atoms, sparkling in the noonday beam.  
 Come hither, ye that press your beds of down  
 And sleep not ; see him sweating o'er his bread  
 Before he eats it.—'Tis the primal curse,  
 But soften'd into mercy ; made the pledge  
 Of cheerful days, and nights without a groan.

By ceaseless action, all that is subsists.  
 Constant rotation of the unwearied wheel  
 That Nature rides upon, maintains her health,  
 Her beauty, her fertility. She dreads  
 An instant's pause, and lives but while she moves.  
 Its own revolvency upholds the world.  
 Winds from all quarters agitate the air,  
 And fit the limpid element for use,  
 Else noxious : oceans, rivers, lakes, and streams,  
 All feel the fresh'ning impulse, and are cleansed

By restless undulation. Even the oak  
 Thrives by the rude concussion of the storm :  
 He seems indeed indignant, and to feel  
 The impression of the blast with proud disdain,  
 Frowning as if in his unconscious arm  
 He held the thunder. But the monarch owes  
 His firm stability to what he scorns,  
 More fix'd below, the more disturb'd above.  
 The law, by which all creatures else are bound,  
 Binds man, the lord of all. Himself derives  
 No mean advantage from a kindred cause,  
 From strenuous toil his hours of sweetest ease.  
 The sedentary stretch their lazy length  
 When custom bids, but no refreshment find,  
 For none they need : the languid eye, the cheek  
 Deserted of its bloom, the flaccid, shrunk,  
 And wither'd muscle, and the vapid soul,  
 Reproach their owner with that love of rest  
 To which he forfeits even the rest he loves.  
 Not such the alert and active. Measure life  
 By its true worth, the comforts it affords,  
 And theirs alone seems-worthy of the name.  
 Good health, and its associate in the most,  
 Good temper ; spirits prompt to undertake,  
 And not soon spent, though in an arduous task ;  
 The powers of fancy and strong thought are theirs ;  
 Even age itself seems privileged in them  
 With clear exemption from its own defects.  
 A sparkling eye beneath a wrinkled front  
 The veteran shows, and gracing a gray beard  
 With youthful smiles, descends toward the grave  
 Sprightly, and old almost without decay.  
 Like a coy maiden, Ease, when courted most,  
 Farthest retires—an idol, at whose shrine  
 Who oftenest sacrifice are favour'd least.  
 The love of Nature, and the scenes she draws,  
 Is Nature's dictate. Strange ! there should be found,  
 Who, self-imprison'd in their proud saloons,  
 Renounce the odours of the open field  
 For the unscented fictions of the loom ;  
 Who, satisfied with only pencill'd scenes,  
 Prefer to the performance of a God  
 The inferior wonders of an artist's hand.  
 Lovely indeed tho' mimic works of Art,  
 But Nature's works far lovelier. I admire,  
 None more admires, the painter's magic skill,  
 Who shows me that which I shall never see,  
 Conveys a distant country into mine,

And throws Italian light on English walls :  
 But imitative strokes can do no more  
 Than please the eye—sweet Nature every sense.  
 The air salubrious of her lofty hills,  
 The cheering fragrance of her dewy vales,  
 And music of her woods—no works of man  
 May rival these ; these all bespeak a power  
 Peculiar, and exclusively her own.  
 Beneath the open sky she spreads the feast ;  
 'Tis free to all—'tis every day renew'd ;  
 Who scorns it, starves deservedly at home.  
 He does not scorn it, who, imprison'd long  
 In some unwholesome dungeon, and a prey  
 To sallow sickness, which the vapours dank  
 And clammy of his dark abode have bred,  
 Escapes at last to liberty and light :  
 His cheek recovers soon its healthful hue,  
 His eye relumines its extinguish'd fires,  
 He walks, he leaps, he runs—is wing'd with joy,  
 And riots in the sweets of every breeze.  
 He does not scorn it, who has long endured  
 A fever's agonies, and fed on drugs.  
 Nor yet the mariner, his blood inflamed  
 With acrid salts ; his very heart athirst  
 To gaze at Nature in her green array,  
 Upon the ship's tall side he stands, possess'd  
 With visions prompted by intense desire :  
 Fair fields appear below, such as he left  
 Far distant, such as he would die to find,—  
 He seeks them headlong, and is seen no more.\*  
 The spleen is seldom felt where Flora reigns ;  
 The lowering eye, the petulance, the frown,  
 And sullen sadness, that o'ershade, distort,  
 And mar the face of beauty, when no cause  
 For such immeasurable woe appears,  
 These Flora banishes, and gives the fair  
 Sweet smiles, and bloom less transient than her own.  
 It is the constant revolution, stale  
 And tasteless, of the same repeated joys,  
 That palls and satiates, and makes languid life  
 A pedler's pack, that bows the bearer down.  
 Health suffers, and the spirits ebb ; the heart  
 Recoils from its own choice—at the full feast  
 Is famish'd—finds no music in the song,  
 No smartness in the jest, and wonders why.

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\* These lines refer to a singular hallucination to which seamen were subject when suffering from scurvy. It is called a calenture.



Yet thousands still desire to journey on,  
Though halt, and weary of the path they tread.  
The paralytic who can hold her cards  
But cannot play them, borrows a friend's hand  
To deal and shuffle, to divide and sort  
Her mingled suits and sequences, and sits  
Spectatress both and spectacle, a sad  
And silent cypher, while her proxy plays.  
Others are dragg'd into the crowded room  
Between supporters; and, once seated, sit  
Through downright inability to rise,  
Till the stout bearers lift the corpse again.  
These speak a loud memento. Yet even these  
Themselves love life, and cling to it, as he  
That overhangs a torrent, to a twig.  
They love it, and yet loathe it; fear to die,  
Yet scorn the purposes for which they live.  
Then wherefore not renounce them? No—the dread,  
The slavish dread of solitude, that breeds  
Reflection and remorse, the fear of shame,  
And their inveterate habits, all forbid.

Whom call we gay? That honour has been long  
The boast of mere pretenders to the name.  
The innocent are gay—the lark is gay,  
That dries his feathers saturate with dew  
Beneath the rosy cloud, while yet the beams  
Of dayspring overshoot his humble nest.  
The peasant too, a witness of his song,  
Himself a songster, is as gay as he.  
But save me from the gaiety of those  
Whose headaches nail them to a noonday bed:  
And save me too from theirs whose haggard eyes  
Flash desperation, and betray their pangs  
For property stripp'd off by cruel chance;  
From gaiety that fills the bones with pain,  
The mouth with blasphemy, the heart with woe.

The earth was made so various, that the mind  
Of desultory man, studious of change,  
And pleased with novelty, might be indulged.  
Prospects, however lovely, may be seen  
Till half their beauties fade; the weary sight,  
Too well acquainted with their smiles, slides off  
Fastidious, seeking less familiar scenes.  
Then snug enclosures in the shelter'd vale,  
Where frequent hedges intercept the eye,  
Delight us, happy to renounce awhile,  
Not senseless of its charms, what still we love,  
That such short absence may endear it more,

Then forests, or the savage rock, may please,  
That hides the sea-mew in his hollow clefts  
Above the reach of man : his hoary head,  
Conspicuous many a league, the mariner  
Bound homeward, and in hope already there,  
Greets with three cheers exulting. At his waist  
A girdle of half-wither'd shrubs he shows,  
And at his feet the baffled billows die.

The common, overgrown with fern, and rough  
With prickly gorse, that, shapeless and deform'd,  
And dangerous to the touch, has yet its bloom,  
And decks itself with ornaments of gold,  
Yields no unpleasing ramble ; there the turf  
Smells fresh, and, rich in odoriferous herbs  
And fungous fruits of earth, regales the sense  
With luxury of unexpected sweets.

There often wanders one, whom better days  
Saw better clad, in cloak of satin trimm'd  
With lace, and hat with splendid riband bound.  
A serving-maid was she, and fell in love  
With one who left her, went to sea, and died.  
Her fancy follow'd him through foaming waves  
To distant shores, and she would sit and weep  
At what a sailor suffers ; fancy too,  
Delusive most where warmest wishes are,  
Would oft anticipate his glad return,  
And dream of transports she was not to know.  
She heard the doleful tidings of his death,  
And never smiled again. And now she roams  
The dreary waste ; there spends the livelong day,  
And there, unless when charity forbids,  
The livelong night. A tatter'd apron hides,  
Worn as a cloak, and hardly hides a gown  
More tatter'd still ; and both but ill conceal  
A bosom heaved with never-ceasing sighs.  
She begs an idle pin of all she meets,  
And hoards them in her sleeve ; but needful food,  
Though press'd with hunger oft, or comelier clothes,  
Though pinch'd with cold, asks never.—Kate is crazed.\*

I see a column of slow-rising smoke  
O'ertop the lofty wood that skirts the wild.  
A vagabond and useless tribe there eat  
Their miserable meal. A kettle, slung  
Between two poles upon a stick transverse,  
Receives the morsel ; flesh obscene of dog,

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\* "Kate" was a real personage, well known to the poet.

Or vermin, or, at best, of cock purloin'd  
 From his accustom'd perch. Hard-faring race!  
 They pick their fuel out of every hedge,  
 Which, kindled with dry leaves, just saves unquench'd  
 The spark of life. The sportive wind blows wide  
 Their fluttering rags, and shows a tawny skin,  
 The vellum of the pedigree they claim.  
 Great skill have they in palmistry, and more  
 To conjure clean away the gold they touch,  
 Conveying worthless dross into its place;  
 Loud when they beg, dumb only when they steal.  
 Strange! that a creature rational, and cast  
 In human mould, should brutalise by choice  
 His nature, and, though capable of arts  
 By which the world might profit and himself,  
 Self-banish'd from society, prefer  
 Such squalid sloth to honourable toil!  
 Yet even these, though feigning sickness oft,  
 They swathe the forehead, drag the limping limb,  
 And vex their flesh with artificial sores,  
 Can change their whine into a mirthful note  
 When safe occasion offers; and with dance  
 And music of the bladder and the bag,  
 Beguile their woes, and make the woods resound.  
 Such health and gaiety of heart enjoy  
 The houseless rovers of the sylvan world;  
 And breathing wholesome air, and wandering much,  
 Need other physic none to heal the effects  
 Of loathsome diet, penury, and cold.

Blest he, though undistinguish'd from the crowd  
 By wealth or dignity, who dwells secure  
 Where man, by nature fierce, has laid aside  
 His fierceness, having learnt, though slow to learn,  
 The manners and the arts of civil life.  
 His wants, indeed, are many; but supply  
 Is obvious; placed within the easy reach  
 Of temperate wishes and industrious hands.  
 Here virtue thrives as in her proper soil;  
 Not rude and surly, and beset with thorns,  
 And terrible to sight, as when she springs  
 (If e'er she spring spontaneous) in remote  
 And barbarous climes, where violence prevails,  
 And strength is lord of all; but gentle, kind,  
 By culture tamed, by liberty refresh'd,  
 And all her fruits by radiant truth matured.  
 War and the chase engross the savage whole:  
 War follow'd for revenge, or to supplant  
 The envied tenants of some happier spot;

The chase for sustenance, precarious trust !  
 His hard condition with severe constraint  
 Binds all his faculties, forbids all growth  
 Of wisdom, proves a school in which he learns  
 Sly circumvention, unrelenting hate,  
 Mean self-attachment, and scarce aught beside.  
 Thus fare the shivering natives of the north,  
 And thus the rangers of the western world,  
 Where it advances far into the deep,  
 Towards the Antarctic. Even the favour'd isles,  
 So lately found,\* although the constant sun  
 Cheer all their seasons with a grateful smile,  
 Can boast but little virtue; and inert  
 Through plenty, lose in morals what they gain  
 In manners—victims of luxurious ease.  
 These therefore I can pity, placed remote  
 From all that science traces, art invents,  
 Or inspiration teaches; and enclosed  
 In boundless oceans, never to be pass'd  
 By navigators uninform'd as they,  
 Or plough'd perhaps by British bark again.  
 But far beyond the rest, and with most cause,  
 Thee, gentle savage!† whom no love of thee  
 Or thine, but curiosity perhaps,  
 Or else vain-glory, prompted us to draw  
 Forth from thy native bowers, to show thee here  
 With what superior skill we can abuse  
 The gifts of Providence, and squander life.  
 The dream is past; and thou hast found again  
 Thy cocoas and bananas, palms and yams,  
 And homestall thatch'd with leaves. But hast thou found  
 Their former charms? And having seen our state,  
 Our palaces, our ladies, and our pomp  
 Of equipage, our gardens, and our sports,  
 And heard our music; are thy simple friends,  
 Thy simple fare, and all thy plain delights  
 As dear to thee as once? And have thy joys  
 Lost nothing by comparison with ours?  
 Rude as thou art, (for we return'd thee rude  
 And ignorant, except of outward show,)  
 I cannot think thee yet so dull of heart  
 And spiritless, as never to regret  
 Sweets tasted here, and left as soon as known.  
 Methinks I see thee straying on the beach,  
 And asking of the surge that bathes thy foot

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\* The Society and Friendly Islands.

† Omai, interpreter to Captain Cook in his third voyage.

If ever it has wash'd our distant shore.  
 I see thee weep, and thine are honest tears,  
 A patriot's for his country: thou art sad  
 At thought of her forlorn and abject state,  
 From which no power of thine can raise her up.  
 Thus fancy paints thee, and, though apt to err,  
 Perhaps errs little when she paints thee thus.  
 She tells me too, that duly every morn  
 Thou climb'st the mountain top, with eager eye  
 Exploring far and wide the watery waste  
 For sight of ship from England. Every speck  
 Seen in the dim horizon, turns thee pale  
 With conflict of contending hopes and fears.  
 But comes at last the dull and dusky eve,  
 And sends thee to thy cabin, well prepared  
 To dream all night of what the day denied.  
 Alas! expect it not. We found no bait  
 To tempt us in thy country. Doing good,  
 Disinterested good, is not our trade.  
 We travel far, 'tis true, but not for nought;  
 And must be bribed to compass earth again  
 By other hopes and richer fruits than yours.  
 But though true worth and virtue, in the mild  
 And genial soil of cultivated life  
 Thrive most, and may perhaps thrive only there,  
 Yet not in cities oft: in proud and gay  
 And gain-devoted cities. Thither flow,  
 As to a common and most noisome sewer,  
 The dregs and feculence of every land.  
 In cities foul example on most minds  
 Begets its likeness. Rank abundance breeds  
 In gross and pamper'd cities sloth and lust,  
 And wantonness and gluttonous excess.  
 In cities, vice is hidden with most ease,  
 Or seen with least reproach; and virtue, taught  
 By frequent lapse, can hope no triumph there  
 Beyond the achievement of successful flight.  
 I do confess them nurseries of the arts,  
 In which they flourish most; where, in the beams  
 Of warm encouragement, and in the eye  
 Of public note, they reach their perfect size.  
 Such London is, by taste and wealth proclaim'd  
 The fairest capital of all the world,  
 By riot and incontinence the worst.  
 There, touch'd by Reynolds, a dull blank becomes  
 A lucid mirror, in which Nature sees  
 All her reflected features. Bacon there  
 Gives more than female beauty to a stone,

And Chatham's eloquence to marble lips.  
 Nor does the chisel occupy alone  
 The powers of sculpture, but the style as much;  
 Each province of her art her equal care.  
 With nice incision of her guided steel  
 She ploughs a brazen field, and clothes a soil  
 So sterile, with what charms soe'er she will,  
 The richest scenery and the loveliest forms.  
 Where finds Philosophy her eagle eye,  
 With which she gazes at yon burning disk  
 Undazzled, and detects and counts his spots?  
 In London. Where her implements exact,  
 With which she calculates, computes, and scans  
 All distance, motion, magnitude, and now  
 Measures an atom, and now girds a world?  
 In London. Where has commerce such a mart,  
 So rich, so throng'd, so drain'd, and so supplied  
 As London, opulent, enlarged, and still  
 Increasing London? Babylon of old  
 Not more the glory of the earth than she,  
 A more accomplish'd world's chief glory now.  
 She has her praise. Now mark a spot or two  
 That so much beauty would do well to purge;  
 And show this queen of cities, that so fair  
 May yet be foul, so witty, yet not wise.  
 It is not seemly, nor of good report,  
 That she is slack in discipline; more prompt  
 To avenge than to prevent the breach of law;  
 That she is rigid in denouncing death  
 On petty robbers, and indulges life  
 And liberty, and oftentimes honour too,  
 To peculators of the public gold;  
 That thieves at home must hang, but he, that puts  
 Into his overgorged and bloated purse  
 The wealth of Indian provinces, escapes.  
 Nor is it well, nor can it come to good,  
 That, through profane and infidel contempt  
 Of holy writ, she has presumed to annul  
 And abrogate, as roundly as she may,  
 The total ordinance and will of God;  
 Advancing Fashion to the post of Truth,  
 And centering all authority in modes  
 And customs of her own, till Sabbath rites  
 Have dwindled into unrespected forms,  
 And knees and hassocks are well nigh divorced.  
 God made the country, and man made the town:  
 What wonder then, that health and virtue, gifts  
 That can alone make sweet the bitter draught

## THE TASK—THE TIME-PIECE.

That life holds out to all, should most abound  
 And least be threaten'd in the fields and groves?  
 Possess ye therefore, ye who, borne about  
 In chariots and sedaus, know no fatigue  
 But that of idleness, and taste no scenes  
 But such as art contrives, possess ye still  
 Your element; there only ye can shine,  
 There only minds like yours can do no harm.  
 Our groves were planted to console at noon  
 The pensive wanderer in their shades. At eve  
 The moonbeam, sliding softly in between  
 The sleeping leaves, is all the light they wish,  
 Birds warbling all the music. We can spare  
 The splendour of your lamps, they but eclipse  
 Our softer satellite. Your songs confound  
 Our more harmonious notes: the thrush departs  
 Scared, and the offended nightingale is mute.  
 There is a public mischief in your mirth;  
 It plagues your country. Folly such as yours,  
 Graced with a sword, and worthier of a fan,  
 Has made, what enemies could ne'er have done,  
 Our arch of empire, steadfast but for you,  
 A mutilated structure, soon to fall.

## BOOK II.—THE TIME-PIECE.

## ARGUMENT

Reflections suggested by the conclusion of the former book—Peace among the nations recommended on the ground of their common fellowship in sorrow—Prodigies enumerated—Sicilian earthquakes—Man rendered obnoxious to these calamities by sin—God the agent in them—The philosophy that stops at secondary causes reproved—Our own late miscarriages accounted for—Satirical notice taken of our trips to Fontainebleau—But the pulpit, not satire, the proper engine of reformation—The reverend advertiser of engraved sermons—Petit-maitre parson—The good preacher—Picture of a theatrical clerical coxcomb—Story-tellers and jesters in the pulpit reproved—Apostrophe to popular applause—Retailers of ancient philosophy expostulated with—Sum of the whole matter—Effects of sacerdotal mismanagement on the laity—Their folly and extravagance—The mischiefs of profusion—Profusion itself, with all its consequent evils, ascribed, as to its principal cause, to the want of discipline in the universities.

Oh for a lodge in some vast wilderness,  
 Some boundless contiguity of shade,  
 Where rumour of oppression and deceit,  
 Of unsuccessful or successful war,  
 Might never reach me more! My ear is pain'd,  
 My soul is sick with every day's report

Of wrong and outrage with which earth is fill'd.  
 There is no flesh in man's obdurate heart—  
 It does not feel for man ; the natural bond  
 Of brotherhood is sever'd as the flax  
 That falls asunder at the touch of fire.  
 He finds his fellow guilty of a skin  
 Not colour'd like his own, and having power  
 To enforce the wrong, for such a worthy cause  
 Dooms and devotes him as his lawful prey.  
 Lands intersected by a narrow frith  
 Abhor each other. Mountains interposed,  
 Make enemies of nations, who had else  
 Like kindred drops been mingled into one.  
 Thus man devotes his brother, and destroys ;  
 And worse than all, and most to be deplored  
 As human Nature's broadest, foulest blot,  
 Chains him, and tasks him, and exacts his sweat  
 With stripes, that Mercy with a bleeding heart  
 Weeps when she sees inflicted on a beast.  
 Then what is man ? And what man seeing this,  
 And having human feelings, does not blush  
 And hang his head, to think himself a man ?  
 I would not have a slave to till my ground,  
 To carry me, to fan me while I sleep,  
 And tremble when I wake, for all the wealth  
 That sinews bought and sold have ever earn'd.  
 No : dear as freedom is, and in my heart's  
 Just estimation priz'd above all price,  
 I had much rather be myself the slave  
 And wear the bonds, than fasten them on him.  
 We have no slaves at home.—Then why abroad ?  
 And they themselves once forc'd o'er the wave  
 That parts us, are emancipate and loosed.  
 Slaves cannot breathe in England ;\* if their lungs  
 Receive our air, that moment they are free,  
 They touch our country, and their shackles fall.  
 That's noble, and bespeaks a nation proud  
 And jealous of the blessing. Spread it then,  
 And let it circulate through every vein  
 Of all your empire ; that where Britain's power  
 Is felt, mankind may feel her mercy too.  
 Sure there is need of social intercourse,  
 Benevolence, and peace, and mutual aid,  
 Between the nations, in a world that seems  
 To toll the death-bell of its own decease,

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\* This decision was given in the case of Somerset, a negro, in 1772. Dr. Johnson took a humane interest in him.



And by the voice of all its elements  
 To preach the general doom. When were the winds  
 Let slip with such a warrant to destroy?  
 When did the waves so haughtily o'erleap  
 Their ancient barriers, deluging the dry?  
 Fires from beneath, and meteors from above,  
 Portentous, unexampled, unexplain'd,  
 Have kindled beacons in the skies, and the old  
 And crazy earth has had her shaking fits  
 More frequent, and foregone her usual rest.  
 Is it a time to wrangle, when the props  
 And pillars of our planet seem to fail,  
 And Nature with a dim and sickly eye  
 To wait the close of all? But grant her end  
 More distant, and that prophecy demands  
 A longer respite, unaccomplish'd yet;  
 Still they are frowning signals, and bespeak  
 Displeasure in His breast who smites the earth  
 Or heals it, makes it languish or rejoice.  
 And 'tis but seemly that, where all deserve  
 And stand exposed by common peccancy  
 To what no few have felt, there should be peace,  
 And brethren in calamity should love.

Alas for Sicily!\* rude fragments now  
 Lie scatter'd where the shapely column stood.  
 Her palaces are dust. In all her streets  
 The voice of singing and the sprightly chord  
 Are silent. Revelry and dance and show  
 Suffer a syncope and solemn pause,  
 While God performs upon the trembling stage  
 Of His own works His dreadful part alone.  
 How doth the earth receive Him?—With what signs  
 Of gratulation and delight, her King?  
 Pours she not all her choicest fruits abroad,  
 Her sweetest flowers, her aromatic gums,  
 Disclosing Paradise where'er He treads?  
 She quakes at His approach. Her hollow womb  
 Conceiving thunders, through a thousand deeps  
 And fiery caverns roars beneath His foot.  
 The hills move lightly, and the mountains smoke,  
 For He has touch'd them. From the extremest point  
 Of elevation down into the abyss,  
 His wrath is busy and His frown is felt.  
 The rocks fall headlong and the valleys rise,  
 The rivers die into offensive pools,

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\* Frightful earthquakes took place in Sicily in 1783.

And, charged with putrid verdure, breathe a gross  
 And mortal nuisance into all the air.  
 What solid was, by transformation strange  
 Grows fluid, and the fix'd and rooted earth,  
 Tormented into billows, heaves and swells,  
 Or with vortiginous and hideous whirl  
 Sucks down its prey insatiable. Immense  
 The tumult and the overthrow, the pangs  
 And agonies of human and of brute  
 Multitudes, fugitive on every side,  
 And fugitive in vain. The sylvan scene  
 Migrates uplifted, and with all its soil  
 Alighting in far-distant fields, finds out  
 A new possessor, and survives the change.  
 Ocean has caught the frenzy, and upwrought  
 To an enormous and o'erbearing height,  
 Not by a mighty wind, but by that voice  
 Which winds and waves obey, invades the shore  
 Resistless. Never such a sudden flood,  
 Upridged so high, and sent on such a charge,  
 Possess'd an inland scene. Where now the throng  
 That press'd the beach, and hasty to depart  
 Look'd to the sea for safety? They are gone,  
 Gone with the refluent wave into the deep—  
 A prince with half his people!<sup>\*</sup> Ancient towers,  
 And roofs embattled high, the gloomy scenes  
 Where beauty oft and letter'd worth consume  
 Life in the unproductive shades of death,  
 Fall prone; the pale inhabitants come forth,  
 And, happy in their unforeseen release  
 From all the rigours of restraint, enjoy  
 The terrors of the day that sets them free.  
 Who then that has thee, would not hold thee fast,  
 Freedom! whom they that lose thee, so regret,  
 That even a judgment making way for thee,  
 Seems in their eyes, a mercy for thy sake.  
 Such evil sin hath wrought; and such a flame  
 Kindled in heaven, that it burns down to earth,  
 And in the furious inquest that it makes  
 On God's behalf, lays waste His fairest works.  
 The very elements, though each be meant  
 The minister of man, to serve his wants,  
 Conspire against him. With his breath, he draws  
 A plague into his blood; and cannot use

<sup>\*</sup> Numbers perished at Scylla; the Prince persuaded a great number of the survivors to put to sea for safety; but the waves rose with great fury, and all in the boats perished with their Prince.—See Lyell's "Principles of Geology," p. 488, ed. 1858.



Life's necessary means, but he must die.  
 Storms rise to o'erwhelm him : or if stormy winds  
 Rise not, the waters of the deep shall rise,  
 And needing none assistance of the storm,  
 Shall roll themselves ashore, and reach him there.  
 The earth shall shake him out of all his holds,  
 Or make his house his grave : nor so content,  
 Shall counterfeit the motions of the flood,  
 And drown him in her dry and dusty gulfs.  
 What then—were they the wicked above all,  
 And we the righteous, whose fast-anchor'd isle  
 Moved not, while theirs was rock'd like a light skiff,  
 The sport of every wave ? No : none are clear,  
 And none than we more guilty. But where all  
 Stand chargeable with guilt, and to the shafts  
 Of wrath obnoxious, God may choose His mark.  
 May punish, if He please, the less, to warn  
 The more malignant. If He spared not them,  
 Tremble and be amazed at thine escape,  
 Far guiltier England ! lest He spare not thee.

Happy the man who sees a God employ'd  
 In all the good and ill that chequer life !  
 Resolving all events, with their effects  
 And manifold results, into the will  
 And arbitration wise of the Supreme.  
 Did not His eye rule all things, and intend  
 The least of our concerns, (since from the least  
 The greatest oft originate,) could chance  
 Find place in His dominion, or dispose  
 One lawless particle to thwart His plan,  
 Then God might be surprised, and unforeseen  
 Contingence might alarm Him, and disturb  
 The smooth and equal course of His affairs.  
 This truth Philosophy, though eagle-eyed  
 In nature's tendencies, oft overlooks,  
 And, having found His instrument, forgets  
 Or disregards, or more presumptuous still,  
 Denies the power that wills it. God proclaims  
 His hot displeasure against foolish men  
 That live an atheist life : involves the heaven  
 In tempests, quits His grasp upon the winds,  
 And gives them all their fury : bids a plague  
 Kindle a fiery boil upon the skin,  
 And putrefy the breath of blooming health.  
 He calls for Famine, and the meagre fiend  
 Blows mildew from between his shrivell'd lips,  
 And taints the golden ear. He springs His mines,  
 And desolates a nation at a blast.

Forth steps the spruce philosopher, and tells  
 Of homogeneal and discordant springs  
 And principles ; of causes, how they work  
 By necessary laws their sure effects ;  
 Of action and reaction. He has found  
 The source of the disease that nature feels,  
 And bids the world take heart and banish fear.  
 Thou fool ! will thy discovery of the cause  
 Suspend the effect, or heal it ? Has not God  
 Still wrought by means since first He made the world,  
 And did He not of old employ His means  
 To drown it ? What is His creation less  
 Than a capacious reservoir of means  
 Form'd for His use, and ready at His will ?  
 Go, dress thine eyes with eye-salve, ask of Him,  
 Or ask of whomsoever He has taught,  
 And learn, though late, the genuine cause of all.

England, with all thy faults, I love thee still,  
 My country ! and while yet a nook is left  
 Where English minds and manners may be found,  
 Shall be constrain'd to love thee. Though thy clime  
 Be fickle, and thy year, most part deform'd  
 With dripping rains, or wither'd by a frost,  
 I would not yet exchange thy sullen skies  
 And fields without a flower, for warmer France  
 With all her vines ; nor for Ausonia's groves  
 Of golden fruitage and her myrtle bowers.  
 To shake thy senate, and from heights sublime  
 Of patriot eloquence to flash down fire  
 Upon thy foes, was never meant my task ;  
 But I can feel thy fortunes, and partake  
 Thy joys and sorrows with as true a heart  
 As any thunderer there. And I can feel  
 Thy follies too, and with a just disdain  
 Frown at effeminates, whose very looks  
 Reflect dishonour on the land I love.  
 How, in the name of soldiership and sense,  
 Should England prosper, when such things, as smooth  
 And tender as a girl, all-essenced o'er  
 With odours, and as profligate as sweet,  
 Who sell their laurel for a myrtle wreath,  
 And love when they should fight ; when such as these  
 Presume to lay their hand upon the ark  
 Of her magnificent and awful cause ?  
 Time was when it was praise and boast enough  
 In every clime, and travel where we might,  
 That we were born her children ; praise enough  
 To fill the ambition of a private man,

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*THE TASK—THE TIME-PIECE.*

That Chatham's language was his mother-tongue,  
 And Wolfe's great name compatriot with his own.  
 Farewell those honours, and farewell with them  
 The hope of such hereafter. They have fallen  
 Each in his field of glory: one in arms,  
 And one in council—Wolfe upon the lap  
 Of smiling Victory that moment won,  
 And Chatham, heart-sick of his country's shame!  
 They made us many soldiers. Chatham still  
 Consulting England's happiness at home,  
 Secured it by an unforgetting frown  
 If any wrong'd her. Wolfe, where'er he fought,  
 Put so much of his heart into his act,  
 That his example had a magnet's force,  
 And all were swift to follow whom all loved.  
 Those suns are set. Oh, rise some other such!  
 Or all that we have left, is empty talk  
 Of old achievements, and despair of new.

Now hoist the sail, and let the streamers float  
 Upon the wanton breezes. Strew the deck  
 With lavender, and sprinkle liquid sweets,  
 That no rude savour maritime invade  
 The nose of nice nobility. Breathe soft  
 Ye clarionets, and softer still ye flutes,  
 That winds and waters lull'd by magic sounds  
 May bear us smoothly to the Gallic shore.  
 True, we have lost an empire—let it pass.  
 True, we may thank the perfidy of France  
 That pick'd the jewel out of England's crown,  
 With all the cunning of an envious shrew.  
 And let that pass,—'twas but a trick of state.  
 A brave man knows no malice, but at once  
 Forgets in peace the injuries of war,  
 And gives his direst foe a friend's embrace.  
 And shamed as we have been, to the very beard  
 Braved and defied, and in our own sea proved  
 Too weak for those decisive blows that once  
 Insured us mastery there, we yet retain  
 Some small pre-eminence, we justly boast  
 At least superior jockeyship, and claim  
 The honours of the turf as all our own.  
 Go then, well worthy of the praise ye seek,  
 And show the shame ye might conceal at home,  
 In foreign eyes!—be grooms, and win the plate,  
 Where once your nobler fathers won a crown!—  
 'Tis generous to communicate your skill  
 To those that need it. Folly is soon learn'd:  
 And, under such preceptors, who can fail!

There is a pleasure in poetic pains  
Which only poets know. The shifts and turns,  
The expedients and inventions multiform  
To which the mind resorts, in chase of terms  
Though apt, yet coy, and difficult to win,—  
T' arrest the fleeting images that fill  
The mirror of the mind, and hold them fast,  
And force them sit, till he has pencill'd off  
A faithful likeness of the forms he views;  
Then to dispose his copies with such art  
That each may find its most propitious light  
And shine by situation, hardly less  
Than by the labour and the skill it cost,  
Are occupations of the poet's mind  
So pleasing, and that steal away the thought  
With such address from themes of sad import,  
That, lost in his own musings, happy man!  
He feels the anxieties of life, denied  
Their wonted entertainment, all retire.  
Such joys has he that sings. But ah! not such,  
Or seldom such, the hearers of his song.  
Fastidious, or else listless, or perhaps  
Aware of nothing arduous in a task  
They never undertook, they little note  
His dangers or escapes, and haply find  
Their least amusement where he found the most.  
But is amusement all? Studios of song,  
And yet ambitious not to sing in vain,  
I would not trifle merely, though the world  
Be loudest in their praise who do no more.  
Yet what can satire, whether grave or gay?  
It may correct a foible, may chastise  
The freaks of fashion, regulate the dress,  
Retrench a sword-blade, or displace a patch;  
But where are its sublimer trophies found?  
What vice has it subdued? whose heart reclaim'd  
By rigour, or whom laugh'd into reform?  
Alas! Leviathan is not so tamed:  
Laugh'd at, he laughs again; and, stricken hard,  
Turns to the stroke his adamantine scales,  
That fear no discipline of human hands.  
The pulpit, therefore, (and I name it fill'd  
With solemn awe, that bids me well beware  
With what intent I touch that holy thing;)  
The pulpit (when the satirist has at last,  
Strutting and vapouring in an empty school,  
Spent all his force, and made no proselyte,)  
I say the pulpit (in the sober use

## THE TASK—THE TIME-PIECE.

Of its legitimate, peculiar powers)  
 Must stand acknowledged, while the world shall stand,  
 The most important and effectual guard,  
 Support, and ornament of virtue's cause.  
 There stands the messenger of truth. There stands  
 The legate of the skies; his theme divine,  
 His office sacred, his credentials clear.  
 By him, the violated law speaks out  
 Its thunders, and by him, in strains as sweet  
 As angels use, the gospel whispers peace.  
 He 'stablishes the strong, restores the weak,  
 Reclaims the wanderer, binds the broken heart,  
 And, arm'd himself in panoply complete  
 Of heavenly temper, furnishes with arms  
 Bright as his own, and trains, by every rule  
 Of holy discipline, to glorious war,  
 The sacramental host of God's elect.  
 Are all such teachers? would to Heaven all were!  
 But hark,—the Doctor's voice!\*—fast wedged between  
 Two empirics he stands, and with swollen cheeks  
 Inspires the news, his trumpet. Keener far  
 Than all invective is his bold harangue,  
 While through that public organ of report  
 He hails the clergy; and defying shame,  
 Announces to the world his own and theirs.  
 He teaches those to read, whom schools dismiss'd,  
 And colleges, untaught: sells accent, tone,  
 And emphasis in score, and gives to prayer  
 The *adagio* and *andante* it demands.  
 He grinds divinity of other days  
 Down into modern use; transforms old print  
 To zigzag manuscript, and cheats the eyes  
 Of gallery critics by a thousand arts.  
 Are there who purchase of the Doctor's ware?  
 Oh name it not in Gath!—it cannot be,  
 That grave and learned clerks should need such aid.  
 He doubtless is in sport, and does but droll,  
 Assuming thus a rank unknown before—  
 Grand caterer and drynurse of the Church.  
 I venerate the man whose heart is warm,  
 Whose hands are pure, whose doctrine and whose life  
 Coincident, exhibit lucid proof  
 That he is honest in the sacred cause.  
 To such I render more than mere respect,

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\* Dr. Trusler, who first abridged and wrote sermons for sale. He compiled and abridged many works, and was well known at that time as a teacher of elocution.

Whose actions say that they respect themselves,  
 But loose in morals, and in manners vain,  
 In conversation frivolous, in dress  
 Extreme, at once rapacious and profuse,  
 Frequent in park, with lady at his side,  
 Ambling and prattling scandal as he goes,  
 But rare at home, and never at his books,  
 Or with his pen, save when he scrawls a card ;  
 Constant at routs, familiar with a round  
 Of ladyships, a stranger to the poor ;  
 Ambitious of preferment for its gold,  
 And well prepared by ignorance and sloth,  
 By infidelity and love of the world,  
 To make God's work a sinecure ; a slave  
 To his own pleasures and his patron's pride :—  
 From such apostles, O ye mitred heads,  
 Preserve the Church ! and lay not careless hands  
 On skulls that cannot teach, and will not learn.

Would I describe a preacher, such as Paul,  
 Were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own,  
 Paul should himself direct me. I would trace  
 His master-strokes, and draw from his design.  
 I would express him simple, grave, sincere ;  
 In doctrine uncorrupt ; in language plain,  
 And plain in manner ; decent, solemn, chaste,  
 And natural in gesture ; much impress'd  
 Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,  
 And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds  
 May feel it too ; affectionate in look,  
 And tender in address, as well becomes  
 A messenger of grace to guilty men.  
 Behold the picture ! Is it like ?—Like whom ?  
 The things that mount the rostrum with a skip,  
 And then skip down again ; pronounce a text,  
 Cry hem ! and reading what they never wrote,  
 Just fifteen minutes, huddle up their work,  
 And with a well-bred whisper close the scene.  
 In man or woman, but far most in man,  
 And most of all in man that ministers  
 And serves the altar, in my soul I loathe  
 All affectation. 'Tis my perfect scorn ;  
 Object of my implacable disgust.  
 What !—will a man play tricks, will he indulge  
 A silly fond conceit of his fair form  
 And just proportion, fashionable mien,  
 And pretty face, in presence of his God ?  
 Or will he seek to dazzle me with tropes,  
 As with the diamond on his lily hand,



*THE TASK—THE TIME-PIECE.*

And play his brilliant parts before my eyes  
 When I am hungry for the bread of life?  
 He mocks his Maker, prostitutes and shames  
 His noble office, and, instead of truth,  
 Displaying his own beauty, starves his flock.  
 Therefore avaunt all attitude and stare,  
 And start theatric, practised at the glass.  
 I seek divine simplicity in him  
 Who handles things divine; and all beside,  
 Though learn'd with labour, and though much admired  
 By curious eyes and judgments ill inform'd,  
 To me is odious as the nasal twang  
 Heard at conventicle, where worthy men,  
 Misled by custom, strain celestial themes  
 Through the press'd nostril, spectacle-bestrud.  
 Some, decent in demeanour while they preach,  
 That task perform'd, relapse into themselves,  
 And having spoken wisely, at the close  
 Grow wanton, and give proof to every eye—  
 Whoe'er was edified, themselves were not.  
 Forth comes the pocket mirror. First we stroke  
 An eyebrow; next, compose a straggling lock;  
 Then with an air, most gracefully perform'd,  
 Fall back into our seat, extend an arm,  
 And lay it at its ease with gentle care,  
 With handkerchief in hand, depending low.  
 The better hand more busy, gives the nose  
 Its bergamot, or aids the indebted eye  
 With opera-glass to watch the moving scene  
 And recognise the slow-retiring fair.  
 Now this is fulsome, and offends me more  
 Than in a Churchman slovenly neglect  
 And rustic coarseness would. A heavenly mind  
 May be indifferent to her house of clay,  
 And slight the hovel as beneath her care;  
 But how a body so fantastic, trim,  
 And quaint in its deportment and attire,  
 Can lodge a heavenly mind—demands a doubt.  
 He that negotiates between God and man,  
 As God's ambassador, the grand concerns  
 Of judgment and of mercy, should beware  
 Of lightness in his speech. 'Tis pitiful  
 To court a grin, when you should woo a soul;  
 To break a jest, when pity would inspire  
 Pathetic exhortation; and to address  
 The skittish fancy with facetious tales,  
 When sent with God's commission to the heart.  
 So did not Paul. Direct me to a quip

Or merry turn in all he ever wrote,  
 And I consent you take it for your text,  
 Your only one, till sides and benches fail.  
 No: he was serious in a serious cause,  
 And understood too well the weighty terms  
 That he had ta'en in charge. He would not stoop  
 To conquer those by jocular exploits,  
 Whom truth and soberness assail'd in vain.  
 Oh, popular applause! what heart of man  
 Is proof against thy sweet seducing charms?  
 The wisest and the best feel urgent need  
 Of all their caution in thy gentlest gales;  
 But swell'd into a gust—who then, alas!  
 With all his canvas set, and inexpert,  
 And therefore heedless, can withstand thy power?  
 Praise from the-rivell'd lips of toothless, bald  
 Decrepitude, and in the looks of lean  
 And craving poverty, and in the bow  
 Respectful of the smutch'd artificer,  
 Is oft too welcome, and may much disturb  
 The bias of the purpose. How much more  
 Pour'd forth by beauty splendid and polite,  
 In language soft as adoration breathes?  
 Ah spare your idol! think him human still;  
 Charms he may have, but he has frailties too;  
 Dote not too much, nor spoil what ye admire.  
 All truth is from the sempiternal source  
 Of light divine. But Egypt, Greece, and Rome,  
 Drew from the stream below. More favour'd, we  
 Drink, when we choose it, at the fountain-head.  
 To them it flow'd much mingled and defiled  
 With hurtful error, prejudice, and dreams  
 Illusive of philosophy, so-call'd,  
 But falsely. Sages after sages strove  
 In vain to filter off a crystal draught  
 Pure from the lees, which often more enhanced  
 The thirst than slaked it, and not seldom bred  
 Intoxication and delirium wild.  
 In vain they push'd inquiry to the birth  
 And spring-time of the world; asked, Whence is man?  
 Why form'd at all? And wherefore as he is?  
 Where must he find his Maker? With what rites  
 Adore Him? Will He hear, accept, and bless?  
 Or does He sit regardless of His works?  
 Has man within him an immortal seed?  
 Or does the tomb take all? If he survive  
 His ashes, where? and in what weal or woe?  
 Knots worthy of solution, which alone

*THE TASK—THE TIME-PIECE.*

A Deity could solve. Their answers vague,  
 And all at random, fabulous and dark,  
 Left them as dark themselves. Their rules of life  
 Defective and unsanction'd, proved too weak  
 To bind the roving appetite, and lead  
 Blind Nature to a God not yet reveal'd.  
 'Tis Revelation satisfies all doubts,  
 Explains all mysteries, except her own,  
 And so illuminates the path of life,  
 That fools discover it, and stray no more.  
 Now tell me, dignified and sapient sir,  
 My man of morals, nurtured in the shades  
 Of Academus, is this false or true?  
 Is Christ the abler teacher, or the schools?  
 If Christ, then why resort at every turn  
 To Athens or to Rome, for wisdom short  
 Of man's occasions, when in Him reside  
 Grace, knowledge, comfort, an unfathom'd store?  
 How oft, when Paul has served us with a text,  
 Has Epictetus, Plato, Tully, preach'd!  
 Men that, if now alive, would sit content  
 And humble learners of a Saviour's worth,  
 Preach it who might. Such was their love of truth,  
 Their thirst for knowledge, and their candour too.

And thus it is. The pastor, either vain  
 By nature, or by flattery made so, taught  
 To gaze at his own splendour, and to exalt  
 Absurdly, not his office, but himself;  
 Or unenlighten'd, and too proud to learn,  
 Or vicious, and not therefore apt to teach,  
 Perverting often by the stress of lewd  
 And loose example, whom he should instruct,  
 Exposes and holds up to broad disgrace  
 The noblest function, and discredits much  
 The brightest truths that man has ever seen.  
 For ghostly counsel, if it either fall  
 Below the exigence, or be not back'd  
 With show of love, at least with hopeful proof  
 Of some sincerity on the giver's part;  
 Or be dishonour'd in the exterior form  
 And mode of its conveyance, by such tricks  
 As move derision, or by foppish airs  
 And histrionic mummary, that let down  
 The pulpit to the level of the stage,  
 Drops from the lips a disregarded thing.  
 The weak perhaps are moved, but are not taught,  
 While prejudice in men of stronger minds  
 Takes deeper root, confirm'd by what they see.

A relaxation of religion's hold  
 Upon the roving and untutor'd heart  
 Soon follows, and the curb of conscience snapp'd,  
 The larty run wild.—But do they now?  
 Note their extravagance, and be convinced.  
 As nations, ignorant of God, contrive  
 A wooden one, so we, no longer taught  
 By monitors that mother Church supplies,  
 Now make our own. Posterity will ask,  
 (If e'er posterity see verse of mine,)
 Some fifty or a hundred lustrums hence,  
 What was a monitor in George's days?  
 My very gentle reader, yet unborn,  
 Of whom I needs must augur better things,  
 Since Heaven would sure grow weary of a world  
 Productive only of a race like ours,  
 A monitor is wood. Plankshaven thin.  
 We wear it at our backs. There closely braced  
 And neatly fitted, it compresses hard  
 The prominent and most unsightly bones,  
 And binds the shoulders flat. We prove its use  
 Sovereign and most effectual to secure  
 A form not now gymnastic as of yore,  
 From rickets and distortion, else, our lot.  
 But thus admonish'd we can walk erect,  
 One proof at least of manhood; while the friend  
 Sticks close, a Mentor worthy of his charge.  
 Our habits costlier than Lucullus wore,  
 And by caprice as multiplied as his,  
 Just please us while the fashion is at full,  
 But change with every moon. The sycophant  
 Who waits to dress us, arbitrates their date,  
 Surveys his fair reversion with keen eye;  
 Finds one ill made, another obsolete,  
 This fits not nicely, that is ill conceived,  
 And making prize of all that he condemns,  
 With our expenditure defrays his own.  
 Variety's the very spice of life,  
 That gives it all its flavour. We have run  
 Through every change that fancy at the loom  
 Exhausted, has had genius to supply,  
 And studious of mutation still, discard  
 A real elegance, a little used,  
 For monstrous novelty and strange disguise.  
 We sacrifice to dress, till household joys  
 And comforts cease. Dress drains our cellar dry,  
 And keeps our larder lean; puts out our fires,  
 And introduces hunger, frost, and woe,

*THE TASK—THE TIME-PIECE.*

Where peace and hospitality might reign.  
 What man that lives, and that knows how to live,  
 Would fail to exhibit at the public shows  
 A form as splendid as the proudest there,  
 Though appetite raise outcries at the cost ?  
 A man of the town dines late, but soon enough,  
 With reasonable forecast and despatch,  
 To insure a side-box station at half-price.  
 You think, perhaps, so delicate his dress,  
 His daily fare as delicate. Alas !  
 He picks clean teeth, and, busy as he seems  
 With an old tavern quill, is hungry yet.  
 The rout is folly's circle, which she draws  
 With magic wand. So potent is the spell,  
 That none, decoy'd into that fatal ring,  
 Unless by Heaven's peculiar grace, escape.  
 There we grow early gray, but never wise ;  
 There form connexions, but acquire no friend ;  
 Solicit pleasure hopeless of success ;  
 Waste youth in occupations only fit  
 For second childhood, and devote old age  
 To sports which only childhood could excuse.  
 There they are happiest who dissemble best  
 Their weariness ; and they the most polite  
 Who squander time and treasure with a smile,  
 Though at their own destruction. She that asks  
 Her dear five hundred friends, contemns them all,  
 And hates their coming. They, what can they less ?  
 Make just reprisals, and with cringe and shrug,  
 And bow obsequious, hide their hate of her.  
 All catch the frenzy, downward from her Grace,  
 Whose flambeaux flash against the morning skies,  
 And gild our chamber ceilings as they pass,  
 To her who, frugal only that her thrift  
 May feed excesses she can ill afford,  
 Is hackney'd home unlackey'd ; who in haste  
 Alighting, turns the key in her own door,  
 And at the watchman's lantern borrowing light,  
 Finds a cold bed her only comfort left.  
 Wives beggar husbands, husbands starve their wives,  
 On Fortune's velvet altar offering up  
 Their last poor pittance—Fortune most severe  
 Of goddesses yet known, and costlier far  
 Than all that held their routs in Juno's heaven.  
 So fare we in this prison-house the world.  
 And 'tis a fearful spectacle to see  
 So many maniacs dancing in their chains.  
 They gaze upon the links that hold them fast,

With eyes of anguish, execrate their lot,  
 Then shake them in despair, and dance again.  
 Now basket up the family of plagues  
 That waste our vitals. Peculation, sale  
 Of honour, perjury, corruption, frauds  
 By forgery, by subterfuge of law,  
 By tricks and lies as numerous and as keen  
 As the necessities their authors feel;  
 Then cast them closely bundled, every brat  
 At the right door. Profusion is the sire.  
 Profusion unrestrain'd, with all that's base  
 In character, has litter'd all the land,  
 And bred within the memory of no few,  
 A priesthood such as Baal's was of old,  
 A people such as never was till now.  
 It is a hungry vice :—it eats up all  
 That gives society its beauty, strength,  
 Convenience, and security, and use :  
 Makes men mere vermin, worthy to be trapp'd  
 And gibbeted as fast as catchpole claws  
 Can seize the slippery prey : unties the knot  
 Of union, and converts the sacred band  
 That holds mankind together, to a scourge.  
 Profusion deluging a state with lusts  
 Of grossest nature and of worse effects,  
 Prepares it for its ruin : hardens, blinds,  
 And warps the consciences of public men  
 Till they can laugh at virtue ; mock the fools  
 That trust them ; and, in the end, disclose a face  
 That would have shock'd credulity herself  
 Unmask'd, vouchsafing this their sole excuse,  
 Since all alike are selfish—why not they ?  
 This does Profusion, and the accurs'd cause  
 Of such deep mischief, has itself a cause.  
 In colleges and halls, in ancient days,  
 When learning, virtue, piety, and truth  
 Were precious and inculcated with care.  
 There dwelt a sage call'd Discipline. His head  
 Not yet by time completely silver'd o'er,  
 Bespoke him past the bounds of freakish youth,  
 But strong for service still, and unimpair'd.  
 His eye was meek and gentle, and a smile  
 Play'd on his lips, and in his speech was heard  
 Paternal sweetness, dignity, and love.  
 The occupation dearest to his heart  
 Was to encourage goodness. He would stroke  
 The head of modest and ingenuous worth  
 That blush'd at his own praise ; and press the youth

*THE TASK—THE TIME-PIECE.*

Close to his side that pleased him. Learning grew  
Beneath his care, a thriving vigorous plant ;  
The mind was well-inform'd, the passions held  
Subordinate, and diligence was choice.  
If e'er it chanced, as sometimes chance it must,  
That one among so many overleap'd  
The limits of control, his gentle eye  
Grew stern, and darted a severe rebuke ;  
His frown was full of terror, and his voice  
Shook the delinquent with such fits of awe  
As left him not, till penitence had won  
Lost favour back again, and closed the breach.  
But Discipline, a faithful servant long,  
Declined at length into the vale of years ;  
A palsy struck his arm, his sparkling eye  
Was quench'd in rheums of age, his voice unstrung  
Grew tremulous, and moved derision more  
Than reverence, in perverse rebellious youth.  
So colleges and halls neglected much  
Their good old friend, and Discipline at length  
O'erlook'd and unemploy'd, fell sick and died.  
Then study languish'd, emulation slept,  
And virtue fled. The schools became a scene  
Of solemn farce, where ignorance in stilts,  
His cap well lined with logic not his own,  
With parrot-tongue perform'd the scholar's part,  
Proceeding soon a graduated dunce.  
Then compromise had place, and scrutiny  
Became stone-blind, precedence went in truck,  
And he was competent whose purse was so.  
A dissolution of all bonds ensued ;  
The curbs invented for the mulish mouth  
Of headstrong youth were broken ; bars and bolts  
Grew rusty by disuse, and massy gates  
Forgot their office, opening with a touch ;  
Till gowns at length are found mere masquerade :  
The tassell'd cap and the spruce band a jest,  
A mockery of the world. What need of these  
For gamesters, jockeys, brothellers impure,  
Spendthrifts and booted sportsmen, oftener seen  
With belted waist and pointers at their heels,  
Than in the bounds of duty ? What was learn'd,  
If aught was learn'd in childhood, is forgot,  
And such expense as pinches parents blue,  
And mortifies the liberal hand of love,  
Is squander'd in pursuit of idle sports  
And vicious pleasures ; buys the boy a name,  
That sits a stigma on his father's house,

And cleaves through life inseparably close  
 To him that wears it. What can after-games  
 Of riper joys, and commerce with the world,  
 The lewd vain world that must receive him soon,  
 Add to such erudition thus acquired,  
 Where science and where virtue are profess'd?  
 They may confirm his habits, rivet fast  
 His folly, but to spoil him is a task  
 That bids defiance to the united powers  
 Of fashion, dissipation, taverns, stewes.  
 Now, blame we most the nurslings or the nurse?  
 The children crook'd, and twisted, and deform'd  
 Through want of care, or her whose winking eye  
 And slumbering oscitancy mars the brood?  
 The nurse no doubt. Regardless of her charge,  
 She needs herself correction; needs to learn  
 That it is dangerous sporting with the world,  
 With things so sacred as a nation's trust,  
 The nurture of her youth, her dearest pledge.

All are not such. I had a brother once—  
 Peace to the memory of a man of worth,  
 A man of letters, and of manners too;  
 Of manners sweet as virtue always wears,  
 When gay good-nature dresses her in smiles.  
 He graced a college,\* in which order yet  
 Was sacred; and was honour'd, loved, and wept  
 By more than one, themselves conspicuous there.  
 Some minds are temper'd happily, and mix'd  
 With such ingredients of good sense and taste  
 Of what is excellent in man, they thirst  
 With such a zeal to be what they approve,  
 That no restraints can circumscribe them more  
 Than they themselves by choice, for wisdom's sake.  
 Nor can example hurt them; what they see  
 Of vice in others but enhancing more  
 The charms of virtue in their just esteem.  
 If such escape contagion, and emerge  
 Pure, from so foul a pool, to shine abroad,  
 And give the world their talents and themselves,  
 Small thanks to those whose negligence or sloth  
 Exposed their inexperience to the snare,  
 And left them to an undirected choice.

See then! the quiver broken and decay'd,  
 In which are kept our arrows. Rusting there  
 In wild disorder, and unfit for use,

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\* Benet, now Corpus Christi, Cambridge.



## THE TASK—THE GARDEN.

What wonder, if discharged into the world,  
 They shame their shooters with a random flight,  
 Their points obtuse, and feathers drunk with wine.  
 Well may the Church wage unsuccessful war,  
 With such artillery arm'd. Vice parries wide  
 The undreaded volley with a sword of straw,  
 And stands an impudent and fearless mark.

Have we not track'd the felon home, and found  
 His birthplace and his dam? The country mourns,  
 Mourns, because every plague that can infest  
 Society, and that saps and worms the base  
 Of the edifice that Policy has raised,  
 Swarms in all quarters; meets the eye, the ear,  
 And suffocates the breath at every turn.  
 Profusion breeds them; and the cause itself  
 Of that calamitous mischief has been found:  
 Found too where most offensive, in the skirts  
 Of the robed pedagogue. Else, let the arraign'd  
 Stand up unconscious, and refute the charge.  
 So when the Jewish leader stretch'd his arm,  
 And waved his rod divine, a race obscene,  
 Spawn'd in the muddy beds of Nile, came forth,  
 Polluting Egypt. Gardens, fields, and plains  
 Were cover'd with the pest. The streets were fill'd;  
 The croaking nuisance lurk'd in every nook,  
 Nor palaces nor even chambers 'scaped,  
 And the land stank, so numerous was the fry.

## BOOK III.—THE GARDEN.

## ARGUMENT.

Self-recollection and reproof—Address to domestic happiness—Some account of myself—  
 The vanity of many of their pursuits who are reputed wise—Justification of my cen-  
 sures—Divine illumination necessary to the most expert philosopher—The question,  
 What is truth, answered by other questions—Domestic happiness addressed again—  
 Few lovers of the country—My tame hare—Occupations of a retired gentleman in  
 his garden—Pruning—Framing—Greenhouse—Sowing of flower-seeds—The country  
 preferable to the town even in the winter—Reasons why it is deserted at that season  
 —Ruinous effects of gaming, and of expensive improvement—Book concludes with an  
 apostrophe to the metropolis.

As one who, long in thickets and in brakes  
 Entangled, winds now this way and now that  
 His devious course uncertain, seeking home;  
 Or having long in miry ways been foil'd  
 And sore discomfited, from slough to slough  
 Plunging, and half-despairing of escape,

If chance at length he finds a greensward smooth  
 And faithful to the foot, his spirits rise,  
 He cherups brisk his ear-erecting steed,  
 And winds his way with pleasure and with ease;  
 So I, designing other themes, and call'd  
 To adorn the Sofa with eulogium due,  
 To tell its slumbers and to paint its dreams,  
 Have rambl'd wide. In country, city, seat  
 Of academic fame, (howe'er deserved,)  
 Long held and scarcely disengaged at last.  
 But now with pleasant pace a cleanlier road  
 I mean to tread. I feel myself at large,  
 Courageous, and refresh'd for future toil,  
 If toil awaits me, or if dangers new.

Since pulpits fail, and sounding boards reflect  
 Most part an empty ineffectual sound,  
 What chance that I, to fame so little known,  
 Nor conversant with men or manners much,  
 Should speak to purpose, or with better hope  
 Crack the satiric thong? 'Twere wiser far  
 For me, enamour'd of sequester'd scenes,  
 And charm'd with rural beauty, to repose  
 Where chance may throw me, beneath elm or vine,  
 My languid limbs when summer sears the plains,  
 Or when rough winter rages, on the soft  
 And shelter'd Sofa, while the nitrous air  
 Feeds a blue flame, and makes a cheerful hearth;  
 There, undisturb'd by Folly, and apprised,  
 How great the danger of disturbing her,  
 To muse in silence, or at least confine  
 Remarks that gall so many, to the few  
 My partners in retreat. Disgust conceal'd  
 Is ofttimes proof of wisdom, when the fault  
 Is obstinate, and cure beyond our reach.

Domestic happiness, thou only bliss  
 Of Paradise that has survived the Fall!  
 Though few now taste thee unimpair'd and pure.  
 Or tasting, long enjoy thee, too infirm  
 Or too incautious to preserve thy sweets  
 Unmix'd with drops of bitter, which neglect  
 Or temper sheds into thy crystal cup.  
 Thou art the nurse of virtue. In thine arms  
 She smiles, appearing, as in truth she is,  
 Heaven-born, and destined to the skies again.  
 Thou art not known where pleasure is adored,  
 That reeling goddess with the zoneless waist  
 And wandering eyes, still leaning on the arm  
 Of Novelty, her fickle frail support;

# THE TASK—THE GARDEN.

For thou art meek and constant, hating change,  
 And finding in the calm of truth-tried love  
 Joys that her stormy raptures never yield.  
 Forsaking thee, what shipwreck have we made  
 Of honour, dignity, and fair renown,  
 Till prostitution elbows us aside  
 In all our crowded streets, and senates seem  
 Convened for purposes of empire less,  
 Than to release the adulteress from her bond.  
 The adulteress! what a theme for angry verse!  
 What provocation to the indignant heart  
 That feels for injured love! but I disdain  
 The nauseous task to paint her as she is,  
 Cruel, abandon'd, glorying in her shame.  
 No. Let her pass, and charioted along  
 In guilty splendour, shake the public ways;  
 The frequency of crimes has wash'd them white;  
 And verse of mine shall never brand the wretch,  
 Whom matrons now of character unsmirch'd,  
 And chaste themselves, are not ashamed to own.  
 Virtue and vice had boundaries in old time,  
 Not to be pass'd; and she that had renounced  
 Her sex's honour, was renounced herself  
 By all that prized it; not for prudery's sake,  
 But dignity's, resentful of the wrong.  
 'Twas hard perhaps on here and there a waif,  
 Desirous to return, and not received;  
 But was a wholesome rigour in the main,  
 And taught the unblemish'd to preserve with care  
 That purity, whose loss was loss of all.  
 Men too were nice in honour in those days,  
 And judged offenders well. Then he that sharp'd,  
 And pocketed a prize by fraud obtain'd,  
 Was mark'd and shunn'd as odious. He that sold  
 His country, or was slack when she required  
 His every nerve in action and at stretch,  
 Paid with the blood that he had basely spared  
 The price of his default. But now, yes, now,  
 We are become so candid and so fair,  
 So liberal in construction, and so rich  
 In Christian charity, (good-natured age!)  
 That they are safe, sinners of either sex,  
 Transgress what laws they may. Well dress'd, well bred,  
 Well equipaged, is ticket good enough  
 To pass us readily through every door.  
 Hypocrisy, detest her as we may,  
 (And no man's hatred ever wrong'd her yet.)  
 May claim this merit still—that she admits

The worth of what she mimics with such care,  
 And thus gives virtue indirect applause;  
 But she has burn'd her mask, not needed here,  
 Where vice has such allowance, that her shifts  
 And specious semblances have lost their use.

I was a stricken deer that left the herd  
 Long since; with many an arrow deep infix'd  
 My panting side was charged, when I withdrew  
 To seek a tranquil death in distant shades.  
 'There was I found by One who had Himself  
 Been hurt by the archers. In His side He bore,  
 And in His hands and feet, the cruel scars.  
 With gentle force soliciting the darts,  
 He drew them forth, and heal'd and bade me live.  
 Since then, with few associates, in remote  
 And silent woods I wander, far from those  
 My former partners of the peopled scene;  
 With few associates, and not wishing more.  
 Here much I ruminate, as much I may,  
 With other views of men and manners now  
 Than once, and others of a life to come.  
 I see that all are wanderers, gone astray  
 Each in his own delusions; they are lost  
 In chace of fancied happiness, still woo'd  
 And never won. Dream after dream ensues,  
 And still they dream that they shall still succeed,  
 And still are disappointed. Rings the world  
 With the vain stir. I sum up half mankind,  
 And add two-thirds of the remaining half,  
 And find the total of their hopes and fears  
 Dreams, empty dreams. The million flit as gay  
 As if created only like the fly,  
 That spreads his motley wings in the eye of noon,  
 To sport their season, and be seen no more.  
 The rest are sober dreamers, grave and wise,  
 And pregnant with discoveries new and rare.  
 Some write a narrative of wars, and feats  
 Of heroes little known, and call the rant  
 A history: describe the man, of whom  
 His own coevals took but little note,  
 And paint his person, character, and views,  
 As they had known him from his mother's womb.  
 They disentangle from the puzzled skein  
 In which obscurity has wrapp'd them up,  
 The threads of politic and shrewd design  
 That ran through all his purposes, and charge  
 His mind with meanings that he never had,  
 Or having, kept conceal'd. Some drill and bore

The solid earth, and from the strata there  
 Extract a register, by which we learn  
 That He who made it, and reveal'd its date  
 To Moses, was mistaken in its age.  
 Some more acute, and more industrious still,  
 Contrive creation ; travel nature up  
 To the sharp peak of her sublimest height,  
 And tell us whence the stars ; why some are fix'd,  
 And planetary some ; what gave them first  
 Rotation, from what fountain flow'd their light.  
 Great contest follows, and much learned dust  
 Involves the combatants, each claiming truth,  
 And truth disclaiming both : and thus they spend  
 The little wick of life's poor shallow lamp  
 In playing tricks with nature, giving laws  
 To distant worlds, and trifling in their own.  
 Is't not a pity now, that tickling rheums  
 Should ever tease the lungs and blear the sight  
 Of oracles like these ? Great pity too,  
 That having wielded the elements, and built  
 A thousand systems, each in his own way,  
 They should go out in fume and be forgot ?  
 Ah ! what is life thus spent ? and what are they  
 But frantic who thus spend it ? all for smoke,—  
 Eternity for bubbles proves at last  
 A senseless bargain. When I see such games  
 Play'd by the creatures of a Power who swears  
 That He will judge the earth, and call the fool  
 To a sharp reckoning that has lived in vain ;  
 And when I weigh this seeming wisdom well,  
 And prove it in the infallible result  
 So hollow and so false,—I feel my heart  
 Dissolve in pity, and account the learn'd,  
 If this be learning, most of all deceived.  
 Great crimes alarm the conscience, but it sleeps  
 While thoughtful man is plausibly amused.  
 Defend me therefore, common sense, say I,  
 From reveries so airy, from the toil  
 Of dropping buckets into empty wells,  
 And growing old in drawing nothing up !  
 'Twere well, says one sage erudite, profound,  
 Terribly arch'd and aquiline his nose,  
 And overbuilt with most impending brows—  
 'Twere well, could you permit the world to live  
 As the world pleases. What's the world to you ?  
 Much. I was born of woman, and drew milk,  
 As sweet as charity, from human breasts.  
 I think, articulate, I laugh and weep,

And exercise all functions of a man.  
 How then should I and any man that lives  
 Be strangers to each other? Pierce my vein,  
 Take of the crimson stream meandering there,  
 And catechise it well. Apply your glass,  
 Search it, and prove now if it be not blood  
 Congenial with thine own : and if it be,  
 What edge of subtlety canst thou suppose  
 Keen enough, wise and skilful as thou art,  
 To cut the link of brotherhood, by which  
 One common Maker bound me to the kind?  
 True ; I am no proficient, I confess,  
 In arts like yours. I cannot call the swift  
 And perilous lightnings from the angry clouds,  
 And bid them hide themselves in earth beneath ;  
 I cannot analyse the air, nor catch  
 The parallax of yonder luminous point  
 That seems half quench'd in the immense abyss ;  
 Such powers I boast not—neither can I rest  
 A silent witness of the headlong rage  
 Or heedless folly by which thousands die,  
 Bone of my bone, and kindred souls to mine.  
 God never meant that man should scale the heavens  
 By strides of human wisdom. In His works,  
 Though wondrous, He commands us in His Word  
 To seek Him rather where His mercy shines.  
 The mind indeed, enlighten'd from above,  
 Views Him in all ; ascribes to the grand cause  
 The grand effect ; acknowledges with joy  
 His manner, and with rapture tastes His style.  
 But never yet did philosophic tube,  
 That brings the planets home into the eye  
 Of observation, and discovers, else  
 Not visible, His family of worlds,  
 Discover Him that rules them : such a veil  
 Hangs over mortal eyes, blind from the birth,  
 And dark in things divine. Full often too  
 Our wayward intellect, the more we learn  
 Of nature, overlooks her Author more ;  
 From instrumental causes proud to draw  
 Conclusions retrograde, and mad mistake.  
 But if His Word once teach us, shoot a ray  
 Through all the heart's dark chambers, and reveal  
 Truths undiscern'd but by that holy light,  
 Then all is plain. Philosophy baptized  
 In the pure fountain of eternal love  
 Has eyes indeed ; and viewing all she sees,  
 As meant to indicate a God to man,

Gives Him his praise, and forfeits not her own.  
 Learning has borne such fruit in other days  
 On all her branches: piety has found  
 Friends in the friends of science, and true prayer  
 Has flow'd from lips wet with Castalian dews.  
 Such was thy wisdom, Newton, childlike sage!  
 Sagacious reader of the works of God,  
 And in His Word sagacious. Such too thine,  
 Milton, whose genius had angelic wings,  
 And fed on manna. And such thine, in whom  
 Our British Themis gloried with just cause,  
 Immortal Hale! for deep discernment praised,  
 And sound integrity not more, than famed  
 For sanctity of manners undefiled.

All flesh is grass, and all its glory fades  
 Like the fair flower dishevell'd in the wind;  
 Riches have wings, and grandeur is a dream;  
 The man we celebrate must find a tomb,  
 And we that worship him, ignoble graves.  
 Nothing is proof against the general curse  
 Of vanity, that seizes all below.  
 The only amaranthine flower on earth  
 Is virtue; the only lasting treasure, truth.  
 But what is truth? 'Twas Pilate's question put  
 To Truth itself, that deign'd him no reply.  
 And wherefore? will not God impart His light  
 To them that ask it?—Freely—'tis His joy,  
 His glory, and His nature to impart.  
 But to the proud, uncandid, insincere,  
 Or negligent inquirer, not a spark.  
 What's that which brings contempt upon a book,  
 And him who writes it, though the style be neat,  
 The method clear, and argument exact?  
 That makes a minister in holy things  
 The joy of many, and the dread of more,  
 His name a theme for praise and for reproach?  
 That while it gives us worth in God's account,  
 Depreciates and undoes us in our own?  
 What pearl is it that rich men cannot buy,  
 That learning is too proud to gather up,  
 But which the poor, and the despised of all  
 Seek and obtain, and often find unsought?  
 Tell me, and I will tell thee what is truth.

O friendly to the best pursuits of man,  
 Friendly to thought, to virtue, and to peace,  
 Domestic life in rural pleasure pass'd!  
 Few know thy value, and few taste thy sweets,  
 Though many boast thy favours, and affect

To understand and choose thee for their own.  
But foolish man foregoes his proper bliss,  
Even as his first progenitor, and quits,  
Though placed in Paradise, (for earth has still  
Some traces of her youthful beauty left,)  
Substantial happiness for transient joy.  
Scenes form'd for contemplation, and to nurse  
The growing seeds of wisdom; that suggest  
By every pleasing image they present,  
Reflections such as meliorate the heart,  
Compose the passions, and exalt the mind;  
Scenes such as these, 'tis his supreme delight  
To fill with riot, and defile with blood.  
Should some contagion, kind to the poor brutes  
We persecute, annihilate the tribes  
That draw the sportsman over hill and dale  
Fearless, and wrapt away from all his cares;  
Should never game-fowl hatch her eggs again,  
Nor baited hook deceive the fish's eye;  
Could pageantry and dance, and feast and song  
Be quell'd in all our summer-months' retreats;  
How many self-deluded nymphs and swains,  
Who dream they have a taste for fields and groves,  
Would find them hideous nurseries of the spleen,  
And crowd the roads, impatient for the town!  
They love the country, and none else, who seek  
For their own sake, its silence and its shade;  
Delights which who would leave, that has a heart  
Susceptible of pity, or a mind  
Cultured and capable of sober thought,  
For all the savage din of the swift pack,  
And clamours of the field? Detested sport,  
That owes its pleasures to another's pain,  
That feeds upon the sobs and dying shrieks  
Of harmless nature, dumb, but yet endued  
With eloquence that agonies inspire  
Of silent tears and heart-distending sighs!  
Vain tears, alas! and sighs that never find  
A corresponding tone in jovial souls.  
Well,—one at least is safe. One shelter'd hare  
Has never heard the sanguinary yell  
Of cruel man, exulting in her woes.  
Innocent partner of my peaceful home,  
Whom ten long years' experience of my care  
Has made at last familiar, she has lost  
Much of her vigilant instinctive dread,  
Not needful here, beneath a roof like mine.  
Yes—thou mayst eat thy bread, and lick the hand.



# THE TASK—THE GARDEN.

That feeds thee; thou mayst frolic on the floor  
 At evening, and at night retire secure  
 To thy straw couch, and slumber unalarm'd;  
 For I have gained thy confidence, have pledged  
 All that is human in me to protect  
 Thine unsuspecting gratitude and love.  
 If I survive thee I will dig thy grave;  
 And when I place thee in it, sighing say,  
 I knew at least one hare that had a friend.

How various his employments, whom the world  
 Calls idle, and who justly in return  
 Esteems that busy world an idler too!  
 Friends, books, a garden, and perhaps his pen,  
 Delightful industry enjoy'd at home,  
 And Nature in her cultivated trim  
 Dress'd to his taste, inviting him abroad—  
 Can he want occupation who has these?  
 Will he be idle who has much to enjoy?  
 Me, therefore, studious of laborious ease,  
 Not slothful, happy to deceive the time,  
 Not waste it, and aware that human life  
 Is but a loan to be repaid with use,  
 When He shall call his debtors to account,  
 From whom are all our blessings, business finds  
 Even here, while sedulous I seek to improve,  
 At least neglect not, or leave unemploy'd  
 The mind He gave me; driving it though slack  
 Too oft, and much impeded in its work  
 By causes not to be divulged in vain,  
 To its just point—the service of mankind.  
 He that attends to his interior self;  
 That has a heart and keeps it; has a mind  
 That hungers and supplies it; and who seeks  
 A social, not a dissipated life,  
 Has business; feels himself engaged to achieve  
 No unimportant, though a silent task.  
 A life all turbulence and noise may seem,  
 To him that leads it, wise and to be praised;  
 But wisdom is a pearl with most success  
 Sought in still water, and beneath clear skies.  
 He that is ever occupied in storms,  
 Or dives not for it, or brings up instead,  
 Vainly industrious, a disgraceful prize.  
 The morning finds the self-sequester'd man  
 Fresh for his task, intend what task he may.  
 Whether inclement seasons recommend  
 His warm but simple home, where he enjoys,  
 With her who shares his pleasures and his heart,

Sweet converse, sipping calm the fragrant lymph  
 Which neatly she prepares ; then to his book  
 Well chosen, and not sullenly perused  
 In selfish silence, but imparted oft  
 As ought occurs that she may smile to hear,  
 Or turn to nourishment digested well.  
 Or if the garden with its many cares,  
 All well repaid, demand him, he attends  
 The welcome call, conscious how much the hand  
 Of lubbard Labour needs his watchful eye,  
 Oft loitering lazily if not o'erseen,  
 Or misapplying his unskilful strength.  
 Nor does he govern only or direct,  
 But much performs himself ; no works indeed  
 That ask robust tough sinews bred to toil,  
 Servile employ,—but such as may amuse,  
 Not tire, demanding rather skill than force.  
 Proud of his well spread walls, he views his trees  
 That meet, no barren interval between,  
 With pleasure more than even their fruits afford,  
 Which, save himself who trains them, none can feel ;  
 These therefore are his own peculiar charge,  
 No meaner hand may discipline the shoots,  
 None but his steel approach them. What is weak,  
 Distemper'd, or has lost prolific powers,  
 Impair'd by age, his unrelenting hand  
 Dooms to the knife : nor does he spare the soft  
 And succulent that feeds its giant growth,  
 But barren, at the expense of neighbouring twigs  
 Less ostentatious, and yet studded thick  
 With hopeful gems. The rest, no portion left  
 That may disgrace his art, or disappoint  
 Large expectation, he disposes neat  
 At measured distances, that air and sun,  
 Admitted freely, may afford their aid,  
 And ventilate and warm the swelling buds.  
 Hence Summer has her riches, Autumn hence,  
 And hence even Winter fills his wither'd hand  
 With blushing fruits, and plenty not his own.\*  
 Fair recompense of labour well bestow'd,  
 And wise precaution, which a clime so rude  
 Makes needful still, whose Spring is but the child  
 Of churlish winter, in her froward moods  
 Discovering much the temper of her sire.  
 For oft, as if in her the stream of mild

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\* *Miraturque novos fructus et non sua poma.*—VIRGIL.

## THE TASK—THE GARDEN.

Maternal nature had reversed its course,  
 She brings her infants forth with many smiles,  
 But once deliver'd, kills them with a frown.  
 He therefore, timely warn'd, himself supplies  
 Her want of care, screening and keeping warm  
 The plenteous bloom, that no rough blast may sweep  
 His garlands from the boughs. Again, as oft  
 As the sun peeps and vernal airs breathe mild,  
 The fence withdrawn, he gives them every beam,  
 And spreads his hopes before the blaze of day.

To raise the prickly and green-coated gourd,  
 So grateful to the palate, and when rare  
 So coveted, else base and disesteem'd,—  
 Food for the vulgar merely,—is an art  
 That toiling ages have but just matured,  
 And at this moment unessay'd in song.  
 Yet gnats have had, and frogs and mice long since,  
 Their eulogy; those sang the Mantuan bard,  
 And these the Grecian, in ennobling strains;  
 And in thy numbers, Phillips, shines for aye  
 The solitary Shilling.\* Pardon then,  
 Ye sage dispensers of poetic fame!  
 The ambition of one meaner far, whose powers,  
 Presuming an attempt not less sublime,  
 Pant for the praise of dressing to the taste  
 Of critic appetite, no sordid fare,  
 A cucumber, while costly yet and scarce.

The stable yields a stercoraceous heap,  
 Impregnated with quick fermenting salts,  
 And potent to resist the freezing blast:  
 For ere the beech and elm have cast their leaf  
 Deciduous, when now November dark  
 Checks vegetation in the torpid plant  
 Exposed to his cold breath, the task begins.  
 Warily therefore, and with prudent heed,  
 He seeks a favour'd spot; that where he builds  
 The agglomerated pile, his frame may front  
 The sun's meridian disk, and at the back  
 Enjoy close shelter, wall, or reeds, or hedge  
 Impervious to the wind. First he bids spread  
 Dry fern or litter'd hay, that may imbibe  
 The ascending damps; then leisurely impose,  
 And lightly shaking it with agile hand  
 From the full fork, the saturated straw.  
 What longest binds the closest, forms secure

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\* "The Splendid Shilling" was a burlesque poem published by Phillips in 1703.

The shapely side, that as it rises takes,  
 By just degrees, an over-hanging breadth,  
 Sheltering the base with its projected eaves.  
 The uplifted frame compact at every joint,  
 And overlaid with clear translucent glass,  
 He settles next upon the sloping mount,  
 Whose sharp declivity shoots off secure  
 From the dash'd pane the deluge as it falls :  
 He shuts it close, and the first labour ends.  
 Thrice must the voluble and restless earth  
 Spin round upon her axle, ere the warmth,  
 Slow gathering in the midst, through the square mass  
 Diffused, attain the surface : when behold !  
 A pestilent and most corrosive steam,  
 Like a gross fog Bœotian, rising fast,  
 And fast condensed upon the dewy sash,  
 Asks egress ; which obtain'd, the overcharged  
 And drench'd conservatory breathes abroad,  
 In volumes wheeling slow, the vapour dank ;  
 And purified, rejoices to have lost  
 Its foul inhabitant. But to assuage  
 The impatient fervour which it first conceives  
 Within its reeking bosom, threatening death  
 To his young hopes, requires discreet delay.  
 Experience, slow preceptress, teaching oft  
 The way to glory by miscarriage foul,  
 Must prompt him, and admonish how to catch  
 The auspicious moment, when the temper'd heat,  
 Friendly to vital motion, may afford  
 Soft fermentation, and invite the seed.  
 The seed, selected wisely, plump, and smooth,  
 And glossy, he commits to pots of size  
 Diminutive, well filled with well-prepared  
 And fruitful soil, that has been treasured long  
 And drank no moisture from the dripping clouds :  
 These on the warm and genial earth that hides  
 The smoking manure, and o'erspreads it all,  
 He places lightly, and as time subdues  
 The rage of fermentation, plunges deep  
 In the soft medium, till they stand immersed.  
 Then rise the tender germs, upstarting quick  
 And spreading wide their spongy lobes, at first  
 Pale, wan, and livid, but assuming soon,  
 If fann'd by balmy and nutritious air,  
 Strain'd through the friendly mats, a vivid green.  
 Two leaves produced, two rough indented leaves,  
 Cautious he pinches from the second stalk  
 A pimple, that portends a future sprout,

## THE TASK—THE GARDEN.

And interdicts its growth. Thence straight succeed  
 The branches, sturdy to his utmost wish,  
 Prolific all, and harbingers of more.  
 The crowded roots demand enlargement now,  
 And transplantation in an ampler space.  
 Indulged in what they wish, they soon supply  
 Large foliage, overshadowing golden flowers,  
 Blown on the summit of the apparent fruit.  
 These have their sexes, and when summer shines  
 The bee transports the fertilizing meal  
 From flower to flower, and even the breathing air  
 Wafts the rich prize to its appointed use.  
 Not so when winter scowls. Assistant art  
 Then acts in Nature's office, brings to pass  
 The glad espousals, and ensures the crop.

Grudge not, ye rich, (since luxury must have  
 His dainties, and the world's more numerous half  
 Lives by contriving delicates for you.)  
 Grudge not the cost. Ye little know the cares,  
 The vigilance, the labour, and the skill,  
 That day and night are exercised, and hang  
 Upon the ticklish balance of suspense,  
 That ye may garnish your profuse regales  
 With summer fruits brought forth by wintry suns.  
 Ten thousand dangers lie in wait to thwart  
 The process. Heat and cold, and wind and steam,  
 Moisture and drought, mice, worms, and swarming flies  
 Minute as dust and numberless, oft work  
 Dire disappointment that admits no cure,  
 And which no care can obviate. It were long,  
 Too long to tell the expedients and the shifts  
 Which he that fights a season so severe  
 Devises, while he guards his tender trust,  
 And oft, at last, in vain. The learn'd and wise  
 Sarcastic would exclaim, and judge the song  
 Cold as its theme, and, like its theme, the fruit  
 Of too much labour, worthless when produced.

Who loves a garden, loves a greenhouse too.  
 Unconscious of a less propitious clime,  
 There blooms exotic beauty, warm and snug,  
 While the winds whistle and the snows descend.  
 The spiry myrtle with unwithering leaf  
 Shines there and flourishes. The golden boast  
 Of Portugal and western India there,  
 The ruddier orange and the paler lime,  
 Peep through their polish'd foliage at the storm,  
 And seem to smile at what they need not fear.  
 The amomum there with intermingling flowers

And cherries hangs her twigs. Geranium boasts  
 Her crimson honours, and the spangled bean,  
 Ficoides,\* glitters bright the winter long.  
 All plants, of every leaf that can endure  
 The winter's frown, if screen'd from its shrewd bite,  
 Live there and prosper. Those Ausonia† claims,  
 Levantine regions these; the Azores send  
 Their jessamine, her jessamine remote  
 Caffraria: foreigners from many lands,  
 They form one social shade, as if convened  
 By magic summons of the Orphean lyre.  
 Yet just arrangement, rarely brought to pass  
 But by a master's hand, disposing well  
 The gay diversities of leaf and flower,  
 Must lend its aid to illustrate all their charms,  
 And dress the regular yet various scene.  
 Plant behind plant aspiring, in the van  
 The dwarfish, in the rear retired, but still  
 Sublime above the rest, the statelier stand.  
 So once were ranged the sons of ancient Rome,  
 A noble show! while Roscius trod the stage;  
 And so, while Garrick as renown'd as he,  
 The sons of Albion, fearing each to lose  
 Some note of Nature's music from his lips,  
 And covetous of Shakespeare's beauty seen  
 In every flash of his far-beaming eye.  
 Nor taste alone and well contrived display  
 Suffice to give the marshall'd ranks the grace  
 Of their complete effect. Much yet remains  
 Unsung, and many cares are yet behind,  
 And more laborious; cares on which depends  
 Their vigour, injured soon, not soon restored.  
 The soil must be renew'd, which, often wash'd,  
 Loses its treasure of salubrious salts,  
 And disappoints the roots: the slender roots  
 Close interwoven, where they meet the vase  
 Must smooth be shorn away; the sapless branch  
 Must fly before the knife; the wither'd leaf  
 Must be detach'd; and where it strews the floor  
 Swept with a woman's neatness, breeding else  
 Contagion, and disseminating death.  
 Discharge but these kind offices, (and who  
 Would spare, that loves them, offices like these?)  
 Well they reward the toil. The sight is pleased,  
 The scent regaled, each odoriferous leaf,

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 \* Ice plant.

† Italy.

*THE TASK—THE GARDEN.*

Each opening blossom, freely breathes abroad  
Its gratitude, and thanks him with its sweets.  
So manifold, all pleasing in their kind,  
All healthful, are the employs of rural life,  
Reiterated as the wheel of time  
Runs round, still ending, and beginning still.  
Nor are these all. To deck the shapely knoll  
That softly swell'd and gaily dress'd, appears  
A flowery island, from the dark green lawn  
Emerging, must be deem'd a labour due  
To no mean hand, and asks the touch of taste.  
Here also grateful mixture of well-match'd  
And sorted hues, (each giving each relief,  
And by contrasted beauty shining more,)  
Is needful. Strength may wield the ponderous spade,  
May turn the clod, and wheel the compost home,  
But elegance, chief grace the garden shews,  
And most attractive, is the fair result  
Of thought, the creature of a polish'd mind.  
Without it, all is Gothic as the scene  
To which the insipid citizen resorts  
Near yonder heath; where industry misspent,  
But proud of his uncouth ill-chosen task,  
Has made a heaven on earth; with suns and moons  
Of close ramm'd stones has charged the encumber'd soil,  
And fairly laid the zodiac in the dust.  
He therefore who would see his flowers disposed  
Sightly and in just order, ere he gives  
The beds the trusted treasure of their seeds,  
Forecasts the future whole; that when the scene  
Shall break into its preconceived display,  
Each for itself, and all as with one voice  
Conspiring, may attest his bright design.  
Nor even then, dismissing as perform'd  
His pleasant work, may he suppose it done.  
Few self-supported flowers endure the wind  
Uninjured, but expect the upholding aid  
Of the smooth shaven prop, and neatly tied,  
Are wedded thus like beauty to old age,  
For interest sake, the living to the dead.  
Some clothe the soil that feeds them, far-diffused  
And lowly creeping, modest and yet fair,  
Like virtue, thriving most where little seen.  
Some, more aspiring, catch the neighbour shrub  
With clasping tendrils, and invest his branch,  
Else unadorn'd, with many a gay festoon  
And fragrant chaplet, recompensing well  
The strength they borrow with the grace they lend.

All hate the rank society of weeds,  
 Noisome, and ever greedy to exhaust  
 The impoverish'd earth; an overbearing race,  
 That like the multitude, made faction-mad,  
 Disturb good order, and degrade true worth.  
 Oh, blest seclusion from a jarring world,  
 Which he, thus occupied, enjoys! Retreat  
 Cannot indeed to guilty man restore  
 Lost innocence, or cancel follies past;  
 But it has peace, and much secures the mind  
 From all assaults of evil, proving still  
 A faithful barrier, not o'erleap'd with ease  
 By vicious custom, raging uncontroll'd  
 Abroad, and desolating public life.  
 When fierce temptation, seconded within  
 By traitor appetite, and arm'd with darts  
 Temper'd in hell, invades the throbbing breast,  
 To combat may be glorious, and success  
 Perhaps may crown us; but to fly is safe.  
 Had I the choice of sublunary good,  
 What could I wish, that I possess not here?  
 Health, leisure, means to improve it, friendship, peace;  
 No loose or wanton, though a wandering muse,  
 And constant occupation without care.  
 Thus blest, I draw a picture of that bliss;  
 Hopeless indeed that dissipated minds,  
 And profligate abusers of a world  
 Created fair so much in vain for them,  
 Should seek the guiltless joys that I describe,  
 Allured by my report: but sure no less  
 That, self-condemn'd, they must neglect the prize,  
 And what they will not taste must yet approve.  
 What we admire we praise; and when we praise,  
 Advance it into notice, that its worth  
 Acknowledged, others may admire it too.  
 I therefore recommend, though at the risk  
 Of popular disgust, yet boldly still,  
 The cause of piety and sacred truth,  
 And virtue, and those scenes which God ordain'd  
 Should best secure them and promote them most;  
 Scenes that I love, and with regret perceive  
 Forsaken, or through folly not enjoy'd.  
 Pure is the nymph, though liberal of her smiles,  
 And chaste, though unconfined, whom I extol.  
 Not as the prince in Shushan, when he call'd,  
 Vain-glorious of her charms, his Vashti forth  
 To grace the full pavilion. His design  
 Was but to boast his own peculiar good,



Which all might view with envy, none partake.  
My charmer is not mine alone; my sweets,  
And she that sweetens all my bitters too,  
Nature, enchanting Nature, in whose form  
And lineaments divine I trace a hand  
That errs not, and find raptures still renew'd,  
Is free to all men, universal prize.  
Strange that so fair a creature should yet want  
Admirers, and be destined to divide  
With meaner objects even the few she finds.  
Stripp'd of her ornaments, her leaves and flowers,  
She loses all her influence. Cities then  
Attract us, and neglected nature pines,  
Abandon'd, as unworthy of our love.  
But are not wholesome airs, though unperfumed  
By roses, and clear suns though scarcely felt,  
And groves, if unharmonious, yet secure  
From clamour, and whose very silence charms,  
To be preferr'd to smoke, to the eclipse  
That metropolitan volcanoes make,  
Whose Stygian throats breathe darkness all day long,  
And to the stir of commerce, driving slow,  
And thundering loud, with his ten thousand wheels?  
They would be, were not madness in the head,  
And folly in the heart; were England now  
What England was, plain, hospitable, kind,  
And undebauch'd. But we have bid farewell  
To all the virtues of those better days,  
And all their honest pleasures. Mansions once  
Knew their own masters, and laborious hinds,  
That had survived the father, served the son.  
Now the legitimate and rightful lord  
Is but a transient guest, newly arrived,  
And soon to be supplanted. He that saw  
His patrimonial timber cast its leaf,  
Sells the last scantling, and transfers the price  
To some shrewd sharper, ere it buds again.  
Estates are landscapes, gazed upon awhile,  
Then advertised, and auctioneer'd away.  
The country starves, and they that feed the o'ercharged  
And surfeited lewd town with her fair dues,  
By a just judgment strip and starve themselves.  
The wings that waft our riches out of sight  
Grow on the gamester's elbows, and the alert  
And nimble motion of those restless joints,  
That never tire, soon fans them all away.  
Improvement too, the idol of the age,  
Is fed with many a victim. Lo! he comes,—

The omnipotent magician, Brown,\* appears.  
 Down falls the venerable pile, the abode  
 Of our forefathers, a grave whisker'd race,  
 But tasteless. Springs a palace in its stead,  
 But in a distant spot; where more exposed,  
 It may enjoy the advantage of the north,  
 And aguish east, till time shall have transform'd  
 Those naked acres to a sheltering grove.  
 He speaks. The lake in front becomes a lawn,  
 Woods vanish, hills subside, and valleys rise,  
 And streams, as if created for his use,  
 Pursue the track of his directing wand,  
 Sinuous or straight, now rapid and now slow,  
 Now murmuring soft, now roaring in cascades,  
 Even as he bids. The enraptured owner smiles.  
 'Tis finish'd! and yet, finish'd as it seems,  
 Still wants a grace, the loveliest it could shew,  
 A mine to satisfy the enormous cost.  
 Drain'd to the last poor item of his wealth,  
 He sighs, departs, and leaves the accomplish'd plan  
 That he has touch'd, retouch'd, many a long day  
 Labour'd, and many a night pursued in dreams,  
 Just when it meets his hopes, and proves the heaven  
 He wanted, for a wealthier to enjoy.  
 And now perhaps the glorious hour is come,  
 When having no stake left, no pledge to endear  
 Her interests, or that gives her sacred cause  
 A moment's operation on his love,  
 He burns with most intense and flagrant zeal  
 To serve his country. Ministerial grace  
 Deals him out money from the public chest;  
 Or if that mine be shut, some private purse  
 Supplies his need with an usurious loan,  
 To be refunded duly, when his vote,  
 Well managed, shall have earn'd its worthy price.  
 Oh innocent, compared with arts like these,  
 Crape and cock'd pistol, and the whistling ball  
 Sent through the traveller's temples! He that finds  
 One drop of Heaven's sweet mercy in his cup,  
 Can dig, beg, rot, and perish well content,  
 So he may wrap himself in honest rags  
 At his last gasp; but could not for a world  
 Fish up his dirty and dependent bread

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\* Lancelot Brown, a famous landscape and ornamental gardener. He was born in 1715, and died in 1773. He had the nickname of "Capability Brown" given him, from his frequent use of that word.

From pools and ditches of the commonwealth,  
Sordid and sickening at his own success.

Ambition, avarice, penury incurr'd  
By endless riot, vanity, the lust  
Of pleasure and variety, despatch  
As duly as the swallows disappear,  
The world of wandering knights and squires to town.  
London ingulfs them all. The shark is there,  
And the shark's prey; the spendthrift and the leech  
That sucks him. There the sycophant, and he  
Who, with bareheaded and obsequious bows,  
Begs a warm office, doom'd to a cold jail,  
And groat per diem, if his patron frown.  
The levee swarms, as if, in golden pomp,  
Were character'd on every statesman's door,  
"BATTER'D AND BANKRUPT FORTUNES MENDEd HERE."  
These are the charms that sully and eclipse  
The charms of nature. 'Tis the cruel gripe  
That lean hard-handed Poverty inflicts,  
The hope of better things, the chance to win,  
The wish to shine, the thirst to be amused,  
That at the sound of Winter's hoary wing,  
Unpeople all our counties, of such herds  
Of fluttering, loitering, cringing, begging, loose  
And wanton vagrants, as make London, vast  
And boundless as it is, a crowded coop.

Oh thou, resort and mart of all the earth,  
Chequer'd with all complexions of mankind,  
And spotted with all crimes; in which I see  
Much that I love, and more that I admire,  
And all that I abhor; thou freckled fair,  
That pleases and yet shocks me, I can laugh  
And I can weep, can hope and can despond,  
Feel wrath and pity, when I think on thee!  
Ten righteous would have saved a city once,  
And thou hast many righteous.—Well for thee  
That salt preserves thee; more corrupted else,  
And therefore more obnoxious at this hour,  
Than Sodom in her day had power to be,  
For whom God heard his Abraham plead in vain.

## BOOK IV.—THE WINTER EVENING.

## ARGUMENT.

The post comes in—The newspaper is read—The world contemplated at a distance—Address to winter—The rural amusements of a winter evening compared with the fashionable ones—Address to evening—A brown study—Fall of snow in the evening—The waggoner—A poor family piece—The rural thief—Public-houses—The multitude of them censured—The farmer's daughter: what she was; what she is—The simplicity of country manners almost lost—Causes of the change—Desertion of the country by the rich—Neglect of magistrates—The militia principally in fault—The new recruit and his transformation—Reflection on bodies corporate—The love of rural objects natural to all, and never to be totally extinguished.

HARK! 'tis the twanging horn! O'er yonder bridge,  
That with its wearisome but needful length  
Bestrides the wintry flood, in which the moon  
Sees her unwrinkled face reflected bright,  
He comes, the herald of a noisy world,  
With spatter'd boots, strapp'd waist, and frozen locks,  
News from all nations lumbering at his back.  
True to his charge the close-pack'd load behind,  
Yet careless what he brings, his one concern  
Is to conduct it to the destined inn,  
And having dropp'd the expected bag—pass on.  
He whistles as he goes, light-hearted wretch,  
Cold and yet cheerful: messenger of grief  
Perhaps to thousands, and of joy to some,  
To him indifferent whether grief or joy.  
Houses in ashes, and the fall of stocks,  
Births, deaths, and marriages, epistles wet  
With tears that trickled down the writer's cheeks  
Fast as the periods from his fluent quill,  
Or charged with amorous sighs of absent swains,  
Or nymphs responsive, equally affect  
His horse and him, unconscious of them all.  
But oh the important budget! usher'd in  
With such heart-shaking music, who can say  
What are its tidings! have our troops awaked?  
Or do they still, as if with opium drugg'd,  
Snore to the murmurs of the Atlantic wave? \*  
Is India free? and does she wear her plumed  
And jewell'd turban with a smile of peace,  
Or do we grind her still? The grand debate,  
The popular harangue, the tart reply,  
The logic, and the wisdom, and the wit,  
And the loud laugh—I long to know them all;

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\* The American war was then taking place.

I burn to set the imprison'd wranglers free,  
And give them voice and utterance once again.  
Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,  
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,  
And while the bubbling and loud hissing urn  
Throws up a steamy column, and the cups  
That cheer but not inebriate, wait on each,  
So let us welcome peaceful evening in.  
Not such his evening, who with shining face  
Sweats in the crowded theatre, and squeezed  
And bored with elbow points through both his sides,  
Outsolds the ranting actor on the stage;  
Nor his, who patient stands till his feet throb,  
And his head thumps, to feed upon the breath  
Of patriots, bursting with heroic rage,  
Or placemen, all tranquillity and smiles.  
This folio of four pages, happy work!  
Which not even critics criticise; that holds  
Inquisitive attention while I read,  
Fast bound in chains of silence, which the fair,  
Though eloquent themselves, yet fear to break;  
What is it but a map of busy life,  
Its fluctuations, and its vast concerns?  
Here runs the mountainous and craggy ridge  
That tempts ambition. On the summit, see,  
The seals of office glitter in his eyes;  
He climbs, he pants, he grasps them. At his heels,  
Close at his heels, a demagogue ascends,  
And with a dexterous jerk soon twists him down,  
And wins them, but to lose them in his turn.  
Here rills of oily eloquence in soft  
Meanders lubricate the course they take;  
The modest speaker is ashamed and grieved  
To engross a moment's notice, and yet begs,  
Begs a propitious ear for his poor thoughts,  
However trivial all that he conceives.  
Sweet bashfulness! it claims, at least, this praise;  
The dearth of information and good sense,  
That it foretells us, always comes to pass.  
Cataracts of declamation thunder here,  
There forests of no meaning spread the page  
In which all comprehension wanders lost;  
While fields of pleasantry amuse us there,  
With merry descants on a nation's woes.  
The rest appears a wilderness of strange  
But gay confusion; roses for the cheeks  
And lilies for the brows of faded age,  
Teeth for the toothless, ringlets for the bald,

Heaven, earth, and ocean plunder'd of their sweets,  
 Nectareous essences, Olympian dews,  
 Sermons and city feasts, and favourite airs,  
 Æthereal journeys, submarine exploits,  
 And Katerfelto,\* with his hair on end  
 At his own wonders, wondering for his bread.

'Tis pleasant through the loopholes of retreat  
 To peep at such a world; to see the stir  
 Of the great Babel, and not feel the crowd;  
 To hear the roar she sends through all her gates,  
 At a safe distance, where the dying sound  
 Falls a soft murmur on the uninjured ear.  
 Thus sitting, and surveying thus at ease  
 The globe and its concerns, I seem advanced  
 To some secure and more than mortal height,  
 That liberates and exempts me from them all.  
 It turns submitted to my view, turns round  
 With all its generations; I behold  
 The tumult, and am still. The sound of war  
 Has lost its terrors ere it reaches me;  
 Grieves, but alarms me not. I mourn the pride  
 And avarice that make man a wolf to man,  
 Hear the faint echo of those brazen throats,  
 By which he speaks the language of his heart,  
 And sigh, but never tremble at the sound.  
 He travels and expatiates, as the bee  
 From flower to flower, so he from land to land;  
 The manners, customs, policy of all  
 Pay contribution to the store he gleans;  
 He sucks intelligence in every clime,  
 And spreads the honey of his deep research  
 At l's return, a rich repast for me.  
 He travels, and I too. I tread his deck,  
 Ascend his topmast, through his peering eyes  
 Discover countries, with a kindred heart  
 Suffer his woes, and share in his escapes;  
 While fancy, like the finger of a clock,  
 Runs the great circuit, and is still at home.

O Winter! ruler of the inverted year,  
 Thy scatter'd hair with sleet like ashes fill'd,  
 Thy breath congeal'd upon thy lips, thy cheeks  
 Fringed with a beard made white with other snows  
 Than those of age, thy forehead wrapp'd in clouds,  
 A leafless branch thy sceptre, and thy throne  
 A sliding car, indebted to no wheels,

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\* Katerfelto was a quack who advertised his own performances, and those of his black cat; heading his advertisements with "Wonders! wonders! wonders!"

But urged by storms along its slippery way ;  
I love thee, all unlovely as thou seem'st,  
And dreaded as thou art. Thou hold'st the sun  
A prisoner in the yet undawning east,  
Shortening his journey between morn and noon,  
And hurrying him, impatient of his stay,  
Down to the rosy west ; but kindly still  
Compensating his loss with added hours  
Of social converse and instructive ease,  
And gathering, at short notice, in one group  
The family dispersed, and fixing thought,  
Not less dispersed by daylight and its cares.  
I crown thee King of intimate delights,  
Fireside enjoyments, homeborn happiness,  
And all the comforts that the lowly roof  
Of undisturb'd retirement, and the hours  
Of long uninterrupted evening know.  
No rattling wheels stop short before these gates ;  
No powder'd pert proficient in the art  
Of sounding an alarm, assaults these doors  
Till the street rings ; no stationary steeds  
Cough their own knell, while, heedless of the sound,  
The silent circle fan themselves, and quake :  
But here the needle plies its busy task,  
The pattern grows, the well-depicted flower,  
Wrought patiently into the snowy lawn,  
Unfolds its bosom ; buds, and leaves, and sprigs,  
And curling tendrils, gracefully disposed,  
Follow the nimble finger of the fair ;  
A wreath that cannot fade, of flowers that blow  
With most success when all besides decay.  
The poet's or historian's page, by one  
Made vocal for the amusement of the rest ;  
The sprightly lyre, whose treasure of sweet sounds  
The touch from many a trembling chord shakes out ;  
And the clear voice symphonious, yet distinct,  
And in the charming strife triumphant still,  
Beguile the night, and set a keener edge  
On female industry ; the threaded steel  
Flies swiftly, and unfelt the task proceeds.  
The volume closed, the customary rites  
Of the last meal commence. A Roman meal,  
Such as the mistress of the world once found  
Delicious, when her patriots of high note,  
Perhaps by moonlight, at their humble doors,  
And under an old oak's domestic shade,  
Enjoy'd, spare feast ! a radish and an egg.  
Discourse ensues, not trivial, yet not dull,

Nor such as with a frown forbids the play  
 Of fancy, or proscribes the sound of mirth;  
 Nor do we madly, like an impious world,  
 Who deem religion frenzy, and the God  
 That made them an intruder on their joys,  
 Start at His awful name, or deem His praise  
 A jarring note. Themes of a graver tone,  
 Exciting oft our gratitude and love,  
 While we retrace with memory's pointing wand,  
 That calls the past to our exact review,  
 The dangers we have 'scaped, the broken snare,  
 The disappointed foe, deliverance found  
 Unlook'd for, life preserved and peace restored,  
 Fruits of omnipotent eternal love.  
 Oh evenings worthy of the gods! exclaim'd  
 The Sabine bard. Oh evenings, I reply,  
 More to be prized and coveted than yours,  
 As more illumined, and with nobler truths,  
 That I and mine, and those we love, enjoy.  
 Is winter hideous in a garb like this?  
 Needs he the tragic fur, the smoke of lamps,  
 The pent-up breath of an unsavoury throng,  
 To thaw him into feeling, or the smart  
 And snappish dialogue that flippant wits  
 Call comedy, to prompt him with a smile?  
 The self-complacent actor, when he views  
 (Stealing a sidelong glance at a full house)  
 The slope of faces from the floor to the roof,  
 (As if one master spring controll'd them all,)  
 Relax'd into a universal grin,  
 Sees not a countenance there that speaks of joy  
 Half so refined or so sincere as ours.  
 Cards were superfluous here, with all the tricks  
 That idleness has ever yet contrived  
 To fill the void of an unfurnish'd brain,  
 To palliate dulness, and give time a shove.  
 Time as he passes us, has a dove's wing,  
 Unsoil'd and swift, and of a silken sound;  
 But the world's time is time in masquerade.  
 Theirs, should I paint him, has his pinions fledg'd,  
 With motley plumes, and where the peacock shows  
 His azure eyes, is tintured black and red  
 With spots quadrangular of diamond form,  
 Ensanguined hearts, clubs typical of strife,  
 And spades, the emblem of untimely graves.  
 What should be, and what was an hourglass once,  
 Becomes a dice-box, and a billiard mace  
 Well does the work of his destructive scythe.



Thus deck'd, he charms a world whom fashion blinds  
To his true worth, most pleased when idle most,  
Whose only happy are their wasted hours.  
Even misses, at whose age their mothers wore  
The backstring and the bib, assume the dress  
Of womanhood, sit pupils in the school  
Of card-devoted time, and night by night  
Placed at some vacant corner of the board,  
Learn every trick, and soon play all the game.  
But truce with censure. Roving as I rove,  
Where shall I find an end, or how proceed?  
As he that travels far, oft turns aside  
To view some rugged rock or mouldering tower,  
Which seen, delights him not; then coming home,  
Describes and prints it, that the world may know  
How far he went for what was nothing worth;  
So I, with brush in hand and pallet spread  
With colours mix'd for a far different use,  
Paint cards and dolls, and every idle thing  
That fancy finds in her excursive flights.

Come, Evening, once again, season of peace,  
Return, sweet Evening, and continue long!  
Methinks I see thee in the streaky west,  
With matron step slow moving, while the night  
Treads on thy sweeping train; one hand employ'd  
In letting fall the curtain of repose  
On bird and beast, the other charged for man  
With sweet oblivion of the cares of day;  
Not sumptuously adorn'd, nor needing aid,  
Like homely featured night, of clustering gems;  
A star or two just twinkling on thy brow  
Suffices thee; save that the moon is thine  
No less than hers, not worn indeed on high  
With ostentatious pageantry, but set  
With modest grandeur in thy purple zone,  
Resplendent less, but of an ampler round.  
Come then, and thou shalt find thy votary calm,  
Or make me so. Composure is thy gift:  
And whether I devote thy gentle hours  
To books, to music, or the poet's toil;  
To weaving nets for bird-alluring fruit;  
Or twining silken threads round ivory reels,  
When they command whom man was born to please;  
I slight thee not, but make thee welcome still.  
Just when our drawing-rooms begin to blaze  
With lights, by clear reflection multiplied  
From many a mirror, in which he of Gath,  
Goliath, might have seen his giant bulk

Whole without stooping, towering crest and all,  
My pleasures too begin. But me perhaps  
The glowing hearth may satisfy awhile  
With faint illumination, that uplifts  
The shadows to the ceiling, there by fits  
Dancing uncouthly to the quivering flame.  
Not undelightful is an hour to me  
So spent in parlour twilight; such a gloom  
Suits well the thoughtful or unthinking mind,  
The mind contemplative, with some new theme  
Pregnant, or indisposed alike to all.  
Laugh ye, who boast your more mercurial powers,  
That never feel a stupor, know no pause,  
Nor need one; I am conscious, and confess,  
Fearless, a soul that does not always think.  
Me oft has fancy, ludicrous and wild,  
Soothed with a waking dream of houses, towers,  
Trees, churches, and strange visages express'd  
In the red cinders, while with poring eye  
I gazed, myself creating what I saw.  
Nor less amused have I quiescent watch'd  
The sooty films that play upon the bars  
Pendulous, and foreboding, in the view  
Of superstition, prophesying still,  
Though still deceived, some stranger's near approach.  
'Tis thus the understanding takes repose  
In indolent vacuity of thought,  
And sleeps and is refresh'd. Meanwhile the face  
Conceals the mood lethargic with a mask  
Of deep deliberation, as the man  
Were task'd to his full strength, absorb'd and lost.  
Thus oft, reclined at ease, I lose an hour  
At evening, till at length the freezing blast,  
That sweeps the bolted shutter, summons home  
The recollected powers, and snapping short  
The glassy threads with which the fancy weaves  
Her brittle toils, restores me to myself.  
How calm is my recess, and how the frost,  
Raging abroad, and the rough wind, endear  
The silence and the warmth enjoy'd within!  
I saw the woods and fields at close of day  
A variegated show; the meadows green,  
Though faded; and the lands, where lately waved  
The golden harvest, of a mellow brown,  
Upturn'd so lately by the forceful share;  
I saw far off the weedy fallows smile  
With verdure not unprofitable, grazed  
By flocks, fast feeding, and selecting each

His favourite herb ; while all the leafless groves,  
That skirt the horizon, wore a sable hue,  
Scarce noticed in the kindred dusk of eve.  
To-morrow brings a change, a total change !  
Which even now, though silently perform'd  
And slowly, and by most unfelt, the face  
Of universal nature undergoes.

Fast falls a fleecy shower : the downy flakes  
Descending, and, with never-ceasing lapse,  
Softly alighting upon all below,  
Assimilate all objects. Earth receives  
Gladly the thickening mantle, and the green  
And tender blade that fear'd the chilling blast,  
Escapes unhurt beneath so warm a veil.

In such a world, so thorny, and where none  
Finds happiness unblighted, or, if found,  
Without some thistly sorrow at his side,  
It seems the part of wisdom, and no sin  
Against the law of love, to measure lots  
With less distinguish'd than ourselves, that thus  
We may with patience bear our moderate ills,  
And sympathize with others, suffering more.  
Ill fares the traveller now, and he that stalks  
In ponderous boots beside his reeking team.  
The wain goes heavily, impeded sore  
By congregated loads adhering close  
To the clogg'd wheels ; and in its sluggish pace  
Noiseless appears a moving hill of snow.  
The toiling steeds expand the nostril wide,  
While every breath, by respiration strong  
Forced downward, is consolidated soon  
Upon their jutting chests. He, form'd to bear  
The pelting brunt of the tempestuous night,  
With half-shut eyes and pucker'd cheeks, and teeth  
Presented bare against the storm, plods on.  
One hand secures his hat, save when with both  
He brandishes his pliant length of whip,  
Resounding oft, and never heard in vain.  
Oh happy ! and in my account, denied  
The sensibility of pain with which  
Refinement is endued, thrice happy thou.  
Thy frame, robust and hardy, feels indeed  
The piercing cold, but feels it unimpair'd.  
The learned finger never need explore  
Thy vigorous pulse ; and the unhealthful east,  
That breathes the spleen, and searches every bone  
Of the infirm, is wholesome air to thee.  
Thy day rolls on exempt from household care ;

Thy waggon is thy wife ; and the poor beasts,  
That drag the dull companion to and fro,  
Thine helpless charge, dependent on thy care.  
Ah, treat them kindly ! rude as thou appear'st,  
Yet show that thou hast mercy, which the great  
With needless hurry whirl'd from place to place,  
Humane as they would seem, not always show.

Poor, yet industrious, modest, quiet, neat,  
Such claim compassion in a night like this,  
And have a friend in every feeling heart.  
Warm'd while it lasts, by labour, all day long  
They brave the season, and yet find at eve,  
Ill clad and fed but sparely, time to cool.  
The frugal housewife trembles when she lights  
Her scanty stock of brushwood, blazing clear,  
But dying soon, like all terrestrial joys.  
The few small embers left she nurses well,  
And while her infant race, with outspread hands,  
And crowded knees, sit cowering o'er the sparks,  
Retires, content to quake, so they be warm'd.  
The man feels least, as more inured than she  
To winter, and the current in his veins  
More briskly moved by his severer toil;  
Yet he too finds his own distress in theirs.  
The taper soon extinguish'd, which I saw  
Dangled along at the cold finger's end  
Just when the day declined, and the brown loaf  
Lodged on the shelf, half eaten, without sauce  
Of savoury cheese, or butter costlier still,  
Sleep seems their only refuge: for, alas!  
Where penury is felt the thought is chain'd,  
And sweet colloquial pleasures are but few.  
With all this thrift they thrive not. All the care  
Ingenious parsimony takes, but just  
Saves the small inventory, bed and stool,  
Skillet and old carved chest, from public sale.  
They live, and live without extorted alms  
From grudging hands, but other boast have none  
To soothe their honest pride, that scorns to beg;  
Nor comfort else, but in their mutual love.  
I praise you much, ye meek and patient pair,  
For ye are worthy; choosing rather far  
A dry but independent crust, hard earn'd,  
And eaten with a sigh, than to endure  
The rugged frowns and insolent rebuffs  
Of knaves in office, partial in the work  
Of distribution; liberal of their aid  
To clamorous importunity in rags,

## THE TASK—THE WINTER EVENING.

But ofttimes deaf to suppliants, who would blush  
 To wear a tatter'd garb however coarse,  
 Whom famine cannot reconcile to filth;  
 These ask with painful shyness, and refused  
 Because deserving, silently retire.  
 But be ye of good courage. Time itself  
 Shall much befriend you. Time shall give increase,  
 And all your numerous progeny, well train'd,  
 But helpless, in few years shall find their hands,  
 And labour too. Meanwhile ye shall not want  
 What, conscious of your virtues, we can spare,  
 Nor what a wealthier than ourselves may send.  
 I mean the man\* who, when the distant poor  
 Need help, denies them nothing but his name.

But poverty, with most who whimper forth  
 Their long complaints, is self-inflicted woe;  
 The effect of laziness or sottish waste.  
 Now goes the nightly thief prowling abroad  
 For plunder; much solicitous how best  
 He may compensate for a day of sloth,  
 By works of darkness and nocturnal wrong.  
 Woe to the gardener's pale, the farmer's hedge  
 Plash'd neatly, and secured with driven stakes  
 Deep in the loamy bank. Uptorn by strength,  
 Resistless in so bad a cause, but lame  
 To better deeds, he bundles up the spoil,  
 An ass's burden, and, when laden most  
 And heaviest, light of foot steals fast away.  
 Nor does the boarded hovel<sup>1</sup> better guard  
 The well-stack'd pile of riven logs and roots  
 From his pernicious force. Nor will he leave  
 Unwrench'd the door, however well secured,  
 Where chanticleer amidst his harem sleeps  
 In unsuspecting pomp. Twitch'd from the perch,  
 He gives the princely bird, with all his wives,  
 To his voracious bag, struggling in vain,  
 And loudly wondering at the sudden change.  
 Nor this to feed his own. 'Twere some excuse  
 Did pity of their sufferings warp aside  
 His principle, and tempt him into sin  
 For their support, so destitute. But they  
 Neglected pine at home, themselves, as more  
 Exposed than others, with less scruple made  
 His victims, robb'd of their defenceless all.  
 Cruel is all he does. 'Tis quenchless thirst

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\* Supposed to be Mr. Smith, the banker, afterwards created Lord Carrington.

Of ruinous ebriety that prompts  
His every action, and imbrutes the man.  
Oh for a law to noose the villain's neck  
Who starves his own ; who persecutes the blood  
He gave them in his children's veins, and hates  
And wrongs the woman he has sworn to love.  
Pass where we may, through city or through town,  
Village or hamlet, of this merry land,  
Though lean and beggar'd, every twentieth pace  
Conducts the unguarded nose to such a whiff  
Of stale debauch, forth issuing from the styes  
That law has licensed, as makes temperance reel.  
There sit, involved and lost in curling clouds  
Of Indian fume, and guzzling deep, the boor,  
The lackey, and the groom ; the craftsman there  
Takes a Lethæan leave of all his toil ;  
Smith, cobbler, joiner, he that plies the shears,  
And he that kneads the dough ; all loud alike,  
All learnèd, and all drunk. The fiddle screams  
Plaintive and piteous, as it wept and wail'd  
Its wasted tones and harmony unheard.  
Fierce the dispute, whate'er the theme ; while she,  
Fell Discord, arbitress of such debate,  
Perch'd on the sign-post, holds with even hand  
Her undecisive scales. In this she lays  
A weight of ignorance, in that, of pride ;  
And smiles delighted with the eternal poise.  
Dire is the frequent curse, and its twin sound  
The cheek-distending oath, not to be praised  
As ornamental, musical, polite,  
Like those which modern senators employ,  
Whose oath is rhetoric, and who swear for fame.  
Behold the schools in which plebeian minds,  
Once simple, are initiated in arts  
Which some may practise with politer grace,  
But none with readier skill ! 'Tis here they learn  
The road that leads from competence and peace  
To indigence and rapine ; till at last  
Society, grown weary of the load,  
Shakes her encumber'd lap, and casts them out.  
But censure profits little : vain the attempt  
To advertise in verse a public pest,  
That, like the filth with which the peasant feeds  
His hungry acres, stinks, and is of use.  
The excise is fatten'd with the rich result  
Of all this riot ; and ten thousand casks  
For ever dribbling out their base contents,  
Touch'd by the Midas' finger of the state,

Bleed gold for ministers to sport away.  
Drink and be mad then; 'tis your country bids;  
Gloriously drunk, obey the important call;  
Her cause demands the assistance of your throats;  
Ye all can swallow, and she asks no more.  
Would I had fall'n upon those happier days  
That poets celebrate; those golden times  
And those Arcadian scenes that Maro sings,  
And Sidney, warbler of poetic prose.  
Nymphs were Dianas then, and swains had hearts  
That felt their virtues: Innocence, it seems,  
From courts dismiss'd, found shelter in the groves.  
The footsteps of Simplicity, impress'd  
Upon the yielding herbage (so they sing)  
Then were not all effaced: then speech profane,  
And manners profligate, were rarely found,  
Observed as prodigies, and soon reclaim'd.  
Vain wish! those days were never: airy dreams  
Sat for the picture, and the poet's hand,  
Imparting substance to an empty shade,  
Imposed a gay delirium for a truth.  
Grant it: I still must envy them an age  
That favour'd such a dream, in days like these  
Impossible, when virtue is so scarce,  
That to suppose a scene where she presides  
Is tramontane, and stumbles all belief.  
No: we are polish'd now. The rural lass,  
Whom once her virgin modesty and grace,  
Her artless manner, and her neat attire,  
So dignified, that she was hardly less  
Than the fair shepherdess of old romance,  
Is seen no more. The character is lost.  
Her head, adorn'd with lappets pinn'd aloft,  
And ribands streaming gay, superbly raised,  
And magnified beyond all human size,  
Indebted to some smart wig-weaver's hand  
For more than half the tresses it sustains;  
Her elbows ruffled, and her tottering form  
Ill propp'd upon French heels; she might be deem'd  
(But that the basket dangling on her arm  
Interprets her more truly) of a rank  
Too proud for dairy work or sale of eggs.  
Expect her soon with footboy at her heels,  
No longer blushing for her awkward load,  
Her train and her umbrella all her care.  
The town has tinged the country; and the stain  
Appears a spot upon a vestal's robe,  
The worse for what it soils. The fashion runs

Down into scenes still rural ; but, alas !  
Scenes rarely graced with rural manners now.  
Time was when in the pastoral retreat  
The unguarded door was safe ; men did not watch  
To invade another's right, or guard their own.  
Then sleep was undisturb'd by fear, unscared  
By drunken howlings ; and the chilling tale  
Of midnight murder was a wonder heard  
With doubtful credit, told to frighten babes.  
But farewell now to unsuspecting nights,  
And slumbers unalarm'd. Now, ere you sleep,  
See that your polish'd arms be primed with care,  
And drop the nightbolt ; ruffians are abroad ;  
And the first 'larum of the cock's shrill throat  
May prove a trumpet, summoning your ear  
To horrid sounds of hostile feet within.  
Even daylight has its dangers ; and the walk  
Through pathless wastes and woods, unconscious once  
Of other tenants than melodious birds,  
Or harmless flocks, is hazardous and bold.  
Lamented change ! to which full many a cause  
Inveterate, hopeless of a cure, conspires.  
The course of human things from good to ill,  
From ill to worse, is fatal, never fails.  
Increase of power begets increase of wealth ;  
Wealth luxury, and luxury excess ;  
Excess, the scrofulous and itchy plague  
That seizes first the opulent, descends  
To the next rank contagious, and in time  
Taints downward all the graduated scale  
Of order, from the chariot to the plough.  
The rich, and they that have an arm to check  
The license of the lowest in degree,  
Desert their office ; and themselves, intent  
On pleasure, haunt the capital, and thus  
To all the violence of lawless hands  
Resign the scenes their presence might protect.  
Authority herself not seldom sleeps,  
Though resident, and witness of the wrong.  
The plump, convivial parson often bears  
The magisterial sword in vain, and lays  
His reverence and his worship both to rest  
On the same cushion of habitual sloth.  
Perhaps timidity restrains his arm ;  
When he should strike, he trembles, and sets free,  
Himself enslaved by terror of the band,  
The audacious convict, whom he dares not bind.  
Perhaps, though by profession ghostly pure,



He too may have his vice, and sometimes prove  
Less dainty than becomes his grave outside  
In lucrative concerns. Examine well  
His milk-white hand; the palm is hardly clean,—  
But here and there an ugly smutch appears.  
Foh! 'twas a bribe that left it: he has touch'd  
Corruption. Whoso seeks an audit here  
Propitious, pays his tribute, game or fish,  
Wildfowl or venison, and his errand speeds.

But faster far, and more than all the rest,  
A noble cause, which none who bears a spark  
Of public virtue ever wish'd removed,  
Works the deplored and mischievous effect.  
'Tis universal soldiership has stabb'd  
The heart of merit in the meaner class.  
Arms, through the vanity and brainless rage  
Of those that bear them, in whatever cause,  
Seem most at variance with all moral good,  
And incompatible with serious thought.  
The clown, the child of nature, without guile,  
Blest with an infant's ignorance of all  
But his own simple pleasures, now and then  
A wrestling-match, a foot-race, or a fair,  
Is balloted, and trembles at the news:  
Sheepish he doffs his hat, and mumbling swears  
A bible-oath to be whate'er they please,  
To do he knows not what. The task perform'd,  
That instant he becomes the sergeant's care,  
His pupil, and his torment, and his jest.  
His awkward gait, his introverted toes,  
Bent knees, round shoulders, and dejected looks,  
Procure him many a curse. By slow degrees,  
Unapt to learn, and form'd of stubborn stuff,  
He yet by slow degrees puts off himself,  
Grows conscious of a change, and likes it well.  
He stands erect; his slouch becomes a walk;  
He steps right onward, martial in his air,  
His form, and movement; is as smart above  
As meal and larded locks can make him; wears  
His hat, or his plumed helmet, with a grace;  
And his three years of heroship expired,  
Returns indignant to the slighted plough.  
He hates the field, in which no fife or drum  
Attends him, drives his cattle to a march,  
And sighs for the smart comrades he has left.  
'Twere well if his exterior change were all—  
But with his clumsy port the wretch has lost  
His ignorance and harmless manners too.

To swear, to game, to drink, to show at home,  
 By lewdness, idleness, and Sabbath breach,  
 The great proficiency he made abroad ;  
 To astonish and to grieve his gazing friends ;  
 To break some maiden's and his mother's heart ;  
 To be a pest where he was useful once ;  
 Are his sole aim, and all his glory now.

Man in society is like a flower  
 Blown in its native bed : 'tis there alone  
 His faculties, expanded in full bloom,  
 Shine out ; there only reach their proper use.  
 But man, associated and leagued with man  
 By regal warrant, or self-join'd by bond  
 For interest sake, or swarming into clans  
 Beneath one head for purposes of war,  
 Like flowers selected from the rest, and bound  
 And bundled close to fill some crowded vase,  
 Fades rapidly, and, by compression marr'd,  
 Contracts defilement not to be endured.  
 Hence charter'd boroughs are such public plagues ;  
 And burghers, men immaculate perhaps  
 In all their private functions, once combined,  
 Become a loathsome body, only fit  
 For dissolution, hurtful to the main.  
 Hence merchants, unimpeachable of sin  
 Against the charities of domestic life,  
 Incorporated, seem at once to lose  
 Their nature, and, disclaiming all regard  
 For mercy and the common rights of man,  
 Build factories with blood, conducting trade  
 At the sword's point, and dyeing the white robe  
 Of innocent commercial justice red.  
 Hence too the field of glory, as the world  
 Misdeems it, dazzled by its bright array,  
 With all its majesty of thundering pomp,  
 Enchanting music and immortal wreaths,  
 Is but a school where thoughtlessness is taught  
 On principle, where foppery atones  
 For folly, gallantry for every vice.

But slighted as it is, and by the great  
 Abandon'd, and, which still I more regret,  
 Infected with the manners and the modes  
 It knew not once, the country wins me still.  
 I never fram'd a wish, or form'd a plan,  
 That flatter'd me with hopes of earthly bliss,  
 But there I laid the scene. There early stray'd  
 My fancy, ere yet liberty of choice  
 Had found me, or the hope of being free

My very dreams were rural, rural too  
The firstborn efforts of my youthful muse,  
Sportive, and jingling her poetic bells  
Ere yet her ear was mistress of their powers.  
No bard could please me but whose lyre was tuned  
To Nature's praises. Heroes and their feats  
Fatigued me, never weary of the pipe  
Of Tityrus, assembling, as he sang,  
The rustic throng beneath his favourite beech.  
Then Milton had indeed a poet's charms:  
New to my taste, his Paradise surpass'd  
The struggling efforts of my boyish tongue  
To speak its excellence: I danced for joy.  
I marvell'd much that, at so ripe an age  
As twice seven years, his beauties had then first  
Engaged my wonder, and admiring still,  
And still admiring, with regret supposed  
The joy half lost because not sooner found.  
Thee too, (enamour'd of the life I loved,  
Pathetic in its praise, in its pursuit  
Determined, and possessing it at last  
With transports such as favour'd lovers feel,)  
I studied, prized, and wish'd that I had known,  
Ingenious Cowley! and though now, reclaim'd  
By modern lights from an erroneous taste,  
I cannot but lament thy splendid wit  
Entangled in the cobwebs of the schools:  
I still revere thee, courtly though retired,  
Though stretch'd at ease in Chertsey's silent bowers,  
Not unemploy'd, and finding rich amends  
For a lost world in solitude and verse.  
'Tis born with all: the love of Nature's works  
Is an ingredient in the compound, man,  
Infused at the creation of the kind.  
And though the Almighty Maker has throughout  
Discriminated each from each, by strokes  
And touches of His hand, with so much art  
Diversified, that two were never found  
Twins at all points—yet this obtains in all,  
That all discern a beauty in His works,  
And all can taste them: minds that have been form'd  
And tutor'd, with a relish more exact,  
But none without some relish, none unmoved.  
It is a flame that dies not even there,  
Where nothing feeds it: neither business, crowds,  
Nor habits of luxurious city life,  
Whatever else they smother of true worth  
In human bosoms, quench it or abate.

The villas with which London stands begirt,  
 Like a swarth Indian with his belt of beads,  
 Prove it. A breath of unadulterate air,  
 The glimpse of a green pasture, how they cheer  
 The citizen, and brace his languid frame!  
 Even in the stifling bosom of the town,  
 A garden, in which nothing thrives, has charms  
 That soothe the rich possessor; much consoled  
 That here and there some sprigs of mournful mint,  
 Of nightshade, or valerian, grace the well  
 He cultivates. 'These serve him with a hint  
 That nature lives; that sight-refreshing green  
 Is still the livery she delights to wear,  
 Though sickly samples of the exuberant whole.  
 What are the casements lined with creeping herbs,  
 The prouder sashes fronted with a range  
 Of orange, myrtle, or the fragrant weed,  
 The Frenchman's darling? \* are they not all proofs  
 That man, immured in cities, still retains  
 His inborn inextinguishable thirst  
 Of rural scenes, compensating his loss  
 By supplemental shifts, the best he may?  
 The most unfurnish'd with the means of life,  
 And they that never pass their brick-wall bounds  
 To range the fields and treat their lungs with air,  
 Yet feel the burning instinct; over head  
 Suspend their crazy boxes, planted thick,  
 And water'd duly. There the pitcher stands  
 A fragment, and the spoutless teapot there;  
 Sad witnesses how close-pent man regrets  
 The country, with what ardour he contrives  
 A peep at nature, when he can no more.

Hail, therefore, patroness of health and ease  
 And contemplation, heart-consoling joys  
 And harmless pleasures, in the throng'd abode  
 Of multitudes unknown! hail, rural life:  
 Address himself who will to the pursuit  
 Of honours, or emolument, or fame,  
 I shall not add myself to such a chase,  
 Thwart his attempts, or envy his success.  
 Some must be great. Great offices will have  
 Great talents: and God gives to every man  
 The virtue, temper, understanding, taste,  
 That lifts him into life, and lets him fall  
 Just in the niche he was ordain'd to fill.  
 To the deliverer of an injured land

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\* Mignonette.

He gives a tongue to enlarge upon, a heart  
 To feel, and courage to redress her wrongs;  
 To monarchs dignity; to judges sense;  
 To artists ingenuity and skill;  
 To me an unambitious mind, content  
 In the low vale of life, that early felt  
 A wish for ease and leisure, and ere long  
 Found here that leisure and that ease I wish'd.

## BOOK V.—THE WINTER MORNING WALK.

## ARGUMENT.

A frosty morning—The foddering of cattle—The woodman and his dog—The poultry—Whimsical effects of frost at a waterfall—The Empress of Russia's palace of ice—Amusements of monarchs—War, one of them—Wars, whence—And whence monarchy—The evils of it—English and French loyalty contrasted—The Bastille, and a prisoner there—Liberty the chief recommendation of this country—Modern patriotism questionable, and why—The perishable nature of the best human institutions—Spiritual liberty not perishable—The slavish state of man by nature—Deliver him, Deist, if you can—Grace must do it—The respective merits of patriots and martyrs stated—Their different treatment—Happy freedom of the man whom grace makes free—His relish of the works of God—Address to the Creator.

'Tis morning; and the sun with ruddy orb  
 Ascending fires the horizon: while the clouds  
 That crowd away before the driving wind,  
 More ardent as the disk emerges more,  
 Resemble most some city in a blaze,  
 Seen through the leafless wood. His slanting ray  
 Slides ineffectual down the snowy vale,  
 And tinging all with his own rosy hue,  
 From every herb and every spiry blade  
 Stretches a length of shadow o'er the field.  
 Mine, spindling into longitude immense,  
 In spite of gravity, and sage remark  
 That I myself am but a fleeting shade,  
 Provokes me to a smile. With eye askance  
 I view the muscular proportion'd limb  
 Transform'd to a lean shank. The shapeless pair,  
 As they design'd to mock me, at my side  
 Take step for step; and as I near approach  
 The cottage, walk along the plaster'd wall,  
 Preposterous sight! the legs without the man.  
 The verdure of the plain lies buried deep  
 Beneath the dazzling deluge; and the bents,  
 And coarser grass upspearing o'er the rest,

Of late unsightly and unseen, now shine  
Conspicuous, and in bright apparel clad,  
And fledged with icy feathers, nod superb.  
The cattle mourn in corners where the fence  
Screens them, and seem half-petrified to sleep  
in unrecumbent sadness. There they wait  
Their wonted fodder, not like hungering man  
Fretful if unsupplied, but silent, meek,  
And patient of the slow-paced swain's delay.  
He from the stack carves out the accustom'd load,  
Deep plunging, and again deep plunging oft,  
His broad keen knife into the solid mass;  
Smooth as a wall the upright remnant stands,  
With such undeviating and even force  
He severs it away : no needless care  
Lest storms should overset the leaning pile  
Deciduous, or its own unbalanced weight.  
Forth goes the woodman, leaving unconcern'd  
The cheerful haunts of man, to wield the axe  
And drive the wedge in yonder forest drear,  
From morn to eve his solitary task.  
Shaggy, and lean, and shrewd, with pointed ears  
And tail cropp'd short, half lurcher, and half cur,  
His dog attends him. Close behind his heel  
Now creeps he slow; and now with many a frisk  
Wide scampering, snatches up the drifted snow  
With ivory teeth, or ploughs it with his snout;  
Then shakes his powder'd coat, and barks for joy.  
Heedless of all his pranks, the sturdy churl  
Moves right toward the mark; nor stops for aught,  
But now and then with pressure of his thumb  
To adjust the fragrant charge of a short tube  
That fumes beneath his nose: the trailing cloud  
Streams far behind him, scenting all the air.  
Now from the roost, or from the neighbouring pale,  
Where, diligent to catch the first faint gleam  
Of smiling day, they gossip'd side by side,  
Come trooping at the housewife's well-known call  
The feather'd tribes domestic. Half on wing,  
And half on foot, they brush the fleecy flood,  
Conscious, and fearful of too deep a plunge.  
The sparrows peep, and quit the sheltering eaves  
To seize the fair occasion. Well they eye  
The scatter'd grain, and thievishly resolved  
To escape the impending famine, often scared  
As oft return, a pert voracious kind.  
Clean riddance quickly made, one only care  
Remains to each, the search of sunny nook,

## THE TASK—THE WINTER MORNING WALK.

Or shed impervious to the blast. Resign'd  
 To sad necessity, the cock foregoes  
 His wonted strut, and wading at their head  
 With well-consider'd steps, seems to resent  
 His alter'd gait and stateliness retrench'd.  
 How find the myriads, that in summer cheer  
 The hills and valleys with their ceaseless songs,  
 Due sustenance, or where subsist they now?  
 Earth yields them nought: the imprison'd worm is safe  
 Beneath the frozen clod; all seeds of herbs  
 Lie cover'd close, and berry-bearing thorns  
 That feed the thrush, (whatever some suppose,)  
 Afford the smaller minstrels no supply.  
 The long protracted rigour of the year  
 Thins all their numerous flocks. In chinks and holes  
 Ten thousand seek an unmolested end,  
 As instinct prompts, self-buried ere they die.  
 The very rocks and daws forsake the fields,  
 Where neither grub nor root nor earth-nut now  
 Repays their labour more; and perch'd aloft  
 By the way-side, or stalking in the path,  
 Lean pensioners upon the traveller's track,  
 Pick up their nauseous dole, though sweet to them,  
 Of voided pulse or half-digested grain.  
 The streams are lost amid the splendid blank,  
 O'erwhelming all distinction. On the flood,  
 Indurated and fix'd, the snowy weight  
 Lies undissolved; while silently beneath,  
 And unperceived, the current steals away.  
 Not so, where scornful of a check it leaps  
 The mill-dam, dashes on the restless wheel,  
 And wantons in the pebbly gulf below:  
 No frost can bind it there; its utmost force  
 Can but arrest the light and smoky mist  
 That in its fall the liquid sheet throws wide.  
 And see where it has hung the embroider'd banks  
 With forms so various, that no powers of art,  
 The pencil or the pen, may trace the scene!  
 Here glittering turrets rise, upbearing high  
 (Fantastic misarrangement!) on the roof  
 Large growth of what may seem the sparkling trees  
 And shrubs of fairy land. The crystal drops  
 That trickle down the branches, fast congeal'd,  
 Shoot into pillars of pellucid length,  
 And prop the pile they but adorn'd before.  
 Here grotto within grotto safe defies  
 The sunbeam: there emboss'd and fretted wild,  
 The growing wonder takes a thousand shapes

Capricious, in which fancy seeks in vain  
 The likeness of some object seen before.  
 Thus nature works as if to mock at art,  
 And in defiance of her rival powers;  
 By these fortuitous and random strokes  
 Performing such inimitable feats,  
 As she with all her rules can never reach.  
 Less worthy of applause, though more admired,  
 Because a novelty, the work of man,  
 Imperial mistress of the fur-clad Russ !\*  
 Thy most magnificent and mighty freak,  
 The wonder of the north. No forest fell  
 When thou wouldst build ; no quarry sent its stores  
 To enrich thy walls ; but thou didst hew the floods,  
 And make thy marble of the glassy wave.  
 In such a palace Aristæus found  
 Cyrene,† when he bore the plaintive tale  
 Of his lost bees to her maternal ear :  
 In such a palace poetry might place  
 The armoury of winter ; where his troops,  
 The gloomy clouds, find weapons, arrowy sleet,  
 Skin-piercing volley, blossom-bruising hail,  
 And snow that often blinds the traveller's course,  
 And wraps him in an unexpected tomb.  
 Silently as a dream the fabric rose ;  
 No sound of hammer or of saw was there.  
 Ice upon ice, the well-adjusted parts  
 Were soon conjoin'd, nor other cement ask'd  
 Than water interfused to make them one.  
 Lamps gracefully disposed, and of all hues,  
 Illumined every side ; a watery light  
 Gleam'd through the clear transparency, that seem'd  
 Another moon new risen, or meteor fallen  
 From heaven to earth, of lambent flame serene.  
 So stood the brittle prodigy ; though smooth  
 And slippery the materials, yet frostbound  
 Firm as a rock. Nor wanted aught within,  
 That royal residence might well befit,  
 For grandeur or for use. Long wavy wreaths  
 Of flowers, that fear'd no enemy but warmth,  
 Blush'd on the panels. Mirror needed none

\* Anna. This Empress constructed a palace of ice on the bank of the Neva in 1740. It lasted from January to March.

† Aristæus, the son of Apollo and Cyrene a water nymph, having been in a measure the cause of Eurydice's death, was punished by the loss of all his bees. He appealed for help to his mother, weeping on the banks of the Peneus, and was allowed to descend beneath the waves, where he found Cyrene in a "watery palace," to which the poet compares the ice palace of the Empress.



## THE TASK—THE WINTER MORNING WALK.

Where all was vitreous; but in order due  
 Convivial table and commodious seat  
 (What seem'd at least commodious seat) were there,  
 Sofa and couch and high-built throne august.  
 The same lubricity was found in all,  
 And all was moist to the warm touch; a scene  
 Of evanescent glory, once a stream,  
 And soon to slide into a stream again.  
 Alas! 'twas but a mortifying stroke  
 Of undesigned severity, that glanced  
 (Made by a monarch) on her own estate,  
 On human grandeur and the courts of kings.  
 'Twas transient in its nature, as in show  
 'Twas durable; as worthless, as it seem'd  
 Intrinsically precious; to the foot  
 Treacherous and false; it smiled, and it was cold.

Great princes have great playthings. Some have play'd  
 At hewing mountains into men, and some  
 At building human wonders mountain high.  
 Some have amused the dull sad years of life,  
 Life spent in indolence, and therefore sad,  
 With schemes of monumental fame; and sought  
 By pyramids and mausolean pomp,  
 Short-lived themselves, to immortalise their bones.  
 Some seek diversion in the tented field,  
 And make the sorrows of mankind their sport.  
 But war's a game, which, were their subjects wise,  
 Kings would not play at. Nations would do well  
 To extort their truncheons from the puny hands  
 Of heroes, whose infirm and baby minds  
 Are gratified with mischief, and who spoil,  
 Because men suffer it, their toy the world.

When Babel was confounded, and the great  
 Confederacy of projectors wild and vain  
 Was split into diversity of tongues,  
 Then, as a shepherd separates his flock,  
 These to the upland, to the valley those,  
 God drove asunder, and assign'd their lot  
 To all the nations. Ample was the boon  
 He gave them, in its distribution fair  
 And equal, and He bade them dwell in peace.  
 Peace was awhile their care: they plough'd and sow'd,  
 And reap'd their plenty without grudge or strife.  
 But violence can never longer sleep  
 Than human passions please. In every heart  
 Are sown the sparks that kindle fiery war;  
 Occasion needs but fan them, and they blaze.  
 Cain had already shed a brother's blood;

The deluge wash'd it out ; but left unquench'd  
The seeds of murder in the breast of man.  
Soon, by a righteous judgment, in the line  
Of his descending progeny was found  
The first artificer of death ; the shrewd  
Contriver who first sweated at the forge,  
And forced the blunt and yet unbloodied steel  
To a keen edge, and made it bright for war.  
Him, Tubal named, the Vulcan of old times,  
The sword and falchion their inventor claim,  
And the first smith was the first murderer's son.\*  
His art survived the waters ; and ere long,  
When man was multiplied and spread abroad  
In tribes and clans, and had begun to call  
These meadows and that range of hills his own,  
The tasted sweets of property begat  
Desire of more ; and industry in some  
To improve and cultivate their just demesne,  
Made others covet what they saw so fair.  
Thus war began on earth : these fought for spoil,  
And those in self-defence. Savage at first  
The onset, and irregular. At length  
One eminent above the rest, for strength,  
For stratagem, or courage, or for all,  
Was chosen leader ; him they served in war,  
And him in peace, for sake of warlike deeds  
Reverenced no less. Who could with him compare ?  
Or who so worthy to control themselves  
As he whose prowess had subdued their foes ?  
Thus war affording field for the display  
Of virtue, made one chief, whom times of peace,  
Which have their exigencies too, and call  
For skill in government, at length made king.  
King was a name too proud for man to wear  
With modesty and meekness ; and the crown,  
So dazzling in their eyes who set it on,  
Was sure to intoxicate the brows it bound.  
It is the abject property of most,  
That being parcel of the common mass,  
And destitute of means to raise themselves,  
They sink and settle lower than they need.  
They know not what it is to feel within  
A comprehensive faculty that grasps  
Great purposes with ease, that turns and wields,  
Almost without an effort, plans too vast  
For their conception, which they cannot move.

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\* Gen. iv. 22.

Conscious of impotence, they soon grow drunk  
With gazing, when they see an able man  
Step forth to notice ; and besotted thus,  
Build him a pedestal, and say, " Stand there,  
And be our admiration and our praise."  
They roll themselves before him in the dust,  
Then most deserving in their own account  
When most extravagant in his applause,  
As if exalting him they raised themselves.  
Thus by degrees, self-cheated of their sound  
And sober judgment, that he is but man,  
They demi-deify and fume him so,  
That in due season he forgets it too.  
Inflated and astrut with self-conceit,  
He gulps the windy diet, and ere long,  
Adopting their mistake, profoundly thinks  
The world was made in vain, if not for him.  
Thenceforth they are his cattle : drudges born  
To bear his burdens ; drawing in his gears  
And sweating in his service, his caprice  
Becomes the soul that animates them all.  
He deems a thousand, or ten thousand lives,  
Spent in the purchase of renown for him,  
An easy reckoning, and they think the same.  
Thus kings were first invented, and thus kings  
Were burnish'd into heroes, and became  
The arbiters of this terraqueous swamp,  
Storks among frogs, that have but croak'd and died.  
Strange that such folly as lifts bloated man  
To eminence fit only for a god,  
Should ever drivel out of human lips,  
Even in the cradled weakness of the world !  
Still stranger much, than when at length mankind  
Had reach'd the sinewy firmness of their youth,  
And could discriminate and argue well  
On subjects more mysterious, they were yet  
Babes in the cause of freedom, and should fear  
And quake before the gods themselves had made.  
But above measure strange, that neither proof  
Of sad experience, nor examples set  
By some whose patriot virtue has prevail'd,  
Can even now, when they are grown mature  
In wisdom, and with philosophic deeps  
Familiar, serve to emancipate the rest !  
Such dupes are men to custom, and so prone  
To reverence what is ancient, and can plead  
A course of long observance for its use.  
That even servitude, the worst of ill's

Because deliver'd down from sire to son,  
Is kept and guarded as a sacred thing.  
But is it fit, or can it it bear the shock  
Of rational discussion, that a man,  
Compounded and made up like other men  
Of elements tumultuous, in whom lust  
And folly in as ample measure meet  
As in the bosoms of the slaves he rules,  
Should be a despot absolute, and boast  
Himself the only freeman of his land ?  
Should, when he pleases, and on whom he will,  
Wage war, with any or with no pretence  
Of provocation given or wrong sustain'd,  
And force the beggarly last doit, by means  
That his own humour dictates, from the clutch  
Of poverty, that thus he may procure  
His thousands, weary of penurious life,  
A splendid opportunity to die ?  
Say ye, who (with less prudence than of old  
Jotham ascribed to his assembled trees  
In politic convention) put your trust  
In the shadow of a bramble, and reclined  
In fancied peace beneath its dangerous branch,  
Rejoice in him, and celebrate his sway,  
Where find ye passive fortitude ? Whence springs  
Your self-denying zeal that holds it good  
To stroke the prickly grievance, and to hang  
His thorns with streamers of continual praise ?  
We too are friends to loyalty. We love  
The king who loves the law, respects his bounds,  
And reigns content within them : him we serve  
Freely and with delight, who leaves us free :  
But recollecting still that he is man,  
We trust him not too far. King though he be,  
And king in England too, he may be weak,  
And vain enough to be ambitious still,  
May exercise amiss his proper powers,  
Or covet more than freemen choose to grant :  
Beyond that mark is treason. He is ours,  
To administer, to guard, to adorn the state,  
But not to warp or change it. We are his,  
To serve him nobly in the common cause,  
True to the death, but not to be his slaves.  
Mark now the difference, ye that boast your love  
Of kings, between your loyalty and ours :  
We love the man, the paltry pageant you ;  
We the chief patron of the commonwealth,  
You the regardless author of its woes ;

We, for the sake of liberty, a king,  
 You chains and bondage for a tyrant's sake.  
 Our love is principle, and has its root  
 In reason, is judicious, manly, free ;  
 Yours, a blind instinct, crouches to the rod,  
 And licks the foot that treads it in the dust.  
 Were kingship as true treasure as it seems,  
 Sterling, and worthy of a wise man's wish,  
 I would not be a king to be beloved  
 Causeless, and daub'd with undiscerning praise,  
 Where love is mere attachment to the throne,  
 Not to the man who fills it as he ought.

Whose freedom is by sufferance, and at will  
 Of a superior, he is never free.  
 Who lives, and is not weary of a life  
 Exposed to manacles, deserves them well.  
 The state that strives for liberty, though foil'd,  
 And forced to abandon what she bravely sought,  
 Deserves at least applause for her attempt,  
 And pity for her loss. But that's a cause  
 Not often unsuccessful ; power usurp'd  
 Is weakness when opposed ; conscious of wrong,  
 'Tis pusillanimous and prone to flight.  
 But slaves that once conceive the glowing thought  
 Of freedom, in that hope itself possess  
 All that the contest calls for ; spirit, strength,  
 The scorn of danger, and united hearts,  
 The surest presage of the good they seek.\*  
 Then shame to manhood, and opprobrious more  
 To ~~France~~ than all her losses and defeats,  
 Old or of later date, by sea or land,  
 Her house of bondage, worse than that of old  
 Which God avenged on Tharaoth—the Bastille.  
 Ye horrid towers, the abode of broken hearts,  
 Ye dungeons, and ye cages of despair,  
 That monarchs have supplied from age to age  
 With music such as suits their sovereign ears,  
 The sighs and groans of miserable men !  
 There's not an English heart that would not leap  
 To hear that ye were fall'n at last ; to know  
 That even our enemies, so oft employ'd  
 In forging chains for us, themselves were free.  
 For he who values liberty confines

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\* The author hopes that he shall not be censured for unnecessarily warmth upon so interesting a subject. He is aware that it is become almost fashionable to stigmatize such sentiments as no better than empty declamation ; but it is an ill symptom, and peculiar to modern times.—(C.)

His zeal for her predominance within  
No narrow bounds; her cause engages him  
Wherever pleaded. 'Tis the cause of man.  
There dwell the most forlorn of human kind,  
Immured though unaccused, condemn'd untried,  
Cruelly spared, and hopeless of escape.  
There, like the visionary emblem seen  
By him of Babylon,\* life stands a stump,  
And filleted about with hoops of brass,  
Still lives, though all his pleasant boughs are gone.  
To count the hour-bell, and expect no change;  
And ever, as the sullen sound is heard,  
Still to reflect, that though a joyless note  
To him whose moments all have one dull pace,  
Ten thousand rovers in the world at large  
Account it music; that it summons some  
To theatre or jocund feast or ball;  
The wearied hireling finds it a release  
From labour; and the lover, who has chid  
Its long delay, feels every welcome stroke  
Upon his heart-strings, trembling with delight:—  
To fly for refuge from distracting thought  
To such amusements as ingenious woe  
Contrives, hard shifting and without her tools:—  
To read engraven on the mouldy walls,  
In staggering types, his predecessor's tale,  
A sad memorial, and subjoin his own:—  
To turn purveyor to an overgorged  
And bloated spider, till the pamper'd pest  
Is made familiar, watches his approach,  
Comes at his call, and serves him for a friend:—  
To wear out time in numbering to and fro  
The studs that thick emboss his iron door,  
Then downward and then upward, then aslant,  
And then alternate, with a sickly hope  
By dint of change to give his tasteless task  
Some relish, till the sum exactly found  
In all directions, he begins again:—  
Oh comfortless existence! hemm'd around  
With woes, which who that suffers would not kneel  
And beg for exile, or the pangs of death?  
That man should thus encroach on fellow man,  
Abridge him of his just and native rights,  
Eradicate him, tear him from his hold  
Upon the endearments of domestic life  
And social, nip his fruitfulness and use,

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\* Nebuchadnezzar.

## THE TASK—THE WINTER MORNING WALK.

And doom him for perhaps a heedless word  
 To barrenness, and solitude, and tears,  
 Moves indignation, makes the name of king  
 (Of king whom such prerogative can please)  
 As dreadful as the Manichean god,\*  
 Adored through fear, strong only to destroy.  
 'Tis liberty alone that gives the flower  
 Of fleeting life its lustre and perfume,  
 And we are weeds without it. All constraint,  
 Except what wisdom lays on evil men,  
 Is evil; hurts the faculties, impedes  
 Their progress in the road of science; blinds  
 The eyesight of discovery, and begets  
 In those that suffer it a sordid mind  
 Bestial, a meagre intellect, unfit  
 To be the tenant of man's noble form.  
 Thee therefore still, blameworthy as thou art,  
 With all thy loss of empire, and though squeezed  
 By public exigence till annual food  
 Fails for the craving hunger of the state,  
 Thee I account still happy, and the chief  
 Among the nations, seeing thou art free!  
 My native nook of earth! Thy clime is rude,  
 Replete with vapours, and disposes much  
 All hearts to sadness, and none more than mine;  
 Thine unadulterate manners are less soft  
 And plausible than social life requires,  
 And thou hast need of discipline and art  
 To give thee what politer France receives  
 From nature's bounty—that humane address  
 And sweetness, without which no pleasure is  
 In converse, either starved by cold reserve,  
 Or flush'd with fierce dispute, a senseless brawl;  
 Yet being free I love thee: for the sake  
 Of that one feature can be well content,  
 Disgraced as thou hast been, poor as thou art,  
 To seek no sublunary rest beside.  
 But once enslaved, farewell! I could endure  
 Chains nowhere patiently; and chains at home,  
 Where I am free by birthright, not at all.  
 Then what were left of roughness in the grain  
 Of British natures, wanting its excuse  
 That it belongs to freemen, would disgust

\* The power of Evil. Manes, the founder of the sect called Manicheans, taught that there were two gods of equal power—the one good, the other evil. This heresy arose in the third century. Arimanes was worshipped from fear. See Saracen's song in Scott's "Talisman," chap. i.

And shock me. I should then with double pain  
Feel all the rigour of thy fickle clime;  
And if I must bewail the blessing lost  
For which our Hampdens and our Sidneys bled,  
I would at least bewail it under skies  
Milder, among a people less austere,  
In scenes which, having never known me free,  
Would not reproach me with the loss I felt.  
Do I forebode impossible events,  
And tremble at vain dreams? Heaven grant I may!  
But the age of virtuous politics is past,  
And we are deep in that of cold pretence.  
Patriots are grown too shrewd to be sincere,  
And we too wise to trust them. He that takes  
Deep in his soft credulity the stamp  
Design'd by loud declaimers on the part  
Of liberty, themselves the slaves of lust,  
Incurs derision for his easy faith  
And lack of knowledge, and with cause enough:  
For when was public virtue to be found  
Where private was not? Can he love the whole  
Who loves no part? He be a nation's friend  
Who is, in truth, the friend of no man there?  
Can he be strenuous in his country's cause,  
Who slights the charities for whose dear sake  
That country, if at all, must be beloved?  
'Tis therefore sober and good men are sad  
For England's glory, seeing it wax pale  
And sickly, while her champions wear their hearts  
So loose to private duty, that no brain,  
Healthful and undisturb'd by factious fumes,  
Can dream them trusty to the general weal.  
Such were not they of old, whose temper'd blades  
Dispersed the shackles of usurp'd control,  
And hew'd them link from link. Then Albion's sons  
Were sons indeed: they felt a filial heart  
Beat high within them at a mother's wrongs,  
And shining each in his domestic sphere,  
Shone brighter still, once call'd to public view.  
'Tis therefore many, whose sequester'd lot  
Forbids their interference, looking on,  
Anticipate perforce some dire event;  
And seeing the old castle of the state,  
That promised once more firmness, so assail'd  
That all its tempest-beaten turrets shake,  
Stand motionless, expectants of its fall.  
All has its date below; the fatal hour  
Was register'd in heaven ere time began.



We turn to dust, and all our mightiest works  
Die too: the deep foundations that we lay,  
Time ploughs them up, and not a trace remains.  
We build with what we deem eternal rock;  
A distant age asks where the fabric stood;  
And in the dust, sifted and search'd in vain,  
The indiscoverable secret sleeps.

But there is yet a liberty unsung  
By poets, and by senators unpraised,  
Which monarchs cannot grant, nor all the powers  
Of earth and hell confederate take away;  
A liberty which persecution, fraud,  
Oppression, prisons, have no power to bind;  
Which whoso tastes can be enslaved no more.  
'Tis liberty of heart, derived from Heaven,  
Bought with His blood who gave it to mankind,  
And seal'd with the same token. It is held  
By charter, and that charter sanction'd sure  
By the unimpeachable and awful oath  
And promise of a God. His other gifts  
All bear the royal stamp that speaks them His,  
And are august, but this transcends them all.  
His other works, the visible display  
Of all-creating energy and might,  
Are grand, no doubt, and worthy of the word  
That, finding an interminable space  
Unoccupied, has fill'd the void so well,  
And made so sparkling what was dark before.  
But these are not His glory. Man, 'tis true,  
Smit with the beauty of so fair a scene,  
Might well suppose the Artificer Divine  
Meant it eternal, had He not Himself  
Pronounced it transient, glorious as it is,  
And still designing a more glorious far,  
Doom'd it as insufficient for His praise.  
These therefore are occasional and pass;  
Form'd for the confutation of the fool,  
Whose lying heart disputes against a God;  
That office served, they must be swept away.  
Not so the labours of His love: they shine  
In other heavens than these that we behold,  
And fade not. There is paradise that fears  
No forfeiture, and of its fruits He sends  
Large prelibation oft to saints below.  
Of these the first in order, and the pledge  
And confident assurance of the rest,  
Is liberty; a flight into his arms,  
Ere yet mortality's fine threads give way,

A clear escape from tyrannizing lust,  
And full immunity from penal woe.

Chains are the portion of revolted man,  
Stripes, and a dungeon ; and his body serves  
The triple purpose. In that sickly, foul,  
Opprobrious residence he finds them all.  
Propense his heart to idols, he is held  
In silly dotage on created things,  
Careless of their Creator. And that low  
And sordid gravitation of his powers  
To a vile clod, so draws him, with such force  
Resistless from the centre he should seek,  
That he at last forgets it. All his hopes  
Tend downwards ; his ambition is to sink,  
To reach a depth profounder still, and still  
Profounder, in the fathomless abyss  
Of folly, plunging in pursuit of death.  
But ere he gain the comfortless repose  
He seeks, and acquiescence of his soul  
In heaven-renouncing exile, he endures—  
What does he not ? from lusts opposed in vain,  
And self-reproaching conscience. He foresees  
The fatal issue to his health, fame, peace,  
Fortune and dignity ; the loss of all  
That can ennoble man, and make frail life,  
Short as it is, supportable. Still worse,  
Far worse than all the plagues with which his sins  
Infect his happiest moments, he forebodes  
Ages of hopeless misery ; future death,  
And death still future : not a hasty stroke,  
Like that which sends him to the dusty grave,  
But unrepealable enduring death.  
Scripture is still a trumpet to his fears ;  
What none can prove a forgery, may be true ;  
What none but bad men wish exploded, must.  
That scruple checks him. Riot is not loud  
Nor drunk enough to drown it. In the midst  
Of laughter his compunctions are sincere,  
And he abhors the jest by which he shines.  
Remorse begets reform. His master-lust  
Falls first before his resolute rebuke,  
And seems dethroned and vanquish'd. Peace ensues,  
But spurious and short-lived, the puny child  
Of self-congratulating pride, begot  
On fancied innocence. Again he falls,  
And fights again ; but finds his best essay  
A presage ominous, portending still  
Its own dishonour by a worse relapse,

Till nature, unavailing nature, foil'd  
 So oft, and wearied in the vain attempt,  
 Scoffs at her own performance. Reason now  
 Takes part with appetite, and pleads the cause  
 Perversely, which of late she so condemn'd;  
 With shallow shifts and old devices, worn  
 And tatter'd in the service of debauch,  
 Covering his shame from his offended sight.

"Hath God indeed given appetites to man,  
 And stored the earth so plenteously with means  
 To gratify the hunger of His wish,  
 And doth He reprobate and will He damn  
 The use of His own bounty? making first  
 So frail a kind, and then enacting laws  
 So strict, that less than perfect must despair?  
 Falsehood! which whoso but suspects of truth  
 Dishonours God, and makes a slave of man.  
 Do they themselves, who undertake for hire  
 The teacher's office, and dispense at large  
 Their weekly dole of edifying strains,  
 Attend to their own music? have they faith  
 In what with such solemnity of tone  
 And gesture they propound to our belief?  
 Nay,—conduct hath the loudest tongue. The voice  
 Is but an instrument on which the priest  
 May play what tune he pleases. In the deed,  
 The unequivocal authentic deed,  
 We find sound argument, we read the heart."

Such reasonings (if that name must needs belong  
 To excuses in which reason has no part)  
 Serve to compose a spirit well inclined  
 To live on terms of amity with vice,  
 And sin without disturbance. Often urged  
 (As often as libidinous discourse  
 Exhausted, he resorts to solemn themes  
 Of theological and grave import,)  
 They gain at last his unreserved assent;  
 Till harden'd his heart's temper in the forge  
 Of lust, and on the anvil of despair,  
 He slights the strokes of conscience. Nothing moves,  
 Or nothing much, his constancy in ill;  
 Vain tampering has but fostered his disease;  
 'Tis desperate, and he sleeps the sleep of death.  
 Haste now, philosopher, and set him free.  
 Charm the deaf serpent wisely. Make him hear  
 Of rectitude and fitness; moral truth  
 How lovely, and the moral sense how sure,  
 Consulted and obey'd, to guide his steps

Directly to THE FIRST AND ONLY FAIR.  
Spare not in such a cause. Spend all the powers  
Of rant and rhapsody in virtue's praise;  
Be most sublimely good, verbosely grand,  
And with poetic trappings grace thy prose,  
Till it outmantle all the pride of verse.—  
Ah, tinkling cymbal and high-sounding brass,  
Smitten in vain! such music cannot charm  
The eclipse that intercepts truth's heavenly beam,  
And chills and darkens a wide wandering soul.  
The *still small voice* is wanted. He must speak,  
Whose word leaps forth at once to its effect,  
Who calls for things that are not, and they come.

Grace makes the slave a freeman. 'Tis a change  
That turns to ridicule the turgid speech  
And stately tone of moralists, who boast,  
As if, like him of fabulous renown,  
They had indeed ability to smooth  
The shag of savage nature, and were each  
An Orpheus, and omnipotent in song.  
But transformation of apostate man  
From fool to wise, from earthly to divine,  
Is work for Him that made him. He alone,  
And He by means in philosophic eyes  
Trivial and worthy of disdain, achieves  
The wonder; humanizing what is brute  
In the lost kind, extracting from the lips  
Of asps their venom, overpowering strength  
By weakness, and hostility by love.

Patriots have toil'd, and in their country's cause  
Bled nobly, and their deeds, as they deserve,  
Receive proud recompense. We give in charge  
Their names to the sweet lyre. The historic muse,  
Proud of the treasure, marches with it down  
To latest times; and Sculpture, in her turn,  
Gives bond in stone and ever-during brass  
To guard them, and to immortalize her trust.  
But fairer wreaths are due, though never paid,  
To those who, posted at the shrine of truth,  
Have fallen in her defence. A patriot's blood,  
Well spent in such a strife, may earn indeed,  
And for a time ensure to his loved land,  
The sweets of liberty and equal laws;  
But martyrs struggle for a brighter prize,  
And win it with more pain. Their blood is shed  
In confirmation of the noblest claim,  
Our claim to feed upon immortal truth,  
To walk with God, to be divinely free,

## THE TASK—THE WINTER MORNING WALK.

To soar, and to anticipate the skies.  
 Yet few remember them. They lived unknown  
 Till Persecution dragg'd them into fame,  
 And chased them up to heaven. Their ashes flew  
 —No marble tells us whither. With their names  
 No bard embalms and sanctifies his song;  
 And history, so warm on meaner themes,  
 Is cold on this. She execrates indeed  
 The tyranny that doom'd them to the fire,  
 But gives the glorious sufferers little praise.\*  
 He is the freeman whom the truth makes free,  
 And all are slaves beside. There's not a chain  
 That hellish foes confederate for his harm  
 Can wind around him, but he casts it off  
 With as much ease as Samson his green withes.  
 He looks abroad into the varied field  
 Of nature, and though poor perhaps, compared  
 With those whose mansions glitter in his sight,  
 Calls the delightful scenery all his own.  
 His are the mountains, and the valleys his,  
 And the resplendent rivers. His to enjoy  
 With a propriety that none can feel,  
 But who, with filial confidence inspired,  
 Can lift to heaven an unpresumptuous eye,  
 And smiling say—"My Father made them all!"  
 Are they not his by a peculiar right,  
 And by an emphasis of interest his,  
 Whose eye they fill with tears of holy joy,  
 Whose heart with praise, and whose exalted mind  
 With worthy thoughts of that unwearied love  
 That plann'd, and built, and still upholds a world  
 So clothed with beauty, for rebellious man?  
 Yes—ye may fill your garners, ye that reap  
 The loaded soil, and ye may waste much good  
 In senseless riot; but ye will not find  
 In feast or in the chase, in song or dance,  
 A liberty like his, who unimpeach'd  
 Of usurpation, and to no man's wrong,  
 Appropriates nature as his Father's work,  
 And has a richer use of yours, than you.  
 He is indeed a freeman; free by birth  
 Of no mean city, plann'd or e'er the hills  
 Were built, the fountains open'd, or the sea  
 With all his roaring multitude of waves.  
 His freedom is the same in every state;

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\* See Hume, cap. 37. (C.)

And no condition of this changeful life,  
So manifold in cares, whose every day  
Brings its own evil with it, makes it less:  
For he has wings that neither sickness, pain,  
Nor penury can cripple or confine.  
No nook so narrow but he spreads them there  
With ease, and is at large. The oppressor holds  
His body bound, but knows not what a range  
His spirit takes, unconscious of a chain,  
And that to bind him is a vain attempt  
Whom God delights in, and in whom He dwells.

Acquaint thyself with God, if thou wouldst taste  
His works. Admitted once to His embrace,  
Thou shalt perceive that thou wast blind before;  
Thine eye shall be instructed, and thine heart,  
Made pure, shall relish with divine delight  
Till then unfelt, what hands divine have wrought.  
Brutes graze the mountain-top with faces prone  
And eyes intent upon the scanty herb  
It yields them; or, recumbent on its brow,  
Ruminate heedless of the scene outspread  
Beneath, beyond, and stretching far away  
From inland regions to the distant main.  
Man views it and admires, but rests content  
With what he views. The landscape has his praise,  
But not its Author. Unconcern'd who form'd  
The paradise he sees, he finds it such,  
And such well-pleased to find it, asks no more.  
Not so thine mind that has been touch'd from Heaven,  
And in the school of sacred wisdom taught  
To read His wonders, in whose thought the world,  
Fair as it existed ere it was.  
Not for its own sake merely, but for His  
Much more who fashion'd it, he gives it praise;  
Praise that from earth resulting as it ought  
To earth's acknowledged sovereign, finds at once  
Its only just proprietor in Him.  
The soul that sees Him, or receives sublimed  
New faculties, or learns at least to employ  
More worthily the powers she own'd before,  
Discerns in all things, what with stupid gaze  
Of ignorance till then she overlook'd,  
A ray of heavenly light gilding all forms  
Terrestrial in the vast and the minute,  
The unambiguous footsteps of the God  
Who gives its lustre to an insect's wing,  
And wheels His throne upon the rolling worlds.  
Much conversant with Heaven, she often holds,

With those fair ministers of light to man,  
That fill the skies nightly with silent pomp,  
Sweet conference; inquires what strains were they  
With which Heaven rang, when every star, in haste  
To gratulate the new-created earth,  
Sent forth a voice, and all the sons of God  
Shouted for joy.—“Tell me, ye shining hosts  
That navigate a sea that knows no storms,  
Beneath a vault unsullied with a cloud,  
If from your elevation, whence ye view  
Distinctly scenes invisible to man,  
And systems of whose birth no tidings yet  
Have reach'd this nether world, ye spy a race  
Favour'd as ours, transgressors from the womb,  
And hasting to a grave, yet doom'd to rise,  
And to possess a brighter heaven than yours?  
As one who long detain'd on foreign shores  
Pants to return, and when he sees afar  
His country's weather-bleach'd and batter'd rocks,  
From the green wave emerging, darts an eye  
Radiant with joy towards the happy land;  
So I with animated hopes behold,  
And many an aching wish, your beamy fires,  
That show like beacons in the blue abyss,  
Ordain'd to guide the embodied spirit home,  
From toilsome life to never-ending rest.  
Love kindles as I gaze. I feel desires  
That give assurance of their own success,  
And that infused from Heaven must thither tend.”

So reads he nature whom the lamp of truth  
Illuminates. Thy lamp, mysterious Word!  
Which whoso sees, no longer wanders lost  
With intellects bemazed in endless doubt,  
But runs the road of wisdom. Thou hast built,  
With means that were not till by Thee employ'd,  
Worlds that had never been hadst Thou in strength  
Been less, or less benevolent than strong.  
They are Thy witnesses, who speak Thy power  
And goodness infinite, but speak in ears  
That hear not, or receive not their report.  
In vain Thy creatures testify of Thee  
Till Thou proclaim Thyself. Theirs is indeed  
A teaching voice; but 'tis the praise of Thine  
That whom it teaches it makes prompt to learn,  
And with the boon gives talents for its use.  
Till Thou art heard, imaginations vain  
Possess the heart, and fables false as hell,  
Yet deem'd oracular, lure down to death

The uninform'd and heedless souls of men.  
We give to Chance, blind Chance, ourselves as blind,  
The glory of Thy work, which yet appears  
Perfect and unimpeachable of blame,  
Challenging human scrutiny, and proved  
Then skilful most when most severely judged.  
But Chance is not ; or is not where thou reign'st :  
Thy providence forbids that fickle power  
(If power she be that works but to confound)  
To mix her wild vagaries with Thy laws.  
Yet thus we dote, refusing while we can  
Instruction, and inventing to ourselves  
Gods such as guilt makes welcome ; gods that sleep,  
Or disregard our follies, or that sit  
Amused spectators of this bustling stage.  
Thee we reject, unable to abide  
Thy purity, till pure as Thou art pure,  
Made such by Thee, we love Thee for that cause  
For which we shunn'd and hated Thee before.  
Then we are free : then liberty like day  
Breaks on the soul, and by a flash from Heaven  
Fires all the faculties with glorious joy.  
A voice is heard that mortal ears hear not  
Till Thou hast touch'd them ; 'tis the voice of song,  
A loud Hosanna sent from all Thy works,  
Which he that hears it with a shout repeats,  
And adds his rapture to the general praise.  
In that blest moment, Nature throwing wide  
Her veil opaque, discloses with a smile  
The Author of her beauties, who, retired  
Behind His own creation, works unseen  
By the impure, and hears His power denied.  
Thou art the source and centre of all minds,  
Their only point of rest, eternal Word !  
From Thee departing, they are lost and rove,  
At random without honour, hope, or peace.  
From Thee is all that soothes the life of man,  
His high endeavour, and his glad success,  
His strength to suffer, and his will to serve.  
But oh, Thou bounteous Giver of all good,  
Thou art of all Thy gifts Thyself the crown !  
Give what Thou canst, without Thee we are poor ;  
And with Thee rich, take what Thou wilt away.



## BOOK VI.—THE WINTER WALK AT NOON.

## ARGUMENT.

Bells at a distance—Their effect—A fine noon in winter—A sheltered walk—Meditation better than books—Our familiarity with the course of nature makes it appear less wonderful than it is—The transformation that spring effects in a shrubbery described—A mistake concerning the course of nature corrected—God maintains it by an unremitted act—The amusements fashionable at this hour of the day reproved—Animals happy, a delightful sight—Origin of cruelty to animals—That it is a great crime proved from Scripture—That proof illustrated by a tale—A line drawn between the lawful and unlawful destruction of them—Their good and useful properties insisted on—Apology for the encomiums bestowed by the author upon animals—Instances of man's extravagant praise of man—The groans of the creation shall have an end—A view taken of the restoration of all things—An invocation and an invitation of Him who shall bring it to pass—The retired man vindicated from the charge of uselessness—Conclusion.

THERE is in souls a sympathy with sounds,  
 And as the mind is pitch'd the ear is pleased  
 With melting airs or martial, brisk or grave.  
 Some chord in unison with what we hear  
 Is touch'd within us, and the heart replies.  
 How soft the music of those village bells  
 Falling at intervals upon the ear  
 In cadence sweet! now dying all away,  
 Now pealing loud again and louder still,  
 Clear and sonorous as the gale comes on.  
 With easy force it opens all the cells  
 Where memory slept. Wherever I have heard  
 A kindred melody, the scene recurs,  
 And with it all its pleasures and its pains.  
 Such comprehensive views the spirit takes,  
 That in a few short moments I retrace  
 (As in a map the voyager his course)  
 The windings of my way through many years.  
 Short as in retrospect the journey seems,  
 It seem'd not always short; the rugged path,  
 And prospect oft so dreary and forlorn,  
 Moved many a sigh at its disheartening length.  
 Yet feeling present evils, while the past  
 Faintly impress the mind, or not at all,  
 How readily we wish time spent revoked,  
 That we might try the ground again, where once  
 (Through inexperience as we now perceive)  
 We miss'd that happiness we might have found!  
 Some friend is gone, perhaps his son's best friend,  
 A father, whose authority, in show

When most severe, and mustering all its force,  
Was but the graver countenance of love;  
Whose favour, like the clouds of spring, might lower,  
And utter now and then an awful voice,  
But had a blessing in its darkest frown,  
Threatening at once and nourishing the plant.  
We loved, but not enough, the gentle hand  
That rear'd us. At a thoughtless age allured  
By every gilded folly, we renounced  
His sheltering side, and wilfully forewent  
That converse which we now in vain regret.  
How gladly would the man recall to life  
The boy's neglected sire! a mother too,  
That softer friend, perhaps more gladly still,  
Might he demand them at the gates of death.  
Sorrow has, since they went, subdued and tamed  
The playful humour; he could now endure  
(Himself grown sober in the vale of tears)  
And feel a parent's presence no restraint.  
But not to understand a treasure's worth  
Till time has stolen away the slighted good,  
Is cause of half the poverty we feel,  
And makes the world the wilderness it is.  
The few that pray at all pray oft amiss,  
And, seeking grace to improve the prize they hold,  
Would urge a wiser suit than asking more.

The night was winter in its roughest mood,  
The morning sharp and clear. But now at noon  
Upon the southern side of the slant hills,  
And where the woods fence off the northern blast,  
The season smiles, resigning all its rage,  
And has the warmth of May. The vault is blue  
Without a cloud, and white without a speck  
The dazzling splendour of the scene below.  
Again the harmony comes o'er the vale,  
And through the trees I view the embattled tower  
Whence all the music. I again perceive  
The soothing influence of the wafted strains,  
And settle in soft musings as I tread  
The walk still verdant, under oaks and elms,  
Whose outspread branches overarch the glade.  
The roof though moveable through all its length  
As the wind sways it, has yet well sufficed,  
And intercepting in their silent fall  
The frequent flakes, has kept a path for me.  
No noise is here, or none that hinders thought.  
The redbreast warbles still, but is content  
With slender notes and more than half suppress'd:

Pleased with his solitude, and fitting light  
 From spray to spray, where'er he rests he shakes  
 From many a twig the pendent drops of ice,  
 That tinkle in the wither'd leaves below.  
 Stillness, accompanied with sounds so soft,  
 Charms more than silence. Meditation here  
 May think down hours to moments. Here the heart  
 May give a useful lesson to the head,  
 And learning wiser grow without his books.  
 Knowledge and wisdom, far from being one,  
 Have oftentimes no connexion. Knowledge dwells  
 In heads replete with thoughts of other men,  
 Wisdom in minds attentive to their own.  
 Knowledge, a rude unprofitable mass,  
 The mere materials with which wisdom builds,  
 Till smoothed and squared and fitted to its place,  
 Does but encumber whom it seems to enrich.  
 Knowledge is proud that he has learn'd so much;  
 Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.  
 Books are not seldom talismans and spells,  
 By which the magic art of shrewder wits  
 Holds an unthinking multitude enthral'd.  
 Some, to the fascination of a name  
 Surrender judgment hoodwink'd. Some the style  
 Infatuates, and through labyrinths and wilds  
 Of error leads them, by a tune entranced.  
 While sloth seduces more, too weak to bear  
 The insupportable fatigue of thought,  
 And swallowing therefore, without pause or choice,  
 The total grist unsifted, husks and all.  
 But trees, and rivulets whose rapid course  
 Defies the check of winter, haunts of deer,  
 And sheepwalks populous with bleating lambs,  
 And lanes in which the primrose ere her time  
 Peeps through the moss that clothes the hawthorn root,  
 Deceive no student. Wisdom there, and truth,  
 Not shy as in the world, and to be won  
 By slow solicitation, seize at once  
 The roving thought, and fix it on themselves.  
 What prodigies can power divine perform  
 More grand than it produces year by year,  
 And all in sight of inattentive man?  
 Familiar with the effect we slight the cause,  
 And in the constancy of nature's course,  
 The regular return of genial months,  
 And renovation of a faded world,  
 See nought to wonder at. Should God again,  
 As once in Gibeon, interrupt the race

Of the undeviating and punctual sun,  
 How would the world admire ! but speaks it less  
 An agency divine, to make him know  
 His moment when to sink and when to rise,  
 Age after age, than to arrest his course ?  
 All we behold is miracle, but seen  
 So duly, all is miracle in vain.  
 Where now the vital energy that moved,  
 While summer was, the pure and subtle lymph  
 Through the imperceptible meandering veins  
 Of leaf and flower ? It sleeps ; and the icy touch  
 Of unprolific winter has impress'd  
 A cold stagnation on the intestine tide.  
 But let the months go round, a few short months,  
 And all shall be restored. These naked shoots,  
 Barren as lances, among which the wind  
 Makes wintry music, sighing as it goes,  
 Shall put their graceful foliage on again,  
 And more aspiring, and with ampler spread,  
 Shall boast new charms, and more than they have lost.  
 Then, each in its peculiar honours clad,  
 Shall publish, even to the distant eye,  
 Its family and tribe. Laburnum rich  
 In streaming gold ; syringa ivory pure ;  
 The scentless and the scented rose, this red  
 And of an humbler growth, the other tall,\*  
 And throwing up into the darkest gloom  
 Of neighbouring cypress, or more sable yew,  
 Her silver globes, light as the foamy surf  
 That the wind severs from the broken wave ;  
 The lilac various in array, now white,  
 Now sanguine, and her beauteous head now set  
 With purple spikes pyramidal, as if  
 Studious of ornament, yet unresolved  
 Which hue she most approved, she chose them all ;  
 Copious of flowers the woodbine, pale and wan,  
 But well compensating her sickly looks  
 With never-cloying odours, early and late ;  
 Hypericum† all bloom, so thick a swarm  
 Of flowers like flies clothing her slender rods  
 That scarce a leaf appears ; mezereon, too,  
 Though leafless, well attired, and thick beset  
 With blushing wreaths investing every spray ;  
 Althæa‡ with the purple eye ; the broom,  
 Yellow and bright as bullion unalloy'd

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\* Guelder rose. (C.)

† The common St. John's wort.

‡ The mallow.

Her blossoms ; and luxuriant above all  
The jasmine, throwing wide her elegant sweets,  
The deep dark green of whose unvarnish'd leaf  
Makes more conspicuous, and illumines more  
The bright profusion of her scatter'd stars.  
These have been, and these shall be in their day ;  
And all this uniform, uncolour'd scene  
Shall be dismantled of its fleecy load,  
And flush into variety again.  
From dearth to plenty, and from death to life,  
Is Nature's progress when she lectures man  
In heavenly truth ; evincing as she makes  
The grand transition, that there lives and works  
A soul in all things, and that soul is God.  
The beauties of the wilderness are His,  
That make so gay the solitary place  
Where no eye sees them. And the fairer forms  
That cultivation glories in are His,  
He sets the bright procession on its way,  
And marshals all the order of the year ;  
He marks the bounds which Winter may not pass,  
And blunts his pointed fury ; in its case,  
Russet and rude, folds up the tender germ  
Uninjured, with inimitable art ;  
And, ere one flowery season fades and dies,  
Designs the blooming wonders of the next.

Some say that in the origin of things,  
When all creation started into birth,  
The infant elements received a law  
From which they swerve not since. That under force  
Of that controlling ordinance they move,  
And need not His immediate hand who first  
Prescribed their course, to regulate it now.  
Thus dream they, and contrive to save a God  
The incumbrance of His own concerns, and spare  
The great Artificer of all that moves  
The stress of a continual act, the pain  
Of unremitted vigilance and care,  
As too laborious and severe a task.  
So man, the moth, is not afraid, it seems,  
To span Omnipotence, and measure might  
That knows no measure, by the scanty rule  
And standard of his own, that is to-day,  
And is not ere to-morrow's sun go down.  
But how should matter occupy a charge,  
Dull as it is, and satisfy a law  
So vast in its demands, unless impell'd  
To ceaseless service by a ceaseless force,

And under pressure of some conscious cause?  
The Lord of all, Himself through all diffused,  
Sustains and is the life of all that lives.  
Nature is but a name for an effect  
Whose cause is God. He feeds the secret fire  
By which the mighty process is maintain'd,  
Who sleeps not, is not weary; in whose sight  
Slow-circling ages are as transient days;  
Whose work is without labour; whose designs  
No flaw deforms, no difficulty thwarts;  
And whose beneficence no charge exhausts.  
Him blind antiquity profaned, not served,  
With self-taught rites, and under various names,  
Female and male, Pomona, Pales, Pan,  
And Flora and Vertumnus; peopling earth  
With tutelary goddesses and gods  
That were not, and commending as they would  
To each some province, garden, field, or grove.  
But all are under One. One spirit—His  
Who wore the plaited thorns with bleeding brows—  
Rules universal nature. Not a flower  
But shows some touch in freckle, streak, or stain,  
Of His univall'd pencil. He inspires  
Their balmy odours and imparts their hues,  
And bathes their eyes with nectar, and includes,  
In grains as countless as the seaside sands,  
The forms with which He sprinkles all the earth.  
Happy who walks with Him! whom what he finds  
Of flavour or of scent in fruit or flower,  
Or what he views of beautiful or grand  
In nature, from the broad, majestic oak  
To the green blade that twinkles in the sun,  
Prompts with remembrance of a present God.  
His presence, who made all so fair, perceived,  
Makes all still fairer. As with Him no scene  
Is dreary, so with Him all seasons please.  
Though winter had been none, had man been true,  
And earth be punish'd for its tenant's sake,  
Yet not in vengeance; as this smiling sky,  
So soon succeeding such an angry night,  
And these dissolving snows, and this clear stream  
Recovering fast its liquid music, prove.  
Who, then, that has a mind well strung and tuned  
To contemplation, and within his reach  
A scene so friendly to his favourite task,  
Would waste attention at the chequer'd board,  
His host of wooden warriors to and fro  
Marching and countermarching, with an eye

As fix'd as marble, with a forehead ridged  
 And furrow'd into storms, and with a hand  
 Trembling, as if eternity were hung  
 In balance on his conduct of a pin;  
 Nor envies he aught more their idle sport,  
 Who pant with application misapplied  
 To trivial toys, and pushing ivory balls  
 Across a velvet level, feel a joy  
 Akin to rapture, when the bauble finds  
 Its destined goal of difficult access.  
 Nor deems he wiser him, who gives his noon  
 To miss, the mercer's plague, from shop to shop  
 Wandering, and littering with unfolded silks  
 The polish'd counter, and approving none,  
 Or promising with smiles to call again.  
 Nor him, who by his vanity seduced,  
 And soothed into a dream that he discerns  
 The difference of a Guido from a daub,  
 Frequents the crowded auction. Station'd there  
 As duly as the Langford\* of the show,  
 With glass at eye, and catalogue in hand,  
 And tongue accomplish'd in the fulsome cant  
 And pedantry that coxcombs learn with ease,  
 Oft as the price-deciding hammer falls,  
 He notes it in his book, then raps his box,  
 Swears 'tis a bargain, rails at his hard fate  
 That he has let it pass—but never bids.

Here unmolested, through whatever sign  
 The sun proceeds, I wander: neither mist,  
 Nor freezing sky, nor sultry, checking me,  
 Nor stranger intermeddling with my joy.  
 Even in the spring and playtime of the year,  
 That calls the unwonted villager abroad  
 With all her little ones, a sportive train,  
 To gather kingcups in the yellow mead,  
 And prink their hair with daisies, or to pick  
 A cheap but wholesome salad from the brook,  
 These shades are all my own. The timorous hare,  
 Grown so familiar with her frequent guest,  
 Scarce shuns me; and the stockdove, unalarm'd,  
 Sits cooing in the pine-tree, nor suspends  
 His long love-ditty for my near approach.  
 Drawn from his refuge in some lonely elm  
 That age or injury has hollow'd deep,  
 Where, on his bed of wool and matted leaves,

\* A celebrated auctioneer of books, pictures, and articles of vertu.



He has outslept the winter, ventures forth  
To frisk a while, and bask in the warm sun,  
The squirrel, flippant, pert, and full of play.  
He sees me, and at once, swift as a bird,  
Ascends the neighbouring beech; there whisks his brush,  
And perks his ears, and stamps and scolds aloud,  
With all the prettiness of feign'd alarm,  
And anger insignificantly fierce.

The heart is hard in nature, and unfit  
For human fellowship, as being void  
Of sympathy, and therefore dead alike  
To love and friendship both, that is not pleased  
With sight of animals enjoying life,  
Nor feels their happiness augment his own.  
The bounding fawn, that darts across the glade  
When none pursues, through mere delight of heart,  
And spirits buoyant with excess of glee;  
The horse, as wanton and almost as fleet,  
That skims the spacious meadow at full speed,  
Then stops and snorts, and throwing high his heels,  
Starts to the voluntary race again;  
The very kine that gambol at high noon,  
The total herd receiving first from one  
That leads the dance a summons to be gay,  
Though wild their strange vagaries, and uncount  
Their efforts, yet resolved with one consent  
To give such act and utterance as they may  
To ecstasy too big to be suppress'd;  
These, and a thousand images of bliss,  
With which kind nature graces every scene  
Where cruel man defeats not her design,  
Impart to the benevolent, who wish  
All that are capable of pleasure pleased,  
A far superior happiness to theirs,  
The comfort of a reasonable joy.

Man scarce had risen, obedient to His call  
Who form'd him from the dust, his future grave,  
When he was crown'd as never king was since.  
God set the diadem upon his head,  
And angel choirs attended. Wondering stood  
The new-made monarch, while before him pass'd,  
All happy, and all perfect in their kind,  
The creatures, summon'd from their various haunts  
To see their sovereign, and confess his sway.  
Vast was his empire, absolute his power,  
Or bounded only by a law whose force  
'Twas his sublimest privilege to feel  
And own, the law of universal love.



He ruled with meekness, they obey'd with joy ;  
No cruel purpose lurk'd within his heart,  
And no distrust of his intent in theirs.  
So Eden was a scene of harmless sport,  
Where kindness on his part who ruled the whole  
Begot a tranquil confidence in all,  
And fear as yet was not, nor cause for fear.  
But sin marr'd all ; and the revolt of man,  
That source of evils not exhausted yet,  
Was punish'd with revolt on his from him.  
Garden of God, how terrible the change  
Thy groves and lawns then witness'd ! Every heart,  
Each animal of every name, conceived  
A jealousy and an instinctive fear,  
And, conscious of some danger, either fled  
Precipitate the loathed abode of man,  
Or growl'd defiance in such angry sort,  
As taught him too to tremble in his turn.  
Thus harmony and family accord  
Were driven from Paradise ; and in that hour  
The seeds of cruelty, that since have swell'd  
To such gigantic and enormous growth,  
Were sown in human nature's fruitful soil.  
Hence date the persecution and the pain  
That man inflicts on all inferior kinds,  
Regardless of their plaints. To make him sport,  
To gratify the frenzy of his wrath,  
Or his base gluttony, are causes good  
And just in his account, why bird and beast  
Should suffer torture, and the streams be dyed  
With blood of their inhabitants impaled.  
Earth groans beneath the burden of a war  
Waged with defenceless innocence, while he,  
Not satisfied to prey on all around,  
Adds tenfold bitterness to death, by pangs  
Needless, and first torments ere he devours.  
Now happiest they that occupy the scenes  
The most remote from his abhorr'd resort.  
Whom once, as delegate of God on earth,  
They fear'd, and as His perfect image loved.  
The wilderness is theirs, with all its caves,  
Its hollow glens, its thickets, and its plains  
Unvisited by man. There they are free,  
And howl and roar as likes them, uncontroll'd,  
Nor ask his leave to slumber or to play.  
Woe to the tyrant, if he dare intrude  
Within the confines of their wild domain.  
The lion tells him—"I am monarch here !"

And if he spare him, spares him on the terms  
 Of royal mercy, and through generous scorn  
 To rend a victim trembling at his foot.  
 In measure, as by force of instinct drawn,  
 Or by necessity constrain'd, they live  
 Dependent upon man, those in his fields,  
 These at his crib, and some beneath his roof;  
 They prove too often at how dear a rate  
 He sells protection. Witness at his foot  
 The spaniel dying for some venial fault,  
 Under dissection of the knotted scourge;  
 Witness, the patient ox, with stripes and yells  
 Driven to the slaughter, goaded as he runs  
 To madness, while the savage at his heels  
 Laughs at the frantic sufferer's fury spent  
 Upon the guiltless passenger o'erthrown.  
 He too is witness, noblest of the train  
 That wait on man, the flight-performing horse :  
 With unsuspecting readiness he takes  
 His murderer on his back, and push'd all day,  
 With bleeding sides, and flanks that heave for life,  
 To the far-distant goal, arrives and dies.  
 So little mercy shows who needs so much !  
 Does law, so jealous in the cause of man,  
 Denounce no doom on the delinquent ? None.  
 He lives, and o'er his brimming beaker boasts  
 (As if barbarity were high desert)  
 The inglorious feat, and clamorous in praise  
 Of the poor brute, seems wisely to suppose  
 The honours of his matchless horse his own.  
 But many a crime deem'd innocent in earth  
 Is register'd in heaven, and these, no doubt,  
 Have each their record, with a curse annex'd.  
 Man may dismiss compassion from his heart,  
 But God will never. When He charged the Jew  
 To assist his foe's down-fallen beast to rise,\*  
 And when the bush-exploring boy that seized  
 The young, to let the parent bird go free,†  
 Proved He not plainly that His meaner works  
 Are yet His care, and have an interest all,  
 All in the universal Father's love ?  
 On Noah, and in him on all mankind,  
 The charter was conferr'd, by which we hold  
 The flesh of animals in fee, and claim  
 O'er all we feed on, power of life and death.‡

\* Exodus xxiii. 5. † Deuteronomy xxii. 6, 7. ‡ Genesis ix. 2, 3.

But read the instrument, and mark it well:  
 The oppression of a tyrannous control  
 Can find no warrant there. Feed, then, and yield  
 Thanks for thy food. Carnivorous, through sin,  
 Feed on the slain, but spare the living brute.

The Governor of all, Himself to all  
 So bountiful, in whose attentive ear  
 The unfledged raven and the lion's whelp  
 Plead not in vain for pity on the pangs  
 Of hunger unassuaged, has interposed,  
 Not seldom, His avenging arm, to smite  
 The injurious trampler upon Nature's law,  
 That claims forbearance even for a brute.  
 He hates the hardness of a Balaam's heart;  
 And prophet as he was, he might not strike  
 The blameless animal, without rebuke,  
 On which he rode. Her opportune offence  
 Saved him, or the unrelenting seer had died.  
 He sees that human equity is slack  
 To interfere, though in so just a cause,  
 And makes the task His own. Inspiring dumb  
 And helpless victims with a sense so keen  
 Of injury, with such knowledge of their strength,  
 And such sagacity to take revenge,  
 That oft the beast has seem'd to judge the man.  
 An ancient, not a legendary tale,  
 By one of sound intelligence rehearsed,  
 (If such who plead for Providence may seem  
 In modern eyes,) shall make the doctrine clear.

Where England, stretch'd towards the setting sun,  
 Narrow and long, o'erlooks the western wave,  
 Dwelt young Misagathus; a scorner he  
 Of God and goodness, atheist in ostent,  
 Vicious in act, in temper savage-fierce.  
 He journey'd; and his chance was as he went  
 To join a traveller of far different note,  
 Evander, famed for piety, for years  
 Deserving honour, but for wisdom more.  
 Fame had not left the venerable man  
 A stranger to the manners of the youth,  
 Whose face too was familiar to his view.  
 Their way was on the margin of the land,  
 O'er the green summit of the rocks whose base  
 Beats back the roaring surge, scarce heard so high.  
 The charity that warm'd his heart was moved  
 At sight of the man-monster. With a smile  
 Gentle, and affable, and full of grace,  
 As fearful of offending whom he wish'd

Much to persuade, he plied his ear with truths  
Not harshly thunder'd forth, or rudely press'd,  
But, like his purpose, gracious, kind, and sweet.  
"And dost thou dream," the impenetrable man  
Exclaim'd, "that me, the lullabies of age,  
And fantasies of dotards such as thou,  
Can cheat, or move a moment's fear in me?  
Mark now the proof I give thee, that the brave  
Need no such aids as superstition lends,  
To steel their hearts against the dread of death."  
He spoke, and to the precipice at hand  
Push'd with a madman's fury. Fancy shrinks,  
And the blood thrills and curdles at the thought  
Of such a gulf as he design'd his grave.  
But though the felon on his back could dare  
The dreadful leap, more rational his steed  
Declined the death, and wheeling swiftly round,  
Or e'er his hoof had press'd the crumbling verge,  
Baffled his rider, saved against his will.  
The frenzy of the brain may be redress'd  
By medicine well applied, but without grace  
The heart's insanity admits no cure.  
Enraged the more by what might have reform'd  
His horrible intent, again he sought  
Destruction with a zeal to be destroy'd,  
With sounding whip, and rowels dyed in blood.  
But still in vain. The Providence that meant  
A longer date to the far nobler beast,  
Spared yet again the ignobler for his sake.  
And now, his prowess proved, and his sincere  
Incurable obduracy evinced,  
His rage grew cool; and pleased perhaps to have earn'd  
So cheaply the renown of that attempt,  
With looks of some complacency he resumed  
His road, deriding much the blank amaze  
Of good Evander, still where he was left  
Fix'd motionless, and petrified with dread.  
So on they fared; discourse on other themes  
Ensuing, seem'd to obliterate the past,  
And tamer far for so much fury shewn,  
(As is the course of rash and fiery men,)  
The rude companion smiled, as if transform'd.  
But 'twas a transient calm. A storm was near,  
An unsuspected storm. His hour was come.  
The impious challenger of power divine  
Was now to learn that Heaven, though slow to wrath,  
Is never with impunity defied.  
His horse, as he had caught his master's mood,

*THE TASK—THE WINTER WALK AT NOON.*

Snorting, and starting into sudden rage,  
Unbidden, and not now to be controll'd,  
Rush'd to the cliff, and having reached it, stood.  
At once the shock unseated him : he flew  
Sheer o'er the craggy barrier, and immersed  
Deep in the flood, found, when he sought it not,  
The death he had deserved, and died alone.  
So God wrought double justice ; made the fool  
The victim of his own tremendous choice,  
And taught a brute the way to safe revenge.

I would not enter on my list of friends  
(Though graced with polish'd manners and fine sense,  
Yet wanting sensibility) the man  
Who needlessly sets foot upon a worm.  
An inadvertent step may crush the snail  
That crawls at evening in the public path ;  
But he that has humanity, forewarn'd,  
Will tread aside, and let the reptile live.  
The creeping vermin, loathsome to the sight,  
And charged perhaps with venom, that intrudes,  
A visitor unwelcome, into scenes  
Sacred to neatness and repose, the alcove,  
The chamber, or refectory, may die :  
A necessary act incurs no blame.  
Not so when, held within their proper bounds,  
And guiltless of offence, they range the air,  
Or take their pastime in the spacious field :  
There they are privileged ; and he that hunts  
Or harms them there is guilty of a wrong,  
Disturbs the economy of nature's realm,  
Who when she form'd, design'd them an abode.  
The sum is this : if man's convenience, health,  
Or safety interfere, his rights and claims  
Are paramount, and must extinguish theirs.  
Else they are all—the meanest things that are,  
As free to live and to enjoy that life,  
As God was free to form them at the first,  
Who in His sovereign wisdom made them all.  
Ye therefore who love mercy, teach your sons  
To love it too. The spring-time of our years  
Is soon dishonour'd and defiled in most  
By budding ills, that ask a prudent hand  
To check them. But, alas ! none sooner shoots,  
If unrestrain'd, into luxuriant growth,  
Than cruelty, most devilish of them all.  
Mercy to him that shews it, is the rule  
And righteous limitation of its act,  
By which Heaven moves in pardoning guilty man ;

And he that shews none, being ripe in years,  
 And conscious of the outrage he commits,  
 Shall seek it and not find it in his turn.

Distinguish'd much by reason, and still more  
 By our capacity of grace divine,  
 From creatures that exist but for our sake,  
 Which having served us, perish, we are held  
 Accountable, and God, some future day,  
 Will reckon with us roundly for the abuse  
 Of what he deems no mean or trivial trust.  
 Superior as we are, they yet depend  
 Not more on human help, than we on theirs.  
 Their strength, or speed, or vigilance, were given  
 In aid of our defects. In some are found  
 Such teachable and apprehensive parts,  
 That man's attainments in his own concerns,  
 Match'd with the expertness of the brutes in theirs,  
 Are ofttimes vanquish'd and thrown far behind.  
 Some show that nice sagacity of smell,  
 And read with such discernment in the port  
 And figure of the man, his secret aim,  
 That oft we owe our safety to a skill  
 We could not teach, and must despair to learn.  
 But learn we might, if not too proud to stoop  
 To quadruped instructors, many a good  
 And useful quality, and virtue too,  
 Rarely exemplified among ourselves;  
 Attachment never to be wean'd or changed  
 By any change of fortune, proof alike  
 Against unkindness, absence, and neglect;  
 Fidelity that neither bribe nor threat  
 Can move or warp; and gratitude for small  
 And trivial favours, lasting as the life,  
 And glistening even in the dying eye.

Man praises man. Desert in arts or arms  
 Wins public honour; and ten thousand sit  
 Patiently present at a sacred song,  
 Commemoration-mad; content to hear  
 'Oh wonderful effect of music's power!'  
 Messiah's eulogy, for Handel's sake.  
 But less, methinks, than sacrilege might serve—  
 (For was it less—what heathen would have dared  
 To strip Jove's statue of his oaken wreath,  
 And hang it up in honour of a man?)  
 Much less might serve, when all that we design  
 Is but to gratify an itching ear,  
 And give the day to a musician's praise.  
 Remember Handel? Who that was not born

## THE TASK—THE WINTER WALK AT NOON.

Deaf as the dead to harmony, forgets,  
 Or can, the more than Homer of his age?  
 Yes—we remember him; and while we praise  
 A talent so divine, remember too  
 That His most holy Book from whom it came  
 Was never meant, was never used before,  
 To buckram out the memory of a man.  
 But hush!—the muse perhaps is too severe,  
 And with a gravity beyond the size  
 And measure of the offence, rebukes a deed  
 Less impious than absurd, and owing more  
 To want of judgment than to wrong design.  
 So in the chapel of old Ely House,  
 When wandering Charles,\* who meant to be the third,  
 Had fled from William,† and the news was fresh,  
 The simple clerk, but loyal, did announce,  
 And eke did rear right merrily, two staves,  
 Sung to the praise and glory of King George.  
 Man praises man; and Garrick's memory next,  
 When time hath somewhat mellow'd it, and made  
 The idol of our worship while he lived,  
 The god of our idolatry once more,  
 Shall have its altar; and the world shall go  
 In pilgrimage to bow before his shrine.  
 The theatre, too small, shall suffocate  
 Its squeezed contents, and more than it admits  
 Shall sigh at their exclusion, and return  
 Ungratified. For there some noble lord  
 Shall stuff his shoulders with King Richard's bunch,  
 Or wrap himself in Hamlet's inky cloak,  
 And strut and storm and straddle, stamp and stare,  
 To shew the world how Garrick did not act.  
 For Garrick was a worshipper himself;  
 He drew the liturgy, and framed the rites  
 And solemn ceremonial of the day,  
 And call'd the world to worship on the banks  
 Of Avon famed in song.‡ Ah, pleasant proof  
 That piety has still in human hearts  
 Some place, a spark or two not yet extinct.  
 The mulberry-tree was hung with blooming wreaths;  
 The mulberry-tree stood centre of the dance;  
 The mulberry-tree was hymn'd with dulcet airs;  
 And from his touchwood trunk the mulberry-trees

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\* The Prince Charles Edward Stuart.

† The Duke of Cumberland. The news of the victory at Culloden reached London on Sunday morning.

‡ Alluding to Garrick's Shakspeare Commemoration held at Stratford-on-Avon, 1769.

Supplied such relics as devotion holds  
Still sacred, and preserves with pious care.  
So 'twas a hallow'd time : decorum reign'd,  
And mirth without offence. No few return'd,  
Doubtless much edified, and all refresh'd.  
—Man praises man. The rabble all alive,  
From tippling benches, cellars, stalls, and styes,  
Swarm in the streets. The statesman of the day,  
A pompous and slow-moving pageant, comes.  
Some shout him, and some hang upon his car  
'To gaze in his eyes, and bless him. Maidens wave  
Their kerchiefs, and old women weep for joy ;  
While others, not so satisfied, unhorse  
The gilded equipage, and turning loose  
His steeds, usurp a place they well deserve.  
Why ? what has charm'd them ? Hath he saved the state ?  
No. Doth he purpose its salvation ? No.  
Enchanting novelty, that moon at full,  
That finds out every crevice of the head  
That is not sound and perfect, hath in theirs  
Wrought this disturbance. But the wane is near,  
And his own cattle must suffice him soon.  
Thus idly do we waste the breath of praise,  
And dedicate a tribute, in its use  
And just direction sacred, to a thing  
Doom'd to the dust, or lodged already there.  
Encomium in old time was poets' work ;  
But poets having lavishly long since  
Exhausted all materials of the art,  
The task now falls into the public hand ;  
And I, contented with an humble theme,  
Have pour'd my stream of panegyric down  
The vale of nature, where it creeps and winds  
Among her lovely works, with a secure  
And unambitious course reflecting clear  
If not the virtues, yet the worth of brutes.  
And I am recompensed, and deem the toils  
Of poetry not lost, if verse of mine  
May stand between an animal and woe,  
And teach one tyrant pity for his drudge.  
The groans of nature in this nether world,  
Which Heaven has heard for ages, have an end.  
Foretold by prophets, and by poets sung  
Whose fire was kindled at the prophets' lamp,  
The time of rest, the promised sabbath, comes.  
Six thousand years of sorrow have well-nigh  
Fulfill'd their tardy and disastrous course  
Over a sinful world ; and what remains



## THE TASK—THE WINTER WALK AT NOON.

Of this tempestuous state of human things,  
 Is merely as the working of a sea  
 Before a calm, that rocks itself to rest :  
 For He whose car the winds are, and the clouds  
 The dust that waits upon His sultry march,  
 When sin hath moved Him, and His wrath is hot,  
 Shall visit earth in mercy ; shall descend  
 Propitious, in His chariot paved with love,  
 And what His storms have blasted and defaced  
 For man's revolt, shall with a smile repair.

Sweet is the harp of prophecy ; too sweet  
 Not to be wrong'd by a mere mortal touch ;  
 Nor can the wonders it records be sung  
 To meaner music, and not suffer loss.  
 But when a poet, or when one like me,  
 Happy to rove among poetic flowers,  
 Though poor in skill to rear them, lights at last  
 On some fair theme, some theme divinely fair,  
 Such is the impulse and the spur he feels  
 To give it praise proportion'd to its worth,  
 That not to attempt it, arduous as he deems  
 The labour, were a task more arduous still.

Oh scenes surpassing fable, and yet true,  
 Scenes of accomplish'd bliss ! which who can see  
 Though but in distant prospect, and not feel  
 His soul refresh'd with foretaste of the joy ?  
 Rivers of gladness water all the earth,  
 And clothe all climes with beauty ; the reproach  
 Of barrenness is past. The fruitful field  
 Laughs with abundance : and the land once lean,  
 Or fertile only in its own disgrace,  
 Exults to see its thistly curse repeal'd.  
 The various seasons woven into one,  
 And that one season an eternal spring,  
 The garden feels no blight, and needs no fence,  
 For there is none to covet, all are full.  
 The lion, and the libbard,\* and the bear  
 Graze with the fearless flocks ; all bask at noon  
 Together, or all gambol in the shade  
 Of the same grove, and drink one common stream.  
 Antipathies are none. No foe to man  
 Lurks in the serpent now : the mother sees,  
 And smiles to see, her infant's playful hand  
 Stretch'd forth to dally with the crested worm,  
 To stroke his azure neck, or to receive

\* Leopard ; libbard is an old English word found in Spenser and Shakspeare.

The lambent homage of his arrowy tongue.  
 All creatures worship man, and all mankind  
 One Lord, one Father. Error has no place:  
 That creeping pestilence is driven away :  
 The breath of Heaven has chased it. In the heart  
 No passion touches a discordant string,  
 But all is harmony and love. Disease  
 Is not; the pure and uncontaminate blood  
 Holds its due course, nor fears the frost of age.  
 One song employs all nations, and all cry,  
 "Worthy the Lamb, for He was slain for us!"  
 The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks  
 Shout to each other, and the mountain-tops  
 From distant mountains catch the flying joy,  
 Till, nation after nation, taught the strain,  
 Earth rolls the rapturous hosanna round.  
 Behold the measure of the promise fill'd ;  
 See Salem built, the labour of a God !  
 Bright as a sun the sacred city shines ;  
 All kingdoms and all princes of the earth  
 Flock to that light ; the glory of all lands  
 Flows into her ; unbounded is her joy,  
 And endless her increase. Thy rams are there,  
 Nebaioth, and the flocks of Kedar there ;\*  
 The looms of Ormus, and the mines of Ind,  
 And Saba's spicy groves, pay tribute there.  
 Praise is in all her gates : upon her walls,  
 And in her streets, and in her spacious courts,  
 Is heard salvation. Eastern Java there  
 Kneels with the native of the furthest west,  
 And Æthiopia spreads abroad the hand  
 And worships. Her report has travell'd forth  
 Into all lands. From every clime they come  
 To see thy beauty, and to share thy joy,  
 O Sion ! an assembly such as earth  
 Saw never, such as heaven stoops down to see.  
 Thus heavenward all things tend. For all were once  
 Perfect, and all must be at length restored.  
 So God has greatly purposed ; who would else  
 In His dishonour'd works Himself endure  
 Dishonour, and be wrong'd without redress.  
 Haste then, and wheel away a shatter'd world,  
 Ye slow-revolving seasons ! we would see  
 (A sight to which our eyes are strangers yet)

\* Nebaioth and Kedar, the sons of Ishmael, and progenitors of the Arabs, in the prophetic scripture here alluded to, may be reasonably considered as representatives of the Gentiles at large.—(C.)

## THE TASK—THE WINTER WALK AT NOON.

A world that does not dread and hate His laws,  
 And suffer for its crime; would learn how fair  
 The creature is that God pronounces good,  
 How pleasant in itself what pleases Him.  
 Here every drop of honey hides a sting;  
 Worms wind themselves into our sweetest flowers,  
 And even the joy that haply some poor heart  
 Derives from Heaven, pure as the fountain is,  
 Is sullied in the stream; taking a taint  
 From touch of human lips, at best impure.  
 Oh for a world in principle as chaste  
 As this is gross and selfish! over which  
 Custom and prejudice shall bear no sway  
 That govern all things here, shouldering aside  
 The meek and modest truth, and forcing her  
 To seek a refuge from the tongue of strife  
 In nooks obscure, far from the ways of men;  
 Where violence shall never lift the sword,  
 Nor cunning justify the proud man's wrong,  
 Leaving the poor no remedy but tears;  
 Where he that fills an office, shall esteem  
 The occasion it presents of doing good  
 More than the perquisite; where law shall speak  
 Seldom, and never but as wisdom prompts  
 And equity: not jealous more to guard  
 A worthless form, than to decide aright;  
 Where fashion shall not sanctify abuse,  
 Nor smooth good-breeding (supplemental grace)  
 With lean performance ape the work of love.  
 Come then, and, added to Thy many crowns,  
 Receive yet one, the crown of all the earth,  
 Thou who alone art worthy! It was Thine  
 By ancient covenant, ere Nature's birth,  
 And Thou hast made it Thine by purchase since,  
 And overpaid its value with Thy blood.  
 Thy saints proclaim Thee king; and in their hearts  
 Thy title is engraven with a pen  
 Dipp'd in the fountain of eternal love.  
 Thy saints proclaim Thee king; and Thy delay  
 Gives courage to their foes, who, could they see  
 The dawn of Thy last advent, long desired,  
 Would creep into the bowels of the hills,  
 And flee for safety to the falling rocks.  
 The very spirit of the world is tired  
 Of its own taunting question, ask'd so long,  
 "Where is the promise of your Lord's approach?"\*

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\* 2 St. Peter iii. 4.

The infidel has shot his bolts away,  
Till his exhausted quiver yielding none,  
He gleans the blunted shafts that have recoil'd,  
And aims them at the shield of Truth again.  
The veil is rent, rent too by priestly hands,  
That hides divinity from mortal eyes,  
And all the mysteries to faith proposed,  
Insulted and traduced, are cast aside  
As useless, to the moles and to the bats.  
They now are deem'd the faithful, and are praised,  
Who constant only in rejecting Thee,  
Deny Thy Godhead with a martyr's zeal,  
And quit their office for their error's sake.\*  
Blind and in love with darkness! yet even these  
Worthy, compared with sycophants, who knee  
Thy name adoring, and then preach Thee man!  
So fares Thy Church. But how Thy Church may fare  
The world takes little thought; who will may preach,  
And what they will. All pastors are alike  
To wandering sheep, resolved to follow none.  
Two gods divide them all—Pleasure and Gain:  
For these they live, they sacrifice to these,  
And in their service wage perpetual war  
With conscience and with Thee. Lust in their hearts,  
And mischief in their hands, they roam the earth  
To prey upon each other; stubborn, fierce,  
High-minded, foaming out their own disgrace.  
Thy prophets speak of such; and, noting down  
The features of the last degenerate times,  
Exhibit every lineament of these.  
Come, then, and added to Thy many crowns,  
Receive yet one, as radiant as the rest,  
Due to thy last and most effectual work,  
Thy word fulfill'd, the conquest of a world.  
He is the happy man whose life even now  
Shews somewhat of that happier life to come;  
Who, doom'd to an obscure but tranquil state,  
Is pleased with it, and, were he free to choose,  
Would make his fate his choice; whom peace the fruit  
Of virtue, and whom virtue, fruit of faith,  
Prepare for happiness; bespeak him one  
Content indeed to sojourn while he must  
Below the skies, but having there his home.  
The world o'erlooks him in her busy search,  
Of objects more illustrious in her view;  
And occupied as earnestly as she,

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\* Unitarian seceders from the church at that period.

Though more sublimely, he o'erlooks the world.  
She scorns his pleasures, for she knows them not;  
He seeks not hers, for he has proved them vain.  
He cannot skim the ground like summer birds  
Pursuing gilded flies, and such he deems  
Her honours, her emoluments, her joys.  
Therefore in contemplation is his bliss,  
Whose power is such, that whom she lifts from earth  
She makes familiar with a heaven unseen,  
And shows him glories yet to be reveal'd.  
Not slothful he, though seeming unemploy'd,  
And censured oft as useless. Stillest streams  
Oft water fairest meadows, and the bird  
That flutters least is longest on the wing.  
Ask him indeed what trophies he has raised,  
Or what achievements of immortal fame  
He purposes, and he shall answer—None.  
His warfare is within. There unfatigued  
His fervent spirit labours. There he fights,  
And there obtains fresh triumphs o'er himself,  
And never-withering wreaths, compared with which  
The laurels that a Cæsar reaps are weeds.  
Perhaps the self-approving haughty world,  
That as she sweeps him with her whistling silks  
Scarce deigns to notice him, or, if she see,  
Deems him a cipher in the works of God,  
Receives advantage from his noiseless hours  
Of which she little dreams. Perhaps she owes  
Her sunshine and her rain, her blooming spring  
And plenteous harvest, to the prayer he makes,  
When Isaac-like, the solitary saint  
Walks forth to meditate at eventide,  
And think on her, who thinks not for herself.  
Forgive him, then, thou bustler in concerns  
Of little worth, an idler at the best,  
If, author of no mischief and some good,  
He seeks his proper happiness by means  
That may advance, but cannot hinder thine.  
Nor though he tread the secret path of life,  
Engage no notice, and enjoy much ease,  
Account him an encumbrance on the state,  
Receiving benefits, and rendering none.  
His sphere, though humble, if that humble sphere  
Shine with his fair example, and though small  
His influence, if that influence all be spent  
In soothing sorrow and in quenching strife,  
In aiding helpless indigence, in works  
From which at least a grateful few derive

Some taste of comfort in a world of woe.  
Then let the supercilious great confess  
He serves his country ; recompenses well  
The state beneath the shadow of whose vine  
He sits secure ; and in the scale of life  
Holds no ignoble, though a slighted place.  
The man whose virtues are more felt than seen,  
Must drop indeed the hope of public praise ;  
But he may boast what few that win it can,  
That if his country stand not by his skill,  
At least his follies have not wrought her fall.  
Polite refinement offers him in vain  
Her golden tube, through which a sensual world  
Draws gross impurity, and likes it well,  
The neat conveyance hiding all the offence.  
Not that he peevishly rejects a mode  
Because that world adopts it. If it bear  
The stamp and clear impression of good sense  
And be not costly more than of true worth,  
He puts it on, and for decorum sake  
Can wear it even as gracefully as she.  
She judges of refinement by the eye,  
He by the test of conscience, and a heart  
Not soon deceived ; aware that what is base  
No polish can make sterling, and that vice,  
Though well perfumed and elegantly dress'd,  
Like an unburied carcass trick'd with flowers,  
Is but a garnish'd nuisance, fitter far  
For cleanly riddance than for fair attire.  
So life glides smoothly and by stealth away,  
More golden than that age of fabled gold  
Renown'd in ancient song ; not vex'd with care  
Or stained with guilt, beneficent, approved  
Of God and man, and peaceful in its end.  
So glide my life away ! and so at last,  
My share of duties decently fulfilled,  
May some disease, not tardy to perform  
Its destined office, yet with gentle stroke,  
Dismiss me weary to a safe retreat,  
Beneath the turf that I have often trod.  
It shall not grieve me, then, that once, when called  
To dress a Sofa with the flowers of verse,  
I played awhile, obedient to the fair,  
With that light task ; but soon, to please her more,  
Whom flowers alone I knew would little please,  
Let fall the unfinished wreath, and roved for fruit ;  
Roved far, and gathered much . some harsh, 'tis true,  
Picked from the thorns and briers of reproof,

But wholesome, well-digested ; grateful some  
To palates that can taste immortal truth,  
Insidious else, and sure to be despised.  
But all is in His hand whose praise I seek.  
In vain the Poet sings, and the World hears,  
If He regard not, though divine the theme.  
'Tis not in artful measures, in the chime  
And idle tinkling of a minstrel's lyre,  
To charm His ear, whose eye is on the heart,  
Whose frown can disappoint the proudest strain,  
Whose approbation prosper—even mine.



TIROCINIUM;  
OR, A REVIEW OF SCHOOLS.  
1785.

Κεφαλαιον δη παιδειας ορθη τροφη.—PLATO.  
Αρχη πολιτειας απασης, νεων τροφα.—DIOG. LAERT.

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TO THE  
REV. WILLIAM CAWTHORNE UNWIN,  
RECTOR OF STOCK IN ESSEX,  
THE TUTOR OF HIS TWO SONS,  
THE FOLLOWING POEM,  
RECOMMENDING PRIVATE TUITION IN PREFERENCE TO AN EDUCATION  
AT SCHOOL,  
IS INSCRIBED,  
BY HIS AFFECTIONATE FRIEND,  
WILLIAM COWPER.

*Olney, Nov. 6th, 1784.*

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It is not from his form, in which we trace  
Strength joined with beauty, dignity with grace,  
That man, the master of this globe, derives  
His right of empire over all that lives.  
That form, indeed, the associate of a mind  
Vast in its powers, ethereal in its kind,—  
That form, the labour of Almighty skill,  
Framed for the service of a free-born will,  
Asserts precedence, and bespeaks control,  
But borrows all its grandeur from the soul.  
Hers is the state, the splendour, and the throne,  
An intellectual kingdom, all her own.  
For her, the Memory fills her ample page  
With truths poured down from every distant age;  
For her, amasses an unbounded store,  
The wisdom of great nations, now no more;



Though laden, not encumbered with her spoil,  
 Laborious, yet unconscious of her toil,  
 When copiously supplied, then most enlarged,  
 Still to be fed, and not to be surcharged.  
 For her the Fancy, roving unconfined,  
 The present Muse of every pensive mind,  
 Works magic wonders, adds a brighter hue  
 To Nature's scenes, than Nature ever knew.  
 At her command winds rise and waters roar,  
 Again she lays them slumbering on the shore;  
 With flower and fruit the wilderness supplies,  
 Or bids the rocks in ruder pomp arise.  
 For her the Judgment, umpire in the strife  
 That Grace and Nature have to wage through life,  
 Quick-sighted arbiter of good and ill,  
 Appointed sage preceptor to the Will,  
 Condemns, approves, and with a faithful voice  
 Guides the decision of a doubtful choice.

Why did the fiat of a God give birth  
 To yon fair Sun and his attendant Earth?  
 And when descending he resigns the skies,  
 Why takes the gentler Moon her turn to rise,  
 Whom Ocean feels through all his countless waves,  
 And owns her power on every shore he laves?  
 Why do the seasons still enrich the year,  
 Fruitful and young as in their first career?  
 Spring hangs her infant blossoms on the trees,  
 Rocked in the cradle of the western breeze;  
 Summer in haste the thriving charge receives,  
 Beneath the shade of her expanded leaves,  
 Till Autumn's fiercer heats and plenteous dews  
 Dye them at last in all their glowing hues.—  
 'Twere wild profusion all, and bootless waste,  
 Power misemployed, munificence misplaced,  
 Had not its author dignified the plan,  
 And crowned it with the majesty of man.  
 Thus formed, thus placed, intelligent and taught,  
 Look where he will, the wonders God has wrought,  
 The wildest scorner of his Maker's laws  
 Finds in a sober moment time to pause,  
 To press the important question on his heart,  
 "Why form'd at all, and wherefore as thou art?"  
 If man be what he seems, this hour a slave,  
 The next mere dust and ashes in the grave;  
 Endued with reason only to descry  
 His crimes and follies with an aching eye;  
 With passions, just that he may prove, with pain,  
 The force he spends against their fury vain;

And if, soon after having burned, by turns,  
 With every lust with which frail Nature burns,  
 His being end where death dissolves the bond,  
 The tomb take all, and all be blank beyond ;  
 Then he, of all that Nature has brought forth,  
 Stands self-impeached the creature of least worth,  
 And useless while he lives, and when he dies,  
 Brings into doubt the wisdom of the skies.

Truths that the learned pursue with eager thought  
 Are not important always as dear-bought,  
 Proving at last, though told in pompous strains,  
 A childish waste of philosophic pains ;  
 But truths on which depends our main concern,  
 That 'tis our shame and misery not to learn,  
 Shine by the side of every path we tread,  
 With such a lustre he that runs may read.

'Tis true that, if to trifle life away  
 Down to the sunset of their latest day,  
 Then perish on futurity's wide shore  
 Like fleeting exhalations found no more,  
 Were all that Heaven required of humankind,  
 And all the plan their destiny designed,  
 What none could reverence all might justly blame,  
 And man would breathe but for his Maker's shame.  
 But Reason heard, and Nature well perused,  
 At once the dreaming mind is disabused.  
 If all we find possessing earth, sea, air,  
 Reflect His attributes who placed them there,  
 Fulfil the purpose, and appear designed  
 Proofs of the wisdom of the all-seeing mind,  
 'Tis plain the creature whom He chose to invest  
 With kingship and dominion o'er the rest,  
 Received his nobler nature, and was made  
 Fit for the power in which he stands arrayed,  
 That first or last, hereafter if not here,  
 He too might make his Author's wisdom clear,  
 Praise Him on earth, or obstinately dumb,  
 Suffer His justice in a world to come.

This once believed 'twere logic misapplied  
 To prove a consequence by none denied,  
 That we are bound to cast the minds of youth,  
 Betimes into the mould of heavenly truth,  
 That taught of God they may indeed be wise,  
 Not ignorantly wandering miss the skies.

In early days the Conscience has in most  
 A quickness which in later life is lost :  
 Preserved from guilt by salutary fears,  
 Or, guilty, soon relenting into tears.

Too careless often, as our years proceed,  
 What friends we sort with, or what books we read,  
 Our parents yet exert a prudent care  
 To feed our infant minds with proper fare,  
 And wisely store the nursery by degrees  
 With wholesome learning, yet acquired with ease.  
 Neatly secured from being soiled or torn  
 Beneath a pane of thin translucent horn,  
 A book (to please us at a tender age  
 'Tis called a book, though but a single page)  
 Presents the prayer the Saviour deigned to teach,  
 Which children use, and parsons—when they preach.  
 Lipping our syllables, we scramble next  
 Through moral narrative, or sacred text,  
 And learn with wonder how this world began,  
 Who made, who marred, and who has ransomed man;  
 Points, which, unless the Scripture made them plain,  
 The wisest heads might agitate in vain.  
 Oh thou,\* whom, borne on Fancy's eager wing  
 Back to the season of life's happy spring,  
 I pleased remember, and, while memory yet  
 Holds fast her office here, can ne'er forget;  
 Ingenious dreamer, in whose well-told tale  
 Sweet fiction and sweet truth alike prevail;  
 Whose humorous vein, strong sense, and simple style,  
 May teach the gayest, make the gravest smile,  
 Witty, and well-employed, and, like thy Lord,  
 Speaking in parables His shghted word,  
 I name thee not, lest so despised a name  
 Should move a sneer at thy deserved fame,  
 Yet even in transitory life's late day,  
 That mingles all my brown with sober grey,  
 Revere the man whose PILGRIM marks the road,  
 And guides the PROGRESS of the soul to God.  
 'Twere well with most, if books that could engage  
 Their childhood, pleased them at a riper age;  
 The man approving what had charmed the boy,  
 Would die at last in comfort, peace, and joy,  
 And not with curses on his art who stole  
 The gem of truth from his unguarded soul.  
 The stamp of artless piety impressed  
 By kind tuition on his yielding breast,  
 The youth now bearded, and yet pert and raw,  
 Regards with scorn, though once received with awe,  
 And warped into the labyrinth of lies,  
 That babblers, called philosophers, devise,

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\* John Bunyan.

Blasphemes his creed, as founded on a plan  
 Replete with dreams, unworthy of a man.  
 Touch but his nature in its ailing part,  
 Assert the native evil of his heart,  
 His pride resents the charge, although the proof \*  
 Rise in his forehead, and seem rank enough :  
 Point to the cure, describe a Saviour's cross  
 As God's expedient to retrieve his loss,  
 The young apostate sickens at the view,  
 And hates it with the malice of a Jew.

How weak the barrier of mere Nature proves,  
 Opposed against the pleasures Nature loves !  
 While self-betrayed, and wilfully undone,  
 She longs to yield, no sooner wooed than won.  
 Try now the merits of this blest exchange  
 Of modest truth for wit's eccentric range.  
 Time was he closed as he began the day,  
 With decent duty, not ashamed to pray ;  
 The practice was a bond upon his heart,  
 A pledge he gave for a consistent part ;  
 Nor could he dare presumptuously displease  
 A power, confessed so lately on his knees.  
 But now, farewell all legendary tales,  
 The shadows fly, philosophy prevails,  
 Prayer to the winds, and caution to the waves,  
 Religion makes the free by nature slaves,  
 Priests have invented, and the world admired,  
 What knavish priests promulgate as inspired,  
 Till Reason, now no longer overawed,  
 Resumes her powers, and spurns the clumsy fraud ;  
 And common sense diffusing real day,  
 The meteor of the Gospel dies away.  
 Such rhapsodies our shrewd discerning youth  
 Learn from expert inquirers after truth ;  
 Whose only care, might truth presume to speak,  
 Is not to find what they profess to seek.  
 And thus, well tutored only while we share  
 A mother's lecture and a nurse's care,  
 And taught at schools much mythologic stuff,†  
 But sound religion sparingly enough,  
 Our early notices of truth, disgraced,  
 Soon lose their credit, and are all effaced.

\* Alluding to Uzziah, King of Judah. See 2 Chron. xxvi. 19.

† The author begs leave to explain.—Sensible that, without such knowledge, neither the ancient poets nor historians can be tasted, or indeed understood, he does not mean to censure the pains that are taken to instruct a schoolboy in the religion of the heathen, but merely that neglect of Christian culture which leaves him shamefully ignorant of his own.—(C.)

Would you your son should be a sot or dunce,  
Lascivious, headstrong, or all these at once;  
That in good time, the stripling's finished taste  
For loose expense and fashionable waste,  
Should prove your ruin, and his own at last,  
Train him in public with a mob of boys,  
Childish in mischief only and in noise,  
Else of a mannish growth, and five in ten  
In infidelity and lewdness, men.  
There shall he learn, ere sixteen winters old,  
That authors are most useful, pawned or sold;  
That pedantry is all that schools impart,  
But taverns teach the knowledge of the heart;  
There waiter Dick, with Bacchanalian lays,  
Shall win his heart, and have his drunken praise,  
His counsellor and bosom-friend shall prove,  
And some street-pacing harlot his first love.  
Schools, unless discipline were doubly strong,  
Detain their adolescent charge too long;  
The management of tyros of eighteen  
Is difficult, their punishment obscene.  
The stout, tall captain, whose superior size  
The minor heroes view with envious eyes,  
Becomes their pattern, upon whom they fix  
Their whole attention, and ape all his tricks.  
His pride, that scorns to obey or to submit,  
With them is courage; his effrontery wit;  
His wild excursions, window-breaking feats,  
Robbery of gardens, quarrels in the streets,  
His hairbreadth 'scapes, and all his daring schemes,  
Transport them, and are made their favourite themes;  
In little bosoms such achievements strike  
A kindred spark, they burn to do the like.  
Thus, half accomplished ere he yet begin  
To show the peeping down upon his chin,  
And as maturity of years comes on,  
Made just the adept that you designed your son,  
To ensure the perseverance of his course,  
And give your monstrous project all its force,  
Send him to college. If he there be tamed,  
Or in one article of vice reclaimed,  
Where no regard of ord'nances is shown,  
Or looked for now, the fault must be his own.  
Some sneaking virtue lurks in him, no doubt,  
Where neither strumpets' charms, nor drinking bout,  
Nor gambling practices, can find it out.  
Such youths of spirit, and that spirit too,  
Ye nurseries of our boys, we owe to you :

Though from ourselves the mischief more proceeds,  
For public schools 'tis public folly feeds.  
The slaves of custom and established mode,  
With packhorse constancy we keep the road,  
Crooked or straight, through quags or thorny dells,  
True to the jingling of our leader's bells.  
To follow foolish precedents, and wink  
With both our eyes, is easier than to think,  
And such an age as ours balks no expense,  
Except of caution and of common sense;  
Else sure, notorious fact and proof so plain,  
Would turn our steps into a wiser train.  
I blame not those who, with what care they can,  
O'erwatch the numerous and unruly clan,  
Or if I blame, 'tis only that they dare  
Promise a work of which they must despair.  
Have ye, ye sage intendants of the whole,  
An ubiquarian presence and control,  
Elisha's eye, that when Gehazi strayed,  
Went with him, and saw all the game he played?  
Yes—ye are conscious; and on all the shelves  
Your pupils strike upon, have struck yourselves.  
Or if by nature sober, ye had then,  
Boys as ye were, the gravity of men,  
Ye knew at least, by constant proofs addressed  
To ears and eyes, the vices of the rest.  
But ye connive at what ye cannot cure,  
And evils not to be endured, endure,  
Lest power exerted, but without success,  
Should make the little ye retain still less.  
Ye once were justly famed for bringing forth  
Undoubted scholarship and genuine worth,  
And in the firmament of fame still shines  
A glory bright as that of all the signs,  
Of poets raised by you, and statesmen, and divines.  
Peace to them all! those brilliant times are fled,  
And no such lights are kindling in their stead.  
Our striplings shine indeed, but with such rays  
As set the midnight riot in a blaze,  
And seem, if judged by their expressive looks,  
Deeper in none than in their surgeons' books.  
Say, Muse (for education made the song,  
No Muse can hesitate or linger long)  
What causes move us, knowing, as we must,  
That these menageries all fail their trust,  
To send our sons to scout and scamper there,  
While colts and puppies cost us so much care?  
Be it a weakness, it deserves some praise,

We love the play-place of our early days.  
 The scene is touching, and the heart is stone  
 That feels not at that sight, and feels at none.  
 The wall on which we tried our graving skill,  
 The very name we carved subsisting still ;  
 The bench on which we sat while deep employed,  
 Though mangled, hacked, and hewed, not yet destroyed ;  
 The little ones, unbuttoned, glowing hot,  
 Playing our games, and on the very spot,  
 As happy as we once, to kneel and draw  
 The chalky ring, and knuckle down at taw ;  
 To pitch the ball into the grounded hat,  
 Or drive it devious with a dexterous pat ;  
 The pleasing spectacle at once excites  
 Such recollection of our own delights,  
 That viewing it, we seem almost to obtain  
 Our innocent sweet simple years again.  
 This fond attachment to the well-known place,  
 Whence first we started into life's long race,  
 Maintains its hold with such unfailing sway,  
 We feel it even in age, and at our latest day.  
 Hark ! how the sire of chits, whose future share  
 Of classic food begins to be his care,  
 With his own likeness placed on either knee,  
 Indulges all a father's heart-felt glee,  
 And tells them, as he strokes their silver locks,  
 That they must soon learn Latin, and to box ;  
 Then turning, he regales his listening wife  
 With all the adventures of his early life,  
 His skill in coachmanship, or driving chaise,  
 In bilking tavern bills, and spouting plays ;  
 What shifts he used, detected in a scrape,  
 How he was flogged, or had the luck to escape,  
 What sums he lost at play, and how he sold  
 Watch, seals, and all—till all his pranks are told.  
 Retracing thus his frolics ('tis a name  
 That palliates deeds of folly and of shame)  
 He gives the local bias all its sway,  
 Resolves that where he played his sons shall play,  
 And destines their bright genius to be shown  
 Just in the scene where he displayed his own.  
 The meek and bashful boy will soon be taught  
 To be as bold and forward as he ought,  
 The rude will scuffle through with ease enough,  
 Great schools suit best the sturdy and the rough.  
 Ah happy designation, prudent choice,  
 The event is sure, expect it, and rejoice !  
 Soon see your wish fulfilled in either child,

The pert made perter, and the tame made wild.  
The great, indeed, by titles, riches, birth,  
Excused the incumbrance of more solid worth,  
Are best disposed of where with most success  
They may acquire that confident address,  
Those habits of profuse and lewd expense,  
That scorn of all delights but those of sense,  
Which though in plain plebeians we condemn,  
With so much reason all expect from them.  
But families of less illustrious fame,  
Whose chief distinction is their spotless name,  
Whose heirs, their honours none, their income small,  
Must shine by true desert, or not at all,  
What dream they of, that, with so little care  
They risk their hopes, their dearest treasure, there ?  
They dream of little Charles or William graced  
With wig prolix, down-flowing to his waist,  
They see the attentive crowds his talents draw,  
They hear him speak—the oracle of law.  
The father who designs his babe a priest,  
Dreams him episcopally such at least,  
And while the playful jockey scours the room  
Briskly, astride upon the parlour broom,  
In fancy sees him more superbly ride  
In coach with purple lined, and mitres on its side.  
Events improbable and strange as these,  
Which only a parental eye foresees,  
A public school shall bring to pass with ease.  
But how ? resides such virtue in that air,  
As must create an appetite for prayer ?  
And will it breathe into him all the zeal  
That candidates for such a prize should feel,  
To take the lead and be the foremost still  
In all true worth and literary skill ?  
“ Ah blind to bright futurity, untaught  
“ The knowledge of the world, and dull of thought !  
“ Church-ladders are not always mounted best  
“ By learned clerks, and Latinists professed.  
“ The exalted prize demands an upward look,  
“ Not to be found by poring on a book.  
“ Small skill in Latin, and still less in Greek,  
“ Is more than adequate to all I seek.  
“ Let erudition grace him or not grace,  
“ I give the bauble but the second place,  
“ His wealth, fame, honours, all that I intend,  
“ Subsist and centre in one point—a friend.  
“ A friend, whate’er he studies or neglects,  
“ Shall give him consequence, heal all defects.



"His intercourse with peers, and sons of peers—  
 "There dawns the splendour of his future years,  
 "In that bright quarter his propitious skies  
 "Shall blush betimes, and there his glory rise.  
 "'Your Lordship!' and 'Your Grace!' what school can teach  
 "A rhetoric equal to those parts of speech?  
 "What need of Homer's verse, or Tully's prose,  
 "Sweet interjections! if he learn but those?  
 "Let reverend churls his ignorance rebuke,  
 "Who starve upon a dog's-ear'd Pentateuch,  
 "The parson knows enough who knows a Duke."  
 Egregious purpose! worthily begun  
 In barbarous prostitution of your son;  
 Pressed on his part by means that would disgrace  
 A scrivener's clerk, or footman out of place,  
 And ending, if at last its end be gained,  
 In sacrilege, in God's own house profaned.  
 It may succeed; and if his sins should call  
 For more than common punishment, it shall.  
 The wretch shall rise, and be the thing on earth  
 Least qualified in honour, learning, worth,  
 To occupy a sacred, awful post,  
 In which the best and worthiest tremble most.  
 The royal letters are a thing of course,  
 A king, that would, might recommend his horse,  
 And Deans, no doubt, and Chapters, with one voice,  
 As bound in duty, would confirm the choice.  
 Behold your Bishop! well he plays his part,  
 Christian in name, and infidel in heart,  
 Ghostly in office, earthly in his plan,  
 A slave at court, elsewhere a lady's man,  
 Dumb as a senator, and as a priest  
 A piece of mere church-furniture at best;  
 To live estranged from God his total scope,  
 And his end sure, without one glimpse of hope.  
 But fair although and feasible it seem,  
 Depend not much upon your golden dream;  
 For Providence, that seems concerned to exempt  
 The hallowed bench from absolute contempt,  
 In spite of all the wrigglers into place,  
 Still keeps a seat or two for worth and grace;  
 And therefore 'tis, that, though the sight be rare,  
 We sometimes see a Lowth or Bagot\* there.  
 Besides, school-friendships are not always found,  
 Though fair in promise, permanent and sound;

\* Bishop Lowth, author of "The Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews," &c. Bishop Bagot, an excellent prelate, adorned the hierarchy by his virtues.

The most disinterested and virtuous minds,  
In early years connected, time unbinds;  
New situations give a different cast  
Of habit, inclination, temper, taste;  
And he that seemed our counterpart at first,  
Soon shows the strong similitude reversed.  
Young heads are giddy, and young hearts are warm,  
And make mistakes for manhood to reform.  
Boys are, at best, but pretty buds unblown,  
Whose scent and hues are rather guessed than known;  
Each dreams that each is just what he appears,  
But learns his error in maturer years,  
When disposition, like a sail unfurled,  
Shows all its rents and patches to the world.  
If, therefore, even when honest in design,  
A boyish friendship may so soon decline,  
'Twere wiser sure to inspire a little heart  
With just abhorrence of so mean a part,  
Than set your son to work at a vile trade  
For wages so unlikely to be paid.

Our public hives of puerile resort,  
That are of chief and most approved report,  
To such base hopes, in many a sordid soul,  
Owe their repute in part, but not the whole.  
A principle, whose proud pretensions pass  
Unquestioned, though the jewel be but glass,  
That with a world, not often over-nice,  
Ranks as a virtue, and is yet a vice,  
Or rather a gross compound, justly tried,  
Of envy, hatred, jealousy and pride,  
Contributes most perhaps to enhance their fame,  
And Emulation is its specious name.  
Boys, once on fire with that contentious zeal,  
Feel all the rage that female rivals feel,  
The prize of beauty in a woman's eyes  
Not brighter than in theirs the scholar's prize.  
The spirit of that competition burns  
With all varieties of ill by turns,  
Each vainly magnifies his own success,  
Resents his fellow's, wishes it were less,  
Exults in his miscarriage if he fail,  
Deems his reward too great if he prevail,  
And labours to surpass him day and night,  
Less for improvement than to tickle spite.  
The spur is powerful, and I grant its force,  
It pricks the genius forward in its course,  
Allows short time for play, and none for sloth,  
And felt alike by each, advances both,

But judge, where so much evil intervenes,  
 The end, though plausible, not worth the means.  
 Weigh, for a moment, classical desert  
 Against a heart depraved and temper hurt,  
 Hurt too perhaps for life, for early wrong  
 Done to the nobler part affects it long;  
 And you are staunch indeed in learning's cause  
 If you can crown a discipline that draws  
 Such mischiefs after it, with much applause.  
 Connexion formed for interest, and endeared  
 By selfish views, thus censured and cashiered;  
 And Emulation, as engendering hate,  
 Doomed to a no less ignominious fate:  
 The props of such proud seminaries fall,  
 The Jachin and the Boaz\* of them all.  
 Great schools rejected then, as those that swell  
 Beyond a size that can be managed well,  
 Shall royal institutions miss the bays,  
 And small academies win all the praise?  
 Force not my drift beyond its just intent,  
 I praise a school as Pope a government;  
 So take my judgment in his language dressed,  
 "Whate'er is best administered, is best."  
 Few boys are born with talents that excel,  
 But all are capable of living well;  
 Then ask not, whether limited or large?  
 But, watch they strictly, or neglect their charge?  
 If anxious only that their boys may learn,  
 While morals languish, a despised concern,  
 The great and small deserve one common blame,  
 Different in size, but in effect the same.  
 Much zeal in virtue's cause all teachers boast,  
 Though motives of mere lucre sway the most;  
 Therefore in towns and cities they abound,  
 For there the game they seek is easiest found,  
 Though there, in spite of all that care can do,  
 Traps to catch youth are most abundant too.  
 If shrewd, and of a well-constructed brain,  
 Keen in pursuit, and vigorous to retain,  
 Your son come forth a prodigy of skill;  
 As wheresoever taught, so formed, he will,  
 The pedagogue, with self complacent air,  
 Claims more than half the praise as his due share;  
 But if, with all his genius, he betray,  
 Not more intelligent than loose and gay,

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\* 1 Kings vii. 21.

Such vicious habits as disgrace his name,  
Threaten his health, his fortune, and his fame,  
Though want of due restraint alone have bred  
The symptoms that you see with so much dread,  
Unenvied there, he may sustain alone  
The whole reproach, the fault was all his own.

Oh! 'tis a sight to be with joy perused,  
By all whom sentiment has not abused,  
New-fangled sentiment, the boasted grace  
Of those who never feel in the right place,  
A sight surpassed by none that we can show,  
Though Vestris on one leg still shine below,  
A father blest with an ingenuous son,  
Father, and friend, and tutor, all in one.  
How!—turn again to tales long since forgot,  
Æsop, and Phædrus, and the rest?—Why not?  
He will not blush, that has a father's heart,  
To take in childish plays a childish part,  
But bends his sturdy back to any toy  
That youth takes pleasure in, to please his boy;  
Then why resign into a stranger's hand  
A task as much within your own command,  
That God and Nature, and your interest too,  
Seem with one voice to delegate to you?  
Why hire a lodging in a house unknown  
For one whose tenderest thoughts all hover round your own?  
This second weaning, needless as it is,  
How does it lacerate both your heart and his!  
The indented stick that loses day by day  
Notch after notch till all are smoothed away,  
Pears witness, long ere his dismission come,  
With what intense desire he wants his home.  
But though the joys he hopes beneath your roof  
Bid fair enough to answer in the proof,  
Harmless, and safe, and natural as they are,  
A disappointment waits him even there:  
Arrived, he feels an unexpected change,  
He blushes, hangs his head, is shy, and strange,  
No longer takes, as once, with fearless ease,  
His favourite stand between his father's knees,  
But seeks the corner of some distant seat,  
And eyes the door, and watches a retreat,  
And least familiar where he should be most,  
Feels all his happiest privileges lost.  
Alas, poor boy!—the natural effect  
Of love by absence chilled into respect.  
Say, what accomplishments at school acquired,  
Brings he to sweeten fruits so undesired?



Thou well deservest an alienated son,  
 Unless thy conscious heart acknowledge—none;  
 None that, in thy domestic snug recess,  
 He had not made his own with more address,  
 Though some, perhaps, that shock thy feeling mind.  
 And better never learned, or left behind.  
 Add too, that thus estranged, thou canst obtain  
 By no kind arts his confidence again;  
 That here begins with most that long complaint  
 Of filial frankness lost, and love grown faint,  
 Which, oft neglected, in life's waning years  
 A parent pours into regardless ears.

Like caterpillars dangling under trees  
 By slender threads, and swinging in the breeze,  
 Which filthily bewray and sore disgrace  
 The boughs on which are bred the unseemly race,  
 While every worm industriously weaves  
 And winds his web about the rivelled leaves,  
 So numerous are the follies that annoy  
 The mind and heart of every sprightly boy;  
 Imaginations noxious and perverse,  
 Which admonition can alone disperse.  
 The encroaching nuisance asks a faithful hand,  
 Patient, affectionate, of high command,  
 To check the procreation of a breed  
 Sure to exhaust the plant on which they feed.  
 'Tis not enough that Greek or Roman page,  
 At stated hours, his freakish thoughts engage;  
 Even in his pastimes he requires a friend  
 To warn, and teach him safely to unbend,  
 O'er all his pleasures gently to preside,  
 Watch his emotions and control their tide,  
 And levying thus, and with an easy sway,  
 A tax of profit from his very play,  
 To impress a value, not to be erased,  
 On moments squandered else, and running all to waste  
 And seems it nothing in a father's eye  
 That unimproved those many moments fly?  
 And is he well content his son should find  
 No nourishment to feed his growing mind,  
 But conjugated verbs, and nouns declined?  
 For such is all the mental food purveyed  
 By public hackneys in the schooling trade;  
 Who feed a pupil's intellect with store  
 Of syntax truly, but with little more,  
 Dismiss their cares when they dismiss their flock,  
 Machines themselves, and governed by a clock.  
 Perhaps a father, blessed with any brains,

Would deem it no abuse, or waste of pains,  
To improve this diet, at no great expense,  
With savoury truth and wholesome common sense ;  
To lead his son for prospects of delight,  
To some not steep, though philosophic, height,  
Thence to exhibit to his wondering eyes  
Yon circling worlds, their distance, and their size,  
The moon of Jove, and Saturn's belted ball,  
And the harmonious order of them all ;  
To show him in an insect, or a flower,  
Such microscopic proof of skill and power,  
As, hid from ages passed, God now displays  
To combat atheists with in modern days ;  
To spread the earth before him and commend,  
With designation of the finger's end,  
Its various parts to his attentive note,  
Thus bringing home to him the most remote ;  
To teach his heart to glow with generous flame,  
Caught from the deeds of men of ancient fame ;  
And more than all, with commendation due,  
To set some living worthy in his view,  
Whose fair example may at once inspire  
A wish to copy what he must admire.  
Such knowledge, gained betimes, and which appears,  
Though solid, not too weighty for his years,  
Sweet in itself, and not forbidding sport,  
When health demands it, of athletic sort,  
Would make him what some lovely boys have been,  
And more than one perhaps that I have seen,  
An evidence and reprehension both  
Of the mere schoolboy's lean and tardy growth.

Art thou a man professionally tied,  
With all thy faculties elsewhere applied,  
Too busy to intend a meaner care  
Than how to enrich thyself, and next, thine heir ?  
Or art thou (as, though rich, perhaps thou art)  
But poor in knowledge, having none to impart ?  
Behold that figure, neat though plainly clad,  
His sprightly mingled with a shade of sad ;  
Not of a nimble tongue, though now and then  
Heard to articulate like other men,  
No jester, and yet lively in discourse,  
His phrase well-chosen, clear, and full of force,  
And his address, if not quite French in ease,  
Not English stiff, but frank and form'd to please,  
Low in the world, because he scorns its arts,  
A man of letters, manners, morals, parts,  
Unpatronized, and therefore little known,

Wise for himself and his few friends alone—  
In him thy well-appointed proxy see,  
Armed for a work too difficult for thee;  
Prepared by taste, by learning, and true worth,  
To form thy son, to strike his genius forth,  
Beneath thy roof, beneath thy eye, to prove  
The force of discipline when backed by love.  
To double all thy pleasure in thy child,  
His mind informed, his morals undefiled.  
Safe under such a wing, the boy shall show  
No spots contracted among grooms below,  
Nor taint his speech with meannesses, designed  
By footman Tom for witty and refined.  
There in his commerce with the liveried herd,  
Lurks the contagion chiefly to be feared;  
For since (so fashion dictates) all, who claim  
A higher than a mere plebeian fame,  
Find it expedient, come what mischief may,  
To entertain a thief or two in pay,  
And they that can afford the expense of more,  
Some half a dozen, and some half a score,  
Great cause occurs to save him from a band  
So sure to spoil him, and so near at hand,  
A point secured, if once he be supplied  
With some such Mentor always at his side.  
Are such men rare? perhaps they would abound  
Were occupation easier to be found,  
Were education, else so sure to fail,  
Conducted on a manageable scale,  
And schools that have outlived all just esteem,  
Exchanged for the secure domestic scheme.—  
But having found him, be thou Duke or Earl,  
Show thou hast sense enough to prize the pearl,  
And as thou wouldst the advancement of thine heir  
In all good faculties beneath his care,  
Respect, as is but rational and just,  
A man deemed worthy of so dear a trust.  
Despised by thee, what more can he expect  
From youthful folly, than the same neglect?  
A flat and fatal negative obtains  
That instant, upon all his future pains;  
His lessons tire, his mild rebukes offend,  
And all the instructions of thy son's best friend  
Are a stream choked, or trickling to no end.  
Doom him not then to solitary meals,  
But recollect that he has sense, and feels,  
And that, possessor of a soul refined,  
An upright heart, and cultivated mind.

His post not mean, his talents not unknown,  
He deems it hard to vegetate alone.  
And if admitted at thy board he sit,  
Account him no just mark for idle wit,  
Offend not him, whom modesty restrains  
From repartee, with jokes that he disdains,  
Much less transfix his feelings with an oath,  
Nor frown unless he vanish with the cloth.—  
And trust me, his utility may reach  
To more than he is hired or bound to teach,  
Much trash unuttered, and some ills undone,  
Through reverence of the censor of thy son.

But, if thy table be indeed unclean,  
Foul with excess, and with discourse obscene,  
And thou a wretch, whom, following her old plan,  
The world accounts an honourable man,  
Because forsooth thy courage has been tried  
And stood the test, perhaps on the wrong side ;  
Though thou hadst never grace enough to prove  
That anything but vice could win thy love ;—  
Or hast thou a polite, card-playing wife,  
Chained to the routs that she frequents for life ;  
Who, just when industry begins to snore,  
Flies, winged with joy, to some coach-crowded door ;  
And thrice in every winter throngs thine own  
With half the chariots and sedans in town,  
Thyself meanwhile e'en shifting as thou mayst,  
Not very sober though, nor very chaste ;—  
Or is thine house, though less superb thy rank,  
If not a scene of pleasure, a mere blank,  
And thou at best, and in thy soberest mood,  
A trifter vain, and empty of all good ?  
Though mercy for thyself thou canst have none,  
Hear Nature plead, show mercy to thy son,  
Saved from his home, where every day brings forth  
Some mischief fatal to his future worth,  
Find him a better in a distant spot,  
Within some pious pastor's humble cot,  
Where vile example (yours I chiefly mean,  
The most seducing, and the oftenest seen)  
May never more be stamped upon his breast,  
Not yet perhaps incurably impressed.  
Where early rest makes early rising sure,  
Disease or comes not, or finds easy cure,  
Prevented much by diet neat and plain ;  
Or if it enter, soon starved out again :  
Where all the attention of his faithful host,  
Discreetly limited to two at most,



May raise such fruits as shall reward his care,  
 And not at last evaporate in air :  
 Where, stillness aiding study, and his mind,  
 Serene, and to his duties much inclined,  
 Not occupied in day-dreams, as at home,  
 Of pleasures past, or follies yet to come,  
 His virtuous toil may terminate at last  
 In settled habit and decided taste.—  
 But whom do I advise ? the fashion-led,  
 The incorrigibly wrong, the deaf, the dead !  
 Whom care and cool deliberation suit  
 Not better much than spectacles a brute ;  
 Who if their sons some slight tuition share,  
 Deem it of no great moment whose, or where ;  
 Too proud to adopt the thoughts of one unknown,  
 And much too gay to have any of their own.  
 But courage, man ! methought the Muse replied,  
 Mankind are various, and the world is wide :  
 The ostrich, silliest of the feathered kind,  
 And formed of God without a parent's mind,  
 Commits her eggs, incautious, to the dust,  
 Forgetful that the foot may crush the trust ;  
 And while on public nurseries they rely,  
 Not knowing, and too oft not caring, why,  
 Irrational in what they thus prefer,  
 No few, that would seem wise, resemble her.  
 But all are not alike. Thy warning voice  
 May here and there prevent erroneous choice ;  
 And some perhaps, who, busy as they are,  
 Yet make their progeny their dearest care  
 (Whose hearts will ache, once told what ills may reach  
 Their offspring, left upon so wild a beach),  
 Will need no stress of argument to enforce  
 The expedience of a less adventurous course :  
 The rest will slight thy counsel, or condemn ;  
 But *they* have human feelings—turn to *them*.  
 To you, then, tenants of life's middle state,  
 Securely placed between the small and great,  
 Whose character, yet undebauched, retains  
 Two-thirds of all the virtue that remains,  
 Who, wise yourselves, desire your sons should learn  
 Your wisdom and your ways—to you I turn.  
 Look round you on a world perversely blind ;  
 See what contempt is fallen on humankind ;  
 See wealth abused, and dignities misplaced,  
 Great titles, offices, and trusts disgraced,  
 Long lines of ancestry, renowned of old,  
 Their noble qualities all quenched and cold ;

See Bedlam's closeted and handcuffed charge  
Surpassed in frenzy by the mad at large;  
See great commanders making war a trade,  
Great lawyers, lawyers without study made:  
Churchmen, in whose esteem their best employ  
Is odious, and their wages all their joy,  
Who far enough from furnishing their shelves  
With Gospel lore, turn infidels themselves;  
See womanhood despised, and manhood shamed  
With infamy too nauseous to be named,  
Fops at all corners, ladylike in mien,  
Civeted fellows, smelt ere they are seen,  
Else coarse and rude in manners, and their tongue  
On fire with curses and with nonsense hung,  
Now flushed with drunkenness, now with whoredom pale,  
Their breath a sample of last night's regale;  
See volunteers in all the vilest arts,  
Men well endowed, of honourable parts,  
Designed by Nature wise, but self-made fools;  
All these, and more like these, were bred at schools.  
And if it chance, as sometimes chance it will,  
That though school-bred the boy be virtuous still,  
Such rare exceptions, shining in the dark,  
Prove, rather than impeach, the just remark,  
As here and there a twinkling star descried  
Serves but to show how black is all beside.  
Now look on him, whose very voice in tone  
Just echoes thine, whose features are thine own,  
And stroke his polished cheek of purest red,  
And lay thine hand upon his flaxen head,  
And say,—“ My boy, the unwelcome hour is come,  
“ When thou, transplanted from thy genial home,  
“ Must find a colder soil and bleaker air,  
“ And trust for safety to a stranger's care.  
“ What character, what turn thou wilt assume  
“ From constant converse with I know not whom;  
“ Who there will court thy friendship, with what views,  
“ And, artless as thou art, whom thou wilt choose;  
“ Though much depends on what thy choice shall be,  
“ Is all chance-medley, and unknown to me.”  
Canst thou, the tear just trembling on thy lids,  
And while the dreadful risk foreseen forbids;  
Free, too, and under no constraining force,  
Unless the sway of custom warp thy course;  
Lay such a stake upon the losing side,  
Merely to gratify so blind a guide?  
Thou canst not! Nature, pulling at thine heart,  
Condemns the unfatherly, the imprudent part.

Thou wouldst not, deaf to Nature's tenderest plea,  
 Turn him adrift upon a rolling sea,  
 Nor say,—“Go thither;”—conscious that there lay  
 A brood of asps, or quicksands, in his way;  
 Then, only governed by the self-same rule  
 Of natural pity, send him not to school.  
 No!—guard him better. Is he not thine own,  
 Thyself in miniature, thy flesh, thy bone?  
 And hopest thou not ('tis every father's hope)  
 That since thy strength must with thy years elope,  
 And thou wilt need some comfort to assuage  
 Health's last farewell, a staff of thine old age,  
 That then, in recompense of all thy cares,  
 Thy child shall show respect to thy gray hairs,  
 Befriend thee, of all other friends bereft,  
 And give thy life its only cordial left?  
 Aware then how much danger intervenes,  
 To compass that good end, forecast the means.  
 His heart, now passive, yields to thy command;  
 Secure it thine, its key is in thine hand.  
 If thou desert thy charge, and throw it wide,  
 Nor heed what guests there enter and abide,  
 Complain not if attachments lewd and base  
 Supplant thee in it, and usurp thy place.  
 But if thou guard its sacred chambers sure  
 From vicious inmates and delights impure,  
 Either his gratitude shall hold him fast,  
 And keep him warm and filial to the last;  
 Or if he prove unkind (as who can say,  
 But being man, and therefore frail, he may)  
 One comfort yet shall cheer thine aged heart;—  
 Howe'er he slight thee, thou hast done thy part.  
 “Oh, barbarous! wouldst thou with a Gothic hand  
 Pull down the schools—what!—all the schools i' th' land;  
 Or throw them up to livery-nags and grooms,  
 Or turn them into shops and auction-rooms?”  
 A captious question, sir, and yours is one,  
 Deserves an answer similar, or none.  
 Wouldst thou, possessor of a flock, employ  
 (Apprised that he is such) a careless boy,  
 And feed him well, and give him handsome pay,  
 Merely to sleep, and let them run astray?  
 Survey our schools and colleges, and see  
 A sight not much unlike my simile.  
 From education, as the leading cause,  
 The public character its colour draws;  
 Thence the prevailing manners take their cast,  
 Extravagant or sober, loose or chaste.

And, though I would not advertise them yet,  
Nor write on each—"This building to be let,"  
Unless the world were all prepared to embrace  
A plan well worthy to supply their place;  
Yet, backward as they are, and long have been,  
To cultivate and keep the *MORALS* clean  
(Forgive the crime), I wish them, I confess,  
Or better managed, or encouraged less.



## Miscellaneous Poems.

1779 to 1799.

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### A TALE, FOUNDED ON A FACT,

WHICH HAPPENED IN JANUARY, 1779.

WHERE Humber pours his rich commercial stream,  
There dwelt a wretch, who breathed but to blaspheme;  
In subterraneous caves his life he led,  
Black as the mine in which he wrought for bread.  
When on a day, emerging from the deep,  
A Sabbath-day (such sabbaths thousands keep!)  
The wages of his weekly toil he bore  
To buy a cock—whose blood might win him more;  
As if the noblest of the feathered kind  
Were but for battle and for death designed;  
As if the consecrated hours were meant  
For sport, to minds on cruelty intent;  
It chanced (such chances Providence obey)  
He met a fellow-labourer on the way,  
Whose heart the same desires had once enflamed;  
But now the savage temper was reclaimed.  
Persuasion on his lips had taken place;  
For all plead well who plead the cause of Grace.  
His iron heart with scripture he assailed,  
Wooded him to hear a sermon, and prevailed.  
His faithful bow the mighty preacher drew,  
Swift as the lightning-glimpse the arrow flew;  
He wept; he trembled; cast his eyes around,  
To find a worse than he; but none he found.  
He felt his sins, and wondered he should feel;  
Grace made the wound, and Grace alone could heal.  
Now farewell oaths, and blasphemies, and lies!  
He quits the sinner's for the martyr's prize.  
That holy day was washed with many a tear,  
Gilded with hope, yet shaded too by fear.  
The next, his swarthy brethren of the mine  
Learned, by his altered speech, the change divine!  
Laughed when they should have wept, and swore the day  
Was nigh when he would swear as fast as they.

"No," said the penitent, "such words shall share  
This breath no more; devoted now to prayer.  
Oh! if Thou seest (Thine eye the future sees)  
That I shall yet again blaspheme, like these;  
Now strike me to the ground on which I kneel,  
Ere yet this heart relapses into steel;  
Now take me to that Heaven I once defied,  
Thy presence, Thy embrace!"—He spoke, and died!

THE PINEAPPLE AND THE BEE.

1779.

THE pineapples, in triple row,  
Were basking hot, and all in blow.  
A bee of most deserving taste  
Perceived the fragrance as he pass'd,  
On eager wing the spoiler came,  
And search'd for crannies in the frame,  
Urged his attempt on every side,  
To every pane his trunk applied;  
But still in vain, the frame was tight,  
And only pervious to the light:  
Thus having wasted half the day,  
He trimm'd his flight another way.  
Methinks, I said, in thee I find  
The sin and madness of mankind.  
To joys forbidden man aspires,  
Consumes his soul with vain desires;  
Folly the spring of his pursuit,  
And disappointment all the fruit.  
While Cynthia ogles, as she passes,  
The nymph between two chariot glasses,  
She is the pineapple, and he  
The silly unsuccessful bee.  
The maid who views with pensive air  
The showglass fraught with glittering ware,  
Sees watches, bracelets, rings, and lockets,  
But sighs at thought of empty pockets;  
Like thine, her appetite is keen,  
But ah, the cruel glass between!  
Our dear delights are often such,  
Exposed to view, but not to touch;  
Tho' sight our foolish heart inflames,  
We long for pineapples in frames;

## MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

With hopeless wish one looks and lingers;  
 One breaks the glass, and cuts his fingers;  
 But they whom Truth and Wisdom lead,  
 Can gather honey from a weed.

## THE LOVE OF THE WORLD REPROVED;

OR, HYPOCRISY DETECTED.\*

Thus says the prophet of the Turk,  
 "Good Mussulman, abstain from pork;  
 There is a part in every swine  
 No friend or follower of mine  
 May taste, whate'er his inclination,  
 On pain of excommunication."  
 Such Mahomet's mysterious charge,  
 And thus he left the point at large.  
 [Had he the sinful part expressed,  
 They might with safety eat the rest;  
 But for one piece they thought it hard  
 From the whole hog to be debarred;  
 And set their wit at work to find  
 What joint the prophet had in mind.†]  
 Much controversy straight arose,  
 These choose the back, the belly those;  
 By some 'tis confidently said  
 He meant not to forbid the head;  
 While others at that doctrine rail,  
 And piously prefer the tail.  
 Thus, conscience freed from every clog,  
 Mahometans eat up the hog.

You laugh—'tis well—the tale applied  
 May make you laugh on t'other side.  
 "Renounce the world"—the preacher cries.  
 "We do"—a multitude replies.  
 While one as innocent regards  
 A snug and friendly game at cards;  
 And one, whatever you may say,  
 Can see no evil in a play;  
 Some love a concert, or a race;  
 And others shooting, and the chase.

\* It may be proper to inform the reader that this piece has already appeared in print, having found its way, though with some unnecessary additions by an unknown hand, into the *Leeds Journal*, without the author's privity.—(C. 1782.)

† The lines between the brackets were added by Newton.

Reviled and loved, renounced and followed,  
Thus, bit by bit, the world is swallowed;  
Each thinks his neighbour makes too free,  
Yet likes a slice as well as he:  
With sophistry their sauce they sweeten,  
Till quite from tail to snout 'tis eaten.

ON THE PROMOTION OF EDWARD THURLOW, ESQ.,

TO THE LORD HIGH CHANCELLORSHIP OF ENGLAND.\*

1779.

ROUND Thurlow's head in early youth,  
And in his sportive days,  
Fair Science pour'd the light of truth,  
And Genius shed its rays.

See! with united wonder cried  
The experienced and the sage,  
Ambition in a boy supplied  
With all the skill of age!

Discernment, eloquence, and grace,  
Proclaim him born to sway  
The balance in the highest place,  
And bear the palm away.

The praise bestow'd was just and wise;  
He sprang impetuous forth,  
Secure of conquest, where the prize  
Attends superior worth.

So the best courser on the plain  
Ere yet he starts is known,  
And does but at the goal obtain  
What all had deem'd his own.

THE MODERN PATRIOT.

REBELLION is my theme all day;  
I only wish 'twould come  
(As who knows but perhaps it may?)  
A little nearer home.

\* Thurlow was fellow clerk with Cowper, at Mr. Chapman's, the solicitor, Ely-place, Holborn



# MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

Yon roaring boys, who rave and fight  
On t'other side the Atlantic,  
I always held them in the right,  
But most so when most frantic.

When lawless mobs insult the court,  
That man shall be my toast,  
If breaking windows be the sport,  
Who bravely breaks the most.

But oh! for him my fancy culls  
The choicest flowers she bears,  
Who constitutionally pulls  
Your house about your ears.

Such civil broils are my delight,  
Though some folks can't endure them,  
Who say the mob are mad outright,  
And that a rope must cure them.

A rope! I wish we patriots had  
Such strings for all who need 'em—  
What? hang a man for going mad!  
Then farewell British freedom.

## THE NIGHTINGALE AND GLOWWORM.

A NIGHTINGALE, that all day long  
Hath cheer'd the village with his song,  
Nor yet at eve his note suspended,  
Nor yet when eventide was ended,  
Began to feel, as well he might,  
The keen demands of appetite;  
When, looking eagerly around,  
He spied far off, upon the ground,  
A something shining in the dark,  
And knew the glowworm by his spark;  
So stooping down from hawthorn top,  
He thought to put him in his crop.  
The worm, aware of his intent,  
Harangued him thus, right eloquent:—  
“Did you admire my lamp,” quoth he,  
“As much as I your minstrelsy,  
You would abhor to do me wrong,  
As much as I to spoil your song;  
For 'twas the self-same power Divine  
Taught you to sing, and me to shine

That you with music, I with light,  
Might beautify and cheer the night."  
The songster heard his short oration,  
And, warbling out his approbation,  
Released him, as my story tells,  
And found a supper somewhere else.

Hence jarring sectaries may learn  
Their real interest to discern;  
That brother should not war with brother,  
And worry and devour each other;  
But sing and shine with sweet consent,  
Till life's poor transient night is spent,  
Respecting in each other's case  
The gifts of nature and of grace.

Those Christians best deserve the name,  
Who studiously make peace their aim;  
Peace both the duty and the prize  
Of him that creeps and him that flies.

## THE RAVEN.

1780.

A RAVEN, while with glossy breast  
Her new-laid eggs she fondly press'd,  
And, on her wicker-work high mounted,  
Her chickens prematurely counted,  
(A fault philosophers might blame,  
If quite exempted from the same,)  
Enjoy'd at ease the genial day;  
'Twas April, as the bumpkins say,  
The legislature call'd it May.\*  
But suddenly a wind, as high  
As ever swept a winter sky,  
Shook the young leaves about her ears,  
And fill'd her with a thousand fears,  
Lest the rude blast should snap the bough,  
And spread her golden hopes below.  
But just at eve the blowing weather  
And all her fears were hush'd together;  
"And now," quoth poor unthinking Ralph,  
"'Tis over, and the brood is safe;"

\* Alluding to the change of style, by which, in 1752, eleven days were deducted from the year. It was long before the peasantry would accept the advanced dates

(For ravens, though, as birds of omen,  
 They teach both conjurers and old women  
 To tell us what is to befall,  
 Can't prophesy themselves at all.)  
 The morning came, when neighbour Hodge,  
 Who long had mark'd her airy lodge,  
 And destined all the treasure there  
 A gift to his expecting fair,  
 Climb'd like a squirrel to his dray,  
 And bore the worthless prize away.

## MORAL.

'Tis Providence alone secures  
 In every change both mine and yours :  
 Safety consists not in escape  
 From dangers of a frightful shape ;  
 An earthquake may be bid to sparo  
 The man that's strangled by a hair.  
 Fate steals along with silent tread,  
 Found oftenest in what least we dread,  
 Frowns in the storm with angry brow,  
 But in the sunshine strikes the blow.

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 THE DOVES.\*

REASONING at every step he treads,  
 Man yet mistakes his way,  
 While meaner things, whom instinct leads,  
 Are rarely known to stray.

One silent eve I wander'd late,  
 And heard the voice of love ;  
 The turtle thus address'd her mate,  
 And soothed the listening dove :

" Our mutual bond of faith and truth  
 No time shall disengage,  
 Those blessings of our early youth,  
 Shall cheer our latest age :

" While innocence without disguise,  
 And constancy sincere,  
 Shall fill the circles of those eyes,  
 And mine can read them there ;

---

\* Probably Mr. and Mrs. Bull. He sent the fable in a letter to Mrs. Newton.

"Those ills, that wait on all below,  
Shall ne'er be felt by me,  
Or gently felt, and only so,  
As being shared by thee.

"When lightnings flash among the trees,  
Or kites are hovering near,  
I fear lest thee alone they seize,  
And know no other fear.

"'Tis then I feel myself a wife,  
And press thy wedded side,  
Resolved a union form'd for life  
Death never shall divide.

"But oh! if fickle and unchaste,  
(Forgive a transient thought,)  
Thou couldst become unkind at last,  
And scorn thy present lot,

"No need of lightnings from on high,  
Or kites with cruel beak;  
Denied the endearments of thine eye,  
This widow'd heart would break."

Thus sang the sweet sequester'd bird,  
Soft as the passing wind,  
And I recorded what I heard,  
A lesson for mankind.

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ON THE

BURNING OF LORD MANSFIELD'S LIBRARY,

TOGETHER WITH HIS MSS., BY THE MOB IN THE MONTH OF JUNE, 1780.

So then—the Vandals of our isle,  
Sworn foes to sense and law,  
Have burnt to dust a nobler pile  
Than ever Roman saw!

And Murray sighs o'er Pope and Swift,  
And many a treasure more,  
The well-judged purchase, and the gift  
That graced his letter'd store.

Their pages mangled, burnt, and torn,  
The loss was his alone;  
But ages yet to come shall mourn  
The burning of his own.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

ON THE SAME.

WHEN wit and genius meet their doom  
In all-devouring flame,  
They tell us of the fate of Rome,  
And bid us fear the same.

O'er Murray's loss the muses wept,  
They felt the rude alarm,  
Yet bless'd the guardian care that kept  
His sacred head from harm.

There Memory, like the bee that's fed  
From Flora's balmy store,  
The quintessence of all he read  
Had treasured up before.

The lawless herd, with fury blind,  
Have done him cruel wrong;  
The flowers are gone—but still we find  
The honey on his tongue.

A RIDDLE.

I AM just two and two, I am warm, I am cold,  
And the parent of numbers that cannot be told,  
I am lawful, unlawful—a duty, a fault—  
I am often sold dear, good for nothing when bought,  
An extraordinary boon, and a matter of course,  
And yielded with pleasure—when taken by force.

TO THE REV. MR. NEWTON,

ON HIS RETURN FROM RAMSGATE.

(Written in October. 1780.)

THAT ocean you have late survey'd,  
Those rocks I too have seen,  
But I, afflicted and dismay'd,  
You, tranquil and serene.

You from the flood-controlling steep  
Saw stretch'd before your view,  
With conscious joy, the threatening deep,  
No longer such to you.

To me the waves, that ceaseless broke  
Upon the dangerous coast,  
Hoarsely and ominously spoke  
Of all my treasure lost.

Your sea of troubles you have past,  
And found the peaceful shore;  
I, tempest-toss'd, and wreck'd at last,  
Come home to part no more.

ON A GOLDFINCH,

STARVED TO DEATH IN HIS CAGE.

TIME was when I was free as air,  
The thistle's downy seed my fare,  
My drink the morning dew;  
I perch'd at will on every spray,  
My form genteel, my plumage gay,  
My strains for ever new.

But gaudy plumage, sprightly strain,  
And form genteel were all in vain,  
And of a transient date;  
For, caught, and caged, and starved to death,  
In dying sighs my little breath  
Soon pass'd the wiry grate.

Thanks, gentle swain, for all my woes,  
And thanks for this effectual close  
And cure of every ill!  
More cruelty could none express;  
And I, if you had shown me less,  
Had been your prisoner still.

REPORT OF AN ADJUDGED CASE.

NOT TO BE FOUND IN ANY OF THE BOOKS.

BETWEEN Nose and Eyes a strange contest arose,  
The spectacles set them unhappily wrong;  
The point in dispute was, as all the world knows,  
To which the said spectacles ought to belong.  
So Tongue was the lawyer, and argued the cause  
With a great deal of skill, and a wig full of learning;  
While Chief-Baron Ear sat to balance the laws,  
So famed for his talent in nicely discerning.

"In behalf of the Nose it will quickly appear,  
And your lordship," he said, "will undoubtedly find,  
That the Nose has had spectacles always in wear,  
Which amounts to possession time out of mind."

Then holding the spectacles up to the court—  
"Your lordship observes they are made with a straddle,  
As wide as the ridge of the Nose is; in short,  
Design'd to sit close to it, just like a saddle.

"Again, would your lordship a moment suppose  
(Tis a case that has happen'd, and may be again)  
That the visage or countenance had not a Nose,  
Pray who would, or who could, wear spectacles then?"

"On the whole it appears, and my argument shows,  
With a reasoning the court will never condemn,  
That the spectacles plainly were made for the Nose,  
And the Nose was as plainly intended for them."

Then shifting his side (as a lawyer knows how),  
He pleaded again in behalf of the Eyes:  
But what were his arguments few people know,  
For the court did not think they were equally wise.

So his lordship decreed with a grave solemn tone,  
Decisive and clear, without one if or but—  
"That, whenever the Nose put his spectacles on,  
By daylight or candlelight—Eyes should be shut!"

---

#### A CARD.

POOR Vestris, grieved beyond all measure,  
To have incurred so much displeasure,  
Although a Frenchman, disconcerted,  
And though light-heeled, yet heavy-hearted,  
Begs humbly to inform his friends,  
Next first of April he intends  
To take a boat and row right down  
To Cuckold's-Point from Richmond town;  
And as he goes, alert and gay,  
Leap all the bridges in his way.  
The boat, borne downward with the tide,  
Shall catch him safe on t'other side.  
He humbly hopes by this expedient  
To prove himself their most obedient,  
(Which shall be always his endeavour),  
And jump into the former favour.

ON THE HIGH PRICE OF FISH.\*

1781.

COCOA-NUT naught,  
Fish too dear,  
None must be bought  
For us that are here:

No lobster on earth,  
That ever I saw,  
To me would be worth  
Sixpence a claw.

So, dear Madam, wait  
Till fish can be got  
At a reasonable rate,  
Whether lobster or not;

Till the French and the Dutch  
Have quitted the seas,  
And then send as much  
And as oft as you please.

TO MRS. NEWTON,

ON RECEIVING A BARREL OF OYSTERS.

A NOBLE theme demands a noble verse,  
In such I thank you for your fine oysters.  
The barrel was magnificently large,  
But, being sent to Olney at free charge,  
Was not inserted in the driver's list,  
And therefore overlook'd, forgot, or miss'd;  
For, when the messenger whom we dispatch'd  
Inquired for the oysters, Hob his noddle scratched;  
Denying that his waggon or his wain  
Did any such commodity contain.  
In consequence of which, your welcome boon  
Did not arrive till yesterday at noon;  
In consequence of which some chanced to die,  
And some, though very sweet, were very dry.  
Now Madam says (and what she says must still  
Deserve attention, say she what she will),

\* On receiving a basket of fish from Mrs. Newton; intended to dissuade her from sending more till they were cheaper.





Fill'd up becomes a paper kite.  
 Let independence, sanguine, horrid,  
 Blaze like a meteor in the forehead :  
 Beneath (but lay aside your graces)  
 Draw six-and-twenty rueful faces,  
 Each with a staring, stedfast eye,  
 Fix'd on his great and good ally.  
 France flies the kite—'tis on the  
     wing—  
 Britannia's lightning cuts the  
     string.  
 The wind that raised it, ere it ceases,  
 Just rends it into thirteen pieces,

Takes charge of every fluttering sheet,  
 And lays them all at George's feet.  
 Iberia, trembling from afar,  
 Renounces the confederate war ;  
 Her efforts and her arts o'ercome,  
 France calls her shatter'd navies  
     home.  
 Repenting Holland learns to mourn  
 The sacred treaties she has torn ;  
 Astonishment and awe profound  
 Are stamp'd upon the nations round ;  
 Without one friend, above all foes,  
 Britannia gives the world repose.

### A POETICAL EPISTLE TO LADY AUSTEN.

DEAR Anna—between friend and  
     friend,  
 Prose answers every common end ;  
 Serves, in a plain and homely way,  
 To express the occurrence of the day ;  
 Our health, the weather, and the news,  
 What walks we take, what books we  
     choose,  
 And all the floating thoughts we find  
 Upon the surface of the mind.  
 But when a poet takes the pen,  
 Far more alive than other men,  
 He feels a gentle tingling come  
 Down to his finger and his thumb,  
 Derived from nature's noblest part,  
 The centre of a glowing heart :  
 And this is what the world, who knows  
 No flights above the pitch of prose,  
 His more sublime vagaries slighting,  
 Denominates an itch for writing.  
 No wonder I, who scribble rhyme  
 To catch the triflers of the time,  
 And tell them truths divine and clear,  
 Which, couch'd in prose, they will  
     not hear ;  
 Who labour hard to allure and draw  
 The loiterers I never saw,

Should feel that itching and that  
     tingling  
 With all my purpose intermingling,  
 To your intrinsic merit true,  
 When call'd to address myself to you.  
 Mysterious are His ways, whose  
     power  
 Brings forth that unexpected hour,  
 When minds, that never met before,  
 Shall meet, unite, and part no more :  
 It is the allotment of the skies,  
 The hand of the Supremely Wise,  
 That guides and governs our affec-  
     tions,  
 And plans and orders our connexions.  
 Directs us in our distant road,  
 And marks the bounds of our abode.  
 Thus we were settled when you  
     found us,  
 Peasants and children all around us,  
 Not dreaming of so dear a friend,  
 Deep in the abyss of Silver-End.\*  
 Thus Martha,† even against her will  
 Perch'd on the top of yonder hill ;  
 And you, though you must needs  
     prefer  
 The fairer scenes of Sweet Sancerre,‡

\* A by-part of Olney.

† Mrs. Jones, Lady Austen's sister, who lived at Clifton Reynes. She was the wife of the Rev. T. Jones.

‡ Lady Austen's place in France.

Are come from distant Loire, to  
 choose  
 A cottage on the banks of Ouse.  
 This page of Providence quite new,  
 And now just opening to our view,  
 Employs our present thoughts and  
 pains  
 To guess and spell what it contains:  
 But day by day, and year by year,  
 Will make the dark enigma clear;  
 And furnish us, perhaps, at last,  
 Like other scenes already past,  
 With proof, that we, and our affairs,  
 Are part of a Jehovah's cares;  
 For God unfolds by slow degrees  
 The purport of His deep decrees;  
 Sheds every hour a clearer light  
 In aid of our defective sight;  
 And spreads, at length, before the  
 soul,  
 A beautiful and perfect whole,  
 Which busy man's inventive brain  
 Toils to anticipate, in vain.

Say, Anna, had you never known  
 The beauties of a rose full blown,  
 Could you, though luminous your eye,  
 By looking on the bud descrie,  
 Or guess, with a prophetic power,  
 The future splendour of the flower?  
 Just so, the Omnipotent, who turns  
 The system of a world's concerns,  
 From mere minutiae can educe  
 Events of most important use,  
 And bid a dawning sky display

The blaze of a meridian day.  
 The works of man tend, one and all,  
 As needs they must, from great to  
 small;

And vanity absorbs at length  
 The monuments of human strength.  
 But who can tell how vast the plan  
 Which this day's incident began?  
 Too small, perhaps, the slight  
 occasion

For our dim-sighted observation;  
 It pass'd unnoticed, as the bird  
 That cleaves the yielding air unheard,  
 And yet may prove when understood  
 An harbinger of endless good.  
 Not that I deem, or mean to call  
 Friendship a blessing cheap or small:  
 But merely to remark, that ours,  
 Like some of Nature's sweetest  
 flowers,

Rose from a seed of tiny size,  
 That seem'd to promise no such  
 prize;

A transient visit intervening,  
 And made almost without a meaning,  
 (Hardly the effect of inclination,  
 Much less of pleasing expectation,)  
 Produced a friendship, then begun,  
 That has cemented us in one;  
 And placed it in our power to prove,  
 By long fidelity and love,  
 That Solomon has wisely spoken,—  
 "A threefold cord is not soon broken."

### TO LADY AUSTEN.\*

WRITTEN IN RAINY WEATHER.

(August 12th, 1782.)

To watch the storms, and hear the sky  
 Give all our almanacs the lie;  
 To shake with cold and see the plains  
 In autumn drowned with wintry rains;  
 'Tis thus I spend my moments here,  
 And wish myself a Dutch Mynheer;

\* Printed by himself.

I then should have no need of wit;  
For lumpish Hollander unfit!  
Nor should I then repine at mud,  
Or meadows deluged by a flood;  
But in a bog live well content,  
And find it just my element;  
Should be a clod and not a man,  
Nor wish in vain for Sister Ann,  
With charitable aid to drag  
My mind out of its proper quag;  
Should have the genius of a boor  
And no ambition to have more.

HEROISM.

THERE was a time when *Ætna's* silent fire  
Slept unperceived, the mountain yet entire;  
When, conscious of no danger from below,  
She towered a cloud-capped pyramid of snow.  
No thunders shook with deep intestine sound  
The blooming groves that girdled her around,  
Her unctuous olives, and her purple vines,  
(Unfelt the fury of those bursting mines)  
The peasant's hopes, and not in vain, assured,  
In peace upon her sloping sides matured.  
When on a day like that of the last doom,  
A conflagration labouring in her womb,  
She teemed and heaved with an infernal birth,  
That shook the circling seas and solid earth.  
Dark and voluminous the vapours rise,  
And hang their horrors in the neighbouring skies,  
While through the Stygian veil that blots the day,  
In dazzling streaks the vivid lightnings play.  
But oh! what Muse, and in what powers of song,  
Can trace the torrent as it burns along?  
Havoc and devastation in the van,  
It marches o'er the prostrate works of man—  
Vines, olives, herbage, forests disappear,  
And all the charms of a Sicilian year.  
Revolving seasons, fruitless as they pass,  
See it an uninformed and idle mass;  
Without a soil to invite the tiller's care,  
Or blade that might redeem it from Despair.  
Yet Time at length (what will not Time achieve?)  
Clothes it with earth, and bids the produce live.  
Once more the spiry myrtle crowns the glade,  
And ruminating flocks enjoy the shade.

B B

O bliss precarious, and unsafe retreats !  
 O charming Paradise of shortlived sweets !  
 The self-same gale that wafts the fragrance round,  
 Brings to the distant ear a sullen sound :  
 Again the mountain feels the imprisoned foe,  
 Again pours ruin on the vale below,  
 Ten thousand swains the wasted scene deplore,  
 That only future ages can restore.

Ye monarchs, whom the lure of honour draws,  
 Who write in blood the merits of your cause,  
 Who strike the blow, then plead your own defence,  
 Glory your aim, but Justice your pretence ;  
 Behold in *Ætna's* emblematic fires  
 The mischiefs your ambitious Pride inspires !

Fast by the stream that bounds your just domain,  
 And tells you where ye have a right to reign,  
 A nation dwells, not envious of your throne,  
 Studious of peace, their neighbours' and their own.  
 Ill fated race ! how deeply must they rue  
 Their only crime, vicinity to you !

The trumpet sounds, your legions swarm abroad,  
 Through the ripe harvest lies their destined road ;  
 At every step beneath their feet they tread  
 The life of multitudes, a nation's bread !  
 Earth seems a garden in its loveliest dress  
 Before them, and behind a wilderness ;  
 Famine, and Pestilence, her firstborn son,  
 Attend to finish what the sword begun ;  
 And echoing praises, such as fiends might earn,  
 And Folly pays, resound at your return.  
 A calm succeeds—but Plenty, with her train  
 Of heartfelt joys, succeeds not soon again ;  
 And years of pining indigence must show  
 What scourges are the gods that rule below.

Yet man, laborious man, by slow degrees,  
 (Such is his thirst of opulence and ease)  
 Plies all the sinews of industrious toil,  
 Gleans up the refuse of the general spoil,  
 Rebuilds the towers that smoked upon the plain,  
 And the sun gilds the shining spires again.

Increasing commerce and reviving art  
 Renew the quarrel on the conqueror's part ;  
 And the sad lesson must be learned once more,  
 That wealth within is ruin at the door.  
 What are ye, monarchs, laurelled heroes, say,  
 But *Ætna's* of the suffering world ye sway ?  
 Sweet Nature, stripped of her embroidered robe,  
 Deplores the wasted regions of her globe,

And stands a witness at Truth's awful bar,  
To prove you there destroyers, as ye are.  
O place me in some Heaven-protected isle,  
Where Peace, and Equity, and Freedom smile;  
Where no volcano pours his fiery flood  
No crested warrior dips his plume in blood;  
Where Power secures what Industry has won;  
Where to succeed is not to be undone;  
A land that distant tyrants hate in vain,  
In Britain's isle, beneath a George's reign.

# THE FLATTING MILL.

AN ILLUSTRATION.

WHEN a bar of pure silver or ingot of gold  
Is sent to be flatted or wrought into length,  
It is pass'd between cylinders often, and roll'd  
In an engine of utmost mechanical strength.

Thus tortured and squeezed, at last it appears  
Like a loose heap of ribbon, a glittering show,  
Like music it tinkles and rings in your ears,  
And warm'd by the pressure is all in a glow.

This process achieved, it is doom'd to sustain  
The thump after thump of a gold-beater's mallet,  
And at last is of service in sickness or pain  
To cover a pill for a delicate palate.

Alas for the poet! who dares undertake  
To urge reformation of national ill—  
His head and his heart are both likely to ache  
With the double employment of mallet and mill.

If he wish to instruct, he must learn to delight,  
Smooth, ductile, and even, his fancy must flow,  
Must tinkle and glitter like gold to the sight,  
And catch in its progress a sensible glow.

After all, he must beat it as thin and as fine  
As the leaf that enfolds what an invalid swallows;  
For truth is unwelcome, however divine,  
And unless you adorn it, nausea follows.

## FROM A LETTER TO THE REV. MR. NEWTON,

RECTOR OF ST. MARY WOOLNOTH.

(May 28th, 1782.)

SAYS the pipe to the snuff-box, "I can't understand  
 What the ladies and gentlemen see in your face,  
 That you are in fashion all over the land,  
 And I am so much fallen into disgrace.

"Do but see what a pretty contemplative air  
 I give to the company,—pray do but note 'em,—  
 —ou would think that the wise men of Greece were all there,  
 Or, at least, would suppose them the wise men of Gotham.

"My breath is as sweet as the breath of blown roses,  
 While you are a nuisance where'er you appear;  
 There is nothing but snivelling and blowing of noses,  
 Such a noise as turns any man's stomach to hear."

Then, lifting his lid in a delicate way,  
 And opening his mouth with a smile quite engaging,  
 The box in reply was heard plainly to say,  
 "What a silly dispute is this we are waging!

"If you have a little of merit to claim,  
 You may thank the sweet-smelling Virginian weed;  
 And I, if I seem to deserve any blame,  
 The beforemention'd drug in apology plead.

"Thus neither the praise nor the blame is our own,  
 No room for a sneer, much less a cachinnus;  
 We are vehicles, not of tobacco alone,  
 But of anything else they may choose to put in us."

## TO THE REV. WILLIAM BULL.\*

(June 22nd, 1782.)

MY DEAR FRIEND,  
 If reading verse be your delight,  
 'Tis mine as much, or more to write;  
 But what we would, so weak is man,  
 Lies oft remote from what we can.  
 For instance, at this very time  
 I feel a wish by cheerful rhyme

To soothe my friend, and, had I  
 power,  
 To cheat him of an anxious hour;  
 Not meaning (for I must confess,  
 It were but folly to suppress)  
 His pleasure or his good alone,  
 But squinting partly at my own.

\* An Independent Minister who resided at Newport Pagnall, five miles from Olney.

But though the sun is flaming high  
In the centre of yon arch, the sky,  
And he had once (and who but he ?)  
The name for setting genius free,  
Yet whether poets of past days  
Yielded him undeserv'd praise,  
And he by no uncommon lot  
Was famed for virtues he had not ;  
Or whether, which is like enough,  
His Highness may have taken huff,  
So seldom sought with invocation,  
Since it has been the reigning fashion  
To disregard his inspiration,  
I seem no brighter in my wits,  
For all the radiance he emits,  
Than if I saw through midnight  
vapour,

The glimmering of a farthing taper.  
Oh for a succedaneum, then,  
To accelerate a creeping pen !  
Oh for a ready succedaneum,  
Quod caput, cerebrum, et cranium  
Pondere liberet exoso,  
Et morbo jam caliginoso !  
'Tis here ; this oval box well fill'd  
With best tobacco, finely mill'd,  
Beats all Anticyra's pretences  
To disengage the encumber'd senses.  
Oh Nymph of transatlantic fame,  
Where'er thine haunt, whate'er thy  
name,  
Whether reposing on the side  
Of Oroonoquo's spacious tide,

Or listening with delight not small  
To Niagara's distant fall,  
'Tis thine to cherish and to feed  
The pungent nose-refreshing weed,  
Which, whether pulverised it gain  
A speedy passage to the brain,  
Or, whether, touch'd with fire, it rise  
In circling eddies to the skies,  
Does thought more quicken and  
refine

Than all the breath of all the Nine—  
Forgive the bard, if bard he be,  
Who once too wantonly made free,  
To touch with a satiric wipe  
That symbol of thy power, the pipe ;  
So may no blight infest thy plains  
And no unseasonable rains ;  
And so may smiling peace once more  
Visit America's sad shore ;  
And thou secure from all alarms,  
Of thundering drums and glittering  
arms,

Rove unconfin'd beneath the shade  
Thy wide expanded leaves have made ;  
So may thy votaries increase,  
And fumigation never cease.  
May Newton with renew'd delights  
Perform thy odoriferous rites,  
While clouds of incense half divine  
Involve thy disappearing shrine :  
And so may smoke-inhaling Bull  
Be always filling, never full.

### FRIENDSHIP.

AMICITIA NISI INTER BONOS ESSE NON POTEST.—*Cicero.*

WHAT virtue, or what mental grace,  
But men unqualified and base  
Will boast it their possession ?  
Profusion apes the noble part  
Of liberality of heart,  
And dulness of discretion.  
If every polish'd gem we find,  
Illuminating heart or mind,  
Provoke to imitation,

No wonder friendship does the same.  
That jewel of the purest flame,  
Or rather constellation.

No knave but boldly will pretend  
The requisites that form a friend,  
A real and a sound one ;  
Nor any fool he would deceive  
But prove as ready to believe,  
And dream that he had found one



Candid, and generous, and just,  
Boys care but little whom they trust,  
An error soon corrected,—

For who but learns in riper years  
That man, when smoothest he appears,  
Is most to be suspected?

But here again a danger lies,  
Lest, having misapplied our eyes,  
And taken trash for treasure,  
We should unwarily conclude  
Friendship a false ideal good,  
A mere Utopian pleasure.

An acquisition rather rare  
Is yet no subject of despair;  
Nor is it wise complaining,  
If either on forbidden ground,  
Or where it was not to be found,  
We sought without attaining.

No friendship will abide the test,  
That stands on sordid interest,  
Or mean self-love erected;  
Nor such as may a while subsist  
Between the sot and sensualist,  
For vicious ends connected.

Who seeks a friend, should come  
disposed  
To exhibit in full bloom disclosed  
The graces and the beauties  
That form the character he seeks;  
For 'tis a union that bespeaks  
Reciprocated duties.

Mutual attention is implied,  
And equal truth on either side,  
And constantly supported;  
'Tis senseless arrogance to accuse  
Another of sinister views,  
Our own as much distorted.

But will sincerity suffice?  
It is indeed above all price,  
And must be made the basis;  
But every virtue of the soul  
Must constitute the charming whole,  
All shining in their places.

A fretful temper will divide  
The closest knot that may be tied,  
By ceaseless sharp corrosion;  
A temper passionate and fierce  
May suddenly your joys disperse  
At one immense explosion.

In vain the talkative unite  
In hopes of permanent delight;  
The secret just committed,  
Forgetting its important weight,  
They drop through mere desire to  
prate,  
And by themselves outwitted.

How bright soe'er the prospect seems,  
All thoughts of friendship are but  
dreams,

If envy chance to creep in;  
An envious man, if you succeed,  
May prove a dangerous foe indeed,  
But not a friend worth keeping.

As envy pines at good possess'd,  
So jealousy looks forth distress'd  
On good that seems approaching,  
And if success his steps attend,  
Discerns a rival in a friend,  
And hates him for encroaching.

Hence authors of illustrious name,  
(Unless belied by common fame,)  
Are sadly prone to quarrel,  
To deem the wit a friend displays  
A tax upon their own just praise,  
And pluck each other's laurel.

A man renown'd for repartee  
Will seldom scruple to make free  
With friendship's finest feeling,  
Will thrust a dagger at your breast,  
And say he wounded you in jest,  
By way of balm for healing.

Who ever keeps an open ear  
For tattlers will be sure to hear  
The trumpet of contention;  
Aspersions is the babblers' trade,  
To listen is to lend him aid,  
And rush into dissension.

A friendship that in frequent fits  
Of controversial rage emits  
The sparks of disputation,  
Like Hand-in-Hand insurance plates,  
Most unavoidably creates  
The thought of conflagration.

Some fickle creatures boast a soul  
True as a needle to the pole,  
Their humour yet so various—  
They manifest their whole life  
through  
The needle's deviations too,  
Their love is so precarious.

The great and small but rarely meet  
On terms of amity complete;  
Plebeians must surrender,  
And yield so much to noble folk,  
It is combining fire with smoke,  
Obscurity with splendour.

Some are so placid and serene  
(As Irish bogs are always green)  
They sleep secure from waking;  
And are indeed a bog, that bears  
Your unparticipated cares  
Unmoved and without quaking.

Courtier and patriot cannot mix  
Their heterogeneous politics  
Without an effervescence,  
Like that of salts with lemon juice,  
Which does not yet like that produce  
A friendly coalescence.

Religion should extinguish strife,  
And make a calm of human life;  
But friends that chance to differ  
On points which God has left at  
large,  
How fiercely will they meet and  
charge!

No combatants are stiffer.  
To prove at last my main intent  
Needs no expense of argument,  
No cutting and contriving—  
Seeking a real friend we seem  
To adopt the chemist's golden dream,  
With still less hope of thriving.

Sometimes the fault is all our own,  
Some blemish in due time made  
known

By trespass or omission:  
Sometimes occasion brings to light  
Our friend's defect, long hid from sight,  
And even from suspicion.

Then judge yourself, and prove your  
man

As circumspectly as you can,  
And, having made election,  
Beware no negligence of yours,  
Such as a friend but ill endures,  
Enfeeble his affection.

That secrets are a sacred trust,  
That friends should be sincere and  
just,

That constancy befits them,  
Are observations on the case,  
That savour much of common place,  
And all the world admits them.

But 'tis not timber, lead, and stone,  
An architect requires alone  
To finish a fine building—  
The palace were but half complete,  
If he could possibly forget  
The carving and the gilding.

The man that hails you Tom or Jack,  
And proves by thumps upon your  
back

How he esteems your merit,  
Is such a friend, that one had need  
Be very much his friend indeed  
To pardon or to bear it.

As similarity of mind,  
Or something not to be defined,  
First fixes our attention;  
So manners decent and polite,  
The same we practised at first sight,  
Must save it from declension.

Some act upon this prudent plan,  
"Say little, and hear all you can."  
Safe policy, but hateful—  
So barren sands imbibe the shower,  
But render neither fruit nor flower,  
Unpleasant and ungrateful.

The man I trust, if shy to me,  
 Shall find me as reserved as he,  
 No subterfuge or pleading  
 Shall win my confidence again;  
 I will by no means entertain  
 A spy on my proceeding.

These samples—for alas ! at last  
 These are but samples, and a taste  
 Of evils yet unmention'd—  
 May prove the task a task indeed  
 In which 'tis much if we succeed,  
 However well intention'd.

Pursue the search, and you will find  
 Good sense and knowledge of mankind  
 To be at least expedient,

And, after summing all the rest,  
 Religion ruling in the breast  
 A principal ingredient.

The noblest friendship ever shown  
 The Saviour's history makes known,  
 Though some have turn'd and  
 turn'd it;

And, whether being crazed or blind,  
 Or seeking with a biass'd mind,  
 Have not, it seems, discern'd it.

O Friendship ! if my soul forego  
 Thy dear delights while here below,  
 To mortify and grieve me,  
 May I myself at last appear  
 Unworthy, base, and insincere,  
 Or may my friend deceive me !

### THE COLUBRIAD.\*

CLOSE by the threshold of a door nail'd fast  
 Three kittens sat ; each kitten look'd aghast ;  
 I passing swift and inattentive by,  
 At the three kittens cast a careless eye,  
 Not much concern'd to know what they did there,  
 Not deeming kittens worth a poet's care.  
 But presently a loud and furious hiss  
 Caused me to stop, and to exclaim, " What's this ?"  
 When lo ! upon the threshold met my view,  
 With head erect, and eyes of fiery hue,  
 A viper, long as Count de Grasse's queue.†  
 Forth from his head his forkèd tongue he throws,  
 Darting it full against a kitten's nose,  
 Who having never seen in field or house  
 The like, sat still and silent as a mouse ;  
 Only projecting with attention due,  
 Her whisker'd face, she ask'd him, " Who are you ?"  
 On to the hall went I, with pace not slow,  
 But swift as lightning, for a long Dutch hoe,  
 With which, well-arm'd, I hasten'd to the spot,  
 To find the viper,—but I found him not.

\* "Colubriad" is a mock heroic title from *Coluber*, a viper or snake.

† Count de Grasse was the French admiral defeated by Rodney, April 12th, 1782. He was famous for wearing a long queue turned up, and tied with ribbon. It was exaggerated in the caricatures of the day.

And, turning up the leaves and shrubs around,  
 Found only—that he was not to be found.  
 But still the kittens, sitting as before,  
 Sat watching close the bottom of the door.  
 “I hope,” said I, “the villain I would kill  
 Has slipp’d between the door and the door-sill;  
 And if I make despatch and follow hard,  
 No doubt but I shall find him in the yard:”  
 For long ere now it should have been rehearsed,  
 ’Twas in the garden that I found him first.  
 Even there I found him, there the full-grown cat  
 His head, with velvet paw, did gently pat,  
 As curious as the kittens erst had been  
 To learn what this phenomenon might mean.  
 Fill’d with heroic ardour at the sight,  
 And fearing every moment he would bite,  
 And rob our household of our only cat  
 That was of age to combat with a rat,  
 With outstretch’d hoe I slew him at the door,  
 And taught him NEVER TO COME THERE NO MORE.

---

 EPITAPH ON A HARE.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>HERE lies, whom hound did ne’er<br/>         pursue,<br/>         Nor swifter greyhound follow,<br/>         Whose foot ne’er tainted morning<br/>         dew,<br/>         Nor ear heard huntsman’s halloo;<br/>         Old Tiney, surliest of his kind,<br/>         Who, nursed with tender care,<br/>         And to domestic bounds confined,<br/>         Was still a wild Jack hare.<br/>         Though duly from my hand he took,<br/>         His pittance every night,<br/>         He did it with a jealous look,<br/>         And, when he could, would bite.<br/>         His diet was of wheaten bread,<br/>         And milk, and oats, and straw;<br/>         Thistles, or lettuces instead,<br/>         With sand to scour his maw.<br/>         On twigs of hawthorn he regaled,<br/>         On pippins’ russet peel,</p> | <p>And, when his juicy salads fail’d,<br/>         Sliced carrot pleased him well.<br/>         A Turkey carpet was his lawn,<br/>         Whereon he loved to bound,<br/>         To skip and gambol like a fawn,<br/>         And swing his rump around.<br/>         His frisking was at evening hours,<br/>         For then he lost his fear,<br/>         But most before approaching showers,<br/>         Or when a storm drew near.<br/>         Eight years and five round rolling<br/>         moons<br/>         He thus saw steal away,<br/>         Dozing out all his idle noons,<br/>         And every night at play.<br/>         I kept him for his humour’s sake,<br/>         For he would oft beguile<br/>         My heart of thoughts that made it<br/>         ache,<br/>         And force me to a smile.</p> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| But now beneath his walnut shade<br>He finds his long last home,<br>And waits, in snug concealment laid,<br>Till gentler Puss shall come. | He, still more aged, feels the shocks<br>From which no care can save,<br>And, partner once of Tiney's box,<br>Must soon partake his grave. |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

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 EPITAPHIUM ALTERUM.

Hic etiam jacet,  
 Qui totum novennium vixit,  
     Puss.  
     Siste paulisper,  
 Qui præteriturus es,  
 Et tecum sic reputa—  
 Hunc neque canis venaticus,

Nec plumbum missile,  
 Nec laqueus,  
 Nec imbres nimii,  
 Confecere:  
 Tamen mortuus est—  
 Et moriar ego.

---

 ON THE LOSS OF THE ROYAL GEORGE.

WRITTEN WHEN THE NEWS ARRIVED.\*

TO THE MARCH IN SCIPIO.

TOLL for the brave!  
 The brave that are no more!  
 All sunk beneath the wave,  
     Fast by their native shore!  
 Eight hundred of the brave,  
     Whose courage well was tried,  
 Had made the vessel heel,  
     And laid her on her side.  
 A land-breeze shook the shrouds,  
     And she was over-set;  
 Down went the Royal George,  
     With all her crew complete.  
 Toll for the brave!  
     Brave Kempenfelt is gone;  
 His last sea-fight is fought;  
     His work of glory done.  
 It was not in the battle;  
     No tempest gave the shock;

She sprang no fatal leak;  
     She ran upon no rock.  
 His sword was in its sheath;  
     His fingers held the pen,  
 When Kempenfelt went down  
     With twice four hundred men.  
 Weigh the vessel up,  
     Once dreaded by our foes!  
 And mingle with our cup  
     The tear that England owes.  
 Her timbers yet are sound,  
     And she may float again  
 Fullcharged with England's thunder,  
     And plough the distant main.  
 But Kempenfelt is gone,  
     His victories are o'er;  
 And he and his eight hundred  
     Shall plough the wave no more

---

\* The *Royal George*, 108 guns, was lost off Spithead, on the 29th of August. 1782. She was undergoing some repairs and was careened over, when a sudden gust of wind overset her and she sank. A great number of persons were on board at the time from Portsmouth. Two or three hundred bodies floated on shore, and were buried in Kingstown Churchyard.

IN SUBMERSIONEM NAVIGII CUI, GEORGIUS REGALE  
NOMEN, INDITUM.

PLANGIMUS fortes. Periêre fortes,  
Patrium propter periêre littus  
Bis quatèr centum; subitò sub alto,  
Æquore mersi.

Navis, innitens lateri, jacebat,  
Malus ad summas trepidabat undas,  
Cum levis, funes quatiens, ad imum  
Depulit aura.

Plangimus fortes. Nimis, heu, ca-  
ducam  
Fortibus vitem voluêre parcæ,  
Nec sinunt ultra tibi nos recentes  
Nectere laurus.

Magne, qui nomen, licet incanorum  
Traditum ex multis atavis tulisti!  
At tuos olim memorabit ævum  
Omne triumphos.

Non hyems illos furibunda mersit,  
Non mari in clauso scopuli latentes,  
Fissa non rimis abies, nec atrox  
Abstulit ensis.

Navitæ sed tum nimium jocosì  
Voce fallebant hilari laborem  
Et quiescebat, calamoque dextram  
Impleverat heros.

Vos, quibus cordi est grave opus  
piumque,  
Humidum ex alto spoliū levate,  
Et putrescentes sub aquis amicos  
Reddite amicis!

Hi quidem (sic dīs placuit) fuêre:  
Sed ratis, nondum putris, ire possit  
Rursus in bellum, Britonumque  
nomen Tollere ad astra.

ODE TO PEACE.

COME, peace of mind, delightful  
guest!

Return and make thy downy nest

Once more in this sad heart:

Nor riches I, nor power pursue,

Nor hold forbidden joys in view,

We therefore need not part.

Where wilt thou dwell, if not with  
me,

From Avarice and Ambition free,

And Pleasure's fatal wiles?

For whom, alas! dost thou prepare

The sweets that I was wont to share,

The banquet of thy smiles?

The great, the gay, shall they partake  
The Heaven that thou alone canst  
make?

And wilt thou quit the stream  
That murmurs through the dewy  
mead,

The grove, and the sequestered shed,  
To be a guest with them?

For thee I panted, thee I prized,

For thee I gladly sacrificed

Whate'er I loved before,

And shall I see thee start away,

And helpless, hopeless, hear thee say,

"Farewell! we meet no more"?

## SONG.—ON PEACE.

AIR—"My fond *Shepherds of late.*"

No longer I follow a sound;  
 No longer a dream I pursue;  
 O happiness! not to be found,  
 Unattainable treasure, adieu!

I have sought thee in splendour and  
 dress,  
 In the regions of pleasure and  
 taste;  
 I have sought thee, and seem'd to  
 possess,  
 But have proved thee a vision at  
 last.

An humble ambition and hope  
 The voice of true wisdom in-  
 spires;  
 'Tis sufficient, if peace be the scope,  
 And the summit of all our de-  
 sires.

Peace may be the lot of the mind  
 That seeks it in meekness and  
 love;  
 But rapture and bliss are confined  
 To the glorified spirits above.

## SONG.

AIR—"The *Lass of Pattie's Mill.*"

WHEN all within is peace,  
 How nature seems to smile;  
 Delights that never cease  
 The livelong day beguile.  
 From morn to dewy eve,  
 With open hand she showers  
 Fresh blessings, to deceive  
 And soothe the silent hours.

It is content of heart  
 Gives Nature power to please;  
 The mind that feels no smart  
 Enlivens all it sees,

Can make a wintry sky  
 Seem bright as smiling May,  
 And evening's closing eye  
 As peep of early day.

The vast majestic globe,  
 So beauteously array'd  
 In Nature's various robe,  
 With wondrous skill display'd,  
 Is to a mourner's heart  
 A dreary wild at best;  
 It flutters to depart,  
 And longs to be at rest.

## THE DISTRESSED TRAVELLERS;

OR, LABOUR IN VAIN.

A NEW SONG TO A TUNE NEVER SUNG BEFORE.

1.

I SING of a journey to Clifton,\*  
 We would have perform'd if we could,

\* Clifton Raynes, of which church Lady Austen's brother-in-law was incumbent.

Without cart or barrow to lift on  
 Poor Mary\* and me through the mud.  
 Slee sla slud,  
 Stuck in the mud.  
 Oh it is pretty to wade through a flood!

2.

So away we went, slipping and sliding,  
 Hop, hop, *à la mode de deux* frogs,  
 'Tis near as good walking as riding,  
 When ladies are dress'd in their clogs.  
 Wheels, no doubt,  
 Go briskly about,  
 But they clatter and rattle, and make such a rout!

3.

SHE.

"Well! now I protest it is charming;  
 How finely the weather improves!  
 That cloud, though 'tis rather alarming,  
 How slowly and stately it moves!"

HE.

"Pshaw! never mind,  
 'Tis not in the wind,  
 We are travelling south, and shall leave it behind."

4.

SHE.

"I am glad we are come for an airing,  
 For folks may be pounded and penn'd,  
 Until they grow rusty, not caring  
 To stir half-a-mile to an end."

HE.

"The longer we stay,  
 The longer we may;  
 It's a folly to think about weather or way."

5.

SHE.

"But now I begin to be frightened;  
 If I fall, what a way I should roll!  
 I am glad that the bridge was indicted,—  
 Stay! stop! I am sunk in a hole!"

---

\* Mrs. Unwin.



HE.

"Nay, never care!  
 'Tis a common affair;  
 You'll not be the last that will set a foot there."

6.

SHE.

"Let me breathe now a little, and ponder  
 On what it were better to do;  
 That terrible lane I see yonder,  
 I think we shall never get through."

HE.

"So think I:—  
 But, by the by,  
 We never shall know, if we never should try."

7.

SHE.

"But should we get there, how shall we get home?  
 What a terrible deal of bad road we have past!  
 Slipping and sliding; and if we should come  
 To a difficult stile, I am ruin'd at last!  
 O this lane:  
 Now it is plain  
 That struggling and striving is labour in vain."

8.

HE.

"Stick fast there while I go and look—"

SHE.

"Don't go away, for fear I should fall!"

HE.

"I have examined it every nook,  
 And what you see here is a sample of all.  
 Come, wheel round,  
 The dirt we have found  
 Would be an estate at a farthing a pound."

9.

Now, sister Anne,\* the guitar you must take,  
 Set it, and sing it, and make it a song;

---

\* Lady Austen.

I have varied the verse for variety's sake,  
 And cut it off short—because it was long.  
     'Tis hobbling and lame,  
     Which critics wont blame,  
 For the sense and the sound, they say, should be the same.

---

THE ROSE.

1783.

THE rose had been wash'd, just wash'd in a shower,  
 Which Mary to Anna conveyed ;\*  
 The plentiful moisture encumber'd the flower,  
 And weigh'd down its beautiful head.

The cup was all fill'd, and the leaves were all wet,  
 And it seem'd, to a fanciful view,  
 To weep for the buds it had left with regret  
 On the flourishing bush where it grew.

I hastily seized it, unfit as it was  
 For a nosegay, so dripping and drown'd,  
 And swinging it rudely, too rudely, alas !  
 I snapp'd it, it fell to the ground.

“And such,” I exclaim'd, “is the pitiless part  
 Some act by the delicate mind,  
 Regardless of wringing and breaking a heart  
 Already to sorrow resign'd.

“This elegant rose, had I shaken it less,  
 Might have bloom'd with its owner awhile ;  
 And the tear that is wiped with a little address,  
 May be follow'd perhaps by a smile.”

---

THE VALEDICTION.†

FAREWELL, false hearts ; whose best affections fail  
 Like shallow brooks which summer suns exhale !  
 Forgetful of the man whom once ye chose,  
 Cold in his cause, and careless of his woes ;  
 I bid you both a long and last adieu !  
 Cold in my turn, and unconcern'd like you.

---

\* “Mary” was Mrs. Unwin ; “Anna,” Lady Austen.

† These lines were written in a fit of indignation, because neither Lord Thurlow nor Colman had acknowledged the receipt of his first volume of poems.

First farewell Niger!\* whom, now duly proved,  
 I disregard as much as I have loved.  
 Your brain well furnish'd, and your tongue well taught  
 To press with energy your ardent thought,  
 Your senatorial dignity of face,  
 Sound sense, intrepid spirit, manly grace,  
 Have raised you high as talents can ascend,  
 Made you a peer, but spoilt you for a friend!  
 Pretend to all that parts have e'er acquired;  
 Be great, be fear'd, be envied, be admired;  
 To fame as lasting as the earth pretend,  
 But not hereafter to the name of friend!  
 I sent you verse, and, as your lordship knows,  
 Back'd with a modest sheet of humble prose;  
 Not to recall a promise to your mind,  
 Fulfill'd with ease had you been so inclined,  
 But to comply with feelings, and to give  
 Proof of an old affection still alive.  
 Your sullen silence serves at least to tell  
 Your alter'd heart: and so, my lord, farewell!

Next, busy actor on a meaner stage,†  
 Amusement-monger of a trifling age,  
 Illustrious histrionic patentee,  
 Terentius,‡ once my friend, farewell to thee!  
 In thee some virtuous qualities combine,  
 To fit thee for a nobler part than thine,  
 Who, born a gentleman, hast stoop'd too low,  
 To live by buskin, sock, and raree-show.  
 Thy schoolfellow, and partner of thy plays,  
 When Nichols§ swung the birch and twined the bays,  
 And having known thee bearded and full grown,  
 The weekly censor of a laughing town,||  
 I thought the volume I presumed to send,  
 Graced with the name of a long-absent friend,  
 Might prove a welcome gift, and touch thine heart,  
 Not hard by nature, in a feeling part.  
 But thou, it seems (what cannot grandeur do,  
 Though but a dream!) art grown disdainful too;  
 And strutting in thy school of queens and kings,  
 Who fret their hour and are forgotten things,  
 Hast caught the cold distemper of the day,  
 And, like his lordship, cast thy friend away.  
 O Friendship! cordial of the human breast!  
 So little felt, so fervently profess'd!

\* "Black" Lord Thurlow. † Colman, proprietor of the Haymarket Theatre.

‡ Alluding to Colman's translation of *Terence*.

§ The master of Westminster school when Cowper was there.

|| In the *Connoisseur*.

Thy blossoms deck our unsuspecting years ;  
 The promise of delicious fruit appears :  
 We hug the hopes of constancy and truth,  
 Such is the folly of our dreaming youth ;  
 But soon, alas ! detect the rash mistake  
 That sanguine inexperience loves to make ;  
 And view with tears the expected harvest lost,  
 Decay'd by time, or wither'd by a frost.  
 Whoever undertakes a friend's great part  
 Should be renew'd in nature, pure in heart,  
 Prepared for martyrdom, and strong to prove  
 A thousand ways the force of genuine love.  
 He may be call'd to give up health and gain,  
 To exchange content for trouble, ease for pain,  
 To echo sigh for sigh, and groan for groan,  
 And wet his cheeks with sorrows not his own.  
 The heart of man, for such a task too frail,  
 When most relied on is most sure to fail ;  
 And, summon'd to partake its fellow's woe,  
 Starts from its office, like a broken bow.  
 Votaries of business, and of pleasure, prove  
 Faithless alike in friendship and in love.  
 Retired from all the circles of the gay,  
 And all the crowds that bustle life away,  
 To scenes where competition, envy, strife,  
 Beget no thunder-clouds to trouble life,  
 Let me, the charge of some good angel, find  
 One who has known and has escaped mankind ;  
 Polite, yet virtuous, who has brought away  
 The manners, not the morals, of the day :  
 With him, perhaps with *her* (for men have known  
 No firmer friendships than the fair have shown),  
 Let me enjoy, in some unthought-of spot,  
 All former friends forgiven and forgot,  
 Down to the close of life's fast fading scene,  
 Union of hearts, without a flaw between.  
 'Tis grace, 'tis bounty, and it calls for praise,  
 If God give health, that sunshine of our days !  
 And if He add, a blessing shared by few,  
 Content of heart, more praises still are due !  
 But if He grant a friend, that boon possess'd  
 Indeed is treasure, and crowns all the rest ;  
 And giving one, whose heart is in the skies,  
 Born from above, and made divinely wise,  
 He gives, what bankrupt Nature never can,  
 Whose noblest coin is light and brittle man,  
 Gold, purer far than Ophir ever knew,  
 A soul, an image of Himself, and therefore true.

c c

## TO THE IMMORTAL MEMORY OF THE HALIBUT,

ON WHICH I DINED THIS DAY, MONDAY, APRIL 26, 1784.

WHERE hast thou floated, in what seas pursued  
 Thy pastime? When wast thou an egg new spawn'd,  
 Lost in the immensity of ocean's waste?  
 Roar as they might, the overbearing winds  
 That rock'd the deep, thy cradle, thou wast safe—  
 And in thy minikin and embryo state,  
 Attach'd to the firm leaf of some salt weed,  
 Didst outlive tempests, such as wrung and rack'd  
 The joints of many a stout and gallant bark,  
 And whelm'd them in the unexplored abyss.  
 Indebted to no magnet and no chart,  
 Nor under guidance of the polar fire,  
 Thou wast a voyager on many coasts,  
 Grazing at large in meadows submarine,  
 Where flat Batavia, just emerging, peeps  
 Above the brine,—where Caledonia's rocks  
 Beat back the surge,—and where Hibernia shoots  
 Her wondrous causeway far into the main.  
 Wherever thou hast fed, thou little thought'st,  
 And I not more, that I should feed on thee.  
 Peace, therefore, and good health, and much good fish,  
 To him who sent thee! and success, as oft  
 As it descends into the billowy gulf,  
 To the same drag that caught thee!—Fare thee well!  
 Thy lot thy brethren of the slimy fin  
 Would envy, could they know that thou wast doom'd  
 To feed a bard, and to be praised in verse.

## PAIRING-TIME ANTICIPATED.

A FABLE.

|                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| I SHALL not ask Jean Jacques Rous-<br>seau*<br>If birds confabulate or no;<br>'Tis clear that they were always able<br>To hold discourse, at least in fable; | And even the child who knows n-<br>better<br>Than to interpret by the letter,<br>A story of a cock and bull,<br>Must have a most uncommon skull. |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

\* It was one of the whimsical speculations of this philosopher, that all fables which ascribe reason and speech to animals, should be withheld from children, as being only vehicles of deception. But what child was ever deceived by them, or can be, against the evidence of his senses?—(C.)

It chanced then on a winter's day,  
But warm and bright and calm as

May,

The birds, conceiving a design  
To forestall sweet St. Valentine,  
In many an orchard, copse, and grove  
Assembled on affairs of love,  
And with much twitter and much  
chatter

Began to agitate the matter.

At length a Bullfinch, who could boast  
More years and wisdom than the most,  
Entreated, opening wide his beak,  
A moment's liberty to speak;  
And silence publicly enjoined,  
I liver'd briefly thus his mind:

"My friends! be cautious how ye  
treat

The subject upon which we meet;  
I fear we shall have winter yet."

A Finch, whose tongue knew no  
control,

With golden wing and satin poll,  
A last year's bird, who ne'er had tried  
What marriage means, thus pert re-  
plied:

"Methinks the gentleman," quoth  
she,

"Opposite in the apple-tree,  
By his good will would keep us single  
Till yonder heaven and earth shall  
mingle;

Or (which is likelier to befall)

Till death exterminate us all.

I marry without more ado;

My dear Dick Redcap, what say you?"

Dick heard, and tweedling, ogling,  
bridling,

Turning short round, strutting, and  
sideling,

Attested, glad, his approbation

Of an immediate conjugation.

Their sentiments so well express'd

Influenced mightily the rest;

All pair'd, and each pair built a nest.

But though the birds were thus in  
haste,

The leaves came on not quite so fast,

And destiny, that sometimes bears

An aspect stern on man's affairs,

Not altogether smiled on theirs.

The wind, of late breathed gently  
forth,

Now shifted east, and east by north;

Bare trees and shrubs but ill, you  
know,

Could shelter them from rain or  
snow:

Stepping into their nests they pad-  
dled,

Themselves were chill'd, their eggs  
were addled;

Soon every father bird and mother  
Grew quarrelsome, and peck'd each  
other,

Parted without the least regret,

Except that they had ever met,

And learned in future to be wiser

Than to neglect a good adviser.

#### MORAL.

Misses! the tale that I relate

This lesson seems to carry—

Choose not alone a proper mate,

But proper time to marry.

#### HUMAN FRAILTY.

WEAK and irresolute is man;

The purpose of to-day,

Woven with pains into his plan,

To-morrow rends away.

The bow well bent and smart the  
spring,

Vice seems already slain;

But passion rudely snaps the string,

And it revives again.

Some foe to his upright intent  
Finds out his weaker part,  
Virtue engages his assent,  
But pleasure wins his heart.

'Tis here the folly of the wise  
Through all his art we view,  
And while his tongue the charge  
denies  
His conscience owns it true.

Bound on a voyage of awful length,  
And dangers little known,  
A stranger to superior strength,  
Man vainly trusts his own.

But oars alone can ne'er prevail  
To reach the distant coast,  
The breath of heaven must swell the  
sail  
Or all the toil is lost.

---

### VERSES

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN BY ALEXANDER SELKIRK, DURING HIS SOLITARY  
ABODE ON THE ISLAND OF JUAN FERNANDEZ.

1782.

I AM monarch of all I survey,  
My right there is none to dispute,  
From the centre all round to the sea,  
I am lord of the fowl and the brute.  
O solitude! where are the charms  
That sages have seen in thy face?  
Better dwell in the midst of alarms,  
Than reign in this horrible place.

I am out of humanity's reach,  
I must finish my journey alone,  
Never hear the sweet music of speech,  
I start at the sound of my own.  
The beasts that roam over the plain,  
My form with indifference see,  
They are so unacquainted with man,  
Their tameness is shocking to me.

Society, friendship, and love,  
Divinely bestow'd upon man,  
Oh, had I the wings of a dove,  
How soon would I taste you again!  
My sorrows I then might assuage  
In the ways of religion and truth,  
Might learn from the wisdom of age,  
And be cheer'd by the sallies of youth.

Religion! what treasure untold  
Resides in that heavenly word!  
More precious than silver and gold,  
Or all that this earth can afford.

But the sound of the church-going bell  
 These valleys and rocks never heard,  
 Ne'er sigh'd at the sound of a knell,  
 Or smiled when a Sabbath appear'd.  
 Ye winds that have made me your sport,  
 Convey to this desolate shore,  
 Some cordial endearing report  
 Of a land I shall visit no more.  
 My friends, do they now and then send  
 A wish or a thought after me?  
 Oh tell me I yet have a friend,  
 Though a friend I am never to see.

How fleet is the glance of the mind!  
 Compared with the speed of its flight,  
 The tempest itself lags behind,  
 And the swift-winged arrows of light.  
 When I think of my own native land,  
 In a moment I seem to be there;  
 But alas! recollection at hand  
 Soon hurries me back to despair.

But the sea-fowl is gone to her nest,  
 The beast is laid down in his lair,  
 Even here is a season of rest,  
 And I to my cabin repair.  
 There's mercy in every place,  
 And mercy, encouraging thought!  
 Gives even affliction a grace,  
 And reconciles man to his lot.

---

#### AN EPISTLE TO JOSEPH HILL.\*

DEAR Joseph—five-and-twenty years ago—  
 Alas, how time escapes!—'tis even so—  
 With frequent intercourse, and always sweet,  
 And always friendly, we were wont to cheat  
 A tedious hour—and now we never meet!  
 As some grave gentleman in Terence says,  
 ('Twas therefore much the same in ancient days,)  
 Good lack, we know not what to-morrow brings—  
 Strange fluctuation of all human things!  
 True. Changes will befall, and friends may part,  
 But distance only cannot change the heart:

---

\* An early friend of Cowper's, who introduced him to Thurlow. He was made the Chancellor's Secretary.



And, were I call'd to prove the assertion true,  
One proof should serve—a reference to you.

Whence comes it then, that in the wane of life,  
Though nothing have occur'd to kindle strife,  
We find the friends we fancied we had won,  
Though numerous once, reduced to few or none?  
Can gold grow worthless that has stood the touch?  
No; gold they seem'd, but they were never such.

Horatio's servant once, with bow and cringe,  
Swinging the parlour door upon its hinge,  
Dreading a negative, and overawed  
Lest he should trespass, begg'd to go abroad.  
"Go, fellow!—whither?"—turning short about—  
"Nay—stay at home—you're always going out."  
"Tis but a step, sir, just at the street's end."  
"For what?"—"An' please you, sir, to see a friend."  
"A friend!" Horatio cried, and seem'd to start—  
"Yea, marry shalt thou, and with all my heart.  
And fetch my cloak; for though the night be raw,  
I'll see him too—the first I ever saw."

I knew the man, and knew his nature mild,  
And was his plaything often when a child;  
But somewhat at that moment pinch'd him close,  
Else he was seldom bitter or morose:  
Perhaps, his confidence just then betray'd,  
His grief might prompt him with the speech he made;  
Perhaps 'twas mere good humour gave it birth,  
The harmless play of pleasantry and mirth.  
Howe'er it was, his language in my mind,  
Bespoke at least a man that knew mankind.

But not to moralise too much, and strain  
To prove an evil of which all complain,  
(I hate long arguments verbosely spun;)   
One story more, dear Hill, and I have done:  
Once on a time an emperor, a wise man,  
No matter where, in China or Japan,  
Decreed that whosoever should offend  
Against the well-known duties of a friend,  
Convicted once, should ever after wear  
But half a coat, and shew his bosom bare.  
The punishment importing this, no doubt,  
That all was naught within, and all found out.

Oh happy Britain! we have not to fear  
Such hard and arbitrary measure here;  
Else, could a law like that which I relate,  
Once have the sanction of our triple state,  
Some few, that I have known in days of old,  
Would run most dreadful risk of catching cold;

While you, my friend, whatever wind should blow  
Might traverse England safely to and fro,  
An honest man, close-button'd to the chin,  
Broad-cloth without, and a warm heart within.

## THE MORALISER CORRECTED.

## A TALE.

A HERMIT, (or if 'chance you hold  
That title now too trite and old,)  
A man once young, who lived retired  
As hermit could have well desired,  
His hours of study closed at last,  
And finish'd his concise repast,  
Stopped his cruise, replaced his  
book

Within its customary nook,  
And, staff in hand, set forth to share  
The sober cordial of sweet air,  
Like Isaac, with a mind applied  
To serious thought at evening-tide.  
Autumnal rains had made it chill,  
And from the trees, that fringed his  
hill

Shades slanting at the close of day  
Chill'd more his else delightful way,  
Distant a little mile he spied  
A western bank's still sunny side,  
And right toward the favour'd place  
Proceeding with his nimblest pace,  
In hope to bask a little yet,  
Just reach'd it when the sun was set.

Your hermit, young and jovial sirs!  
Learns something from whate'er  
occurs;—

And hence, he said, my mind com-  
putes

The real worth of man's pursuits.  
His object chosen, wealth or fame,  
Or other sublunary game,

Imagination to his view  
Presents it deck'd with every hue,  
That can seduce him not to spare  
His powers of best exertion there,  
But youth, health, vigour to expend  
On so desirable an end.

Ere long approach life's evening  
shades,

The glow that fancy gave it fades;  
And, earn'd too late, it wants the  
grace

That first engaged him in the chase.

True, answer'd an angelic guide,  
Attendant at the senior's side,—  
But whether all the time it cost,  
To urge the fruitless chase be lost,  
Must be decided by the worth  
Of that which call'd his ardour forth.  
Trifles pursued, whate'er the event,  
Must cause him shame or discontent;  
A vicious object still is worse,  
Successful there he wins a curse;  
But he, whom even in life's last stage  
Endeavours laudable engage,  
Is paid at least in peace of mind,  
And sense of having well design'd;  
And if, ere he attain his end,  
His sun precipitate descend,  
A brighter prize than that he meant  
Shall recompense his mere intent.  
No virtuous wish can bear a date  
Either too early or too late.

## ODE TO APOLLO.

ON AN INK-GLASS ALMOST DRIED IN THE SUN.

PATRON of all those luckless brains  
That, to the wrong side leaning,  
Indite much metre with much pains,  
And little or no meaning;

Ah, why since oceans, rivers, streams  
That water all the nations,  
Pay tribute to thy glorious beams,  
In constant exhalations;

Why, stooping from the noon of  
day,

Too covetous of drink,  
Apollo, hast thou stolen away  
A poet's drop of ink?

Upporne into the viewless air,  
It floats a vapour now,

Impelled through regions dense and  
rare,  
By all the winds that blow;

Ordain'd perhaps ere summer flies,  
Combin'd with millions more,  
To form an iris in the skies,  
Though black and foul before.

Illustrious drop! and happy then  
Beyond the happiest lot,  
Of all that ever pass'd my pen,  
So soon to be forgot!

Phœbus, if such be thy design  
To place it in thy bow,  
Give wit, that what is left may shine  
With equal grace below.

## THE FAITHFUL BIRD.

THE greenhouse is my summer seat;  
My shrubs displaced from that retreat  
Enjoy'd the open air;

Two goldfinches, whose sprightly  
song

Had been their mutual solace long,  
Lived happy prisoners there.

They sang as blithe as finches sing  
That flutter loose on golden wing,  
And frolic where they list;

Strangers to liberty, 'tis true,  
But that delight they never knew,  
And therefore never miss'd.

But nature works in every breast,  
With force not easily suppress'd

And Dick felt some desire  
That, after many an effort vain,  
Instructed him at last

A pass betwixt

The open windows seem'd to invite  
The freeman to a farewell flight;  
But Tom was still confined;  
And Dick, although his way was clear,  
Was much too generous and sincere  
To leave his friend behind.

So settling on his cage, by play,  
And chirp, and kiss, he seem'd to say,  
You must not live alone;—  
Nor would he quit that chosen stand  
Till I, with slow and cautious hand,  
Return'd him to his own

Oh! he never

MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTION TO WILLIAM NORTHCOT.

Hic sepultus est  
Inter suorum lacrymas  
GULIELMUS NORTHCOT,  
GULIELMI et MARIE filius  
Unicus, unicé dilectus,  
Qui floris ritu succisus est  
semihiantis,  
Aprilis die septimo,  
1780. Æt. 10.

Care, vale! Sed non æternum, care,  
valetō!  
Namque iterum tecum, sim modò  
dignus, ero.

Tum nihil amplexus poterit divellere  
nostros,  
Nec tu marcesces, nec lacrymabor  
ego.

TRANSLATION.

FAREWELL! "But not for ever,"  
Hope replies,  
Trace but his steps and meet him in  
the skies!  
There nothing shall renew our part-  
ing pain,  
Thou shalt not wither, nor I weep  
again.

MUTUAL FORBEARANCE,

NECESSARY TO THE HAPPINESS OF THE MARRIED STATE.

THE lady thus address'd her spouse—  
"What a mere dungeon is this house!  
By no means large enough; and was  
it,  
Yet this dull room, and that dark  
closet,  
Those hangings with their worn-out  
graces,  
Long beards, long noses, and pale  
faces,  
Are such an antiquated scene,  
They overwhelm me with the spleen."  
Sir Humphrey, shooting in the dark,  
Makes answer quite beside the mark:  
"No doubt, my dear, I bade him  
come,  
Engaged myself to be at home,  
And shall expect him at the door  
Precisely when the clock strikes four."  
"You are deaf," the lady cried  
(And with a frown, and frow-  
ning brow,  
"You are deaf, my dear,  
Why do you make me  
say so? Harry!"  
"You are more

For one slight trespass all this  
stir?  
What if he did ride whip and spur,  
'Twas but a mile—your favourite  
horse  
Will never look one hair the worse."  
"Well, I protest 'tis past all bear-  
ing—"  
"Child! I am rather hard of hear-  
ing."  
"Yes, truly—one must scream and  
bawl:  
I tell you, you can't hear at all!"  
Then, with a voice exceeding low,  
"No matter if you hear or no."  
Alas! and is domestic strife,  
That sorest ill of human life,  
A plague so little to be fear'd,  
To be wantonly incurr'd,  
To gratify a fretful passion,  
To every trivial provocation?  
The kindest and the happiest pair  
Will find occasion to forbear;  
And something every day they live  
To pity and perhaps forgive.  
But if infirmities, that fall  
In common to the lot of all,

A blemish or a sense impair'd,  
Are crimes so little to be spared,  
Then farewell all that must create  
The comfort of the wedded state;  
Instead of harmony, 'tis jar,  
And tumult, and intestine war.

The love that cheers life's latest  
stage,  
Proof against sickness and old age,  
Preserved by virtue from declension,  
Becomes not weary of attention;

But lives, when that exterior grace,  
Which first inspired the flame, decays.  
'Tis gentle, delicate, and kind,  
To faults compassionate or blind,  
And will with sympathy endure  
Those evils it would gladly cure;  
But angry, coarse, and harsh expres-  
sion

Shows love to be a mere profession;  
Proves that the heart is none of his,  
Or soon expels him if it is.

### BOADICEA.

#### AN ODE.

WHEN the British warrior Queen,  
Bleeding from the Roman rods,  
Sought, with an indignant mien,  
Counsels of her country's gods,

Sage beneath the spreading oak,  
Sat the Druid, hoary chief;  
Every burning word he spoke  
Full of rage, and full of grief.

"Princess! if our aged eyes  
Weep upon thy matchless wrongs,  
'Tis because resentment ties  
All the terrors of our tongues.

"Rome shall perish—write that word  
In the blood that she has spilt;  
Perish, hopeless and abhorr'd,  
Deep in ruin as in guilt.

"Rome, for empire far renown'd,  
Tramples on a thousand states;  
Soon her prideshall kiss the ground—  
Hark! the Gaul is at her gates!

"Other Romans shall arise,  
Heedless of a soldier's name;

Sounds, not arms, shall win the prize,  
Harmony the path to fame.

"Then the progeny that springs  
From the forests of our land,  
Arm'd with thunder, clad with wings,  
Shall a wider world command.

"Regions Cæsar never knew  
Thy posterity shall sway;  
Where his eagles never flew,  
None invincible as they."

Such the bard's prophetic words,  
Pregnant with celestial fire,  
Bending as he swept the chords  
Of his sweet but awful lyre.

She, with all a monarch's pride,  
Felt them in her bosom glow:  
Rush'd to battle, fought, and died;  
Dying, hurl'd them at the foe.

Ruffians, pitiless as proud,  
Heaven awards the vengeance due;  
Empire is on us bestow'd,  
Shame and ruin wait for you.

### TO THE REV. W. CAWTHORNE UNWIN.

UNWIN, I should but ill repay  
The kindness of a friend,  
Whose worth deserves as warm a lay,

As ever friendship penn'd,  
Thy name omitted in a page,  
That would reclaim a vicious age.

A union form'd as mine with thee,  
Not rashly, or in sport,  
May be as fervent in degree  
And faithful in its sort,  
And may as rich in comfort prove,  
As that of true fraternal love.

The bud inserted in the rind,  
The bud of peach or rose,  
Adorns, though differing in its kind,  
The stock whereon it grows,  
With flower as sweet, or fruit as fair,  
As if produced by nature there.

Not rich, I render what I may,  
I seize thy name in haste,  
And place it in this first essay,  
Lest this should prove the last.  
'Tis where it should be—in a plan,  
That holds in view the good of man.

The poet's lyre, to fix his fame,  
Should be the poet's heart;  
Affection lights a brighter flame  
Than ever blazed by art.  
No muses on these lines attend,  
I sink the poet in the friend.

## TO THE REVEREND MR. NEWTON.

### AN INVITATION INTO THE COUNTRY.

THE swallows in their torpid state  
Compose their useless wing,  
And bees in hives as idly wait  
The call of early Spring.

The keenest frost that binds the  
stream,  
The wildest wind that blows,  
Are neither felt nor fear'd by them,  
Secure of their repose.

But man all feeling and awake,  
The gloomy scene surveys,  
With present ills his heart must ache,  
And pant for brighter days.

Old Winter, halting o'er the mead,  
Bids me and Mary mourn;  
But lovely Spring peeps o'er his head,  
And whispers your return.

Then April with her sister May  
Shall chase him from the bowers,  
And weave fresh garlands every day,  
To crown the smiling hours.

And if a tear that speaks regret  
Of happier times appear,  
A glimpse of joy that we have met  
Shall shine, and dry the tear.

## THE LILY AND THE ROSE.

THE nymph must lose her female  
friend  
If more admired than she—  
But where will fierce contention end,  
If flowers can disagree?

Within the garden's peaceful scene,  
Appear'd two lovely foes,  
Aspiring to the rank of queen,  
The Lily and the Rose.

The Rose soon redden'd into rage,  
And swelling with disdain,  
Appeal'd to many a poet's page  
To prove her right to reign.

The Lily's height bespoke com-  
mand,  
A fair imperial flower,  
She seem'd design'd for Flora's hand,  
The sceptre of her power.

This civil bickering and debate  
 The goddess chanced to hear,  
 And flew to save, ere yet too late,  
 The pride of the parterre.  
 "Yours is," she said, "the nobler  
 hue,  
 And yours the statelier mien,

And, till a third surpasses you,  
 Let each be deem'd a queen."

Thus soothed and reconciled, each  
 seeks  
 The fairest British fair,  
 The seat of empire is her cheeks,  
 They reign united there.

---

IDEM LATINE REDDITUM.

HEU inimicitias quoties parit æmula forma,  
 Quam raro pulchræ pulchra placere potest !  
 Sed fines ultra solitos discordia tendit,  
 Cum flores ipsos bilis et ira movent.

Hortus ubi dulces præbet tacitosque recessus,  
 Se rapit in partes gens animosa duas,  
 Hic sibi regales Amaryllis candida cultus,  
 Illic purpureo vindicat ore Rosa.

Ira Rosam et meritis quæsita superbia tangunt,  
 Multaque ferventi vix cohibenda sinu,  
 Dum sibi fautorum ciet undique nomina vatûm,  
 Jusque suum, multo carmine fulta, probat.

Altior emicat illa, et celso vertice nutat,  
 Ceu flores inter non habitura parem,  
 Fastiditque alios, et nata videtur in usûs  
 Imperii, sceptrum, Flora quod ipsa gerat.

Nec Dea non sensit civilis murmura rixæ,  
 Cui curæ est pictas pandere ruris opes.  
 Deliciasque suas nunquam non prompta tueri,  
 Dum licet et locus est, ut tueatur, adest.

"Et tibi forma datur procerior omnibus," inquit,  
 "Et tibi, principibus qui solet esse, color;  
 Et donec vincat quædam formosior ambas,  
 Et tibi reginæ nomen, et esto tibi."

His ubi sedatus furor est, petit utraque nympham  
 Qualem inter Veneres Anglia sola parit;  
 Hanc penes imperium est, nihil optant amplius, hujus  
 Regnant in nitidis, et sine lite, genis.

THE WINTER NOSEGAY.

WHAT Nature, alas ! has denied  
To the delicate growth of our isle,  
Art has in a measure supplied,  
And winter is deck'd with a  
smile.

See, Mary, what beauties I bring  
From the shelter of that sunny  
shed,

Where the flowers have the charms  
of the spring,  
Though abroad they are frozen  
and dead.

'Tis a bower of Arcadian sweets,  
Where Flora is still in her prime ;

A fortress to which she retreats,  
From the cruel assaults of the  
clime.

While earth wears a mantle of snow,  
These pinks are as fresh and as gay  
As the fairest and sweetest that blow  
On the beautiful bosom of May.

See how they have safely survived  
The frowns of a sky so severe !  
Such Mary's true love that has lived  
Through many a turbulent year.  
The charms of the late-blowing rose,  
Seem'd graced with a livelier hue,  
And the winter of sorrow best shows  
The truth of a friend such as you.

THE POET, THE OYSTER, AND SENSITIVE PLANT.

AN Oyster cast upon the shore  
Was heard, though never heard  
before,  
Complaining in a speech well worded,  
And worthy thus to be recorded :—  
“ Ah, hapless wretch ! condemn'd  
to dwell

For ever in my native shell,  
Ordain'd to move when others please,  
Not for my own content or ease,  
But toss'd and buffeted about,  
Now in the water, and now out.  
’Twere better to be born a stone  
Of ruder shape and feeling none,  
Than with a tenderness like mine,  
And sensibilities so fine !  
I envy that unfeeling shrub,  
Fast rooted against every rub.”  
The plant he meant grew not far off,  
And felt the sneer with scorn enough,  
Was hurt, disgusted, mortified,  
And with asperity replied.

“ When,” cry the botanists, and  
stare,  
“ Did plants call'd Sensitive grow  
there ?”

No matter when—a poet's muse is  
To make them grow just where she  
chooses.

“ You shapeless nothing in a dish,  
You that are but almost a fish,  
I scorn your coarse insinuation,  
And have most plentiful occasion  
To wish myself the rock I view,  
Or such another dolt as you.  
For many a grave and learned clerk,  
And many a gay unletter'd spark,  
With curious touch examines me,  
If I can feel as well as he ;  
And when I bend, retire, and shrink,  
Says, “ Well—’tis more than one  
would think.”

Thus life is spent ! oh fie upon't,  
In being touch'd, and crying—  
“ Don't !”

A poet, in his evening walk,  
O'erheard and check'd this idle talk.  
“ And your fine sense,” he said, “ and  
yours,  
Whatever evil it endures,  
Deserves not, if so soon offended,  
Much to be pitied or commended.



Disputes, though short, are far too  
long,  
Where both alike are in the wrong;  
Your feelings in their full amount,  
Are all upon your own account.

"You, in your grotto-work enclosed

Complain of being thus exposed,  
Yet nothing feel in that rough coat,  
Save when the knife is at your throat.  
Wherever driven by wind or tide,  
Exempt from every ill beside.

"And as for you, my Lady Squeamish,

Who reckon every touch a blemish,  
If all the plants that can be found  
Embellishing the scene around,  
Should droop and wither where they  
grow,

You would not feel at all, not you.  
The noblest minds their virtue prove  
By pity, sympathy, and love:  
These, these are feelings truly fine,  
And prove their owner half divine."

His censure reach'd them as he  
dealt it,  
And each by shrinking shew'd he  
felt it.

### EPITAPH ON DR. JOHNSON.

HERE Johnson lies, a sage by all  
allow'd,

Whom to have bred, may well make  
England proud;

Whose prose was eloquence, by Wisdom taught,

The graceful vehicle of virtuous  
thought;

Whose verse may claim, grave,  
masculine, and strong,

Superior praise to the mere poet's  
song;

Who many a noble gift from heaven  
possess'd,

And faith at last, alone worth all the  
rest.

O man, immortal by a double prize,  
By fame on earth, by glory in the  
skies!

### ON THE AUTHOR\* OF LETTERS ON LITERATURE.

1785.

THE Genius of the Augustan age  
His head among Rome's ruins,  
rear'd,

And bursting with heroic rage,  
When literary Heron appear'd,

"Thou hast," he cried, "like him of  
old,

Who set the Ephesian dome on fire,

By being scandalously bold,  
Attain'd the mark of thy desire.

"And for traducing Virgil's name  
Shalt share his merited reward;  
A perpetuity of fame,  
That rots, and stinks, and is ab-  
horr'd."

\* John Pinkerton, Heron was his *nom de plume*. Cowper was very indignant at the publication of these letters.

THE SHRUBBERY

WRITTEN IN A TIME OF AFFLICTION.

Oh happy shades! to me unblest,  
 Friendly to peace, but not to me,  
 How ill the scene that offers rest,  
 And heart that cannot rest, agree!  
 This glassy stream, that spreading  
 pine,  
 Those alders quivering to the  
 breeze,  
 Might soothe a soul less hurt than  
 mine,  
 And please, if anything could  
 please.  
 But fix'd, unalterable Care,  
 Foregoes not what she feels within,  
 Shews the same sadness every where,  
 And slights the season and the  
 scene.

For all that pleased in wood or  
 lawn,  
 While Peace possess'd these silent  
 bowers,  
 Her animating smile withdrawn,  
 Has lost its beauties and its powers.  
 The saint or moralist should tread  
 This moss-grown alley, musing  
 slow;  
 They seek like me the secret shade,  
 But not like me, to nourish woe.  
 Me fruitful scenes and prospects  
 waste,  
 Alike admonish not to roam;  
 These tell me of enjoyments past,  
 And those of sorrows yet to come.

THE POPLAR FIELD.

The poplars are fell'd; farewell to the shade,  
 And the whispering sound of the cool colonnade!  
 The winds play no longer and sing in the leaves,  
 Nor Ouse on his bosom their image receives.  
 Twelve years have elapsed since I first took a view  
 Of my favourite field, and the bank where they grew;  
 And now in the grass behold they are laid,  
 And the tree is my seat that once lent me a shade!  
 The blackbird has fled to another retreat,  
 Where the hazels afford him a screen from the heat,  
 And the scene where his melody charm'd me before  
 Resounds with his sweet-flowing ditty no more.  
 My fugitive years are all hasting away,  
 And I must ere long lie as lowly as they,  
 With a turf on my breast, and a stone at my head,  
 Ere another such grove shall arise in its stead.  
 'Tis a sight to engage me, if anything can,  
 To muse on the perishing pleasures of man;  
 Though his life be a dream, his enjoyments, I see,  
 Have a being less durable even than he.

## TO MISS CREUZÉ, ON HER BIRTHDAY.

How many between east and west  
 Disgrace their parent earth,  
 Whose deeds constrain us to detest  
 The day that gave them birth!

Not so when Stella's natal morn  
 Revolving months restore,  
 We can rejoice that she was born,  
 And wish her born once more!

## GRATITUDE.

ADDRESSED TO LADY HESKETH.

THIS cap that so stately appears,  
 With ribbon-bound tassel on high,  
 Which seems by the crest that it  
 rears

Ambitious of brushing the sky :  
 This cap to my cousin I owe,  
 She gave it, and gave me beside,  
 Wreathed into an elegant bow,  
 The ribbon with which it is tied.

This wheel-footed studying chair,  
 Contrived both for toil and repose  
 Wide-elbow'd, and wadded with hair,  
 In which I both scribble and dose,  
 Bright-studded to dazzle the eyes,  
 And rival in lustre of that  
 In which, or astronomy lies,  
 Fair Cassiopeia sat!

These carpets, so soft to the foot,  
 Caledonia's traffic and pride,  
 Oh spare them, ye knights of the boot,  
 Escaped from the cross-country  
 ride!

This table and mirror within,  
 Secure from collision and dust,  
 At which I oft shave cheek and chin,  
 And periwig nicely adjust :

This moveable structure of shelves,  
 For its beauty admired and its use,  
 And charged with octavos and  
 twelves,  
 The gayest I had to produce ;

Where, flaming in scarlet and gold,  
 My poems enchanted I view,  
 And hope, in due time, to behold  
 My Iliad and Odyssey too :

This china, that decks the alcove,  
 Which here people call a buffet,  
 But what the gods call it above,  
 Has ne'er been revealed to us yet :  
 These curtains that keep the room  
 warm

Or cool, as the season demands,  
 Those stoves that for pattern and form  
 Seem the labour of Mulciber's  
 hands :

All these are not half that I owe  
 To One, from our earliest youth  
 To me ever ready to shew  
 Benignity, friendship, and truth ;  
 For time, the destroyer declared  
 And foe of our perishing kind,  
 If even her face he has spared,  
 Much less could he alter her mind.

Thus compass'd about with the goods  
 And chattels of leisure and ease,  
 I indulge my poetical moods  
 In many such fancies as these ;  
 And fancies I fear they will seem—  
 Poet's goods are not often so fine ;  
 The poets will swear that I dream,  
 When I sing of the splendour of  
 mine.

STANZAS

SUBJOINED TO THE YEARLY BILL OF MORTALITY OF THE PARISH OF  
ALL-SAINTS, NORTHAMPTON, ANNO DOMINI 1787.\*

Pallida Mors æquo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas,  
Regumque turres.

Pale Death with equal foot strikes wide the door  
Of royal halls and hovels of the poor.

HORACE.

WHILE thirteen moons saw smoothly  
run

The Nen's barge-laden wave,  
All these, life's rambling journey done,  
Have found their home, the grave.

Was man (frail always) made more  
frail

Than in foregoing years?  
Did famine or did plague prevail,  
That so much death appears?

No; these were vigorous as their sires,  
Nor plague nor famine came;  
This annual tribute Death requires,  
And never waives his claim.

Like crowded forest-trees we stand,  
And some are mark'd to fall;  
The axe will smite at God's command,  
And soon shall smite us all.

Green as the bay tree, ever green,  
With its new foliage on,

The gay, the thoughtless, have I seen,  
I pass'd,—and they were gone.

Read, ye that run, the awful truth  
With which I charge my page!  
A worm is in the bud of youth,  
And at the root of age.

No present health can health insure  
For yet an hour to come;  
No medicine, though it oft can cure,  
Can always balk the tomb.

And oh! that humble as my lot,  
And scorn'd as is my strain,  
These truths, though known, too  
much forgot,  
I may not teach in vain.

Soprays your Clerk with all his heart,  
And ere he quits the pen,  
Begs you for once to take his part,  
And answer all—Amen!

\* In the following extract, from a letter of the poet's to Lady Hesketh, Cowper explains how he came to write on such a subject. "On Monday morning last, Sam brought me word that there was a man in the kitchen who desired to speak with me. I ordered him in. A plain, decent, elderly figure made its appearance, and, being desired to sit, spoke as follows: 'Sir, I am clerk of the parish of All Saints, in Northampton; brother of Mr. C. [Cox,] the upholsterer. It is customary for the person in my office to annex to a bill of mortality, which he publishes at Christmas, a copy of verses. You will do me a great favour, sir, if you will furnish me with one.' To this I replied, 'Mr. C., you have several men of genius in your town, why have you not applied to some of them? There is a namesake of yours in particular, C——, the statuary, who, everybody knows, is a first-rate maker of verses. He surely is the man of all the world for your purpose.' 'Alas! sir, I have heretofore borrowed help of him, but he is a gentleman of so much reading that the people of our town cannot understand him.' I confess to you, my dear, I felt all the force of the compliment implied in this speech, and was almost ready to answer, 'Perhaps, my good friend, they may find me unintelligible too for the same reason.' But, on asking him whether he had walked over to Weston on purpose to implore the assistance of my muse, and on his replying in the affirmative, I felt my mortified vanity a little consoled, and, pitying the poor man's distress, which appeared to be considerable, promised to supply him. The waggon has accordingly gone this day to Northampton loaded in part with my effusions in the mortuary style. A fig for poets who write epitaphs on individuals! I have written one that serves two hundred persons."

## ON A SIMILAR OCCASION.

FOR THE YEAR 1788.

Quod adest, memento  
Componere æquus. Cætera fluminis  
Rit, feruntur. HORACE.

Improve the present hour, for all beside  
Is a mere feather on a torrent's tide.

COULD I, from Heaven inspired, as sure presage  
To whom the rising year shall prove his last,  
As I can number in my punctual page,  
And item down the victims of the past;

How each would trembling wait the mournful sheet  
On which the press might stamp him next to die;  
And, reading here his sentence, how replete  
With anxious meaning, heavenward turn his eye!

Time then would seem more precious than the joys  
In which he sports away the treasure now;  
And prayer more seasonable than the noise  
Of drunkards, or the music-drawing bow.

Then doubtless many a trifier, on the brink  
Of this world's hazardous and headlong shore,  
Forced to a pause, would feel it good to think,  
Told that his setting sun must rise no more.

Ah self-deceived! Could I prophetic say  
Who next is fated, and who next to fall,  
The rest might then seem privileged to play;  
But, naming none, the Voice now speaks to all.

Observe the dappled foresters, how light  
They bound and airy o'er the sunny glade:  
One falls—the rest, wide scatter'd with affright,  
Vanish at once into the darkest shade.

Had we their wisdom, should we, often warn'd,  
Still need repeated warnings, and at last,  
A thousand awful admonitions scorn'd,  
Die self-accused of life run all to waste?

Sad waste! for which no after-thrift atones!  
The grave admits no cure for guilt or sin;  
Dewdrops may deck the turf that hides the bones,  
But tears of godly grief ne'er flow within.

Learn then, ye living! by the mouths be taught  
 Of all those sepulchres, instructors true,  
 That, soon or late, death also is your lot,  
 And the next opening grave may yawn for you.

## ON A SIMILAR OCCASION.

FOR THE YEAR 1789.

—Placidâque ibi demum morte quievit. VIRG.

There calm at length he breathed his soul away.

"O most delightful hour by man  
 Experienced here below,  
 The hour that terminates his span,  
 His folly and his woe!  
 "Worlds should not bribe me back  
 to tread  
 Again life's dreary waste,  
 To see again my day o'erspread  
 With all the gloomy past.  
 "My home henceforth is in the skies,  
 Earth, seas, and sun, adieu!  
 All heaven unfolded to my eyes,  
 I have no sight for you."  
 So spake Aspasio, firm possess'd  
 Of faith's supporting rod,  
 Then breathed his soul into its rest,  
 The bosom of his God.  
 He was a man among the few  
 Sincere on Virtue's side;

And all his strength from Scripture  
 drew,  
 To hourly use applied.  
 That rule he prized, by that he fear'd,  
 He hated, hoped, and loved;  
 Nor ever frown'd, or sad appear'd,  
 But when his heart had roved.  
 For he was frail as thou or I,  
 And evil felt within;  
 But when he felt it, heaved a sigh,  
 And loathed the thought of sin.  
 Such lived Aspasio; and at last  
 Call'd up from earth to heaven,  
 The gulf of death triumphant pass'd,  
 By gales of blessing driven.  
 "His joys be mine," each reader cries,  
 "When my last hour arrives;"  
 "They shall be yours," my verse  
 replies,  
 "Such only be your lives."

## ON A SIMILAR OCCASION.

FOR THE YEAR 1790.

Ne componentem recta sperne.—BUCHANAN.

Despise not my good counsel.

He who sits from day to day  
 Where the prison'd lark is hung,  
 Heedless of his loudest lay,  
 Hardly knows that he has sung.

Where the watchman in his round  
 Nightly lifts his voice on high,  
 None accusom'd to the sound,  
 Wakes the sooner for his cry.

So your verse-man I, and Clerk,  
Yearly in my song proclaim  
Death at hand—yourselves his  
mark—

And the foe's unerring aim.

Duly at my time I come,  
Publishing to all aloud,—  
Soon the grave must be your home,  
And your only suit a shroud.

But the monitory strain,  
Oft repeated in your ears,  
Seems to sound too much in vain,  
Wins no notice, wakes no fears.

Can a truth, by all confess'd  
Of such magnitude and weight,

Grow, by being oft impress'd,  
Trivial as a parrot's prate?

Pleasure's call attention wins,  
Hear it often as we may;  
New as ever seem our sins,  
Though committed every day.

Death and judgment, heaven and  
hell—

These alone, so often heard,  
No more move us than the bell  
When some stranger is interr'd.

Oh then, ere the turf or tomb  
Cover us from every eye,  
Spirit of instruction! come,  
Make us learn that we must die.

### ON A SIMILAR OCCASION.

FOR THE YEAR 1792.

*Felix, qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas,  
Atque metus omnes et inexorabile fatum  
Subiecit pedibus, strepitumque Acherontis avari!*—VIRG.

Happy the mortal who has traced effects  
To their first cause, cast fear beneath his feet,  
And Death and roaring Hell's voracious fires!

THANKLESS for favours from on high,  
Man thinks he fades too soon;  
Though 'tis his privilege to die,  
Would he improve the boon.

But he, not wise enough to scan  
His best concerns aright,  
Would gladly stretch life's little span  
To ages, if he might;

To ages in a world of pain,  
To ages, where he goes  
Gall'd by affliction's heavy chain,  
And hopeless of repose.

Strange fondness of the human heart,  
Enamour'd of its harm!

Strange world, that costs it so much  
smart,  
And still has power to charm.

Whence has the world her magic  
power?  
Why deem we Death a foe?  
Recoil from weary life's best hour,  
And covet longer woe?

The cause is Conscience—Conscience  
oft

Her tale of guilt renews;  
Her voice is terrible though soft,  
And dread of Death ensues.

Then anxious to be longer spared  
Man mourns his fleeting breath:  
All evils then seem light, com-  
pared  
With the approach of Death.

|                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 'Tis judgment shakes him ; there's<br>the fear<br>That prompts the wish to stay :<br>He has incurr'd a long arrear,<br>And must despair to pay. | Pay !—follow Christ, and all is paid :<br>His death your peace ensures ;<br>Think on the grave where He was<br>laid,<br>And calm descend to yours. |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## ON A SIMILAR OCCASION.

FOR THE YEAR 1793.

De sacris autem hæc sit una sententia, ut conserventur. Cíc., *De Leg.*

But let us all concur in this one sentiment, that things sacred be inviolate.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| He lives who lives to God alone,<br>And all are dead beside ;<br>For other source than God is none<br>Whence life can be supplied.<br>To live to God is to requite<br>His love as best we may ;<br>To make his precepts our delight,<br>His promises our stay.<br>But life, within a narrow ring<br>Of giddy joys comprised,<br>Is falsely named, and no such thing,<br>But rather death disguised.<br>Can life in them deserve the name,<br>Who only live to prove<br>For what poor toys they can disclaim<br>An endless life above ?<br>Who, much diseased, yet nothing feel ;<br>Much menaced, nothing dread ;<br>Have wounds which only God can<br>heal,<br>Yet never ask His aid ? | Who deem His house a useless place,<br>Faith, want of common sense ;<br>And ardour in the Christian race,<br>A hypocrite's pretence ?<br>Who trample order ; and the day<br>Which God asserts his own<br>Dishonour with unhallow'd play,<br>And worship chance alone ?<br>If scorn of God's commands, impress'd<br>On word and deed, imply<br>The better part of man unblest'd<br>With life that cannot die ;<br>Such want it, and that want, uncured<br>Till man resigns his breath,<br>Speaks him a criminal, assured<br>Of everlasting death.<br>Sad period to a pleasant course !<br>Yet so will God repay<br>Sabbaths profaned without remorse,<br>And mercy cast away. |
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 LINES COMPOSED FOR A MEMORIAL OF  
 ASHLEY COWPER, ESQ.,

IMMEDIATELY AFTER HIS DEATH.\* 1788.

FAREWELL! endued with all that could engage  
 All hearts to love thee, both in youth and age !  
 In prime of life, for sprightliness enroll'd  
 Among the gay, yet virtuous as the old ;

\* The father of Theodora Cowper, his "*Delia*."



## MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

In life's last stage, (oh blessings rarely found !)  
Pleasant as youth with all its blossoms crown'd,  
Through every period of this changeful state  
Unchanged thyself—wise, good, affectionate !

Marble may flatter, and lest this should seem  
O'ercharged with praises on so dear a theme,  
Although thy worth be more than half suppress'd  
Love shall be satisfied, and veil the rest.

## THE POET'S NEW-YEAR'S GIFT.

MARIA !\* I have every good  
For thee wish'd many a time,  
Both sad and in a cheerful mood,  
But never yet in rhyme.

To wish thee fairer is no need,  
More prudent, or more sprightly,  
Or more ingenious, or more freed  
From temper-flaws unsightly.

What favour then not yet possess'd  
Can I for thee require,  
In wedded love already bless'd,  
To thy whole heart's desire ?

None here is happy but in part ;  
Full bliss is bliss divine ;  
There dwells some wish in every heart,  
And doubtless one in thine.

That wish, on some fair future day,  
Which fate shall brightly gild,  
( 'Tis blameless, be it what it may, )  
I wish it all fulfill'd.

## THE NEGRO'S COMPLAINT.

FORCED from home and all its pleasures,  
Afric's coast I left forlorn ;  
To increase a stranger's treasures,  
O'er the raging billows borne.

\* Mrs. Throckmorton.

Men from England bought and sold me,  
Paid my price in paltry gold;  
But, though slave they have enroll'd me,  
Minds are never to be sold.

Still in thought as free as ever,  
What are England's rights, I ask,  
Me from my delights to sever,  
Me to torture, me to task?  
Fleecy locks and black complexion  
Cannot forfeit nature's claim;  
Skins may differ, but affection  
Dwells in white and black the same.

Why did all-creating Nature  
Make the plant for which we toil?  
Sighs must fan it, tears must water,  
Sweat of ours must dress the soil.  
Think, ye masters, iron-hearted,  
Lolling at your jovial boards,  
Think how many backs have smarted  
For the sweets your cane affords.

Is there, as ye sometimes tell us,  
Is there One who reigns on high?  
Has He bid you buy and sell us,  
Speaking from His throne, the sky?  
Ask Him, if your knotted scourges,  
Matches, blood-extorting screws,  
Are the means that duty urges  
Agents of His will to use?

Hark! He answers!—wild tornadoes  
Strewing yonder sea with wrecks,  
Wasting towns, plantations, meadows,  
Are the voice with which He speaks.  
He, foreseeing what vexations  
Afric's sons should undergo,  
Fix'd their tyrants' habitations  
Where His whirlwinds answer—No.

By our blood in Afric wasted,  
Ere our necks received the chain;  
By the miseries that we tasted,  
Crossing in your barks the main;  
By our sufferings, since ye brought us  
To the man-degrading mart,  
All sustain'd by patience, taught us  
Only by a broken heart!

## MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

Deem our nation brutes no longer,  
 Till some reason ye shall find  
 Worthier of regard and stronger  
 Than the colour of our kind.  
 Slaves of gold, whose sordid dealings  
 Tarnish all your boasted powers,  
 Prove that you have human feelings  
 Ere you proudly question ours!

---

 PITY FOR POOR AFRICANS.

*Video meliora proboque,  
 Deteriora sequor.*

I own I am shock'd at the purchase of slaves,  
 And fear those who buy them and sell them are knaves;  
 What I hear of their hardships, their tortures, and groans,  
 Is almost enough to draw pity from stones.

I pity them greatly, but I must be mum,  
 For how could we do without sugar and rum?  
 Especially sugar, so needful we see;  
 What, give up our desserts, our coffee, and tea!

Besides if we do, the French, Dutch, and Danes  
 Will heartily thank us, no doubt, for our pains;  
 If we do not buy the poor creatures, they will;  
 And tortures and groans will be multiplied still.

If foreigners likewise would give up the trade,  
 Much more in behalf of your wish might be said;  
 But, while they get riches by purchasing blacks,  
 Pray tell me why we may not also go snacks?

Your scruples and arguments bring to my mind  
 A story so pat, you may think it is coin'd,  
 On purpose to answer you, out of my mint;  
 But I can assure you I saw it in print.

A youngster at school, more sedate than the rest,  
 Had once his integrity put to the test;  
 His comrades had plotted an orchard to rob,  
 And ask'd him to go and assist in the job.

He was shock'd, sir, like you, and answer'd, "Oh no!  
 What! rob our good neighbour? I pray you don't go!  
 Besides, the man's poor, his orchard's his bread:  
 Then think of his children, for they must be fed."

"You speak very fine, and you look very grave,  
But apples we want, and apples we'll have;  
If you will go with us, you shall have a share,  
If not, you shall have neither apple nor pear."

They spoke, and Tom ponder'd—"I see they will go;  
Poor man! what a pity to injure him so!  
Poor man! I would save him his fruit if I could,  
But staying behind will do him no good.

"If the matter depended alone upon me,  
His apples might hang till they dropp'd from the tree;  
But since they will take them, I think I'll go too;  
He will lose none by me, though I get a few."

His scruples thus silenced, Tom felt more at ease,  
And went with his comrades the apples to seize;  
He blamed and protested, but join'd in the plan;  
He shared in the plunder, but pitied the man.

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### THE MORNING DREAM.

'Twas in the glad season of spring,  
Asleep at the dawn of the day,  
I dream'd what I cannot but sing,  
So pleasant it seem'd as I lay.  
I dream'd that, on ocean afloat,  
Far hence to the westward I sail'd,  
While the billows high lifted the boat,  
And the fresh-blowing breeze never fail'd.

In the steerage a woman I saw;  
Such at least was the form that she wore,  
Whose beauty impress'd me with awe  
Ne'er taught me by woman before.  
She sat, and a shield at her side  
Shed light, like a sun on the waves,  
And, smiling divinely, she cried—  
"I go to make freemen of slaves."

Then raising her voice to a strain  
The sweetest that ear ever heard,  
She sang of the slave's broken chain  
Wherever her glory appear'd.  
Some clouds, which had over us hung,  
Fled, chased by her melody clear,  
And methought while she liberty sung,  
'Twas liberty only to hear.

## MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

Thus swiftly dividing the flood,  
 To a slave-cultur'd island we came,  
 Where a demon, her enemy, stood—  
 Oppression his terrible name.  
 In his hand, as the sign of his sway,  
 A scourge hung with lashes he bore,  
 And stood looking out for his prey  
 From Africa's sorrowful shore.

But soon as approaching the land  
 That goddess-like woman he view'd,  
 The scourge he let fall from his hand,  
 With blood of his subjects imbrued.  
 I saw him both sicken and die,  
 And the moment the monster expired,  
 Heard shouts that ascended the sky,  
 From thousands with rapture inspired.

Awaking, how could I but muse  
 At what such a dream should betide?  
 But soon my ear caught the glad news  
 Which served my weak thought for a guide,—  
 That Britannia, renown'd o'er the waves  
 For the hatred she ever has shown  
 To the black-sceptred rulers of slaves,  
 Resolves to have none of her own.



## SWEET MEAT HAS SOUR SAUCE;

OR, THE SLAVE-TRADE IN THE DUMPS.

A TRADER I am to the African shore,  
 But since that my trading is like to be o'er,  
 I'll sing you a song that you ne'er heard before,  
 Which nobody can deny, deny,  
 Which nobody can deny.

When I first heard the news it gave me a shock,  
 Much like what they call an electrical knock,  
 And now I am going to sell off my stock,  
 Which nobody, &c.

'Tis a curious assortment of dainty regales,  
 To tickle the negroes with when the ship sails,  
 Fine chains for the neck, and a cat with nine tails,  
 Which nobody, &c.

Here's supple-jack plenty, and store of ratan,  
That will wind itself round the sides of a man,  
As close as a hoop round a bucket or can,  
Which nobody, &c.

Here's padlocks and bolts, and screws for the thumbs,  
That squeeze them so lovingly till the blood comes;  
They sweeten the temper like comfits or plums,  
Which nobody, &c.

When a negro his head from his victuals withdraws,  
And clenches his teeth and thrusts out his paws,  
Here's a notable engine to open his jaws,  
Which nobody, &c.

Thus going to market, we kindly prepare  
A pretty black cargo of African ware,  
For what they must meet with when they get there,  
Which nobody, &c.

'Twould do your heart good to see 'em below  
Lie flat on their backs all the way as we go,  
Like sprats on a gridiron, scores in a row,  
Which nobody, &c.

But ah! if in vain I have studied an art  
So gainful to me, all boasting apart,  
I think it will break my compassionate heart,  
Which nobody, &c.

For oh! how it enters my soul like an awl;  
This pity, which some people self-pity call,  
Is sure the most heart-piercing pity of all,  
Which nobody, &c.

So this is my song, as I told you before;  
Come, buy off my stock, for I must no more  
Carry Cæsars and Pompeys to sugar-cane shore,  
Which nobody, &c.

## EPIGRAM.

To purify their wine, some people bleed  
A lamb into the barrel, and succeed;  
No nostrum, planters say, is half so good  
To make fine sugar, as a negro's blood.  
Now lambs and negroes both are harmless things,  
And hence perhaps this wondrous virtue springs.  
'Tis in the blood of innocence alone—  
Good cause why planters never try their own.

## THE YEARLY DISTRESS;

OR, TITHING-TIME AT STOCK, IN ESSEX.

*Verses addressed to a country clergyman\* complaining of the disagreeableness of the day annually appointed for receiving the dues at the parsonage.*

COME, ponder well, for 'tis no jest,  
To laugh it would be wrong,  
The troubles of a worthy priest,  
The burthen of my song.

This priest he merry is and blithe  
Three quarters of a year,  
But oh! it cuts him like a scythe  
When tithing-time draws near.

He then is full of frights and fears,  
As one at point to die,  
And long before the day appears  
He heaves up many a sigh.

For then the farmers come, jog, jog,  
Along the miry road,  
Each heart as heavy as a log,  
To make their payments good.

In sooth the sorrow of such days  
Is not to be express'd,  
When he that takes and he that pays  
Are both alike distress'd.

Now all unwelcome at his gates  
The clumsy swains alight,  
With rueful faces and bald pates;—  
He trembles at the sight.

And well he may, for well he knows,  
Each bumpkin of the clan,  
Instead of paying what he owes,  
Will cheat him if he can.

So in they come—each makes his leg,  
And flings his head before,  
And looks as if he came to beg,  
And not to quit a score.

“And how does miss and madam do,  
The little boy and all?”  
“All tight and well. And how do you,  
Good Mr. What-d’ye-call?”

The dinner comes, and down they sit:  
Were e’er such hungry folk?  
There’s little talking, and no wit;  
It is no time to joke.

One wipes his nose upon his sleeve,  
One spits upon the floor,  
Yet not to give offence or grieve,  
Holds up the cloth before.

The punch goes round, and they are  
dull  
And lumpish still as ever;  
Like barrels with their bellies full,  
They only weigh the heavier.

At length the busy time begins.  
“Come, neighbours, we must  
wag,”—

The money chinks, down drop their  
chins,  
Each lugging out his bag.

One talks of mildew and of frost,  
And one of storms of hail,  
And one of pigs that he has lost  
By maggots at the tail.

Quoth one, “A rarer man than you  
In pulpit none shall hear;  
But yet methinks to tell you true,  
You sell it plaguy dear.”

Oh why were farmers made so coarse,  
Or clergy made so fine?  
A kick that scarce would move a  
horse,  
May kill a sound divine.

Then let the boobies stay at home;  
’Twould cost him, I dare say,  
Less trouble taking twice the sum  
Without the clowns that pay.

\* Mr. Unwin.

SONNET

ADDRESSED TO HENRY COWPER, ESQ.,\* 1788.

*On his emphatical and interesting Delivery of the Defence of Warren Hastings, Esq.,  
in the House of Lords.*

COWPER, whose silver voice, task'd sometimes hard,  
Legends prolix delivers in the ears  
(Attentive when thou readest) of England's peers,  
Let verse at length yield thee thy just reward.

Thou wast not heard with drowsy disregard,  
Expending late on all that length of plea  
Thy generous powers, but silence honour'd thee,  
Mute as e'er gazed on orator or bard.

Thou art not voice alone, but hast beside  
Both heart and head; and couldst with music sweet  
Of Attic phrase and senatorial tone,  
Like thy renown'd forefathers, far and wide  
Thy fame diffuse, praised not for utterance meet  
Of *others'* speech, but magic of *thy own*.

THE DOG AND THE WATER LILY.

NO FABLE.

1788.

THE noon was shady, and soft airs  
Swept Ouse's silent tide,  
When, 'scaped from literary cares,  
I wander'd on his side.

My spaniel, prettiest of his race,  
And high in pedigree,  
(Two nymphs† adorn'd with every  
grace  
That spaniel found for me,)

Now wanton'd lost in flags and reeds,  
Now starting into sight,  
Pursued the swallow o'er the meads  
With scarce a slower flight.

It was the time when Ouse display'd  
His lilies newly blown;  
Their beauties I intent survey'd,  
And one I wish'd my own.

With cane extended far I sought  
To steer it close to land;  
But still the prize, though nearly  
caught,  
Escaped my eager hand.

Beau mark'd my unsuccessful pains  
With fix'd considerate face,  
And puzzling set his puppy brains  
To comprehend the case.

\* The poet's cousin.

† The Gannings, daughters of Sir Robert Gunning, and great-nieces of the celebrated beauties of George II.'s reign.



|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>But with a cherup clear and strong,<br/>         Dispersing all his dream,<br/>         I thence withdrew, and follow'd<br/>             long<br/>         The windings of the stream.</p> <p>My ramble ended I return'd ;<br/>         Beau, trotting far before<br/>         The floating wreath again discern'd,<br/>         And plunging left the shore.</p> <p>I saw him with that lily cropp'd<br/>         Impatient swim to meet</p> | <p>My quick approach, and soon he<br/>         dropp'd<br/>         The treasure at my feet.</p> <p>Charm'd with the sight, "The world,"<br/>         I cried,<br/>         " Shall hear of this thy deed :<br/>         My dog shall mortify the pride<br/>         Of man's superior breed :<br/>         " But chief myself I will enjoin,<br/>         Awake at duty's call,<br/>         To show a love as prompt as thine<br/>         To Him who gives me all."</p> |
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MOTTO FOR A CLOCK.\*

QUÆ lenta accedit, quam velox præterit hora!  
 Ut capias, patiens esto, sed esto vigil!

THUS TRANSLATED BY HAYLEY.

Slow comes the hour; its passing speed how great!  
 Waiting to seize it—vigilantly wait!

---

ON MRS. MONTAGU'S FEATHER HANGINGS.†

(June, 1788.)

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>THE birds put off their every hue,<br/>         To dress a room for Montagu.<br/>         The peacock sends his heavenly<br/>             dyes,<br/>         His rainbows and his starry eyes;<br/>         The pheasant, plumes which round<br/>             infol<br/>         His mantling neck with downy gold;<br/>         The cock his arched tail's azure show;<br/>         And, river-blanch'd, the swan his<br/>             snow.<br/>         All tribes beside of Indian name,<br/>         That glossy shine, or vivid flame,</p> | <p>Where rises and where sets the day,<br/>         Whate'er they boast of rich and gay,<br/>         Contribute to the gorgeous plan,<br/>         Proud to advance it all they can.<br/>         This plumage neither dashing<br/>             shower,<br/>         Nor blasts that shake the dripping<br/>             bower,<br/>         Shall drench again or discompose,<br/>         But screen'd from every storm that<br/>             blows,<br/>         It boasts a splendour ever new,<br/>         Safe with protecting Montagu.</p> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

\* Cowper wrote this motto for a clock which Bacon had sculptured for George III. The clock and lines adorn Her Majesty's presence chamber in Windsor Castle.

† Mrs. Montagu was the daughter of Mr. Robinson, of West Layton in Yorkshire. She was a celebrated literary lady who wrote "A Defence of Shakespeare," &c., and entertained literary people at her house. The feather hangings adorned one of her reception rooms where the "Blue Stocking Club" met.

To the same patroness resort,  
 Secure of favour at her court,  
 Strong Genius, from whose forge of  
 thought  
 Forms rise, to quick perfection  
 wrought,  
 Which, though new-born, with vigour  
 move [Jove;  
 Like Pallas, springing arm'd from  
 Imagination scattering round  
 Wild roses over furrow'd ground,  
 Which Labour of his frown beguile,  
 And teach Philosophy a smile;  
 Wit flashing on Religion's side,  
 Whose fires, to sacred Truth applied,  
 The gem, though luminous before,  
 Obtrude on human notice more,  
 Like sunbeams on the golden height  
 Of some tall temple playing bright;  
 Well-tutor'd Learning, from his books  
 Dismiss'd with grave, not haughty  
 looks,

Their order on his shelves exact,  
 Not more harmonious or compact  
 Than that to which he keeps con-  
 fined

The various treasures of his mind;  
 All these to Montagu's repair,  
 Ambitious of a shelter there.  
 There Genius, Learning, Fancy, Wit,  
 Their ruffled plumage calm refit,  
 (For stormy troubles loudest roar  
 Around their flight who highest  
 soar.)

And in her eye, and by her aid,  
 Shine safe without a fear to fade.

She thus maintains divided sway  
 With you bright regent of the day;  
 The Plume and Poet both, we know,  
 Their lustre to his influence owe;  
 And she the works of Phœbus aiding,  
 Both Poet saves and Plume from  
 fading.

# ON THE DEATH OF MRS. THROCKMORTON'S

BULLFINCH.\* 1788.

YE Nymphs, if e'er your eyes were red  
 With tears o'er hapless favourites shed,  
 Oh, share Maria's grief!  
 Her favourite, even in his cage,  
 (What will not hunger's cruel rage?)  
 Assassinated by a thief.

Where Rhenus strays his vines among,  
 The egg was laid from which he sprung;  
 And though by nature mute,  
 Or only with a whistle bless'd,  
 Well-taught he all the sounds express'd  
 Of flageolet or flute.

The honours of his ebon poll  
 Were brighter than the sleekest mole,  
 His bosom of the hue  
 With which Aurora decks the skies,  
 When piping winds shall soon arise  
 To sweep away the dew.

---

\* it was eaten by a rat.

## MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

Above, below, in all the house,  
 Dire foe alike of bird and mouse,  
     No cat had leave to dwell;  
 And Bully's cage supported stood  
 On props of smoothest shaven wood,  
     Large-built and latticed well.

Well-latticed,—but the grate, alas!  
 Not rough with wire of steel or brass,  
     For Bully's plumage sake,  
 But smooth with wands from Ouse's side,  
 With which, when neatly peel'd and dried,  
     The swains their baskets make.

Night veil'd the pole: all seem'd secure:  
 When, led by instinct sharp and sure,  
     Subsistence to provide,  
 A beast forth sallied on the scout,  
 Long back'd, long tail'd, with whisker'd snout,  
     And badger-colour'd hide.

He, entering at the study door,  
 Its ample area 'gan explore;  
     And something in the wind  
 Conjectured, sniffing round and round,  
 Better than all the books he found,  
     Food chiefly for the mind.

Just then, by adverse fate impress'd,  
 A dream disturbed poor Bully's rest;  
     In sleep he seem'd to view  
 A rat fast clinging to the cage,  
 And, screaming at the sad presage,  
     Awoke and found it true.

For, aided both by ear and scent,  
 Right to his mark the monster went,—  
     Ah, Muse! forbear to speak  
 Minute the horrors that ensued;  
 His teeth were strong, the cage was wood,—  
     He left poor Bully's beak.

Oh, had he made that too his prey!  
 That beak whence issued many a lay  
     Of such mellifluous tone,  
 Might have repaid him well, I wot,  
 For silencing so sweet a throat,  
     Fast stuck within his own.

Maria weeps,—the Muses mourn—  
 So, when by Bacchanalians torn,  
     On Thracian Hebrus' side,  
 The tree-enchanter Orpheus fell,  
 His head alone remain'd to tell  
     The cruel death he died.

---

AN EPISTLE TO AN AFFLICTED PROTESTANT LADY\*  
 IN FRANCE.

MADAM,—

A STRANGER's purpose in these lays  
 Is to congratulate and not to praise.  
 To give the creature the Creator's due  
 Were sin in me, and an offence to you.  
 From man to man, or e'en to woman paid,  
 Praise is the medium of a knavish trade,  
 A coin by craft for folly's use design'd,  
 Spurious, and only current with the blind.  
 The path of sorrow, and that path alone  
 Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown :  
 No traveller ever reach'd that blest abode,  
 Who found not thorns and briers in his road.  
 The world may dance along the flowery plain,  
 Cheer'd as they go by many a sprightly strain ;  
 Where Nature has her mossy velvet spread,  
 With unshod feet they yet securely tread ;  
 Admonish'd, scorn the caution and the friend,  
 Bent all on pleasure, heedless of its end.  
 But He, who knew what human hearts would prove,  
 How slow to learn the dictates of His love,  
 That, hard by nature and of stubborn will,  
 A life of ease would make them harder still,  
 In pity to the souls His grace design'd  
 To rescue from the ruins of mankind,  
 Call'd for a cloud to darken all their years,  
 And said, " Go spend them in the vale of tears !"  
 O balmy gales of soul-reviving air !  
 O salutary streams that murmur there !  
 These flowing from the Fount of Grace above,  
 Those breathed from lips of everlasting love.  
 The flinty soil indeed their feet annoys,  
 Chill blasts of trouble nip their springing joys,

---

\* A Mrs. Billacoys.

An envious world will interpose its frown,  
 To mar delights superior to its own,  
 And many a pang experienced still within,  
 Reminds them of their hated inmate, Sin:  
 But ill of every shape and every name,  
 Transform'd to blessings, miss their cruel aim:  
 And every moment's calm that soothes the breast,  
 Is given in earnest of eternal rest.  
 Ah, be not sad, although thy lot be cast  
 Far from the flock, and in a boundless waste!  
 No shepherd's tents within thy view appear,  
 But the chief Shepherd even there is near;  
 Thy tender sorrows and thy plaintive strain  
 Flow in a foreign land, but not in vain;  
 Thy tears all issue from a source divine,  
 And every drop bespeaks a Saviour thine.  
 So once in Gideon's fleece the dews were found,  
 And drought on all the drooping herbs around.

---

### THE NEEDLESS ALARM.

#### A TALE.

THERE is a field, through which I often pass,  
 Thick overspread with moss and silky grass,  
 Adjoining close to Kilwick's echoing wood,  
 Where oft the bitch-fox hides her hapless brood,  
 Reserved to solace many a neighbouring squire,  
 That he may follow them through brake and brier,  
 Contusion hazarding of neck or spine,  
 Which rural gentlemen call sport divine.  
 A narrow brook, by rushy banks conceal'd,  
 Runs in a bottom, and divides the field;  
 Oaks intersperse it, that had once a head,  
 But now wear crests of oven-wood instead;  
 And where the land slopes to its watery bourn  
 Wide yawns a gulf beside a ragged thorn;  
 Bricks line the sides, but shiver'd long ago,  
 And horrid brambles intertwine below;  
 A hollow scooped, I judge, in ancient time,  
 For baking earth, or burning rock to lime.  
 Not yet the hawthorn bore her berries red,  
 With which the fieldfare, wintry guest, is fed;  
 Nor Autumn yet had brush'd from every spray,  
 With her chill hand, the mellow leaves away;  
 But corn was housed, and beans were in the stack;  
 Now therefore issued forth the spotted pack,

With tails high mounted, ears hung low, and throats  
 With a whole gamut fill'd of heavenly notes,  
 For which, alas! my destiny severe,  
 Though ears she gave me two, gave me no ear.

The sun, accomplishing his early march,  
 His lamp now planted on heaven's topmost arch,  
 When, exercise and air my only aim,  
 And heedless whither, to that field I came,  
 Ere yet with ruthless joy the happy hound  
 Told hill and dale that Reynard's track was found;  
 Or with the high-raised horn's melodious clang  
 All Kilwick and all Dingleberry\* rang.

Sheep grazed the field; some with soft bosom press'd  
 The herb as soft, while nibbling stray'd the rest;  
 Nor noise was heard but of the hasty brook,  
 Struggling, detain'd in many a petty nook.  
 All seem'd so peaceful, that, from them convey'd,  
 To me their peace by kind contagion spread.

But when the huntsman, with distended cheek,  
 'Gan make his instrument of music speak,  
 And from within the wood that crash was heard,  
 Though not a hound from whom it burst appear'd,  
 The sheep recumbent and the sheep that grazed,  
 All huddling into phalanx, stood and gazed,  
 Admiring, terrified, the novel strain,  
 Then coursed the field around, and coursed it round again;  
 But recollecting, with a sudden thought,  
 That flight in circles urged advanced them nought,  
 They gather'd close around the old pit's brink,  
 And thought again—but knew not what to think.

The man to solitude accustom'd long,  
 Perceives in everything that lives a tongue;  
 Not animals alone, but shrubs and trees  
 Have speech for him, and understood with ease;  
 After long drought, when rains abundant fall,  
 He hears the herbs and flowers rejoicing all;  
 Knows what the freshness of their hue implies,  
 How glad they catch the largess of the skies;  
 But, with precision nicer still, the mind  
 He scans of every locomotive kind;  
 Birds of all feather, beasts of every name,  
 That serve mankind, or shun them, wild or tame;  
 The looks and gestures of their griefs and fears  
 Have all articulation in his ears;  
 He spells them true by intuition's light,  
 And needs no glossary to set him right.

---

\* Two woods belonging to John Throckmorton, Esq.

## MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

This truth premised was needful as a text,  
To win due credence to what follows next.

A while they mused; surveying every face,  
Thou hadst supposed them of superior race;  
Their periwigs of wool and fears combined,  
Stamp'd on each countenance such marks of mind,  
That sage they seem'd as lawyers o'er a doubt,  
Which, puzzling long, at last they puzzle out;  
Or academic tutors, teaching youths,  
Sure ne'er to want them, mathematic truths;  
When thus a mutton statelier than the rest,  
A ram, the ewes and wethers sad address'd:

"Friends! we have lived too long. I never heard  
Sounds such as these, so worthy to be fear'd.  
Could I believe that winds for ages pent  
In earth's dark womb have found at last a vent,  
And from their prison-house below arise,  
With all these hideous howlings to the skies,  
I could be much composed, nor should appear,  
For such a cause, to feel the slightest fear.  
Yourselves have seen, what time the thunders roll'd  
All night, me resting quiet in the fold.  
Or heard we that tremendous bray alone,  
I could expound the melancholy tone:  
Should deem it by our old companion made,  
The ass; for he, we know, has lately stray'd,  
And, being lost, perhaps, and wandering wide,  
Might be supposed to clamour for a guide.  
But ah! those dreadful yells what soul can hear,  
That owns a carcass, and not quake for fear.  
Demons produce them doubtless, brazen-claw'd,  
And fang'd with brass the demons are abroad;  
I hold it therefore wisest and most fit  
That, life to save, we leap into the pit."

Him answer'd then his loving mate and true,  
But more discreet than he, a Cambrian ewe:

"How! leap into the pit our life to save?  
To save our life leap all into the grave?  
For can we find it less? Contemplate first  
The depth how awful! falling there we burst:  
Or should the brambles interposed our fall  
In part abate, that happiness were small;  
For with a race like theirs no chance I see  
Of peace or ease to creatures clad as we.  
Meantime, noise kills not. Be it Dapple's bray,  
Or be it not, or be it whose it may,  
And rush those other sounds, that seem by tongues  
Of demons utter'd, from whatever lungs,

Sounds are but sounds, and, till the cause appear,  
We have at least commodious standing here.  
Come fiend, come fury, giant, monster, blast  
From earth or hell, we can but plunge at last."

While thus she spake, I fainter heard the peals,  
For Reynard, close attended at his heels  
By panting dog, tired man, and spatter'd horse,  
Through mere good fortune, took a different course.  
The flock grew calm again, and I, the road  
Following, that led me to my own abode,  
Much wonder'd that the silly sheep had found  
Such cause of terror in an empty sound,  
So sweet to huntsman, gentleman, and hound.

## MORAL.

Beware of desperate steps. The darkest day,  
Live till to-morrow, will have pass'd away.

## ANNUS MEMORABILIS, 1789.

WRITTEN IN COMMEMORATION OF HIS MAJESTY'S HAPPY RECOVERY.

I RANSACK'D for a theme of song,  
Much ancient chronicle, and long ;  
I read of bright embattled fields,  
Of trophied helmets, spears, and  
shields,  
Of chiefs, whose single arm could  
boast  
Prowess to dissipate a host ;  
Through tomes of fable and of dream  
I sought an eligible theme,  
But none I found, or found them  
shared  
Already by some happier bard.  
To modern times, with truth to guide  
My busy search, I next applied ;  
Here cities won, and fleets dispersed,  
Urged loud a claim to be rehearsed,  
Deeds of unpersishing renown,  
Our fathers' triumphs and our own.  
Thus as the bee, from bank to  
bower,  
Assiduous sips at every flower,  
But rests on none till that be found  
Where most nectareous sweets  
abound,

So I, from theme to theme display'd  
In many a page historic stray'd,  
Siege after siege, fight after fight,  
Contemplating with small delight,  
(For feats of sanguinary hue  
Not always glitter in my view,)   
Till, settling on the current year,  
I found the far-sought treasure near.  
A theme for poetry divine,  
A theme to ennoble even mine,  
In memorable Eighty-nine.  
The spring of Eighty-nine shall be  
An era cherish'd long by me.  
Which joyful I will oft record,  
And thankful at my frugal board ;  
For then the clouds of Eighty-eight,  
That threaten'd England's trembling  
state  
With loss of what she least could  
spare,  
Her sovereign's tutelary care,  
One breath of heaven, that cried—  
Restore !  
Chased, never to assemble more ;  
And for the richest crown on earth,



If valued by its wearer's worth,  
The symbol of a righteous reign  
Sat fast on George's brows again.

Then peace and joy again possess'd

Our queen's long agitated breast;  
Such joy and peace as can be known  
By sufferers like herself alone,  
Who losing, or supposing lost,  
The good on earth they valued most,  
For that dear sorrow's sake forego  
All hope of happiness below.

Then suddenly regain the prize,  
And flash thanksgivings to the skies!

O Queen of Albion, queen of isles!  
Since all thy tears were changed to  
smiles,

The eyes that never saw thee, shine  
With joy not unallied to thine,  
Transports not chargeable with art  
Illume the land's remotest part,  
And strangers to the air of courts,  
Both in their toils and at their sports,  
The happiness of answer'd prayers,  
That gilds thy features, shew in  
theirs.

If they who on thy state attend,  
Awe-struck, before thy presence bend,  
'Tis but the natural effect  
Of grandeur that insures respect;  
But she is something more than  
queen

Who is beloved where never seen.

### ON THE QUEEN'S VISIT TO LONDON,

THE NIGHT OF THE 17TH OF MARCH, 1789.

WHEN, long sequester'd from his  
throne,

George took his seat again,  
By right of worth, not blood alone,  
Entitled here to reign;

Then loyalty, with all his lamps  
New trimm'd, a gallant show,  
Chasing the darkness and the damps,  
Set London in a glow.

'Twas hard to tell of streets or squares  
Which form'd the chief display,  
These most resembling cluster'd  
stars,

Those the long milky way.

Bright shone the roofs, the dome,  
the spires,

And rockets flew, self-driven,  
To hang their momentary fires  
Amid the vault of heaven.

So, fire with water to compare,

The ocean serves on high  
Up-spouted by a whale in air,  
To express unwieldy joy.

Had all the pageants of the world  
In one procession join'd,  
And all the banners been unfurl'd  
That heralds e'er designed;

For no such sight had England's  
queen  
Forsaken her retreat,  
Where, George recover'd made a scene  
Sweet always, doubly sweet.

Yet glad she came that night to prove,  
A witness undescried,  
How much the object of her love  
Was loved by all beside.

Darkness the skies had mantled o'er  
In aid of her design,—  
Darkness, O Queen! ne'er call'd  
before  
To veil a deed of thine.

On borrow'd wheels away she flies,  
Resolv'd to be unknown,  
And gratify no curious eyes  
That night except her own.

Arrived, a night like noon she sees,  
And hears the million hum;  
As all by instinct, like the bees,  
Had known their sovereign come.

Pleased she beheld aloft portray'd  
On many a splendid wall,  
Emblems of health and heavenly aid,  
And George the theme of all.

Unlike the enigmatic line,  
So difficult to spell,  
Which shook Belshazzar at his wine,  
The night his city fell.

Soon, watery grew her eyes and dim,  
But with a joyful tear,  
None else, except in prayer for him,  
George ever drew from her.

It was a scene in every part  
Like those in fable feign'd,  
And seem'd by some magician's art  
Created and sustain'd.

But other magic there, she knew,  
Had been exerted none,  
To raise such wonders in her view,  
Save love of George alone.

That cordial thought her spirit  
cheer'd,  
And through the cumbrous  
throng,

Not else unworthy to be fear'd,  
Convey'd her calm along.

So, ancient poets say, serene  
The sea-maid rides the waves,  
And fearless of the billowy scene  
Her peaceful bosom laves.

With more than astronomic eyes  
She view'd the sparkling show;  
One Georgian star adorns the skies,  
She myriads found below.

Yet let the glories of a night  
Like that, once seen, suffice,  
Heaven grant us no such future sight,  
Such previous woe the price!

### ON THE BENEFIT RECEIVED BY HIS MAJESTY FROM SEA-BATHING IN THE YEAR 1789.

O SOVEREIGN of an isle renown'd  
For undisputed sway,  
Wherever o'er yon gulf pro-  
found,  
Her navies wing their way,

With juster claims she builds at  
length  
Her empire on the sea,  
And well may boast the waves her  
strength  
Which strength restored to Thee.

### THE COCK-FIGHTER'S GARLAND.\*

MUSE—hide his name of whom I  
sing,  
Lest his surviving house thou bring  
For his sake into scorn,

Nor speak the school from which he  
drew  
The much or little that he knew,  
Nor place where he was born.

\* Written on reading the following in the obituary of the *Gentleman's Magazine* for April, 1789:—"At Tottenham, John Ardesoif, Esq., a young man of large fortune, and in the splendour of his carriages and horses rivalled by few country gentlemen. His

That such a man once was, may seem  
 Worthy of record (if the theme  
 Perchance may credit win),  
 For proof to man, what Man may  
     prove,  
 If grace depart and demons move  
     The source of guilt within.

This man (for since the howling wild  
 Disclaims him, man he must bestyled)  
     Wanted no good below,  
 Gentle he was, if gentle birth  
 Could make him such; and he had  
     worth,  
     If wealth can worth bestow.

In social talk and ready jest  
 He shone superior at the feast,  
     And qualities of mind,  
 Illustrious in the eyes of those  
 Whose gay society he chose  
     Possess'd of every kind.

Methinks I see him powder'd red,  
 With bushy locks his well-dress'd  
     head  
     Wing'd broad on either side,  
 The mossy rosebud not so sweet;  
 His steeds superb, his carriage neat  
     As luxury could provide.

Can such be cruel? Such can be  
 Cruel as hell, and so was he;  
     A tyrant entertain'd  
 With barbarous sports, whose fell  
     delight  
 Was to encourage mortal fight  
     'Twixt birds to battle train'd.

One feather'd champion he possess'd,  
 His darling far beyond the rest,  
     Which never knew disgrace,  
 Nore'er had fought, but he made flow  
 The life-blood of his fiercest foe,  
     The Cæsar of his race.

It chanced, at last, when, on a day,  
 He push'd him to a desperate fray,  
     His courage droop'd, he fled.  
 The master storm'd, the prize was  
     lost,  
 And, instant, frantic at the cost,  
     He doom'd his favourite dead.

He seized him fast, and from the pit  
 Flew to the kitchen, snatch'd the spit,  
     And, "Bring me cord," he cried;  
 The cord was brought, and, at his  
     word,  
 To that dire implement the bird  
     Alive and struggling, tied.

The horrid sequel asks a veil,  
 And all the terrors of a tale  
     That can be, shall be, sunk—  
 Led by the sufferer's screams aright  
 His shock'd companions view the  
     sight  
     And him with fury drunk.

All, suppliant, beg a milder fate  
 For the old warrior at the grate:  
     He, deaf to pity's call,  
 Whirled round him, rapid as a  
     wheel,  
 His culinary club of steel,  
     Death menacing on all.

table was that of hospitality, where it may be said, he sacrificed too much to conviviality; but, if he had his foibles, he had his merits also, that far outweighed them. Mr. A. was very fond of cock-fighting, and had a favourite cock upon which he had won many profitable matches. The last bet he laid upon this cock he lost, which so enraged him that he had the bird tied to a spit and roasted alive before a large fire. The screams of the miserable animal were so affecting, that some gentlemen who were present attempted to interfere, which so enraged Mr. A. that he seized a poker, and with the most furious vehemence declared that he would kill the first man who interposed; but, in the midst of his passionate asseverations, he fell down dead upon the spot. Such, we are assured, were the circumstances which attended the death of this great pillar of humanity." [This story was afterwards found to be false, and was contradicted.—ED.]

But vengeance hung not far remote,  
 For while he stretch'd his clamorous  
     throat,  
 And heaven and earth defied,  
 Big with a curse too closely pent  
 That struggled vainly for a vent,  
 He totter'd, reel'd, and died.

'Tis not for us, with rash surmise,  
 To point the judgment of the skies;  
     But judgments plain as this,  
 That, sent for man's instruction,  
     bring  
 A written label on their wing,  
     'Tis hard to read amiss.

---

H Y M N,

FOR THE USE OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AT OLNEY.\*

HEAR, Lord, the song of praise and  
     prayer,  
 In heaven Thy dwelling place,  
 From infants made the public care,  
 And taught to seek Thy face!

Thanks for Thy Word, and for Thy  
     Day;  
 And grant us, we implore,  
 Never to waste in sinful play  
 Thy holy Sabbaths more.

Thanks that we hear,—but oh! im-  
     part  
 To each desires sincere,  
 That we may listen with our heart,  
 And learn as well as hear.

For if vain thoughts the minds en-  
     gage  
 Of older far than we,  
 What hope that at our heedless age  
 Our minds should e'er be free?

Much hope, if Thou our spirits take  
 Under Thy gracious sway,  
 Who canst the wisest wiser make,  
 And babes as wise as they.

Wisdom and bliss Thy word be-  
     stows,  
 A sun that ne'er declines;  
 And be Thy mercies shower'd on  
     those  
 Who placed us where it shines.

---

ON THE RECEIPT OF A HAMPER.†

(IN THE MANNER OF HOMER.)

THE straw-stuff'd hamper with his  
     ruthless steel  
 He open'd, cutting sheer the inserted  
     cords,  
 Which bound the lid and lip secure.  
     Forth came  
 The rustling package first, bright  
     straw of wheat,

Or oats, or barley; next a bottle  
     green  
 Throat-full, clear spirits the con-  
     tents, distill'd  
 Drop after drop odorous, by the  
     art  
 Of the fair mother of his friend—the  
     Rose.

\* Written at the request of the Vicar of Olney, to be sung on the occasion of his preaching to the children of the Sunday School.

† Sent by Mr. Rose to the poet.

## ON A MISCHIEVOUS BULL,

WHICH THE OWNER OF HIM SOLD AT THE AUTHOR'S INSTANCE.

Go!—thou art all unfit to share  
 The pleasures of this place  
 With such as its old tenants are,  
 Creatures of gentler race.

The squirrel here his hoard provides,  
 Aware of wintry storms;  
 And woodpeckers explore the sides  
 Of rugged oaks for worms.

The sheep here smooths the knotted  
 thorn

With frictions of her fleece;  
 And here I wander eve and morn,  
 Like her, a friend to peace.

Ah!—I could pity the exiled  
 From this secure retreat;—  
 I would not lose it to be styled  
 The happiest of the great.

But thou canst taste no calm delight;  
 Thy pleasure is to shew  
 Thy magnanimity in fight,  
 Thy prowess,—therefore, go!

I care not whether east or north,  
 So I no more may find thee;  
 The angry muse thus sings thee forth,  
 And claps the gate behind thee.

## VERSES TO THE MEMORY OF DR. LLOYD,\*

SPOKEN AT THE WESTMINSTER ELECTION NEXT AFTER HIS DECEASE.

OUR good old friend is gone, gone to his rest,  
 Whose social converse was itself a feast.  
 O ye of riper years, who recollect  
 How once ye loved and eyed him with respect,  
 Both in the firmness of his better day,  
 While yet he ruled you with a father's sway,  
 And when impair'd by time, and glad to rest,  
 Yet still with looks in mild complacence drest,  
 He took his annual seat, and mingled here  
 His sprightly vein with yours,—now drop a tear.  
 In morals blameless as in manners meek,  
 He knew no wish that he might blush to speak,  
 But, happy in whatever state below,  
 And richer than the rich in being so,  
 Obtain'd the hearts of all, and such a meed  
 At length from one, as made him rich indeed.  
 Hence, then, ye titles, hence, not wanted here!  
 Go, garnish merit in a higher sphere,  
 The brows of those, whose more exalted lot  
 He could congratulate, but envied not.

\* He was the father of Robert Lloyd, and usher and under-master at Westminster for nearly fifty years. He received a handsome retiring pension from the king.

Light lie the turf, good senior, on thy breast !  
And tranquil as thy mind was, be thy rest,  
Though, living, thou hadst more desert than fame,  
And not a stone now chronicles thy name.

ABIIIT senex ! Periiit senex amabilis !  
Quo non fuit jucundior.  
Lugete vos, ætas quibus maturior  
Senem colendum præstitit,  
Seu quando, viribus valentioribus  
Firmoque fretus pectore,  
Florentiori vos juventute excolens  
Curâ fovebat patriâ ;  
Seu quando, fractus, jamque donatus rude,  
Vultu sed usque blandulo,  
Miscere gaudebat suas facetias  
His annuis leporibus.  
Vixit probus, purâque simplex indole,  
Blandisque comis moribus,  
Et dives æquâ mente,—charus omnibus,  
Unius auctus munere.  
Ite, tituli ! Meritis beatioribus  
Aptate laudes debitas !  
Nec invidebat ille, si quibus favens  
Fortuna plus arriserat.  
Placide senex ! levi quiescas cespite,  
Etsi superbum nec vivo tibi  
Decus sit inditum, nec mortuo  
Lapis notatus nomine.

TO MRS. THROCKMORTON,

ON HER BEAUTIFUL TRANSCRIPT OF HORACE'S ODE "AD LIBRUM SUUM."\*

MARIA, could Horace have guess'd  
What honour awaited his ode  
To his own little volume address'd,  
The honour which you have bestow'd,—  
Who have traced it in characters here,  
So elegant, even, and neat,  
He had laugh'd at the critical sneer  
Which he seems to have trembled to meet.

\* "Two odes by Horace have been lately discovered at Rome; I wanted them transcribed into the blank leaves of a little Horace of mine, and Mrs. Throckmorton performed that service for me; in a blank leaf, therefore, of the same book I wrote the following."—*To Lady Hesketh, Feb. 9, 1790.*

And, "Sneer if you please," he had said,  
 "A nymph shall hereafter arise,  
 Who shall give me, when you are all dead,  
 The glory your malice denies;  
 Shall dignity give to my lay,  
 Although but a mere bagatelle;  
 And even a poet shall say,  
 Nothing ever was written so well."

---

### ON THE RECEIPT OF MY MOTHER'S PICTURE OUT OF NORFOLK,

THE GIFT OF MY COUSIN, ANN BODHAM.

OH that those lips had language! Life has pass'd  
 With me but roughly since I heard thee last.  
 Those lips are thine—thy own sweet smile I see,  
 The same that oft in childhood solaced me;  
 Voice only fails, else how distinct they say,  
 "Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears away!"  
 The meek intelligence of those dear eyes  
 (Blest be the art that can immortalise—  
 The art that baffles Time's tyrannic claim  
 To quench it!) here shines on me still the same.  
 Faithful remembrancer of one so dear,  
 O welcome guest, though unexpected here!  
 Who bidst me honour with an artless song,  
 Affectionate, a mother lost so long.  
 I will obey, not willingly alone,  
 But gladly, as the precept were her own;  
 And, while that face renews my filial grief,  
 Fancy shall weave a charm for my relief,  
 Shall steep me in Elysian reverie,  
 A momentary dream, that thou art she.  
 My mother! when I learn'd that thou wast dead,  
 Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?  
 Hover'd thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,  
 Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?  
 Perhaps thou gavest me, though unfelt, a kiss;  
 Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss—  
 Ah, that maternal smile!—it answers—Yes.  
 I heard the bell toll'd on thy burial day,  
 I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,  
 And, turning from my nursery window, drew  
 A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!

But was it such?—It was.—Where thou art gone  
 Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.  
 May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,  
 The parting words shall pass my lips no more!  
 Thy maidens, grieved themselves at my concern,  
 Oft gave me promise of thy quick return.  
 What ardently I wish'd, I long believed,  
 And, disappointed still, was still deceived;  
 By expectation every day beguiled,  
 Dupe of to-morrow even from a child.  
 Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,  
 Till, all my stock of infant sorrow spent,  
 I learn'd at last submission to my lot;  
 But, though I less deplored thee, ne'er forgot.

Where once we dwelt\* our name is heard no more,  
 Children not thine have trod my nursery floor;  
 And where the gardener Robin, day by day,  
 Drew me to school along the public way,  
 Delighted with my bauble coach, and wrapp'd  
 In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet capp'd,  
 'Tis now become a history little known,  
 That once we call'd the pastoral house our own.  
 Short-lived possession! But the record fair,  
 That memory keeps of all thy kindness there,  
 Still outlives many a storm, that has effaced  
 A thousand other themes less deeply traced.  
 Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,  
 That thou mightst know me safe and warmly laid;  
 Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,  
 The biscuit, or confectionary plum;  
 The fragrant waters on my cheeks bestow'd  
 By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and glow'd:  
 All this, and more endearing still than all,  
 Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,  
 Ne'er roughen'd by those cataracts and breaks,  
 That humour interposed too often makes;  
 All this still legible in memory's page,  
 And still to be so to my latest age,  
 Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay  
 Such honours to thee as my numbers may;  
 Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,  
 Not scorn'd in heaven, though little noticed here.  
 Could Time, his flight reversed, restore the hours,  
 When, playing with thy vesture's tissued flowers,  
 The violet, the pink, and jessamine,  
 I pricked them into paper with a pin,

---

\* The rectory at Great Berkhamstead, where he was born.



(And thou wast happier than myself the while,  
 Wouldst softly speak, and stroke my head and smile),  
 Could those few pleasant days again appear,  
 Might one wish bring them, would I wish them here?  
 I would not trust my heart;—the dear delight  
 Seems so to be desired, perhaps I might.—  
 But no—what here we call our life is such,  
 So little to be loved, and thou so much,  
 That I should ill requite thee to constrain  
 Thy unbound spirit into bonds again.

Thou, as a gallant bark from Albion's coast  
 (The storms all weather'd and the ocean cross'd)  
 Shoots into port at some well-haven'd isle,  
 Where spices breathe, and brighter seasons smile,  
 There sits quiescent on the floods, that shew  
 Her beauteous form reflected clear below,  
 While airs impregnated with incense play  
 Around her, fanning light her streamers gay;  
 So thou, with sails how swift! hast reach'd the shore,  
 "Where tempests never beat nor billows roar;"\*  
 And thy loved consort on the dangerous tide  
 Of life long since has anchor'd by thy side.  
 But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest,  
 Always from port withheld, always distress'd,—  
 Me howling blasts drive devious, tempest-toss'd,  
 Sails ripp'd, seams opening wide, and compass lost,  
 And day by day some current's thwarting force  
 Sets me more distant from a prosperous course.  
 Yet, oh, the thought that thou art safe, and he!  
 That thought is joy, arrive what may to me.  
 My boast is not that I deduce my birth  
 From loins enthroned, and rulers of the earth;  
 But higher far my proud pretensions rise,—  
 The son of parents pass'd into the skies.  
 And now, farewell!—Time unrevok'd has run  
 His wonted course, yet what I wish'd is done.  
 By contemplation's help, not sought in vain,  
 I seem to have lived my childhood o'er again;  
 To have renew'd the joys that once were mine,  
 Without the sin of violating thine;  
 And, while the wings of fancy still are free,  
 And I can view this mimic show of thee,  
 Time has but half succeeded in his theft,  
 Thyself removed, thy power to soothe me left.

---

\* Garth.

## INSCRIPTION FOR A STONE

ERECTED AT THE SOWING OF A GROVE OF OAKS AT CHILLINGTON,  
THE SEAT OF T. GIFFARD, ESQ., JUNE, 1790.

OTHER stones the era tell,  
When some feeble mortal fell;  
I stand here to date the birth  
Of these hardy sons of Earth.

Which shall longest brave the sky,  
Storm and frost—these oaks or I?  
Pass an age or two away,  
I must moulder and decay;  
But the years that crumble me

Shall invigorate the tree,  
Spread its branch, dilate its size,  
Lift its summit to the skies.

Cherish honour, virtue, truth,  
So shalt thou prolong thy youth.  
Wanting these, however fast  
Man be fix'd, and form'd to last,  
He is lifeless even now,  
Stone at heart, and cannot grow.

## ANOTHER,

FOR A STONE ERECTED ON A SIMILAR OCCASION AT THE SAME  
PLACE IN THE FOLLOWING YEAR.

READER! behold a monument  
That asks no sigh or tear,

Though it perpetuate the event  
Of a great burial here.

## TO MRS. KING,

ON HER KIND PRESENT TO THE AUTHOR, A PATCHWORK COUNTER-  
PANE OF HER OWN MAKING. AUGUST, 1790.

THE bard, if e'er he feel at all,  
Must sure be quicken'd by a call  
Both on his heart and head,  
To pay with tuneful thanks the care  
And kindness of a lady fair  
Who deigns to deck his bed.

A bed like this, in ancient time,  
On Ida's barren top sublime,  
(As Homer's epic shews,)  
Composed of sweetest vernal flowers,  
Without the aid of sun or showers,  
For Jove and Juno rose.

Less beautiful, however gay,  
Is that which in the scorching day  
Receives the weary swain,

Who, laying his long scythe aside,  
Sleeps on some bank with daisies  
pied,  
Till roused to toil again.

What labours of the loom I see!  
Looms numberless have groan'd for  
me!

Should every maiden come  
To scramble for a patch that bears,  
The impress of the robe she wears  
The bell would toll for some.

And oh, what havoc would ensue!  
This bright display of every hue  
All in a moment fled!  
As if a storm should strip the bowers

Of all their tendrils, leaves, and  
flowers,—  
Each pocketing a shred.  
Thanks, then, to every gentle Fair  
Who will not come to peck me bare

As bird of borrow'd feather,  
And thanks to one above them  
all,  
The gentle fair of Pertenhall,  
Who put the whole together.

## STANZAS

ON THE LATE INDECENT LIBERTIES TAKEN WITH THE REMAINS  
OF MILTON. ANNO 1790.\*

‘ME too, perchance, in future days,  
The sculptured stone shall shew,  
With Paphian myrtle or with bays  
Parnassian on my brow.

“But I, or e’er that season come,  
Escaped from every care,  
Shall reach my refuge in the tomb,  
And sleep securely there.”†

So sang, in Roman tone and style,  
The youthful bard, ere long  
Ordain’d to grace his native isle  
With her sublimest song.

Who then but must conceive disdain,  
Hearing the deed unblest,  
Of wretches who have dared profane  
His dread sepulchral rest?

Ill fare the hands that heaved the  
stones

Where Milton’s ashes lay,  
That trembled not to grasp his bones  
And steal his dust away!

O ill-requited bard! neglect  
Thy living worth repaid,  
And blind idolatrous respect  
As much affronts thee dead.

## IN MEMORY OF THE LATE J. THORNTON, ESQ.‡

[November, 1790.]

POETS attempt the noblest task they can,  
Praising the Author of all good in man,  
And, next, commemorating Worthies lost,  
The dead in whom that good abounded most.

\* This shocking outrage took place in 1790 whilst the Church of St. Giles, Cripplegate, was repairing. The overseers (for the sake of gain) opened a coffin supposed to be Milton’s, found a body, extracted its teeth, cut off its hair, and left the remains to the grave-diggers, who exhibited them for money to the public.

† Forsitan et nostros ducat de marmore vultus,  
Nectens aut Paphia myrti aut Parnasside lauri  
Fronde comas—at ego securâ pace quiescam.

*Milton in Manso.*

‡ Mr. Thornton was a wealthy merchant, the patron and friend of Newton, to whom he allowed 200*l.* a year (and as much more as he should ask for) to spend in hospitality and charity.

Thee, therefore, of commercial fame, but more  
 Famed for thy probity from shore to shore;  
 Thee, Thornton! worthy in some page to shine,  
 As honest and more eloquent than mine,  
 I mourn; or, since thrice happy thou must be,  
 The world, no longer thy abode, not thee.  
 Thee to deplore were grief misspent indeed;  
 It were to weep that goodness has its meed,  
 That there is bliss prepared in yonder sky,  
 And glory for the virtuous, when they die.

What pleasure can the miser's fondled hoard,  
 Or spendthrift's prodigal excess afford,  
 Sweet as the privilege of healing woe  
 By virtue suffer'd combating below?  
 That privilege was thine; Heaven gave thee means  
 To illumine with delight the saddest scenes,  
 Till thy appearance chased the gloom, forlorn  
 As midnight, and despairing of a morn.  
 Thou hadst an industry in doing good,  
 Restless as his who toils and sweats for food;  
 Avarice, in thee, was the desire of wealth  
 By rust unperishable or by stealth;  
 And if the genuine worth of gold depend  
 On application to its noblest end,  
 Thine had a value in the scales of Heaven,  
 Surpassing all that mine or mint had given.  
 And, though God made thee of a nature prone  
 To distribution boundless of thy own,  
 And still, by motives of religious force  
 Impell'd thee more to that heroic course,  
 Yet was thy liberality discreet,  
 Nice in its choice, and of a temper'd heat;  
 And though in act unwearied, secret still,  
 As in some solitude the summer rill  
 Refreshes, where it winds, the faded green,  
 And cheers the drooping flowers, unheard, unseen.

Such was thy charity; no sudden start,  
 After long sleep, of passion in the heart,  
 But steadfast principle, and in its kind,  
 Of close relation to the Eternal Mind,  
 Traced easily to its true source above,  
 To Him, whose works bespeak His nature, love.  
 Thy bounties all were Christian, and I make  
 This record of thee for the Gospel's sake;  
 That the incredulous themselves may see  
 Its use and power exemplified in thee.

## IN SEDITIONEM HORRENDAM,\*

CORRUPTELIS GALLICIS, UT FERTUR, LONDINI NUPER EXORTAM.

PERFIDA, crudelis, victa et lymphata furore,  
 Non armis. laurum Gallia fraude petit.  
 Venalem pretio plebem conducit, et urit  
 Undique privatas patriciasque domos.  
 Nequicquàm conata suâ, fœdissima sperat  
 Posse tamen nostrâ nos superare manu.  
 Gallia, vana struis! Precibus nunc utere! Vinces,  
 Nam mites timidis, supplicibusque sumus.

## TRANSLATION.

FALSE, cruel, disappointed, stung to the heart,  
 France quits the warrior's for the assassin's part,  
 To dirty hands a dirty bribe conveys,  
 Bids the low street and lofty palace blaze.  
 Her sons too weak to vanquish us alone,  
 She hires the worst and basest of our own.  
 Kneel, France! a suppliant conquers us with ease,  
 We always spare a coward on his knees.

## THE JUDGMENT OF THE POETS.†

Two nymphs, both nearly of an age,  
 Of numerous charms possess'd,  
 A warm dispute once chanced to wage,  
 Whose temper was the best.

The worth of each had been complete,  
 Had both alike been mild:  
 But one, although her smile was sweet,  
 Frown'd oftener than she smiled.

And in her humour, when she frown'd,  
 Would raise her voice and roar,  
 And shake with fury to the ground  
 The garland that she wore.

The other was of gentler cast,  
 From all such frenzy clear,  
 Her frowns were seldom known to last,  
 And never proved severe.

To poets of renown in song  
 The nymphs referr'd the cause,  
 Who, strange to tell, all judged it  
 wrong,

And gave misplaced applause.

They gentle call'd, and kind and soft,  
 The flippant and the scold,  
 And though she changed her mood  
 so oft,

That failing left untold.

No judges, sure, were e'er so mad,  
 Or so resolved to err,—

In short, the charms her sister had  
 They lavish'd all on her.

Then thus the god whom fondly they  
 Their great inspirer call,

\* Cowper wrote these lines believing at the time that the French had (as asserted by the newspapers of the day) instigated the Gordon riots.

† This poem was written in May, 1791, when the season was very backward.

Was heard, one genial summer's day,  
To reprimand them all :

" Since thus ye have combined," he  
said,

" My favourite nymph to slight,  
Adorning May, that peevish maid,  
With June's undoubted right,

" The minx shall, for your folly's  
sake,  
Still prove herself a shrew,  
Shall make your scribbling fingers  
ache,  
And pinch your noses blue."

YARDLEY OAK.\*

1791.

SURVIVOR sole, and hardly such, of all  
That once lived here, thy brethren ! at my birth,  
(Since which I number threescore winters past),  
A shatter'd veteran, hollow-trunk'd perhaps,  
As now, and with excoriate forks deform,  
Relics of ages ! could a mind, imbued  
With truth from heaven, created thing adore,  
I might with reverence kneel, and worship thee.

It seems idolatry, with some excuse,  
When our forefather Druids in their oaks  
Imagined sanctity. The conscience, yet  
Unpurified by an authentic act  
Of amnesty, the meed of blood divine,  
Loved not the light, but, gloomy, into gloom  
Of thickest shades, like Adam after taste  
Of fruit proscribed, as to a refuge, fled.

Thou wast a bauble once ; a cup and ball  
Which babes might play with ; and the thievish jay,  
Seeking her food, with ease might have purloin'd  
The auburn nut that held thee, swallowing down  
Thy yet close-folded latitude of boughs  
And all thine embryo vastness at a gulp.  
But Fate thy growth decreed ; autumnal rains  
Beneath thy parent tree mellow'd the soil  
Design'd thy cradle ; and a skipping deer,  
With pointed hoof dibbling the glebe, prepared  
The soft receptacle, in which, secure,  
Thy rudiments should sleep the winter through.

So Fancy dreams. Disprove it, if ye can,  
Ye reasoners broad awake, whose busy search  
Of argument, employed too oft amiss,  
Sifts half the pleasures of short life away !

\* Yardley oak stood in Yardley Chase.

Thou fell'st mature; and, in the loamy clod  
 Swelling with vegetative force instinct  
 Didst burst thine egg, as theirs the fabled Twins,  
 Now stars; two lobes protruding, pair'd exact;  
 A leaf succeeded, and another leaf,  
 And, all the elements thy puny growth  
 Fostering propitious, thou becamest a twig.

Who lived when thou wast such? Oh, couldst thou speak,  
 As in Dodona once thy kindred trees  
 Oracular, I would not curious ask  
 The future, best unknown, but at thy mouth  
 Inquisitive, the less ambiguous past.

By thee I might correct, erroneous oft,  
 The clock of history, facts and events  
 Timing more punctual, unrecorded facts  
 Recovering, and misstated setting right—  
 Desperate attempt, till trees shall speak again!

Time made thee what thou wast, king of the woods;  
 And time hath made thee what thou art—a cave  
 For owls to roost in. Once thy spreading boughs  
 O'erhung the champaign; and the numerous flocks  
 That grazed it, stood beneath that ample cope  
 Uncrowded, yet safe shelter'd from the storm.  
 No flock frequents thee now. Thou hast outlived  
 Thy popularity, and art become  
 (Unless verse rescue thee awhile) a thing  
 Forgotten, as the foliage of thy youth.

While thus through all the stages thou hast push'd  
 Of treeship—first a seedling hid in grass:  
 Then twig; then sapling; and, as century roll'd  
 Slow after century, a giant bulk  
 Of girth enormous, with moss-cushion'd root  
 Upheaved above the soil, and sides emboss'd  
 With prominent wens globose,—till at the last  
 The rottenness, which Time is charged to inflict  
 On other mighty ones, found also thee.

What exhibitions various hath the world  
 Witness'd of mutability in all  
 That we account most durable below!  
 Change is the diet, on which all subsist,  
 Created changeable, and change at last  
 Destroys them. Skies uncertain, now the heat  
 Transmitting cloudless, and the solar beam  
 Now quenching in a boundless sea of clouds,—  
 Calm and alternate storm, moisture and drought,  
 Invigorate by turns the springs of life  
 In all that live, plant, animal, and man,  
 And in conclusion mar them. Nature's threads,

Fine passing thought, e'en in her coarsest works,  
 Delight in agitation, yet sustain  
 The force, that agitates not unimpaired;  
 But, worn by frequent impulse, to the cause  
 Of their best tone their dissolution owe.

Thought cannot spend itself, comparing still  
 The great and little of thy lot, thy growth  
 From almost nullity into a state  
 Of matchless grandeur, and declension thence,  
 Slow, into such magnificent decay.  
 Time was when, settling on thy leaf, a fly  
 Could shake thee to the root--and time has been  
 When tempests could not. At thy firmest age  
 Thou hadst within thy bole solid contents,  
 That might have ribbed the sides and plank'd the deck  
 Of some flagg'd admiral; and tortuous arms,  
 The shipwright's darling treasure, didst present  
 To the four-quarter'd winds, robust and bold,  
 Warped into tough knee-timber, many a load!\*  
 But the axe spared thee. In those thriftier days  
 Oaks fell not, hewn by thousands, to supply  
 The bottomless demands of contest, waged  
 For senatorial honours. Thus to Time  
 The task was left to whittle thee away  
 With his sly scythe, whose ever-nibbling edge,  
 Noiseless, an atom and an atom more,  
 Disjoining from the rest, has, unobserved,  
 Achieved a labour, which had, far and wide,  
 By man perform'd, made all the forest ring.

Embowell'd now, and of thy ancient self  
 Possessing nought but the scoop'd rind, that seems  
 A huge throat calling to the clouds for drink,  
 Which it would give in rivulets to thy root,  
 Thou tempest none, but rather much forbid'st  
 The feller's toil, which thou couldst ill requite.  
 Yet is thy root sincere, sound as the rock,  
 A quarry of stout spurs, and knotted fangs,  
 Which, crook'd into a thousand whimsies, clasp  
 The stubborn soil, and hold thee still erect.

So stands a kingdom, whose foundation yet  
 Fails not in virtue, and in wisdom laid,  
 Though all the superstructure, by the tooth  
 Pulverised of venality, a shell  
 Stands now, and semblance only of itself!

---

\* Knee-timber is found in the crooked arms of oak, which, by reason of their distortion, are easily adjusted to the angle formed where the deck and the ship's sides meet.—C.



Thine arms have left thee. Winds have rent them off  
 Long since, and rovers of the forest wild  
 With bow and shaft have burnt them. Some have left  
 A splinter'd stump bleach'd to a snowy white;  
 And some memorial none where once they grew.  
 Yet life still lingers in thee, and puts forth  
 Proof not contemptible of what she can,  
 Even where death predominates. The spring  
 Finds thee not less alive to her sweet force  
 Than yonder upstarts of the neighbouring wood,  
 So much thy juniors, who their birth received  
 Half a millennium since the date of thine.

But since, although well qualified by age  
 To teach, no spirit dwells in thee, nor voice  
 May be expected from thee, seated here  
 On thy distorted root, with hearers none,  
 Or prompter, save the scene, I will perform  
 Myself the oracle, and will discourse  
 In my own ear such matter as I may.

One man alone, the father of us all,  
 Drew not his life from woman; never gazed,  
 With mute unconsciousness of what he saw,  
 On all around him; learn'd not by degrees,  
 Nor owed articulation to his ear;  
 But, moulded by his Maker into man  
 At once, upstood intelligent, survey'd  
 All creatures, with precision understood  
 Their purport, uses, properties, assign'd  
 To each his name significant, and, fill'd  
 With love and wisdom, render'd back to Heaven  
 In praise harmonious the first air he drew.  
 He was excused the penalties of dull  
 Minority. No tutor charged his hand  
 With the thought-tracing quill, or task'd his mind  
 With problems. History, not wanted yet,  
 Lean'd on her elbow, watching Time, whose course,  
 Eventful, should supply her with a theme. . . .

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#### EPITAPH ON MRS. M. HIGGINS, OF WESTON.

LAURELS may flourish round the conqueror's tomb,  
 But happiest they who win the world to come:  
 Believers have a silent field to fight,  
 And their exploits are veil'd from human sight.  
 They in some nook, where little known they dwell,  
 Kneel, pray in faith, and rout the hosts of hell;  
 Eternal triumphs crown their toils divine,  
 And all those triumphs, Mary, now are thine.

## SONNET TO A YOUNG LADY ON HER BIRTHDAY.

DEEM not, sweet rose, that bloom'st 'midst many a thorn,  
 Thy friend, though to a cloister's shade consign'd,  
 Can e'er forget the charms he left behind,  
 Or pass unheeded this auspicious morn !  
 In happier days to brighter prospects born,  
 Oh tell thy thoughtless sex, the virtuous mind,  
 Like thee, Content in every state may find,  
 And look on Folly's pageantry with scorn ;  
 To steer with nicest art betwixt the extreme  
 Of idle mirth, and affectation coy ;  
 To blend good sense with elegance and ease ;  
 To bid Affliction's eye no longer stream ;  
 Is thine ; best gift, the unfailing source of joy,  
 The guide to pleasures which can never cease !

## THE RETIRED CAT.

[1791.]

A POET's cat,\* sedate and grave  
 As poet well could wish to have,  
 Was much addicted to inquire  
 For nooks to which she might retire,  
 And where, secure as mouse in chink,  
 She might repose, or sit and think.  
 I know not where she caught the trick,—  
 Nature perhaps herself had cast her  
 In such a mould philosophique,  
 Or else she learn'd it of her master.  
 Sometimes ascending debonnair,  
 An apple tree or lofty pear,  
 Lodged with convenience in the fork,  
 She watched the gardener at his work ;  
 Sometimes her ease and solace sought  
 In an old empty watering-pot,  
 There, wanting nothing, save a fan,  
 To seem some nymph in her sedan  
 Apparell'd in exactest sort,  
 And ready to be borne to court.

\* His own cat. Cowper had many pets. Lady Hesketh enumerates five rabbits, three hares, two guinea-pigs, a magpie, a jay, a starling, two goldfinches, two canaries, and two dogs.

But love of change it seems has place  
Not only in our wiser race:  
Cats also feel as well as we,  
That passion's force, and so did she.  
Her climbing, she began to find,  
Exposed her too much to the wind,  
And the old utensil of tin  
Was cold and comfortless within;  
She therefore wish'd instead of those,  
Some place of more serene repose,  
Where neither cold might come, nor air  
Too rudely wanton with her hair.  
And sought it in the likeliest mode  
Within her master's snug abode.

A drawer, it chanced, at bottom lined  
With linen of the softest kind,  
With such as merchants introduce  
From India, for the ladies' use,  
A drawer impending o'er the rest,  
Half open in the topmost chest,  
Of depth enough and none to spare,  
Invited her to slumber there;  
Puss with delight beyond expression  
Survey'd the scene and took possession.  
Recumbent at her ease ere long,  
And lull'd by her own humdrum song,  
She left the cares of life behind,

And slept as she would sleep her last,  
When in came, housewifely inclined,  
The chambermaid, and shut it fast,  
By no malignity impell'd,  
But all unconscious whom it held.

Awaken'd by the shock, cried Puss,  
"Was ever cat attended thus!  
The open drawer was left, I see,  
Merely to prove a nest for me,  
For soon as I was well composed,  
Then came the maid and it was closed.  
How smooth these 'kerchiefs and how sweet!  
Oh what a delicate retreat!  
I will resign myself to rest  
Till Sol declining in the west,  
Shall call to supper, when, no doubt,  
Susan will come and let me out."

The evening came, the sun descended,  
And Puss remain'd still unattended.  
The night roll'd tardily away,  
(With her indeed 'twas never day;)

The sprightly morn her course renew'd,  
The evening grey again ensued,  
And Puss came into mind no more  
Than if entomb'd the day before.  
With hunger pinch'd, and pinch'd for room,  
She now presaged approaching doom,  
Nor slept a single wink, or purr'd,  
Conscious of jeopardy incur'd.

That night, by chance, the poet watching,  
Heard an inexplicable scratching;  
His noble heart went pit-a-pat,  
And to himself he said—"What's that?"  
He drew the curtain at his side,  
And forth he peep'd, but nothing spied.  
Yet, by his ear directed, guess'd  
Something imprisoned in the chest,  
And, doubtful what, with prudent care  
Resolved it should continue there.  
At length, a voice which well he knew,  
A long and melancholy mew,  
Saluting his poetic ears,  
Consoled him, and dispell'd his fears:  
He left his bed, he trod the floor,  
He 'gan in haste the drawers explore,  
The lowest first, and without stop  
The rest in order to the top.  
For 'tis a truth well known to most,  
That whatsoever thing is lost,  
We seek it, ere it come to light,  
In every cranny but the right.  
Forth skipp'd the cat, not now replete  
As erst with airy self-conceit,  
Nor in her own fond apprehension  
A theme for all the world's attention,  
But modest, sober, cured of all  
Her notions hyperbolical,  
And wishing for a place of rest  
Anything rather than a chest.  
Then stepp'd the poet into bed  
With this reflection in his head:

## MORAL.

Beware of too sublime a sense  
Of your own worth and consequence.  
The man who dreams himself so great  
And his importance of such weight,

That all around in all that's done,  
Must move and act for him alone,  
Will learn in school of tribulation  
The folly of his expectation.

---

## ON THE NEGLECT OF HOMER.

COULD Homer come himself, distress'd and poor,  
And tune his harp at Rhedycina's\* door,  
The rich old vixen would exclaim, (I fear,)  
"Begone! no tramper gets a farthing here."

---

## TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

WHICH THE AUTHOR HEARD SING ON NEW-YEAR'S DAY.

WHENCE is it, that amazed I hear,  
From yonder wither'd spray,  
This foremost morn of all the year,  
The melody of May?

And why, since thousands would be proud  
Of such a favour shewn,  
Am I selected from the crowd,  
To witness it alone?

Sing'st thou, sweet Philomel, to me,  
For that I also long  
Have practised in the groves like thee,  
Though not like thee in song?

Or sing'st thou rather under force  
Of some divine command,  
Commission'd to presage a course  
Of happier days at hand?

Thrice welcome then! for many a long  
And joyless year have I,  
As thou to-day, put forth my song,  
Beneath a wintry sky.

But thee no wintry skies can harm,  
Who only need'st to sing  
To make even January charm,  
And every season Spring.

---

\* Rhedycina—a Latinized form of the Welsh name for Oxford.

## LINES WRITTEN IN AN ALBUM

OF MISS PATTY MORE'S, SISTER OF HANNAH MORE.

(February, 1792.)

IN vain to live from age to age  
While modern bards endeavour,  
I write my name in Patty's page,  
And gain my point for ever.

---

## EPITAPH ON A FREE BUT TAME REDBREAST,

A FAVOURITE OF MISS SALLY HURDIS.

(March, 1792.)

THESE are not dewdrops, these are tears,  
And tears by Sally shed,  
For absent Robin, who she fears  
With too much cause, is dead.

One morn he came not to her hand  
As he was wont to come,  
And, on her finger perch'd, to stand  
Picking his breakfast crumb.

Alarm'd, she call'd him and perplex'd  
She sought him, but in vain;  
That day he came not, nor the next,  
Nor ever came again.

She therefore raised him here a tomb,  
Though where he fell or how,  
None knows, so secret was his doom,  
Nor where he moulders now.

Had half a score of coxcombs died  
In social Robin's stead,  
Poor Sally's tears had soon been dried,  
Or haply never shed.

But Bob was neither rudely bold,  
Nor spiritlessly tame;  
Nor was, like theirs, his bosom cold,  
But always in a flame.

## ON A MISTAKE IN THE TRANSLATION OF HOMER.

COWPER had sinn'd with some excuse,  
 If, bound in rhyming tethers,  
 He had committed this abuse  
 Of changing ewes for wethers.

But, male for female is a trope,  
 A rather bold misnomer,  
 That would have startled even Pope,  
 When he translated Homer.

## LINES ON A LATE THEFT.\*

SWEET nymph, who art, it seems, accused  
 Of stealing George's pen,  
 Use it thyself, and having used,  
 E'en give it him again;

The plume of his that has one scrap  
 Of thy good sense expressed,  
 Will be a feather in his cap  
 Worth more than all his *crest*.

## SONNET TO WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

(April, 1792.)

THY country, Wilberforce, with just disdain,  
 Hears thee by cruel men and impious call'd  
 Fanatic, for thy zeal to loose the inthrall'd  
 From exile, public sale, and slavery's chain.  
 Friend of the poor, the wrong'd, the fetter-gall'd,  
 Fear not lest labour such as thine be vain.

Thou hast achieved a part; hast gain'd the ear  
 Of Britain's senate to thy glorious cause;  
 Hope smiles, joy springs, and, though cold caution pause  
 And weave delay, the better hour is near  
 That shall remunerate thy toils severe  
 By peace for Afric, fenced with British laws.

Enjoy what thou hast won, esteem and love  
 From all the just on earth, and all the blest above.

\* Contained in a letter to Mrs. King, dated 8th March, 1792.

TO DR. AUSTEN, OF CECIL STREET, LONDON.

(May, 1792.)

AUSTEN ! accept a grateful verse from me,  
 The poet's treasure, no inglorious fee.  
 Loved by the muses, thy ingenious mind  
 Pleasing requital in my verse may find ;  
 Verse oft has dash'd the scythe of Time aside,  
 Immortalising names which else had died :  
 And oh ! could I command the glittering wealth  
 With which sick kings are glad to purchase health ;  
 Yet, if extensive fame, and sure to live,  
 Were in the power of verse like mine to give,  
 I would not recompense his art with less,  
 Who, giving Mary\* health, heals my distress.  
 Friend of my friend ! I love thee, though unknown,  
 And boldly call thee, being his, my own.

TO WARREN HASTINGS, ESQ.

BY AN OLD SCHOOLFELLOW OF HIS AT WESTMINSTER.

HASTINGS ! I knew thee young, and of a mind  
 While young, humane, conversable, and kind ;  
 Nor can I well believe thee, gentle then,  
 Now grown a villain, and the worst of men :  
 But rather some suspect, who have oppress'd  
 And worried thee, as not themselves the best.

LINES ADDRESSED TO DR. DARWIN,

AUTHOR OF "THE BOTANIC GARDEN."

Two poets,† (poets by report  
 Not oft so well agree,)  
 Sweet harmonist of Flora's court !  
 Conspire to honour thee.

They best can judge the poet's worth,  
 Who oft themselves have known  
 The pangs of a poetic birth  
 By labours of their own.

\* Mrs. Unwin. Dr. Austen was a friend of Hayley's.

† Himself and Hayley, a poem by whom accompanied these *Muses*.



## MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

We therefore pleased extol thy song,  
 Though various yet complete,  
 Rich in embellishment, as strong  
 And learned as 'tis sweet.

No envy mingles with our praise;  
 Though, could our hearts repine  
 At any poet's happier lays,  
 They would—they must at thine.

But we, in mutual bondage knit  
 Of friendship's closest tie,  
 Can gaze on even Darwin's wit  
 With an unjaundiced eye:

And deem the bard, whoe'er he be,  
 And howsoever known,  
 Who would not twine a wreath for thee,  
 Unworthy of his own.

---

 CATHARINA.

ADDRESSED TO MISS STAPLETON.\*

SHE came—she is gone—we have met—  
 And meet perhaps never again;  
 The sun of that moment is set,  
 And seems to have risen in vain.  
 Catharina has fled like a dream,  
 (So vanishes pleasure, alas!)  
 But has left a regret and esteem  
 That will not so suddenly pass.

The last evening ramble we made,  
 Catharina, Maria, and I,  
 Our progress was often delay'd  
 By the nightingale warbling nigh.  
 We paused under many a tree,  
 And much she was charm'd with a tone,  
 Less sweet to Maria and me,  
 Who so lately had witness'd her own.

My numbers that day she had sung,  
 And gave them a grace so divine,  
 As only her musical tongue  
 Could infuse into numbers of mine.

---

\* Afterwards Lady Throckmorton.

The longer I heard, I esteem'd  
 The work of my fancy the more,  
 And e'en to myself never seem'd  
 So tuneful a poet before.

Though the pleasures of London exceed  
 In number the days of the year,  
 Catharina, did nothing impede,  
 Would feel herself happier here;  
 For the close-woven arches of limes  
 On the banks of our river, I know,  
 Are sweeter to her many times  
 Than aught that the city can shew.

So it is, when the mind is endued  
 With a well-judging taste from above,  
 Then, whether embellish'd or rude,  
 'Tis nature alone that we love.  
 The achievements of art may amuse,  
 May even our wonder excite,  
 But groves, hills, and valleys diffuse  
 A lasting, a sacred delight.

Since then in the rural recess  
 Catharina alone can rejoice,  
 May it still be her lot to possess  
 The scene of her sensible choice!  
 To inhabit a mansion remote  
 From the clatter of street-pacing steeds,  
 And by Philomel's annual note  
 To measure the life that she leads.

With her book, and her voice, and her lyre,  
 To wing all her moments at home;  
 And with scenes that new rapture inspire,  
 As oft as it suits her to roam;  
 She will have just the life she prefers,  
 With little to hope or to fear,  
 And ours would be pleasant as hers,  
 Might we view her enjoying it here.

## THE SECOND PART.

ON HER MARRIAGE TO GEORGE THROCKMORTON COURTENAY,\* ESQ.

(June, 1792.)

BELIEVE it or not, as you chuse,  
 The doctrine is certainly true,

---

\* Brother of Sir John Throckmorton, to whose baronetcy he succeeded.

## MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

That the future is known to the muse,  
 And poets are oracles too.  
 I did but express a desire  
 To see Catharina at home,  
 At the side of my friend George's fire,  
 And lo !—she is actually come !

Such prophecy some may despise,  
 But the wish of a poet and friend  
 Perhaps is approved in the skies,  
 And therefore attains to its end.  
 'Twas a wish that flew ardently forth  
 From a bosom effectually warm'd  
 With the talents, the graces, and worth  
 Of the person for whom it was form'd.

Maria\* would leave us, I knew,  
 To the grief and regret of us all,  
 But less to our grief, could we view  
 Catharina the Queen of the Hall.  
 And therefore I wish'd as I did,  
 And therefore this union of hands,  
 Not a whisper was heard to forbid,  
 But all cry, Amen—to the banns.

Since therefore I seem to incur  
 No danger of wishing in vain,  
 When making good wishes for her,  
 I will e'en to my wishes again :  
 With one I have made her a wife,  
 And now I will try with another,  
 Which I cannot suppress for my life,—  
 How soon I can make her a mother.

## SONNET,

ADDRESSED TO WILLIAM HAYLEY, ESQ.†

(June, 1792.)

HAYLEY—thy tenderness fraternal shewn  
 In our first interview, delightful guest !  
 To Mary, and me for her dear sake distress'd,  
 Such as it is has made my heart thy own,  
 Though heedless now of new engagements grown ;

\* Lady Throckmorton.

† Author of the "Triumphs of Temper" and other now forgotten poems.

For threescore winters make a wintry breast,  
And I had purposed ne'er to go in quest  
Of friendship more, except with God alone.  
But thou hast won me; nor is God my foe,  
Who, ere this last afflictive scene began,  
Sent thee to mitigate the dreadful blow,  
My brother, by whose sympathy I know  
Thy true deserts infallibly to scan,  
Not more to admire the Bard than love the Man.

---

EPITAPH ON FOP,

A DOG BELONGING TO LADY THROCKMORTON.

(August, 1792.)

THOUGH once a puppy, and though Fop by name,  
Here moulders one whose bones some honour claim;  
No sycophant, although of spaniel race,  
And though no hound, a martyr to the chase.  
Ye squirrels, rabbits, leverets, rejoice!  
Your haunts no longer echo to his voice;  
This record of his fate exulting view,  
He died worn out with vain pursuit of you.  
"Yes,"—the indignant shade of Fop replies—  
"And worn with vain pursuit, man also dies."

---

SONNET TO GEORGE ROMNEY, ESQ.,

ON HIS PICTURE OF ME IN CRAYONS,

*Drawn at Earham in the 61st year of my age, and in the months of  
August and September, 1792.*

(October, 1792.)

ROMNEY, expert infallibly to trace,  
On chart or canvas, not the form alone  
And semblance, but however faintly shown  
The mind's impression too on every face;  
With strokes that time ought never to erase,  
Thou hast so pencill'd mine, that though I own  
The subject worthless, I have never known  
The artist shining with superior grace.

G G

But this I mark,—that symptoms none of woe  
 In thy incomparable work appear.  
 Well—I am satisfied it should be so,  
 Since, on maturer thought, the cause is clear ;  
 For in my looks what sorrow couldst thou see  
 When I was Hayley's guest, and sat to thee ?

---

## THANKS FOR A GIFT OF PHEASANTS.

IN Copeman's ear this truth let Echo tell:  
 "Immortal bards like mortal pheasants well,"  
 And when his clerkship's out, I wish him herds  
 Of golden clients, for his golden birds.

---

## AN EPITAPH

ON A POINTER BELONGING TO SIR JOHN THROCKMORTON.

HERE lies one who never drew  
 Blood himself, yet many slew ;  
 Gave the gun its aim, and figure  
 Made in field, yet ne'er pull'd trigger.  
 Arm'd men have gladly made  
 Him their guide, and him obey'd ;  
 At his signified desire  
 Would advance, present, and fire.  
 Stout he was, and large of limb,  
 Scores have fled at sight of him ;  
 And to all this fame he rose  
 Only following his nose.  
 Neptune was he call'd ; not he  
 Who controls the boisterous sea,  
 But of happier command,  
 Neptune of the furrow'd land ;  
 And, your wonder vain to shorten,  
 Pointer to Sir John Throckmorton.

---

## ON RECEIVING HAYLEY'S PICTURE.

(January, 1793)

IN language warm as could be breath'd or penn'd  
 Thy picture speaks the original, my friend,

Not by those looks that indicate thy mind,  
They only speak thee friend of all mankind;  
Expression here more soothing still I see,  
That friend of all a partial friend to me.

---

EPITAPH ON MR. CHESTER, OF CHICHELEY.

(April, 1793.)

TEARS flow, and cease not, where the good man lies,  
Till all who knew him follow to the skies.  
Tears therefore fall where Chester's ashes sleep;  
Him wife, friends, brothers, children, servants weep;—  
And justly—few shall ever him transcend  
As husband, parent, brother, master, friend.

---

TO MY COUSIN ANNE BODHAM,

ON RECEIVING FROM HER A NETWORK PURSE MADE BY HERSELF.

(May, 1793.)

My gentle Anne, whom heretofore,  
When I was young, and thou no more  
Than plaything for a nurse,  
I danced and fondled on my knee,  
A kitten both in size and glee,—  
I thank thee for my purse.  
Gold pays the worth of all things here;  
But not of love;—that gem's too dear  
For richest rogues to win it;  
I, therefore, as a proof of love,  
Esteem thy present far above  
The best things kept within it.

---

TO MRS. UNWIN.

(May, 1793.)

MARY! I want a lyre with other strings,  
Such aid from heaven as some have feign'd they drew,  
An eloquence scarce given to mortals, new  
And undebased by praise of meaner things,  
That, ere through age or woe I shed my wings,

## MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

I may record thy worth with honour due,  
 In verse as musical as thou art true,  
 And that immortalises whom it sings.  
 But thou hast little need. There is a book  
 By seraphs writ with beams of heavenly light,  
 On which the eyes of God not rarely look,  
 A chronicle of actions just and bright;  
 There all thy deeds, my faithful Mary, shine,  
 And, since thou own'st that praise, I spare thee mine.

---

 TO JOHN JOHNSON,\* ESQ.,

ON HIS PRESENTING ME WITH AN ANTIQUE BUST OF HOMER.

(May, 1793.)

KINSMAN beloved, and as a son, by me!  
 When I behold the fruit of thy regard,  
 The sculptured form of my old favourite bard,  
 I reverence feel for him, and love for thee.  
 Joy too and grief. Much joy that there should be,  
 Wise men and learn'd, who grudge not to reward  
 With some applause my bold attempt and hard,  
 Which others scorn: critics by courtesy.  
 The grief is this, that, sunk in Homer's mine,  
 I lose my precious years now soon to fail,  
 Handling his gold, which, howsoe'er it shine,  
 Proves dross when balanced in the Christian scale.  
 Be wiser thou;—like our forefather Donne,  
 Seek heavenly wealth, and work for God alone.

---

 INSCRIBED ON THE BUST OF HOMER,

PRESENTED TO COWPER BY MR. JOHN JOHNSON, AND NOW  
 IN THE WILDERNESS AT WESTON.

Εἰκόνα τις ταυτην;—κλυτον ἀνερὸς ὄνομ' ὀλωλεν.  
 Οὐνομα δ' οὐτος ἀνὴρ ἀφθιτον αἶεν εχει.

The sculptor?—nameless, though once dear to fame;  
 But This Man bears an everlasting name.

\*The grandson of Cowper's uncle. He cheered the last years of the poet.

## TO A YOUNG FRIEND,

ON HIS ARRIVING AT CAMBRIDGE WET WHEN NO RAIN HAD FALLEN THERE.

If Gideon's fleece, which drench'd with dew he found,  
While moisture none refresh'd the herbs around,  
Might fitly represent the church, endow'd  
With heavenly gifts to heathens not allow'd ;  
In pledge, perhaps, of favours from on high,  
Thy locks were wet when others' locks were dry.  
Heaven grant us half the omen,—may we see  
Not drought on others, but much dew on thee !

---

INSCRIPTION FOR A HERMITAGE IN THE  
AUTHOR'S GARDEN.

(May, 1793.)

THIS cabin, Mary, in my sight appears,  
Built as it has been in our waning years,  
A rest afforded to our weary feet,  
Preliminary to—the last retreat.

---

INSCRIPTION FOR A MOSS-HOUSE IN THE  
SHRUBBERY AT WESTON.

HERE, free from riot's hated noise,  
Be mine, the calmer, purer joys  
A friend or book bestows ;  
Far from the storms that shake the great,  
Contentment's gale shall fan my seat,  
And sweeten my repose.

---

## INSCRIPTION FOR A GARDEN SHED,

BUILT IN A FAR MORE EXPENSIVE WAY THAN WAS DESIGNED.

BEWARE of building ! I intended  
Rough logs and thatch, and thus it ended.



## EPIGRAM ON THE SAME CIRCUMSTANCE.\*

INSTEAD of a pound or two, spending a mint,  
Must serve me at least, I believe, with a hint,  
That building and building a man may be driven  
At last out of doors, and have no house to live in.

## ON ABBOTT'S PORTRAIT OF HIM;

ADDRESSED TO HAYLEY.

(July 15, 1792.)

ABBOTT is painting me so true,  
That (trust me) you would stare,  
And hardly know at the first view,  
If I were here or there.

## THE FOUR AGES.

(A BRIEF FRAGMENT OF AN EXTENSIVE PROJECTED POEM.)

"I COULD be well content, allow'd the use  
Of past experience, and the wisdom glean'd  
From worn-out follies, now acknowledged such,  
To recommence life's trial, in the hope  
Of fewer errors, on a second proof!"

Thus while grey evening lull'd the wind, and call'd  
Fresh odours from the shrubbery at my side,  
Taking my lonely winding walk, I mused,  
And held accustom'd conference with my heart;  
When from within it thus a voice replied:

"Couldst thou in truth? and art thou taught at length  
This wisdom, and but this, from all the past?  
Is not the pardon of thy long arrears,  
Time wasted, violated laws, abuse

\* Cowper thus explains the inscription in a letter to Hayley, July 24, 1793.—"I said to my Sam: 'Sam, build me a shed in the garden, with anything that you can find, and make it rude and rough, like one of those at Eartham.' 'Yes, sir,' says Sam; and straightway laying his own noddle, and the carpenter's noddle together, has built me a thing fit for Stow Gardens."

Of talents, judgment, mercies, better far  
 Than opportunity vouchsafed to err  
 With less excuse, and, haply, worse effect P"  
 I heard, and acquiesced : then to and fro  
 Oft pacing, as the mariner his deck,  
 My gravelly bounds, from self to human kind  
 I pass'd, and next consider'd, what is man ?  
 Knows he his origin ? Can he ascend  
 By reminiscence to his earliest date ?  
 Slept he in Adam ? And in those from him  
 Through numerous generations, till he found  
 At length his destined moment to be born ?  
 Or was he not, till fashion'd in the womb ?  
 Deep mysteries both ! which schoolmen must have toil'd  
 To unriddle, and have left them mysteries still.  
 It is an evil incident to man,  
 And of the worst, that unexplored he leaves  
 Truths useful and attainable with ease,  
 To search forbidden deeps, where mystery lies  
 Not to be solved, and useless, if it might.  
 Mysteries are food for angels ; they digest  
 With ease, and find them nutriment ; but man,  
 While yet he dwells below, must stoop to glean  
 His manna from the ground, or starve and die.

\* \* \* \* \*

### ON A PLANT OF VIRGIN'S BOWER,

DESIGNED TO COVER A GARDEN-SEAT.

THRIVE, gentle plant ! and weave a bower  
 For Mary\* and for me,  
 And deck with many a splendid flower,  
 Thy foliage large and free.  
 Thou cam'st from Eartham, and wilt shade,  
 (If truly I divine,)  
 Some future day the illustrious head  
 Of him who made thee mine.  
 Should Daphne shew a jealous frown,  
 And Envy seize the bay,  
 Affirming none so fit to crown  
 Such honour'd brows as they,

---

\* Mrs. Unwin.

## MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

Thy cause with zeal we shall defend,  
 And with convincing power;  
 For why should not the Virgin's friend  
 Be crown'd with Virgin's Bower?

---

## TO WILLIAM HAYLEY, ESQ.

(June, 1793.)

DEAR architect of fine chateaux in air,  
 Worthier to stand for ever, if they could  
 Than any built of stone, or yet of wood,  
 For back of royal elephant to bear;

Oh for permission from the skies to share,  
 Much to my own, though little to thy good,  
 With thee (not subject to the jealous mood!)  
 A partnership of literary ware!\*

But I am bankrupt now; and doomed henceforth  
 To drudge, in descant dry, on others' lays;  
 Bards, I acknowledge, of unequall'd worth!  
 But what is commentator's happiest praise?

That he has furnish'd lights for other eyes,  
 Which they who need them use, and then despise.

---

## A TALE,† FOUNDED ON FACT.

(June, 1793.)

IN Scotland's realm, where trees are few,  
 Nor even shrubs abound;  
 But where, however bleak the view,  
 Some better things are found;

---

\* Hayley had proposed to share some literary work (it is not known what) with Cowper.  
 † This tale is founded on an article which appeared in the *Buckinghamshire Herald*, Saturday, June 1, 1792:—Glasgow, May 23. In a block, or pulley, near the head of the mast of a gabbert, now lying at the Broomielaw, there is a chaffinch's nest and four eggs. The nest was built while the vessel lay at Greenock, and was followed hither by both birds. Though the block is occasionally lowered for the inspection of the curious, the birds have not forsaken the nest. The cock, however, visits the nest but seldom, while the hen never leaves it but when she descends to the hull for food."

For husband there and wife may boast  
 Their union undefiled,  
 And false ones are as rare almost  
 As hedgerows in the wild ;

In Scotland's realm forlorn and bare  
 The history chanced of late—  
 The history of a wedded pair,  
 A chaffinch and his mate.

The spring drew near, each felt a breast  
 With genial instinct fill'd ;  
 They pair'd, and would have built a nest,  
 But found not where to build.

The heaths uncover'd and the moors  
 Except with snow and sleet,  
 Sea-beaten rocks and naked shores  
 Could yield them no retreat.

Long time a breeding place they sought,  
 Till both grew vexed and tired ;  
 At length a ship arriving brought  
 The good so long desired.

A ship ?—could such a restless thing  
 Afford them place of rest ?  
 Or was the merchant charged to bring  
 The homeless birds a nest ?

Hush !—silent hearers profit most—  
 This racer of the sea  
 Proved kinder to them than the coast,  
 It served them with a tree.

But such a tree ! 'twas shaven deal,  
 The tree they call a mast,  
 And had a hollow with a wheel  
 Through which the tackle pass'd.

Within that cavity aloft  
 Their roofless home they fix'd,  
 Formed with materials neat and soft,  
 Bents, wool, and feathers mix'd.

Four ivory eggs soon pave its floor,  
 With russet specks bedight ;  
 The vessel weighs, forsakes the shore,  
 And lessens to the sight.

## MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

The mother-bird is gone to sea,  
 As she had changed her kind;  
 But goes the male? Far wiser, he  
 Is doubtless left behind.  
 No—soon as from ashore he saw  
 The wingèd mansion move,  
 He flew to reach it, by a law  
 Of never-failing love;  
 Then perching at his consort's side,  
 Was briskly borne along,  
 The billows and the blast defied,  
 And cheer'd her with a song.  
 The seaman with sincere delight  
 His feather'd shipmates eyes,  
 Scarce less exulting in the sight  
 Than when he tows a prize.  
 For seamen much believe in signs,  
 And from a chance so new  
 Each some approaching good divines,  
 And may his hopes be true!  
 Hail, honour'd land! a desert where  
 Not even birds can hide,  
 Yet parent of this loving pair  
 Whom nothing could divide.  
 And ye who, rather than resign  
 Your matrimonial plan,  
 Were not afraid to plough the brine  
 In company with man;  
 For whose lean country much disdain  
 We English often shew;  
 Yet from a richer nothing gain  
 But wantonness and woe;  
 Be it your fortune, year by year,  
 The same resource to prove,  
 And may ye sometimes landing here,  
 Instruct us how to love!

---

 ON A SPANIEL, CALLED BEAU, KILLING A YOUNG BIRD.

(July, 1793.)

A SPANIEL, Beau, that fares like you,  
 Well fed, and at his ease,  
 Should wiser be than to pursue  
 Each trifle that he sees.

But you have kill'd a tiny bird,  
Which flew not till to-day,  
Against my orders, whom you heard  
Forbidding you the prey.

Nor did you kill that you might eat,  
And ease a doggish pain,  
For him, though chased with furious heat,  
You left where he was slain.

Nor was he of the thievish sort,  
Or one whom blood allures,  
But innocent was all his sport  
Whom you have torn for yours.

My dog ! what remedy remains,  
Since, teach you all I can,  
I see you, after all my pains,  
So much resemble man ?

BEAU'S REPLY.

SIR, when I flew to seize the bird  
In spite of your command,  
A louder voice than yours I heard,  
And harder to withstand.

You cried—Forbear !—but in my breast  
A mightier cried—Proceed !—  
'Twas Nature, Sir, whose strong behest  
Impell'd me to the deed.

Yet much as Nature I respect,  
I ventured once to break  
(As you perhaps may recollect)  
Her precept for your sake ;

And when your linnet on a day,  
Passing his prison door,  
Had flutter'd all his strength away,  
And panting press'd the floor,

Well knowing him a sacred thing,  
Not destined to my tooth,  
I only kiss'd his ruffled wing,  
And licked the feathers smooth.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

Let my obedience then excuse  
 My disobedience now,  
 Nor some reproof yourself refuse  
 From your aggrieved bow-wow :

If killing birds be such a crime,  
 (Which I can hardly see,)  
 What think you, Sir, of killing Time  
 With verse address'd to me ?

TO THE SPANISH ADMIRAL, COUNT GRAVINA,

ON HIS TRANSLATING THE AUTHOR'S SONG ON A ROSE INTO  
 ITALIAN VERSE.

(1793.)

My Rose, Gravina, blooms anew,  
 And steep'd not now in rain,  
 But in Castalian streams by you,  
 Will never fade again.

TO MARY.\*

(1793.)

THE twentieth year is well nigh past  
 Since first our sky was overcast ;—  
 Ah would that this might be the last !  
My Mary !

Thy spirits have a fainter flow,  
 I see thee daily weaker grow ;—  
 'Twas my distress that brought thee low.  
My Mary !

Thy needles, once a shining store,  
 For my sake restless heretofore,  
 Now rust disused, and shine no more,  
My Mary !

For though thou gladly wouldst fulfil  
 The same kind office for me still,  
 Thy sight now seconds not thy will,  
My Mary !

\* Mrs. Unwin.

But well thou play'dst the housewife's part,  
And all thy threads with magic art  
Have wound themselves about this heart,  
My Mary!

Thy indistinct expressions seem  
Like language utter'd in a dream :  
Yet me they charm, whate'er the theme,  
My Mary!

Thy silver locks, once auburn bright,  
Are still more lovely in my sight  
Than golden beams of orient light,  
My Mary!

For could I view nor them nor thee,  
What sight worth seeing could I see ?  
The sun would rise in vain for me,  
My Mary!

Partakers of thy sad decline,  
Thy hands their little force resign ;  
Yet gently press'd, press gently mine,  
My Mary!

Such feebleness of limbs thou provest,  
That now at every step thou movest,  
Upheld by two ; yet still thou lovest,  
My Mary!

And still to love, though press'd with ill,  
In wintry age to feel no chill,  
With me is to be lovely still,  
My Mary!

But ah ! by constant heed I know,  
How oft the sadness that I show  
Transforms thy smiles to looks of woe,  
My Mary!

And should my future lot be cast  
With much resemblance of the past,  
Thy worn-out heart will break at last,  
My Mary!





## ON RECEIVING HEYNE'S VIRGIL

FROM MR. HAYLEY.

(October, 1793.)

I SHOULD have deem'd it once an effort vain  
 To sweeten more sweet Maro's matchless strain,  
 But from that error now behold me free,  
 Since I received him as a gift from thee.

## ANSWER

TO STANZAS ADDRESSED TO LADY HESKETH, BY MISS CATHARINE FANSHAWE, IN  
 RETURNING A POEM OF MR. COWPER'S, LENT TO HER ON CONDITION SHE  
 SHOULD NEITHER SHOW IT, NOR TAKE A COPY.\*

To be remember'd thus is fame,  
 And in the first degree;  
 And did the few like her the same,  
 The press might sleep for me.

So Homer, in the memory stored  
 Of many a Grecian belle,  
 Was once preserved—a richer hoard,  
 But never lodged so well.

## INSCRIPTION FOR THE TOMB OF MR. HAMILTON.

PAUSE here, and think: a monitory rhyme  
 Demands one moment of thy fleeting time.  
 Consult life's silent clock, thy bounding vein;  
 Seems it to say—"Health here has long to reign"?  
 Hast thou the vigour of thy youth? an eye  
 That beams delight? a heart untaught to sigh?  
 Yet fear. Youth, oftentimes healthful and at ease,  
 Anticipates a day it never sees;  
 And many a tomb, like Hamilton's, aloud  
 Exclaims, "Prepare thee for an early shroud."

\* Miss Fanshawe returned the poem, with some stanzas, informing her friend that she had obeyed the letter of the "harsh command," but had committed the verses to memory.

MONTES GLACIALES, IN OCEANO GERMANICO  
NATANTES.\*

(March 12th, 1799.)

En, quæ prodigia, ex oris allata remotis,  
Oras adveniunt pavefacta per æquora nostras !  
Non equidem priscæ sæclum rediisse videtur  
Pyrrhæ, cum Proteus pecus altos visere montes  
Et sylvas, egit. Sed tempora vix leviora  
Adsunt, evulsi quando radicitus alti  
In mare descendunt montes, fluctusque pererrant.  
Quid verò hoc monstri est magis et mirabile visu ?  
Splendentes video, ceu pulchro ex ære vel auro  
Conflatos, rutilisque accinctos undique gemmis,  
Baccâ cæruleâ, et flammâ imitante pyropo.  
Ex oriente adsunt, ubi gazas optima tellus  
Parturit omnigenas, quibus æva per omnia sumptu  
Ingenti finxere sibi diademata reges ?  
Vix hoc crediderim. Non fallunt talia acutos  
Mercatorum oculos : prius et quàm littora Gangis  
Liquissent, avidis gratissima præda fuissent.  
Ortos unde putemus ? An illos Ves'vius atrox  
Protulit, ignivomisve eiecit faucibus Ætna ?  
Luce micant propriâ, Phœbive, per aëra purum  
Nunc stimulantis equos, argentea tela retorquent ?  
Phœbi luce micant. Ventis et fluctibus altis  
Appulsi, et rapidis subter currentibus undis,  
Tandem non fallunt oculos. Capita alta videre est  
Multâ onerata nive et canis conspersa pruinis.  
Cætera sunt glacies. Procul hinc, ubi Bruma ferè omnes  
Contristat menses, portenta hæc horrida nobis  
Illa strui voluit. Quoties de culmine summo  
Clivorum fluere in littora prona, solutæ  
Sole, nives, propero tendentes in mare cursu,  
Illa gelu fixit. Paulatim attollere sese  
Mirum cœpit opus ; glacieque ab origine rerum.  
In glaciem aggestâ sublimes vertice tandem  
Æquavit montes, non crescere nescia moles.  
Sic immensa diu stetit, æternumque stetit  
Congeries, hominum neque vi neque mobilis arte,  
Littora ni tandem declivia deseruisset,  
Pondere victa suo. Dilabitur. Omnia circum  
Antra et saxa gemunt, subito concussa fragore,

\* This poem was suggested by a paragraph in the newspapers, describing enormous icebergs which had been seen drifting in the German Ocean.

Dum ruit in pelagum, tanquam studiosa natandi,  
 Ingens tota strues. Sic Delos dicitur olim,  
 Insula, in Ægæo fluitasse erratica ponto.  
 Sed non ex glacie Delos; neque torpida Delum  
 Bruma inter rupes genuit nudum sterilemque.  
 Sed vestita herbis erat illa, ornatæque nunquam  
 Decidua lauro; et Delum dilexit Apollo.  
 At vos, erroneos horrendi, et caligine digni  
 Cimmeriâ, Deus idem odit. Natalia vestra,  
 Nubibus involvens frontem, non ille tueri  
 Sustinuit. Patrium vos ergo requirite cælum!  
 Ite! Redite! Timete moras; ni leniter austro  
 Spirante, et nitidas Phœbo jaculante sagittas  
 Hostili vobis, pereatis gurgite misti!

ON THE ICE ISLANDS SEEN FLOATING IN THE  
 GERMAN OCEAN.

(March 19th, 1799.)

WHAT portents, from what distant region, ride,  
 Unseen till now in ours, the astonish'd tide?  
 In ages past, old Proteus, with his droves  
 Of sea-calves, sought the mountains and the groves;  
 But now, descending whence of late they stood,  
 Themselves the mountains seem to rove the flood;  
 Dire times were they, full charged with human woes;  
 And these, scarce less calamitous than those.  
 What view we now? More wondrous still! Behold!  
 Like burnish'd brass they shine, or beaten gold;  
 And all around the pearl's pure splendour show,  
 And all around the ruby's fiery glow.  
 Come they from India, where the burning earth,  
 All-bounteous, gives her richest treasures birth;  
 And where the costly gems, that beam around  
 The brows of mightiest potentates, are found  
 No. Never such a countless dazzling store  
 Had left unseen the Ganges' peopled shore;  
 Rapacious hands, and ever-watchful eyes,  
 Should sooner far have marked and seized the prize.  
 Whence sprang they then? Ejected have they come  
 From Ves'vius, or from Etna's burning womb?  
 Thus shine they self-illumed, or but display  
 The borrow'd splendours of a cloudless day?  
 With borrow'd beams they shine. The gales that breathe  
 Now landward, and the current's force beneath,

Have borne them nearer : and the nearer sight,  
 Advantaged more, contemplates them aright.  
 Their lofty summits crested high they shew,  
 With mingled sleet, and long-incumbent snow.  
 The rest is ice. Far hence, where, most severe,  
 Bleak winter well-nigh saddens all the year,  
 Their infant growth began. He bade arise  
 Their uncouth forms, portentous in our eyes.  
 Oft as dissolved by transient suns, the snow  
 Left the tall cliff to join the flood below ;  
 He caught, and curdled with a freezing blast  
 The current, ere it reach'd the boundless waste.  
 By slow degrees uprose the wondrous pile,  
 And long successive ages roll'd the while,  
 Till, ceaseless in its growth, it claim'd to stand  
 Tall as its rival mountains on the land.  
 Thus stood, and unremovable by skill  
 Or force of man, had stood the structure still,  
 But that, though firmly fix'd, supplanted yet  
 By pressure of its own enormous weight,  
 It left the shelving beach—and with a sound  
 That shook the bellowing waves and rocks around,  
 Self-launch'd, and swiftly, to the briny wave,  
 As if instinct with strong desire to lave,  
 Down went the ponderous mass. So bards of old  
 How Delos swam, the Ægean deep have told.  
 But not of ice was Delos. Delos bore  
 Herb, fruit, and flower. She, crown'd with laurel, wore,  
 Even under wintry skies, a summer smile ;  
 And Delos was Apollo's favourite isle.  
 But, horrid wanderers of the deep, to you  
 He deems Cimmerian darkness only due.  
 Your hated birth he deign'd not to survey,  
 But, scornful, turn'd his glorious eyes away.  
 Hence ! Seek your home, nor longer rashly dare  
 The darts of Phœbus, and a softer air ;  
 Lest ye regret, too late, your native coast,  
 In no congenial gulf for ever lost !

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### THE CASTAWAY.\*

(March 20th, 1799.)

OBSCUREST night involved the sky,  
 The Atlantic billows roar'd,

---

\* This was Cowper's last original poem. It is founded on an anecdote related in Anson's voyages.

## MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

When such a destined wretch as I,  
 Wash'd headlong from on board,  
 Of friends, of hope, of all bereft,  
 His floating home for ever left.

No braver chief could Albion boast  
 Than he with whom he went,  
 Nor ever ship left Albion's coast  
 With warmer wishes sent.  
 He loved them both, but both in vain ;  
 Nor him beheld, nor her again.

Not long beneath the whelming brine  
 Expert to swim, he lay ;  
 Nor soon he felt his strength decline,  
 Or courage die away ;  
 But waged with death a lasting strife,  
 Supported by despair of life.

He shouted ; nor his friends had fail'd  
 To check the vessel's course,  
 But so the furious blast prevail'd,  
 That pitiless perforce  
 They left their outcast mate behind,  
 And scudded still before the wind.

Some succour yet they could afford ;  
 And, such as storms allow,  
 The cask, the coop, the floated cord,  
 Delay'd not to bestow :  
 But he, they knew, nor ship nor shore,  
 Whate'er they gave, should visit more.

Nor, cruel as it seem'd, could he  
 Their haste himself condemn,  
 Aware that flight, in such a sea,  
 Alone could rescue them ;  
 Yet bitter felt it still to die  
 Deserted, and his friends so nigh.

He long survives, who lives an hour  
 In ocean, self-upheld :  
 And so long he, with unspent power,  
 His destiny repell'd ;  
 And ever, as the minutes flew,  
 Entreated help, or cried—" Adieu !"

At length, his transient respite past,  
 His comrades, who before  
 Had heard his voice in every blast,  
 Could catch the sound no more :

For then, by toil subdued, he drank  
The stifling wave, and then he sank.

No poet wept him ; but the page  
Of narrative sincere,  
That tells his name, his worth, his age,  
Is wet with Anson's tear :  
And tears by bards or heroes shed  
Alike immortalise the dead.

I therefore purpose not, or dream,  
Descanting on his fate,  
To give the melancholy theme  
A more enduring date :  
But misery still delights to trace  
Its semblance in another's case.

No voice divine the storm allay'd,  
No light propitious shone,  
When, snatch'd from all effectual aid,  
We perish'd, each alone :  
But I beneath a rougher sea,  
And whelm'd in deeper gulfs than he.



## Translations.

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### TRANSLATION OF PSALM CXXXVII.

To Babylon's proud waters brought,  
In bondage where we lay,  
With tears on Sion's Hill we thought,  
And sighed our hours away ;  
Neglected on the willows hung  
Our useless harps, while every tongue  
Bewailed the fatal day.

Then did the base insulting foe  
Some joyous notes demand,  
Such as in Sion used to flow  
From Judah's happy band :  
Alas ! what joyous notes have we,  
Our country spoiled, no longer free,  
And in a foreign land ?

O Solyma ! if e'er thy praise  
Be silent in my song,  
Rude and unpleasing be the lays,  
And artless be my tongue !  
Thy name my fancy still employs ;  
To thee, great fountain of my joys,  
My sweetest airs belong.

Remember, Lord ! that hostile sound.  
When Edom's children cried,  
" Razed be her turrets to the ground,  
And humbled be her pride !"  
Remember, Lord ! and let the foe  
The terrors of thy vengeance know,  
Thy vengeance they defied !

Thou too, great Babylon, shalt fall  
A victim to our God ;  
Thy monstrous crimes already call  
For heaven's chastising rod.  
Happy who shall thy little ones  
Relentless dash against the stones,  
And spread their limbs abroad.

## TRANSLATION OF GREEK VERSES.

## THE SPARTAN MOTHER, BY JULIANUS.

A SPARTAN, his companion slain,  
 Alone from battle fled;  
 His mother kindling with disdain  
 That she had borne him, struck him dead;  
 For courage, and not birth alone,  
 In Sparta, testifies a son!

## ON THE SAME, BY PALLADAS.\*

A SPARTAN 'scaping from the fight,  
 His mother met him in his flight,  
 Upheld a falchion to his breast,  
 And thus the fugitive addressed:  
 "Thou canst but live to blot with shame  
 Indelible thy mother's name,  
 While every breath that thou shalt draw  
 Offends against thy country's law;  
 But, if thou perish by this hand,  
 Myself indeed throughout the land,  
 To my dishonour, shall be known  
 The mother still of such a son;  
 But Sparta will be safe and free,  
 And that shall serve to comfort me."

## AN EPITAPH.

My name—my country—what are they to thee?  
 What, whether base or proud my pedigree?  
 Perhaps I far surpassed all other men—  
 Perhaps I fell below them all—what then?  
 Suffice it, stranger! that thou seest a tomb—  
 Thou know'st its use—it hides—no matter whom.

## ANOTHER.

TAKE to thy bosom, gentle earth, a swain  
 With much hard labour in thy service worn!

---

\* He lived in the fifth century.



## TRANSLATIONS

He set the vines that clothe yon ample plain,  
 And he these olives that the vale adorn.  
 He filled with grain the glebe; the rills he led  
 Through this green herbage, and those fruitful bowers;  
 Thou, therefore, earth! lie lightly on his head,  
 His hoary head, and deck his grave with flowers.

## ANOTHER.

PAINTER, this likeness is too strong,  
 And we shall mourn the dead too long.

## ANOTHER.

At threescore winters' end I died,  
 A cheerless being, sole and sad;  
 The nuptial knot I never tied,  
 And wish my father never had.

## ON MELANIPPUS AND HIS SISTER, BY CALLIMACHUS.\*

At morn we placed on his funereal bier  
 Young Melanippus; and at eventide,  
 Unable to sustain a loss so dear,  
 By her own hand his blooming sister died.  
 Thus Aristippus mourned his noble race,  
 Annihilated by a double blow,  
 Nor son could hope, nor daughter more to embrace,  
 And all Cyrene saddened at his woe.

## ON MILTIADES.

MILTIADES! thy valour best  
 (Although in every region known)  
 The men of Persia can attest,  
 Taught by thyself at Marathon.

## ON AN INFANT.

BEWAIL not much, my parents! me, the prey  
 Of ruthless Ades, and sepulchred here.  
 An infant, in my fifth scarce finished year,

---

\* An Alexandrian poet who lived in the third century B.C.

He found all sportive, innocent, and gay,  
Your young Callimachus ; and if I knew  
Not many joys, my griefs were also few.

## ON ARETIMIAS, BY HERACLIDES.

In Cnidus born, the consort I became  
Of Euphron. Aretimias was my name.  
His bed I shared, nor proved a barren bride,  
But bore two children at a birth, and died.  
One child I leave to solace and uphold  
Euphron hereafter, when infirm and old.  
And one, for his remembrance sake, I bear  
To Pluto's realm, till he shall join me there.

## ON A REED-PEN.

I WAS of late a barren plant,  
Useless, insignificant,  
Nor fig, nor grape, nor apple bore,  
A native of the marshy shore ;  
But gathered for poetic use,  
And plunged into a sable juice,  
Of which my modicum I sip,  
With narrow mouth and slender lip,  
At once, although by nature dumb,  
All eloquent I have become,  
And speak with fluency untired,  
As if by Phœbus self inspired.

## TO HEALTH.

ELDEST-BORN of powers divine!  
Blessed Hygeia ! be it mine  
To enjoy what thou canst give,  
And henceforth with thee to live :  
For in power if pleasure be,  
Wealth or numerous progeny,  
Or in amorous embrace,  
Where no spy infests the place ;  
Or in aught that heaven bestows  
To alleviate human woes,  
When the wearied heart despairs  
Of a respite from its cares ;  
These and every true delight  
Flourish only in thy sight ;

## TRANSLATIONS

And the sister Graces three  
Owe, themselves, their youth to thee,  
Without whom we may possess  
Much, but never happiness.

## ON THE ASTROLOGERS.

THE astrologers did all alike presage  
My uncle's dying in extreme old age;  
One only disagreed. But he was wise,  
And spoke not till he heard the funeral cries.

## ON AN OLD WOMAN.

MYCILLA dyes her locks, 'tis said;  
But 'tis a foul aspersion;  
She buys them black; they therefore need  
No subsequent immersion.

## ON INVALIDS.

FAR happier are the dead, methinks, than they  
Who look for death, and fear it every day.

## ON FLATTERERS.

No mischief worthier of our fear  
In nature can be found,  
Than friendship, in ostent sincere,  
But hollow and unsound.  
And lulled into a dangerous dream  
We close infold a foe,  
Who strikes, when most secure we seem,  
The inevitable blow.

## TO THE SWALLOW.

ATTIC maid! with honey fed,  
Bear'st thou to thy callow brood  
Yonder locust from the mead,  
Destined their delicious food?

Ye have kindred voices clear,  
Ye alike unfold the wing,  
Migrate hither, sojourn here,  
Both attendant on the spring.

Ah! for pity drop the prize;  
 Let it not with truth be said,  
 That a songster gasps and dies,  
 That a songster may be fed.

## ON LATE ACQUIRED WEALTH.

POOR in my youth, and in life's later scenes  
 Rich to no end, I curse my natal hour,  
 Who nought enjoyed while young, denied the means;  
 And nought when old enjoyed, denied the power.

## ON A TRUE FRIEND.

HAST thou a friend? Thou hast indeed  
 A rich and large supply,  
 Treasure to serve your every need,  
 Well managed, till you die.

## ON A BATH, BY PLATO.

DID Cytherea to the skies  
 From this pellucid lymph arise?  
 Or was it Cytherea's touch,  
 When bathing here, that made it such?

## ON A FOWLER, BY ISIODORUS.

WITH seeds and birdlime, from the desert air,  
 Eumelus gathered free, though scanty, fare.  
 No lordly patron's hand he deigned to kiss,  
 Nor luxury knew, save liberty, nor bliss.  
 Thrice thirty years he lived, and to his heirs  
 His seeds bequeathed, his birdlime, and his snares.

## ON NIOBE.\*

CHARON! receive a family on board  
 Itself sufficient for thy crazy yawl;  
 Apollo and Diana, for a word  
 By me too proudly spoken, slew us all.

---

\* She boasted that her children were more beautiful than Apollo and Diana, who in their rage slew her whole family, and she wept herself into stone.

## TRANSLATIONS

## ON A GOOD MAN.

TRAVELLER, regret me not ; for thou shalt find  
 Just cause of sorrow none in my decease,  
 Who, dying, children's children left behind,  
 And with one wife lived many a year in peace :  
 Three virtuous youths espoused my daughters three,  
 And oft their infants in my bosom lay,  
 Nor saw I one, of all derived from me,  
 Touched with disease, or torn by death away.  
 Their duteous hands my funeral rites bestowed,  
 And me, by blameless manners fitted well  
 To seek it, sent to the serene abode  
 Where shades of pious men for ever dwell.

## ON A MISER.

THEY call thee rich—I deem thee poor,  
 Since, if thou dar'st not use thy store,  
 But sav'st it only for thine heirs,  
 The treasure is not thine, but theirs.

## ANOTHER.

A MISER, traversing his house,  
 Espied, unusual there, a mouse,  
 And thus his uninvited guest  
 Briskly inquisitive addressed :  
 " Tell me, my dear, to what cause is it  
 I owe this unexpected visit ?"  
 The mouse her host obliquely eyed,  
 And, smiling, pleasantly replied :  
 " Fear not, good fellow, for your hoard !  
 I come to lodge, and not to board."

## ANOTHER.

ART thou some individual of a kind  
 Long lived by nature as the rook or hind ?  
 Heap treasure, then, for if thy need be such,  
 Thou hast excuse, and scarce canst heap too much.  
 But man thou seem'st, clear therefore from thy breast  
 This lust of treasure—folly at the best !  
 For why shouldst thou go wasted to the tomb,  
 To fatten with thy spoils thou know'st not whom ?

## ON FEMALE INCONSTANCY.

RICH, thou hadst many lovers—poor, hast none,  
 So surely want extinguishes the flame,  
 And she who called thee once her pretty one,  
 And her Adonis, now inquires thy name.

Where wast thou born, Sosicrates, and where,  
 In what strange country can thy parents live,  
 Who seem'st, by thy complaints, not yet aware  
 That want's a crime no woman can forgive?

## ON THE GRASSHOPPER.

HAPPY songster, perched above,  
 On the summit of the grove,  
 Whom a dewdrop cheers to sing  
 With the freedom of a king.  
 From thy perch survey the fields  
 Where prolific nature yields  
 Nought that, willingly as she,  
 Man surrenders not to thee.  
 For hostility or hate  
 None thy pleasures can create.  
 Thee it satisfies to sing  
 Sweetly the return of spring,  
 Herald of the genial hours,  
 Harming neither herbs nor flowers.  
 Therefore man thy voice attends  
 Gladly—thou and he are friends;  
 Nor thy never ceasing strains  
 Phœbus or the Muse disdains  
 As too simple or too long,  
 For themselves inspire the song.  
 Earth-born, bloodless, undecaying,  
 Ever singing, sporting, playing,  
 What has nature else to show  
 Godlike in its kind as thou?

## ON HERMOCRATIA.

HERMOCRATIA named—save only one—  
 Twice fifteen births I bore, and buried none;  
 For neither Phœbus pierced my thriving joys,  
 Nor Dian—she my girls, or he my boys.  
 But Dian rather, when my daughters lay  
 In parturition, chased their pangs away.

## TRANSLATIONS

And all my sons, by Phœbus' bounty, shared  
 A vigorous youth, by sickness unimpaired.  
 O Niobe ! far less prolific ! see  
 Thy boast against Latona shamed by me !

## WHAT WEALTH CANNOT BUY.

FROM MENANDER.\*

FOND youth ! who dream'st that hoarded gold  
 Is needful, not alone to pay  
 For all thy various items sold,  
 To serve the wants of every day ;

Bread, vinegar, and oil, and meat,  
 For savoury viands seasoned high ;  
 But somewhat more important yet—  
 I tell thee what it cannot buy.

No treasure, hadst thou more amassed  
 Than fame to Tantalus assigned,  
 Would save thee from a tomb at last,  
 But thou must leave it all behind.

I give thee, therefore, counsel wise ;  
 Confide not vainly in thy store,  
 However large—much less despise  
 Others comparatively poor ;

But in thy more exalted state  
 A just and equal temper show,  
 That all who see thee rich and great  
 May deem thee worthy to be so.

## ON PALLAS BATHING,

FROM A HYMN OF CALLIMACHUS.

NOR oils of balmy scent produce,  
 Nor mirror for Minerva's use,  
 Ye nymphs who lave her ; she, arrayed  
 In genuine beauty, scorns their aid.  
 Not even when they left the skies  
 To seek on Ida's head the prize  
 From Paris' hand, did Juno deign,  
 Or Pallas in the crystal plain

---

\* A Greek poet who lived B.C. 342.

Of Simois' stream her locks to trace,  
Or in the mirror's polished face,  
Though Venus oft with anxious care  
Adjusted twice a single hair.

## ON A FLATTERING MIRROR, TO DEMOSTHENES.

It flatters and deceives thy view,  
This mirror of ill-polished ore;  
For were it just, and told thee true,  
Thou wouldst consult it never more.

## ON A SIMILAR CHARACTER.

You give your cheeks a rosy stain,  
With washes dye your hair;  
But paint and washes both are vain  
To give a youthful air.

Those wrinkles mock your daily toil,  
No labour will efface'em,  
You wear a mask of smoothest oil,  
Yet still with ease we trace'em.

An art so fruitless then forsake,  
Which though you much excel in,  
You never can contrive to make  
Old Hecuba young Helen.

## ON AN UGLY FELLOW.

BEWARE, my friend ! of crystal brook,  
Or fountain, lest that hideous hook,  
Thy nose, thou chance to see;  
Narcissus' fate would then be thine,  
And self-detested thou wouldst pine,  
As self-enamoured he.

## ON A BATTERED BEAUTY.

HAIR, wax, rouge, honey, teeth you buy,  
A multifarious store !  
A mask at once would all supply,  
Nor would it cost you more.



## ON A THIEF.

WHEN Aulus, the nocturnal thief, made prize  
 Of Hermes, swift-winged envoy of the skies,  
 Hermes, Arcadia's king, the thief divine,  
 Who when an infant stole Apollo's kine,  
 And whom, as arbiter and overseer  
 Of our gymnastic sports, we planted here;  
 "Hermes," he cried, "you meet no new disaster;  
 Ofttimes the pupil goes beyond his master."

## ON PEDIGREE, FROM EPICHRMUS.\*

My mother! if thou love me, name no more  
 My noble birth! Sounding at every breath  
 My noble birth, thou kill'st me. Thither fly,  
 As to their only refuge, all from whom  
 Nature withholds all good besides; they boast  
 Their noble birth, conduct us to the tombs  
 Of their forefathers, and, from age to age  
 Ascending, trumpet their illustrious race:  
 But whom hast thou beheld, or canst thou name  
 Derived from no forefathers? Such a man  
 Lives not; for how could such be born at all?  
 And if it chance that, native of a land  
 Far distant, or in infancy deprived  
 Of all his kindred, one, who cannot trace  
 His origin, exist, why deem him sprung  
 From baser ancestry than theirs who can?  
 My mother! he whom nature at his birth  
 Endowed with virtuous qualities, although  
 An Æthiop and a slave, is nobly born.

## ON ENVY.

PITY, says the Theban bard,†  
 From my wishes I discard;  
 Envy, let me rather be,  
 Rather far, a theme for thee!  
 Pity to distress is shown,  
 Envy to the great alone—  
 So the Theban—But to shine  
 Less conspicuous be mine!

---

\* The first Greek comic writer; he lived B.C. 480.

† Pindar.

I prefer the golden mean,  
 Pomp and penury between;  
 For alarm and peril wait  
 Ever on the loftiest state,  
 And the lowest to the end  
 Obloquy and scorn attend.

## ON IMMODERATE GRIEF, BY PHILEMON.\*

Ort we enhance our ills by discontent,  
 And give them bulk beyond what nature meant.  
 A parent, brother, friend deceased, to cry—  
 "He's dead indeed, but he was born to die"—  
 Such temperate grief is suited to the size  
 And burthen of the loss; is just and wise.  
 But to exclaim, "Ah! wherefore was I born,  
 Thus to be left for ever thus forlorn?"  
 Who thus laments his loss invites distress,  
 And magnifies a woe that might be less,  
 Through dull despondence to his lot resigned,  
 And leaving reason's remedy behind.

## ON THE TEACHING OF CUPID, BY MOSCHUS.†

I SLEPT when Venus entered: to my bed  
 A Cupid in her beauteous hand she led,  
 A bashful seeming boy, and thus she said:  
 "Shepherd, receive my little one! I bring  
 An untaught love, whom thou must teach to sing."  
 She said, and left him. I, suspecting nought,  
 Many a sweet strain my subtle pupil taught,  
 How reed to reed Pan first with osier bound,  
 How Pallas formed the pipe of softest sound,  
 How Hermes gave the lute, and how the quire  
 Of Phœbus owe to Phœbus' self the lyre.  
 Such were my themes; my themes nought heeded he,  
 But ditties sang of amorous sort to me,  
 The pangs that mortals and immortals prove  
 From Venus' influence, and the darts of love.  
 Thus was the teacher by the pupil taught;  
 His lessons I retained, and mine forgot.

---

\* An Athenian comic poet who lived B.C. 330.

† A pastoral poet of Sicily.

For none my heart more warmly glows.  
 Oh! what embraces we bestow'd,  
 And with what joy our breasts o'erflow'd!  
 Sure while my sense is sound and clear,  
 Long as I live, I shall prefer  
 A gay, good-natured, easy friend,  
 To every blessing Heaven can send.  
 At a small village, the next night,  
 Near the Voltumnus we alight;  
 Where, as employ'd on state affairs,  
 We were supplied by the purveyors  
 Frankly at once, and without hire,  
 With food for man and horse, and fire.  
 Capua next day betimes we reach,  
 Where Virgil and myself, who each  
 Labour'd with different maladies,  
 His such a stomach,—mine such eyes,—  
 As would not bear strong exercise,  
 In drowsy mood to sleep resort;  
 Mæcenas to the tennis-court.

Next at Cocceius's farm we're treated,  
 Above the Caudian tavern seated;  
 His kind and hospitable board  
 With choice of wholesome food was stored.

Now, O ye Nine, inspire my lays!  
 To nobler themes my fancy raise!  
 Two combatants, who scorn to yield  
 The noisy, tongue-disputed field,  
 Sarmentus and Cicirrus, claim  
 A poet's tribute to their fame;  
 Cicirrus of true Oscian breed,  
 Sarmentus, who was never freed,  
 But ran away. We won't defame him;  
 His lady lives, and still may claim him.  
 Thus dignified, in harder fray  
 These champions their keen wit display,  
 And first Sarmentus led the way.  
 "Thy locks," quoth he, "so rough and coarse,  
 Look like the mane of some wild horse."  
 We laugh: Cicirrus undismay'd—  
 "Have at you!"—cries, and shakes his head.  
 "'Tis well," Sarmentus says, "you've lost  
 That horn your forehead once could boast;  
 Since maim'd and mangled as you are,  
 You seem to butt." A hideous scar  
 Improved ('tis true) with double grace  
 The native horrors of his face.  
 Well. After much jocosely said

Of his grim front, so fiery red,  
(For carbuncles had blotch'd it o'er,  
As usual on Campania's shore,  
"Give us," he cried, "since you're so big,  
A sample of the Cyclops jig!  
Your shanks, methinks, no buskins ask,  
Nor does your phiz require a mask."  
To this Cicirrus: "In return  
Of you, sir, now I fain would learn,  
When 'twas, no longer deem'd a slave,  
Your chains you to the Lares gave.  
For though a scrivener's right you claim,  
Your lady's title is the same.  
But what could make you run away,  
Since, pigmy as you are, each day  
A single pound of bread would quite  
O'erpower your puny appetite?"  
Thus joked the champions, while we laugh'd,  
And many a cheerful bumper quaff'd.  
To Beneventum next we steer;  
Where our good host, by over care  
In roasting thrushes lean as mice,  
Had almost fallen a sacrifice.  
The kitchen soon was all on fire,  
And to the roof the flames aspire.  
There might you see each man and master  
Striving, amidst this sad disaster,  
To save the supper. Then they came  
With speed enough to quench the flame.  
From hence we first at distance see  
The Apulian hills, well known to me,  
Parch'd by the sultry western blast;  
And which we never should have pass'd,  
Had not Trivicus by the way  
Received us at the close of day.  
But each was forced at entering here  
To pay the tribute of a tear,  
For more of smoke than fire was seen;  
The hearth was piled with logs so green.  
From hence in chaises we were carried  
Miles twenty-four, and gladly tarried  
At a small town, whose name my verse  
(So barbarous is it) can't rehearse.  
Know it you may by many a sign,  
Water is dearer far than wine.  
There bread is deem'd such dainty fare,  
That every prudent traveller  
His wallet loads with many a crust;

For at Canusium, you might just  
 As well attempt to gnaw a stone  
 As think to get a morsel down.  
 That too with scanty streams is fed;  
 Its founder was brave Diomed.  
 Good Varius (ah, that friends must part!)  
 Here left us all with aching heart.  
 At Rubi we arrived that day,  
 Well jaded by the length of way,  
 And sure poor mortals ne'er were wetter.  
 Next day no weather could be better;  
 No roads so bad; we scarce could crawl  
 Along to fishy Barium's wall.  
 The Egnatians next, who by the rules  
 Of common sense are knaves or fools,  
 Made all our sides with laughter heave,  
 Since we with them must needs believe,  
 That incense in their temples burns,  
 And without fire to ashes turns.  
 To circumcision's bigots tell  
 Such tales! for me, I know full well,  
 That in high heaven, unmoved by care,  
 The gods eternal quiet share:  
 Nor can I deem their spleen the cause  
 Why fickle Nature breaks her laws.  
 Brundisium last we reach; and there  
 Stop short the muse and traveller.

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## THE NINTH SATIRE OF THE FIRST BOOK OF HORACE.

### THE DESCRIPTION OF AN IMPERTINENT.

ADAPTED TO THE PRESENT TIMES.

1759.

SAUNTERING along the street one day,  
 On trifles musing by the way,  
 Up steps a free familiar wight;  
 (I scarcely knew the man by sight.)  
 "Carlos," he cried, "your hand, my dear;  
 Gad, I rejoice to meet you here!  
 Pray Heaven I see you well!" "So, so;  
 Even well enough, as times now go.  
 The same good wishes, sir, to you."

Finding he still pursued me close,  
 "Sir, you have business, I suppose?"  
 "My business, sir, is quickly done,  
 'Tis but to make my merit known.  
 Sir, I have read"—"O learned sir,  
 You and your learning I revere."  
 Then, sweating with anxiety,  
 And sadly longing to get free,  
 Gods, how I scamper'd, scuffled for't,  
 Ran, halted, ran again, stopp'd short,  
 Beckon'd my boy, and pull'd him near,  
 And whisper'd nothing in his ear.  
 Teased with his loose unjoined chat,  
 "What street is this? What house is that?"  
 O Harlow, how I envied thee  
 Thy unabash'd effrontery,  
 Who dar'st a foe with freedom blame,  
 And call a coxcomb by his name!  
 When I return'd him answer none,  
 Obliging the fool ran on,  
 "I see you're dismally distress'd,  
 Would give the world to be released,  
 But, by your leave, sir, I shall still  
 Stick to your skirts, do what you will.  
 Pray which way does your journey tend?"  
 "Oh 'tis a tedious way, my friend,  
 Across the Thames, the Lord knows where:  
 I would not trouble you so far."  
 "Well, I'm at leisure to attend you."  
 "Are you?" thought I, "the De'il befriend you!"  
 No ass with double panniers rack'd,  
 Oppress'd, o'erladen, broken-back'd,  
 E'er look'd a thousandth part so dull  
 As I, nor half so like a fool.  
 "Sir, I know little of myself,"  
 Proceeds the pert conceited elf,  
 "If Gray or Mason you will deem  
 Than me more worthy your esteem.  
 Poems I write by folios,  
 As fast as other men write prose.  
 Then I can sing so loud, so clear,  
 That Beard\* cannot with me compare.  
 In dancing, too, I all surpass,  
 Not Cooke can move with such a grace."

---

\* John Beard. He married a daughter of Rich, and succeeded him in the management of Covent Garden in 1761.

Here I made shift, with much ado,  
To interpose a word or two.

"Have you no parents, sir, no friends,  
Whose welfare on your own depends?"

"Parents, relations, say you? No.  
They're all disposed of long ago."

"Happy to be no more perplex'd!  
My fate too threatens, I go next.

Dispatch me, sir, 'tis now too late,  
Alas! to struggle with my fate!

Well, I'm convinced my time is come.  
When young, a gipsy told my doom;

The beldame shook her palsied head,  
As she perused my palm, and said,

'Of poison, pestilence, or war,  
Gout, stone, defluxion, or catarrh,

You have no reason to beware.  
Beware the coxcomb's idle prate;

Chiefly, my son, beware of that;  
Be sure, when you behold him, fly

Out of all earshot, or you die!"

To Rufus' Hall we now draw near  
Where he was summon'd to appear,

Refute the charge the plaintiff brought,  
Or suffer judgment by default.

"For Heaven's sake, if you love me, wait  
One moment! I'll be with you straight."

Glad of a plausible pretence—

"Sir, I must beg you to dispense  
With my attendance in the court.

My legs will surely suffer for't."

"Nay, prithee, Carlos, stop a while!"

"Faith, sir, in law I have no skill.

Besides, I have no time to spare,

I must be going, you know where."

"Well, I protest, I'm doubtful now,

Whether to leave my suit or you!"

"Me, without scruple!" I reply,

"Me, by all means, sir!"—"No, not I.

*Allons, Monsieur!*" 'Twere vain (you know)

To strive with a victorious foe.

So I reluctantly obey,

And follow, where he leads the way.

"You and Newcastle are so close;  
Still hand and glove, sir, I suppose?"

"Newcastle (let me tell you, sir),

Has not his equal anywhere."

"Well. There indeed your fortune's made!

Faith, sir, you understand your trade.  
 Would you but give me your good word !  
 Just introduce me to my lord.  
 I should serve charmingly by way  
 Of second fiddle, as they say :  
 What think you, sir ? 'twere a good jest.  
 'Slife, we should quickly scout the rest."  
 " Sir, you mistake the matter far,  
 We have no second fiddles there."  
 " Richer than I some folks may be :  
 More learnèd, but it hurts not me.  
 Friends though he has of different kind,  
 Each has his proper place assign'd."  
 " Strange matters these alleged by you !"  
 " Strange they may be, but they are true."  
 " Well, then, I vow, 'tis mighty clever,  
 Now I long ten times more than ever  
 To be advanced extremely near  
 One of his shining character.  
 Have but the will—there wants no more,  
 'Tis plain enough you have the power.  
 His easy temper (that's the worst)  
 He knows, and is so shy at first.  
 But such a cavalier as you—  
 Lord, sir, you'll quickly bring him to !  
 Well ; if I fail in my design,  
 Sir, it shall be no fault of mine.  
 If by the saucy servile tribe  
 Denied, what think you of a bribe ?  
 Shut out to-day, not die with sorrow,  
 But try my luck again to-morrow.  
 Never attempt to visit him  
 But at the most convenient time,  
 Attend him on each levee day,  
 And there my humble duty pay.  
 Labour, like this, our want supplies ;  
 And they must stoop, who mean to rise."  
 While thus he wittingly harangued,  
 For which you'll guess I wish'd him hang'd,  
 Campley, a friend of mine, came by,  
 Who knew his humour more than I.  
 We stop, salute, and—" Why so fast,  
 Friend Carlos ? whither all this haste ?"  
 Fired at the thoughts of a reprieve,  
 I pinch him, pull him, twitch his sleeve,  
 Nod, beckon, bite my lips, wink, pout,  
 Do everything but speak plain out :  
 While he, sad dog, from the beginning.



Determined to mistake my meaning,  
 Instead of pitying my curse,  
 By jeering made it ten times worse.  
 "Campley, what secret (pray!) was that  
 You wanted to communicate!"  
 "I recollect. But 'tis no matter.  
 Carlos, we'll talk of that hereafter.  
 E'en let the secret rest. 'Twill tell  
 Another time, sir, just as well."  
 Was ever such a dismal day?  
 Unlucky cur, he steals away,  
 And leaves me, half bereft of life,  
 At mercy of the butcher's knife;  
 When sudden, shouting from afar,  
 See his antagonist appear!  
 The bailiff seized him quick as thought.  
 "Ho, Mr. Scoundrel! are you caught?  
 Sir, you are witness to the arrest."  
 "Ay, marry sir, I'll do my best."  
 The mob huzzas. Away they trudge,  
 Culpit and all, before the judge.  
 Meanwhile, I, luckily enough,  
 (Thanks to Apollo), got clear off.

## TRANSLATIONS FROM HORACE.

## LIB. I. ODE IX.

Vides, ut altâ stet nive candidum  
 Soracte; . . . . .

SEEST thou yon mountain laden with deep snow?  
 The groves beneath their fleecy burthen bow,  
 The streams, congealed, forget to flow.  
 Come, thaw the cold, and lay a cheerful pile  
 Of fuel on the hearth;  
 Broach the best cask, and make old Winter smile  
 With seasonable mirth.

This be our part—let Heaven dispose the rest;  
 If Jove command, the winds shall sleep,  
 That now wage war upon the foamy deep,  
 And gentle gales spring from the balmy west.

E'en let us shift to-morrow as we may,  
 When to-morrow's passed away,

We at least shall have to say,  
 We have lived another day;  
 Your auburn locks will soon be silvered o'er,  
 Old age is at our heels, and youth returns no more

## LIB. I. ODE XXXVIII.

*Persicos odi, puer, apparatus.*

Box, I hate their empty shows,  
 Persian garlands I detest,  
 Bring not me the late-blown rose,  
 Lingering after all the rest.  
 Plainer myrtle pleases me,  
 Thus outstretched beneath my vine;  
 Myrtle more becoming thee,  
 Waiting with thy master's wine.

## ANOTHER TRANSLATION OF THE SAME ODE.\*

Box ! I detest all Persian fopperies,  
 Fillet-bound garlands are to me disgusting;  
 Task not thyself with any search, I charge thee,  
 Where latest roses linger,  
 Bring me alone (for thou wilt find that readily)  
 Plain myrtle. Myrtle neither will disparage  
 Thee occupied to serve me, or me drinking  
 Beneath my vine's cool shelter.

## LIB. II. ODE XVI.

*Otium Divos rogat in patenti.*

EASE is the weary merchant's prayer,  
 Who ploughs by night the Ægean flood,  
 When neither moon nor stars appear,  
 Or faintly glimmer through the cloud.

For ease the Mede with quiver graced,  
 For ease the Thracian hero sighs,  
 Delightful ease all pant to taste,  
 A blessing which no treasure buys.

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\* Dr. John Johnson remarks upon this second translation, "English Sapphics have been attempted, but with little success, because in our language we have no certain rules to determine the quantity. The following version was made merely in the way of experiment how far it might be possible to imitate a Latin Sapphic in English without any attention to that circumstance." *Poems*, 1816, vol. iii. 8vo, p. 127; 12mo, p. 91.

## TRANSLATIONS

For neither gold can lull to rest,  
Nor all a Consul's guard beat off  
The tumults of a troubled breast,  
The cares that haunt a gilded roof.

Happy the man whose table shows  
A few clean ounces of old plate,  
No fear intrudes on his repose,  
No sordid wishes to be great.

Poor short lived things, what plans we lay!  
Ah, why forsake our native home!  
To distant climates speed away;  
For self sticks close where'er we roam.

Care follows hard, and soon o'ertakes  
The well rigged ship, the warlike steed,  
Her destined quarry ne'er forsakes,  
Not the wind flies with half her speed.

From anxious fears of future ill  
Guard well the cheerful, happy Now;  
Gild e'en your sorrows with a smile,  
No blessing is unmixed below.

Thy neighing steeds and lowing herds,  
Thy numerous flocks around thee graze,  
And the best purple Tyre affords  
Thy robe magnificent displays.

On me indulgent Heaven bestowed  
A rural mansion, neat and small;  
This lyre;—and as for yonder crowd,  
The happiness to hate them all.

## TRANSLATIONS FROM VIRGIL.

## ÆNEID, BOOK VIII. LINE 18.

THUS Italy was moved—nor did the chief  
Æneas in his mind less tumult feel.  
On every side his anxious thought he turns,  
Restless, unfixed, not knowing what to choose.  
And as a cistern that in brim of brass  
Confines the crystal flood, if chance the sun  
Smite on it, or the moon's resplendent orb,  
The quivering light now flashes on the walls,

Now leaps uncertain to the vaulted roof :  
 Such were the wavering motions of his mind.  
 'Twas night—and weary nature sunk to rest.  
 The birds, the bleating flocks, were heard no more.  
 At length, on the cold ground, beneath the damp  
 And dewy vault, fast by the river's brink,  
 The father of his country sought repose.  
 When lo ! among the spreading poplar boughs,  
 Forth from his pleasant stream, propitious rose  
 The god of Tiber : clear transparent gauze  
 Infolds his loins, his brows with reeds are crowned :  
 And these his gracious words to soothe his care :  
 " Heaven-born,\* who bring'st our kindred home again,  
 Rescued, and giv'st eternity to Troy,  
 Long have Laurentum and the Latian plains  
 Expected thee ; behold thy fixed abode.  
 Fear not the threats of war, the storm is passed,  
 The gods appeased. For proof that what thou hearest  
 Is no vain forgery or delusive dream,  
 Beneath the grove that borders my green bank,  
 A milk-white swine, with thirty milk-white young,  
 Shall greet thy wondering eyes. Mark well the place ;  
 For 'tis thy place of rest, there end thy toils :  
 There, twice ten years elapsed, fair Alba's walls  
 Shall rise, fair Alba, by Ascanius' hand.  
 Thus shall it be—now listen, while I teach  
 The means to accomplish these events at hand.  
 The Arcadians here, a race from Pallas† sprung,  
 Following Evander's standard and his fate,  
 High on these mountains, a well chosen spot,  
 Have built a city ; for their grandsire's sake  
 Named Pallanteum. These perpetual war  
 Wage with the Latians : joined in faithful league  
 And arms confederate, add them to your camp.  
 Myself between my winding banks will speed  
 Your well oared barks to stem the opposing tide.  
 Rise, goddess-born, arise ; and with the first  
 Declining stars seek Juno in thy prayer,  
 And vanquish all her wrath with suppliant vows.  
 When conquest crowns thee, then remember me.  
 I am the Tiber, whose cærulean stream  
 Heaven favours ; I with copious flood divide  
 These grassy banks, and cleave the fruitful meads.  
 My mansion, this—and lofty cities crown

\* Æneas was the son of Venus and Anchises.

† Pallas, King of Arcadia, was the great-grandfather of Evander, who migrated to Italy about sixty years before the Trojan war.

My fountain head."—He spoke and sought the deep,  
And plunged his form beneath the closing flood.  
Æneas at the morning dawn awoke,  
And, rising, with uplifted eye beheld  
The orient sun, then dipped his palms, and scooped  
The brimming stream,\* and thus addressed the skies :  
" Ye nymphs, Laurentian nymphs, who feed the source  
Of many a stream, and thou, with thy blest flood,  
O Tiber! hear, accept me, and afford,  
At length afford, a shelter from my woes.  
Where'er in secret cavern under ground  
Thy waters sleep, where'er they spring to light,  
Since thou hast pity for a wretch like me,  
My offerings and my vows shall wait thee still :  
Great horned Father of Hesperian floods,  
Be gracious now, and ratify thy word."  
He said, and chose two galleys from his fleet,  
Fits them with oars, and clothes the crew in arms.  
When lo ! astonishing and pleasing sight,  
The milk-white dam, with her unspotted brood,  
Lay stretched upon the bank, beneath the grove.  
To thee, the pious Prince, Juno, to thee  
Devotes them all, all on thine altar bleed.  
That livelong night old Tiber smoothed his flood,  
And so restrained it that it seemed to stand  
Motionless as a pool, or silent lake,  
That not a billow might resist their oars.  
With cheerful sound of exhortation soon  
Their voyage they begin ; the pitchy keel  
Slides through the gentle deep, the quiet stream  
Admires the unwonted burthen that it bears,  
Well polished arms, and vessels painted gay.  
Beneath the shade of various trees, between  
The umbrageous branches of the spreading groves,  
They cut their liquid way, nor day nor night  
They slack their course, unwinding as they go  
The long meanders of the peaceful tide.  
The glowing sun was in meridian height,  
When from afar they saw the humble walls,  
And the few scattered cottages, which now  
The Roman power has equalled with the clouds ;  
But such was then Evander's scant domain.  
They steer to shore, and hasten to the town.  
It chanced the Arcadian monarch on that day,  
Before the walls, beneath a shady grove,

---

\* Threw it down as a libation.

Was celebrating high, in solemn feast,  
 Alcides and his tutelary gods.  
 Pallas, his son, was there, and there the chief  
 Of all his youth; with these, a worthy tribe,  
 His poor but venerable senate, burnt  
 Sweet incense, and their altars smoked with blood.  
 Soon as they saw the towering masts approach,  
 Sliding between the trees, while the crew rest  
 Upon the silent oars, amazed they rose,  
 Not without fear, and all forsook the feast.  
 But Pallas undismayed, his javelin seized,  
 Rushed to the bank, and from a rising ground  
 Forbade them to disturb the sacred rites.  
 "Ye stranger youth! What prompts you to explore  
 This untried way? and whither do ye steer?  
 Whence, and who are ye? Bring ye peace or war?"  
 Æneas from his lofty deck holds forth  
 The peaceful olive branch, and thus replies:  
 "Trojans and enemies to the Latian state,  
 Whom they with unprovoked hostilities  
 Have driven away, thou seest. We seek Evander—  
 Say this—and say beside, the Trojan chiefs  
 Are come, and seek his friendship and his aid."  
 Pallas with wonder heard that awful name,  
 And, "Whosoe'er thou art," he cried, "come forth;  
 Bear thine own tidings to my father's ear,  
 And be a welcome guest beneath our roof."  
 He said, and pressed the stranger to his breast:  
 Then led him from the river to the grove,  
 Where courteous, thus Æneas greets the king:  
 "Best of the Grecian race, to whom I bow  
 (So wills my fortune) suppliant, and stretch forth  
 In sign of amity th' peaceful branch,  
 I feared thee not, although I knew thee well  
 A Grecian leader, born in Arcady,  
 And kinsman of the Atridæ.\* Me my virtue,  
 That means no wrong to thee, the Oracles,  
 Our kindred families allied of old,  
 And thy renown diffused through every land,  
 Have all conspired to bind in friendship to thee,  
 And send me not unwilling to thy shores.  
 Dardanus, author of the Trojan state,  
 (So say the Greeks) was fair Electra's son;  
 Electra boasted Atlas for her sire,  
 Whose shoulders high sustain the æthereal orbs.

---

\* The sons of Atreus—Agamemnon and Menelaus.

Your sire is Mercury, whom Maia bore,  
 Sweet Maia, on Cyllene's hoary top.  
 Her, if we credit aught tradition old,  
 Atlas of yore, the selfsame Atlas, claimed  
 His daughter. Thus united close in blood,  
 Thy race and ours one common sire confess.  
 With these credentials fraught, I would not send  
 Ambassadors with artful phrase to sound  
 And win thee by degrees—but came myself—  
 Me, therefore, me thou seest; my life the stake:  
 'Tis I, Æneas, who implore thine aid.  
 Should Daunia\* that now aims the blow at thee,  
 Prevail to conquer us, nought then, they think,  
 Will hinder but Hesperia must be theirs,  
 All theirs, from the upper to the nether sea.  
 Take then our friendship, and return us thine.  
 We too have courage, we have noble minds,  
 And youth well tried, and exercised in arms."  
 Thus spoke Æneas;—He with fixed regard  
 Surveyed him speaking, features, form, and mien.  
 Then briefly thus—"Thou noblest of thy name,  
 How gladly do I take thee to my heart,  
 How gladly thus confess thee for a friend!  
 In thee I trace Anchises; his thy speech,  
 Thy voice, thy countenance. For I well remember  
 Many a day since, when Priam journeyed forth  
 To Salamis, to see the land where dwelt  
 Hesione, his sister, he pushed on  
 Even to Arcadia's frozen bounds. 'Twas then  
 The bloom of youth was glowing on my cheek;  
 Much I admired the Trojan chiefs, and much  
 Their king, the son of great Laomedon,  
 But most Anchises, towering o'er them all.  
 A youthful longing seized me to accost  
 The hero, and embrace him; I drew near,  
 And gladly led him to the walls of Pheneus.  
 Departing, he distinguished me with gifts,  
 A costly quiver stored with Lycian darts,  
 A robe inwove with gold, with gold embossed,  
 Two bridles, those which Pallas uses now.  
 The friendly league thou hast solicited  
 I give thee, therefore, and to-morrow all  
 My chosen youth shall wait on your return.  
 Meanwhile, since thus in friendship ye are come,  
 Rejoice with us, and join to celebrate

---

\* Part of Apulia.

These annual rites, which may not be delayed,  
And be at once familiar at our board."

He said, and bade replace the feast removed ;  
Himself upon a grassy bank disposed  
The crew ; but for Æneas ordered forth  
A couch spread with a lion's tawny shag,  
And bade him share the honours of his throne.  
The appointed youth with glad alacrity  
Assist the labouring priest to load the board  
With roasted entrails of the slaughtered beeves,  
Well kneaded bread, and mantling bowls. Well pleased,  
Æneas and the Trojan youth regale  
On the huge length of a well pastured chine.

Hunger appeased, and tables all despatched,  
Thus spake Evânder : " Superstition here,  
In this old solemn feasting has no part.  
No, Trojan friend, from utmost danger saved,  
In gratitude this worship we renew.  
Behold that rock which nods above the vale,  
Those bulks of broken stone dispersed around,  
How desolate the shattered cave appears,  
And what a ruin spreads the encumbered plain.  
Within this pile, but far within, was once  
The den of Cacus ; dire his hateful form  
That shunned the day, half monster and half man.  
Blood newly shed streamed ever on the ground  
Smoking, and many a visage pale and wan  
Nailed at his gate, hung hideous to the sight.  
Vulcan begot the brute : vast was his size,  
And from his throat he belched his father's fires.  
But the day came that brought us what we wished,  
The assistance and the presence of a God.  
Flushed with his victory, and the spoils he won  
From triple-formed Geryon lately slain,  
The great avenger, Hercules, appeared.  
Hither he drove his stately bulls, and poured  
His herds along the vale. But the sly thief  
Cacus, that nothing might escape his hand  
Of villany or fraud, drove from the stalls  
Four of the lordliest of his bulls, and four  
The fairest of his heifers ; by the tail  
He dragged them to his den, that, there concealed,  
No footsteps might betray the dark abode.  
And now his herd, with provender sufficed,  
Alcides would be gone : they as they went  
Still bellowing loud, made the deep echoing woods  
And distant hills resound : when hark ! one ox,  
Imprisoned close within the vast recess,





Lows in return, and frustrates all his hope.  
Then fury seized Alcides, and his breast  
With indignation heaved : grasping his club  
Of knotted oak, swift to the mountain top  
He ran, he flew. Then first was Cacus seen  
To tremble, and his eyes bespoke his fears.  
Swift as an eastern blast he sought his den,  
And dread increasing, winged him as he went.  
Drawn up in iron slings above the gate,  
A rock was hung enormous. Such his haste,  
He burst the chains and dropped it at the door,  
Then grappled it with iron work within  
Of bolts and bars by Vulcan's art contrived.  
Scarce was he fast, when panting for revenge  
Came Hercules ; he gnashed his teeth with rage,  
And quick as lightning glanced his eyes around  
In quest of entrance. Fiery red and stung  
With indignation, thrice he wheeled his course  
About the mountain ; thrice, but thrice in vain,  
He strove to force the quarry at the gate,  
And thrice sat down o'erwearied in the vale.  
There stood a pointed rock, abrupt and rude,  
That high o'erlooked the rest, close at the back  
Of the fell monster's den, where birds obscene  
Of ominous note resorted, choughs and daws.  
This, as it leaned obliquely to the left,  
Threatening the stream below, he from the right  
Pushed with his utmost strength, and to and fro  
He shook the mass, loosening its lowest base ;  
Then shoved it from its seat ; down fell the pile ;  
Sky thundered at the fall ; the banks give way,  
The affrighted stream flows upward to his source.  
Behold the kennel of the brute exposed,  
The gloomy vault laid open. So, if chance  
Earth yawning to the centre should disclose  
The mansions, the pale mansions of the dead,  
Loathed by the gods, such would the gulf appear,  
And the ghosts tremble at the sight of day.  
The monster braying with unusual din  
Within his hollow lair, and sore amazed  
To see such sudden inroads of the light,  
Alcides pressed him close with what at hand  
Lay readiest, stumps of trees, and fragments huge  
Of millstone size. He, (for escape was none)  
Wondrous to tell ! forth from his gorge discharged  
A smoky cloud that darkened all the den ;  
Wreath after wreath he vomited amain,  
The smothering vapour mixed with fiery sparks.

No sight could penetrate the veil obscure.  
The hero, more provoked, endured not this,  
But with a headlong leap he rushed to where  
The thickest cloud enveloped his abode.  
There grasped he Cacus, spite of all his fires,  
Till crushed within his arms, the monster shows  
His bloodless throat, now dry with panting hard,  
And his pressed eyeballs start. Soon he tears down  
The barricade of rock, the dark abyss  
Lies open; and the imprisoned bulls, the theft  
He had with oaths denied, are brought to light;  
By the heels the miscreant carcass is dragged forth,  
His face, his eyes, all terrible, his breast  
Beset with bristles, and his sooty jaws  
Are viewed with wonder never to be cloyed.  
Hence the celebrity thou seest, and hence  
This festal day. Potitius first enjoined  
Posterity these solemn rites; he first  
With those who bear the great Pinarian name  
To Hercules devoted, in the grove  
This altar built, deemed sacred in the highest  
By us, and sacred ever to be deemed.  
Come then, my friends, and bind your youthful brows  
In praise of such deliverance, and hold forth  
The brimming cup; your deities and ours  
Are now the same, then drink, and freely too."  
So saying, he twisted round his reverend locks  
A variegated poplar wreath, and filled  
His right hand with a consecrated bowl.  
At once all pour libations on the board,  
All offer prayer. And now the radiant sphere  
Of day descending, eventide drew near,  
When first Potitius with the priests advanced,  
Begirt with skins, and torches in their hands.  
High piled with meats of savoury taste, they ranged  
The chargers, and renewed the grateful feast.  
Then came the Salii, crowned with poplar too,  
Circling the blazing altars; here the youth  
Advanced, a choir harmonious, there were heard  
The reverend seers responsive; praise they sung,  
Much praise in honour of Alcides' deeds;  
How first with infant gripe two serpents huge  
He strangled, sent from Juno; next they sung,  
How Troja and Æchalia he destroyed,  
Fair cities both, and many a toilsome task  
Beneath Eurystheus (so his stepdame willed)  
Achieved victorious. "Thou, the cloud-born pair,  
Hylæus fierce and Pholus, monstrous twins,

Thou slew'st the Minotaur, the plague of Crete,  
And the vast lion of the Nemean rock,  
Thee Hell, and Cerberus, hell's porter, feared,  
Stretched in his den upon his half gnawed bones.  
Thee no abhorred form, not even the vast  
Typhœus could appal, though clad in arms.  
Hail, true born son of Jove, among the gods  
At length enrolled, nor least illustrious thou,  
Haste thee propitious, and approve our songs :"—  
Thus hymned the chorus ; above all they sing  
The cave of Cacus, and the flames he breathed.  
The whole grove echoes, and the hills rebound.  
The rites performed, all hasten to the town.  
The king, bending with age, held as he went  
Æneas, and his Pallas by the hand,  
With much variety of pleasing talk  
Shortening the way. Æneas, with a smile,  
Looks round him, charmed with the delightful scene,  
And many a question asks, and much he learns  
Of heroes far renowned in ancient times.  
Then spake Evander. " These extensive groves  
Were once inhabited by fawns and nymphs  
Produced beneath their shades, and a rude race  
Of men, the progeny uncouth of elms  
And knotted oaks. They no refinement knew  
Of laws or manners civilized, to yoke  
The steer, with forecast provident to store  
The hoarded grain, or manage what they had,  
But browsed like beasts upon the leafy boughs,  
Or fed voracious on their hunted prey.  
An exile from Olympus, and expelled  
His native realm by thunder-bearing Jove,  
First Saturn came. He from the mountains drew  
This herd of men untractable and fierce,  
And gave them laws : and called his hiding place,  
This growth of forests, Latium. Such the peace  
His land possessed, the golden age was then,  
So famed in story ; till by slow degrees  
Far other times, and of far different hue,  
Succeeded, thirst of gold and thirst of blood.  
Then came Ausonian bands, and armed hosts  
From Sicily, and Latium often changed  
Her master and her name. At length arose  
Kings, of whom Tybris of gigantic form  
Was chief ; and we Italians since have called  
The river by his name ; thus Albula  
(So was the country called in ancient days)  
Was quite forgot. Me from my native land

An exile, through the dangerous ocean driven,  
 Resistless fortune and relentless fate,  
 Placed where thou seest me. Phœbus, and  
 The nymph Carmentis, with maternal care  
 Attendant on my wanderings, fixed me here."

[Ten lines omitted.]

He said, and showed him the Tarpeian rock,  
 And the rude spot where now the capitol  
 Stands all magnificent and bright with gold,  
 Then overgrown with thorns. And yet even then  
 The swains beheld that sacred scene with awe;  
 The grove, the rock, inspired religious fear.  
 "This grove," he said, "that crowns the lofty top  
 Of this fair hill, some deity, we know,  
 Inhabits, but what deity we doubt.  
 The Arcadians speak of Jupiter himself,  
 That they have often seen him, shaking here  
 His gloomy Ægis, while the thunder storms  
 Came rolling all around him. Turn thine eyes,  
 Behold that ruin; those dismantled walls,  
 Where once two towns, Janiculum —,  
 By Janus this, and that by Saturn built,  
 Saturnia." Such discourse brought them beneath  
 The roof of poor Evander; thence they saw,  
 Where now the proud and stately forum stands,  
 The grazing herds wide scattered o'er the field.  
 Soon as he entered—"Hercules," he said,  
 "Victorious Hercules, on this threshold trod,  
 These walls contained him, humble as they are.  
 Dare to despise magnificence, my friend,  
 Prove thy divine descent by worth divine,  
 Nor view with haughty scorn this mean abode."  
 So saying, he led Æneas by the hand,  
 And placed him on a cushion stuffed with leaves,  
 Spread with the skin of a Lybistian bear.

[The episode of Venus and Vulcan omitted.]

While thus in Lemnos Vulcan was employed,  
 Awakened by the gentle dawn of day,  
 And the shrill song of birds beneath the eaves  
 Of his low mansion, old Evander rose.  
 His tunic, and the sandals on his feet,  
 And his good sword well girded to his side,  
 A panther's skin dependent from his left,  
 And over his right shoulder thrown aslant,  
 Thus was he clad. Two mastiffs followed him,  
 His whole retinue and his nightly guard.

## THE SALAD, BY VIRGIL.\*

THE winter night now well nigh worn away,  
 The wakeful cock proclaimed approaching day,  
 When Simulus, poor tenant of a farm  
 Of narrowest limits, heard the shrill alarm,  
 Yawned, stretched his limbs, and anxious to provide  
 Against the pangs of hunger unsupplied,  
 By slow degrees his tattered bed forsook,  
 And poking in the dark, explored the nook  
 Where embers slept with ashes heaped around,  
 And with burnt fingers-ends the treasure found.

It chanced that from a brand beneath his nose,  
 Sure proof of latent fire, some smoke arose;  
 When trimming with a pin the incrustated tow,  
 And stooping it towards the coals below,  
 He toils, with cheeks distended, to excite  
 The lingering flame, and gains at length a light.  
 With prudent heed he spreads his hands before  
 The quivering lamp, and opes his granary door.  
 Small was his stock, but taking for the day  
 A measured stint of twice eight pounds away,  
 With these his mill he seeks. A shelf at hand,  
 Fixed in the wall, affords his lamp a stand:  
 Then baring both his arms—a sleeveless coat  
 He girds, the rough exuviae of a goat:  
 And with a rubber, for that use designed,  
 Cleansing his mill within—begins to grind;  
 Each hand has its employ; labouring amain,  
 This turns the winch, while that supplies the grain.  
 The stone revolving rapidly, now glows,  
 And the bruised corn a mealy current flows;  
 While he to make his heavy labour light  
 Takes off his left hand to relieve his right;  
 And chants with rudest accent, to beguile  
 His ceaseless toil, as rude a strain the while.  
 And now, "Dame Cybale, come forth!" he cries;  
 But Cybale, still slumbering, nought replies.

From Afric she, the swain's sole serving-maid,  
 Whose face and form alike her birth betrayed.  
 With woolly locks, lips tumid, sable skin,  
 Wide bosom, udders flaccid, belly thin,

---

\* "This singular poem, which the learned and judicious Heyne seems inclined to think a translation of Virgil's from the Greek of Parthenius, was translated into English by Cowper, during his depressive malady, June 1799."—Hayley, 1803.

Legs slender, broad and most misshapen feet,  
Chapped into chinks, and parched with solar heat.  
Such, summoned oft, she came; at his command  
Fresh fuel heaped, the sleeping embers fanned,  
And made in haste her simmering skillet steam,  
Replenished newly from the neighbouring stream.

The labours of the mill performed, a sieve  
The mingled flour and bran must next receive,  
Which shaken oft shoots Ceres through refined,  
And better dressed, her husks all left behind.  
This done at once, his future plain repast  
Unleavened on a shaven board he cast,  
With tepid lymph first largely soaked it all,  
Then gathered it with both hands to a ball,  
And spreading it again with both hands wide,  
With sprinkled salt the stiffened mass supplied;  
At length the stubborn substance, duly wrought,  
Takes from his palms impressed the shape it ought,  
Becomes an orb—and quartered into shares,  
The faithful mark of just division bears.  
Last, on his hearth it finds convenient space,  
For Cybale before had swept the place,  
And there, with tiles and embers overspread,  
She leaves it—reeking in its sultry bed.

Nor Simulus, while Vulcan sits alone  
His part performed, proves heedless of his own,  
But sedulous, not merely to subdue  
His hunger, but to please his palate too,  
Prepares more savoury food. His chimney side  
Could boast no gammon, salted well and dried,  
And hooked behind him; but sufficient store  
Of bundled anise, and a cheese it bore;  
A broad round cheese, which, through its centre strung  
With a tough broom twig, in the corner hung;  
The prudent hero, therefore, with address  
And quick dispatch, now seeks another mess.

Close to his cottage lay a garden ground,  
With reeds and osiers sparsely girt around:  
Small was the spot, but liberal to produce;  
Nor wanted aught that serves a peasant's use,  
And sometimes even the rich would borrow thence,  
Although its tillage was his sole expense.  
For oft as from his toils abroad he ceased,  
Home-bound by weather, or some stated feast,  
His debt of culture here he duly paid,  
And only left the plough to wield the spade.  
He knew to give each plant the soil it needs,  
To drill the ground and cover close the seeds;

And could with ease compel the wanton rill  
To turn and wind obedient to his will.  
There flourished star-wort, and the branching beet,  
The sorrel acid, and the mallow sweet,  
The skirret, and the leek's aspiring kind,  
The noxious poppy—quencher of the mind!  
Salubrious sequel of a sumptuous board,  
The lettuce, and the long huge-bellied gourd;  
But these (for none his appetite controlled  
With stricter sway) the thrifty rustic sold:  
With broom twigs neatly bound, each kind apart,  
He bore them ever to the public mart:  
Whence laden still, but with a lighter load,  
Of cash well earned, he took his homeward road,  
Expending seldom, ere he quitted Rome,  
His gains in flesh-meat for a feast at home.  
There, at no cost, on onions, rank and red,  
Or the curled endive's bitter leaf he fed:  
On scallions sliced, or with a sensual gust,  
On rockets—foul provocatives of lust!  
Nor even shunned with smarting gums to press  
Nasturtium—pungent face-distorting mess!  
Some such regale now also in his thought,  
With hasty steps his garden ground he sought;  
There delving with his hands, he first displaced  
Four plants of garlick, large, and rooted fast;  
The tender tops of parsley next he culls,  
Then the old rue bush shudders as he pulls;  
And coriander last to these succeeds,  
That hangs on slightest threads her trembling seeds.  
Placed near his sprightly fire, he now demands  
The mortar at his sable servant's hands;  
When stripping all his garlick first, he tore  
The exterior coats, and cast them on the floor,  
Then cast away with like contempt the skin,  
Flimsier concealment of the cloves within.  
These searched, and perfect found, he one by one  
Rinsed, and disposed within the hollow stone.  
Salt added, and a lump of salted cheese,  
With his injected herbs he covered these,  
And tucking with his left his tunic tight,  
And seizing fast the pestle with his right,  
The garlick bruising first he soon expressed,  
And mixed the various juices of the rest.  
He grinds, and by degrees his herbs below,  
Lost in each other, their own powers forego,  
And with the cheese in compound, to the sight  
Nor wholly green appear, nor wholly white.

His nostrils oft the forceful fume resent,  
 He cursed full oft his dinner for its scent ;  
 Or with wry faces, wiping as he spoke  
 The trickling tears, cried " Vengeance on the smoke !"  
 The work proceeds : not roughly turns he now  
 The pestle, but in circles smooth and slow ;  
 With cautious hand, that grudges what it spills,  
 Some drops of olive oil he next instils.  
 Then vinegar with caution scarcely less,  
 And gathering to a ball the medley mess,  
 Last, with two fingers frugally applied,  
 Sweeps the small remnant from the mortar's side.  
 And thus complete in figure and in kind,  
 Obtains at length the salad he designed.  
 And now black Cybale before him stands,  
 The cake drawn newly glowing in her hands,  
 He glad receives it, chasing far away  
 All fears of famine for the passing day ;  
 His legs enclosed in buskins, and his head  
 In its tough casque of leather, forth he led  
 And yoked his steers, a dull obedient pair,  
 Then drove afield, and plunged the pointed share.

## TRANSLATION FROM OVID.

## TRIST. LIB. V. ELEG. XII.

Scribis, ut oblectem.

You bid me write to amuse the tedious hours,  
 And save from withering my poetic powers ;  
 Hard is the task, my friend, for verse should flow  
 From the free mind, not fettered down by woe ;  
 Restless amidst unceasing tempests tossed,  
 Whoe'er has cause for sorrow, I have most.  
 Would you bid I'riam laugh, his sons all slain,  
 Or childless Niobe from tears refrain,  
 Join the gay dance, and lead the festive train ?  
 Does grief or study most befit the mind  
 To this remote, this barbarous nook\* confined ?  
 Could you impart to my unshaken breast  
 The fortitude by Socrates possessed,

\* Tomi on the Euxine Sea. He had been banished thither, it is believed, by Augustus for his love for the Emperor's sister, Julia.



Soon would it sink beneath such woes as mine,  
 For what is human strength to wrath divine?  
 Wise as he was, and heaven pronounced him so,  
 My sufferings would have laid that wisdom low.  
 Could I forget my country, thee and all,  
 And even the offence to which I owe my fall,  
 Yet fear alone would freeze the poet's vein,  
 While hostile troops swarm o'er the dreary plain.  
 Add that the fatal rust of long disuse  
 Unfits me for the service of the Muse.  
 Thistles and weeds are all we can expect  
 From the best soil impoverished by neglect;  
 Unexercised, and to his stall confined,  
 The fleetest racer would be left behind;  
 The best built bark that cleaves the watery way,  
 Laid useless by, would moulder and decay—  
 No hope remains that time shall me restore,  
 Mean as I was, to what I was before.  
 Think how a series of desponding cares  
 Benumbs the genius, and its force impairs.  
 How oft, as now, on this devoted sheet,  
 My verse constrained to move with measured feet  
 Reluctant and laborious limps along,  
 And proves itself a wretched exile's song.  
 What is it tunes the most melodious lays?  
 'Tis emulation and the thirst of praise;  
 A noble thirst, and not unknown to me,  
 While smoothly wafted on a calmer sea.  
 No, rather let the world forget my name.  
 Is it because the world approved my strain,  
 You prompt me to the same pursuit again?  
 But can a wretch like Ovid pant for fame?  
 No, let the Nine the ungrateful truth excuse,  
 I charge my hopeless ruin on the Muse,  
 And, like Perillus,\* meet my just desert,  
 The victim of my own pernicious art.  
 Fool that I was to be so warned in vain,  
 And shipwrecked once, to tempt the deep again.  
 Ill fares the bard in this unlettered land,  
 None to consult, and none to understand.  
 The purest verse has no admirers here,  
 Their own rude language only suits their ear.  
 Rude as it is, at length familiar grown,  
 I learn it, and almost unlearn my own.

---

\* The inventor of the Brazen Bull, in which Phalaris, tyrant of Agriguntum, burnt his victims alive. Perillus was burnt in it the first himself.



Yet to say truth, even here the Muse disdains  
 Confinement, and attempts her former strains,  
 But finds the strong desire is not the power,  
 And what her taste condemns, the flames devour  
 A part, perhaps, like this, escapes the doom,  
 And though unworthy, finds a friend at Rome;  
 But oh the cruel art, that could undo  
 Its votary thus! would that could perish too!

---

COMPLIMENTARY PIECES ADDRESSED  
 TO MILTON.

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN AND ITALIAN,

[MILTON'S PREFACE.]

TRANSLATED.

Well as the Author knows that the following testimonies are not so much about as above him, and that men of great ingenuity, as well as our friends, are apt, through abundant zeal, so to praise us as rather to draw their own likeness than ours, he was yet unwilling that the world should remain always ignorant of compositions that do him so much honour; and especially because he has other friends, who have, with much importunity, solicited their publication. Aware that excessive commendation awakens envy, he would with both hands thrust it from him, preferring just so much of that dangerous tribute as may of right belong to him; but at the same time he cannot deny that he sets the highest value on the suffrages of judicious and distinguished persons.

THE NEAPOLITAN, JOHN BAPTIST MANSO,

MARQUIS OF VILLA, TO THE ENGLISHMAN,

JOHN MILTON.

WHAT features, form, mien, manners, with a mind  
 Oh how intelligent, and how refined!  
 Were but thy piety from fault as free,  
 Thou wouldst no Angle\* but an Angel be.

---

\* The reader will perceive that the Angle is essential, because the epigram turns upon it. The Angles were the Anglo-Saxons' own ancestors.

AN EPIGRAM ADDRESSED TO THE ENGLISHMAN,  
JOHN MILTON,

A POET WORTHY OF THREE LAURELS, THE GRECIAN, LATIN, AND ETRUSCAN.

BY JOHN SALSILLO, OF ROME.

MELES\* and Mincio† both your urns depress!  
Sebetus,‡ boast henceforth thy Tasso less!  
But let the Thames o'erpeer all floods, since he,  
For Milton famed, shall, single, match the three.

TO JOHN MILTON.

BY SELVAGGI.

GREECE sound thy Homer's, Rome thy Virgil's name,  
But England's Milton equals both in fame.

AN ODE

ADDRESSED TO THE ILLUSTRIOUS ENGLISHMAN,

MR. JOHN MILTON,

BY SIGNOR ANTONIO FRANCINI,

GENTLEMAN, OF FLORENCE.

EXALT me, Clio, to the skies,  
That I may form a starry crown,  
Beyond what Helicon supplies  
In laureate garlands of renown;  
To nobler worth be brighter glory given,  
And to a heavenly mind a recompense from heaven.

Time's wasteful hunger cannot prey  
On everlasting high desert,  
Nor can Oblivion steal away  
Its record graven on the heart;  
Lodge but an arrow, Virtue, on the bow  
That binds my lyre, and death shall be a vanquished foe.

\* Meles is a river of Ionia, in the neighbourhood of Smyrna, whence Homer is called Melesigenes.—[C.]

† The Mincio watered the city of Mantua, famous as the birth-place of Virgil.—[C.]

‡ Sebetus is now the *Fiume della Maddalena*; it runs through Naples.—[C.]

In Ocean's blazing flood enshrined,  
Whose vassal tide around her swells,  
Albion, from other realms disjoined,  
The prowess of the world excels ;  
She teems with heroes that to glory rise,  
With more than human force in our astonished eyes.

To Virtue, driven from other lands,  
Their bosoms yield a safe retreat ;  
Her law alone their deed commands,  
Her smiles they feel divinely sweet ;  
Confirm my record, Milton, generous youth !  
And by true virtue prove thy virtue's praise a truth.

Zeuxis, all energy and flame,  
Set ardent forth in his career,  
Urged to his task by Helen's fame,  
Resounding ever in his ear ;  
To make his image to her beauty true,  
From the collected fair each sovereign charm he drew.\*

The bee, with subtlest skill endued,  
Thus toils to earn her precious juice,  
From all the flowery myriads strewed  
O'er meadow and parterre profuse ;  
Confederate voices one sweet air compound,  
And various chords consent in one harmonious sound.

An artist of celestial aim,  
Thy genius, caught by moral grace,  
With ardent emulation's flame  
The steps of Virtue toiled to trace,  
Observed in every land who brightest shone,  
And blending all their best, make perfect good thy own.

From all in Florence born, or taught  
Our country's sweetest accent there,  
Whose works, with learned labour wrought,  
Immortal honours justly share,  
Thou hast such treasure drawn of purest ore,  
That not even Tuscan bards can boast a richer store.

Babel confused, and with her towers  
Unfinished spreading wide the plain,

---

\* The portrait of Helen was painted at the request of the people of Crotona, who sent to the artist all their loveliest girls for models. Zeuxis selected five, and united their separate beauties in his picture.

Has served but to evince thy powers,  
 With all her tongues confused in vain,  
 Since not alone thy England's purest phrase,  
 But every polished realm thy various speech displays.

The secret things of heaven and earth,  
 By Nature, too reserved, concealed  
 From other minds of highest worth,  
 To thee are copiously revealed;  
 Thou knowest them clearly, and thy views attain  
 The utmost bounds prescribed to moral truth's domain.

Let Time no more his wing display,  
 And boast his ruinous career,  
 For Virtue, rescued from his sway,  
 His injuries may cease to fear;  
 Since all events that claim remembrance find  
 A chronicle exact in thy capacious mind.

Give me, that I may praise thy song,  
 Thy lyre, by which alone I can,  
 Which, placing thee the stars among,  
 Already proves thee more than man;  
 And Thames shall seem Permessus,\* while his stream  
 Graced with a swan like thee, shall be my favourite theme.

I who beside the Arno, strain  
 To match thy merit with my lays,  
 Learn, after many an effort vain,  
 To admire thee rather than to praise;  
 And that by mute astonishment alone,  
 Not by the faltering tongue, thy worth may best be shown.

#### TO MR. JOHN MILTON OF LONDON.

A YOUTH eminent from his country and his virtues, who in his travels has made himself acquainted with many nations, and in his studies, with all, that, like another Ulysses, he might learn all that all could teach him;

Skilful in many tongues, on whose lips languages now mute so live again, that the idioms of all are insufficient to his praise; happy acquisition by which he understands the universal admiration and applause his talents have excited;

Whose endowments of mind and person move us to wonder, but at the same time fix us immoveable; whose works prompt us to extol him, but by their beauty strike us mute;

\* A river in Bœotia which took its rise in Helicon. (Virg. Ecl. vi. 64.)

In whose memory the whole world is treasured; in whose intellect, wisdom; in whose heart, the ardent desire of glory; and in whose mouth, eloquence. Who with Astronomy for his conductor, hears the music of the spheres; with Philosophy for his teacher, deciphers the handwriting of God, in those wonders of creation which proclaim His greatness; and with the most unwearied literary industry for his associate,

Examines, restores, penetrates with ease the obscurities of antiquity, the desolations of ages, and the labyrinths of learning;

“But wherefore toll to reach these arduous heights?”

To him in short whose virtues the mouths of Fame are too few to celebrate, and whom astonishment forbids us to praise as he deserves, this tribute due to his merits, and the offering of reverence and affection, is paid by

CARLO DATI,

A patrician Florentine.

This great man's servant, and this good man's friend.

## TRANSLATIONS OF THE LATIN AND ITALIAN POEMS OF MILTON.

### ELEGY I.

#### TO CHARLES DIODATI.\*

At length, my friend, the far sent letters come,  
Charged with thy kindness, to their destined home;  
They come, at length, from Deva's† western side,  
Where prone she seeks the salt Vergivian‡ tide.  
Trust me, my joy is great that thou shouldst be,  
Though born of foreign race, yet born for me,  
And that my sprightly friend, now free to roam,  
Must seek again so soon his wonted home.  
I well content, where Thames with influent tide  
My native city laves, meantime reside,  
Nor zeal nor duty now my steps impel  
To reedy Cam, and my forbidden cell.§

\* Diodati was a schoolfellow of Milton at St. Paul's, of Italian extraction, nephew Giovanni Diodati, the translator of the Bible into Italian, and son of Theodore Diodati, a physician of eminence, who married and settled in England. Charles Diodati's early death formed the subject of the *Epitaphium Damonis*.

† The Dee of Chester.

‡ The Vergivian Sea, so called by Ptolemy, was the Irish sea between England and Ireland.

§ Milton had been rusticated on account of a quarrel with his tutor.

Nor aught of pleasure in those fields have I,  
 That to the musing bard all shade deny.  
 'Tis time that I a pedant's threats\* disdain,  
 And fly from wrongs my soul will ne'er sustain.  
 If peaceful days, in lettered leisure spent  
 Beneath my father's roof, be banishment,  
 Then call me banished, I will ne'er refuse  
 A name expressive of the lot I choose.  
 I would that, exiled to the Pontic shore,  
 Rome's hapless bard† had suffered nothing more;  
 He then had equalled even Homer's lays,  
 And Virgil! thou hadst won but second praise:  
 For here I woo the Muse with no control,  
 And here my books—my life—absorb me whole.  
 Here too I visit, or to smile or weep,  
 The winding theatre's majestic sweep;  
 The grave or gay colloquial scene recruits  
 My spirits, spent in learning's long pursuits;  
 Whether some senior shrewd, or spendthrift heir,  
 Suitor, or soldier, now unarmed, be there,  
 Or some coifed brooder o'er a ten years' cause,  
 Thunder the Norman gibberish of the laws.  
 The lacquey, there, oft dupes the wary sire,  
 And, artful, speeds the enamoured son's desire.  
 There, virgins oft, unconscious what they prove,  
 What love is know not, yet, unknowing love.  
 Or, if impassioned tragedy wield high  
 The bloody sceptre, give her locks to fly,  
 Wild as the winds, and roll her haggard eye.  
 I gaze and grieve, still cherishing my grief;  
 At times e'en bitter tears yield sweet relief,  
 As, when from bliss untasted torn away,  
 Some youth dies, hapless, on his bridal day;  
 Or when the ghost, sent back from shades below,  
 Fills the assassin's heart with vengeful woe;  
 When Troy, or Argos, the dire scene affords,  
 Or Creon's hall‡ laments its guilty lords.  
 Nor always city-pent, or pent at home,  
 I dwell; but, when spring calls me forth to roam,  
 Expatiate in our proud suburban shades  
 Of branching elm that never sun pervades.  
 Here many a virgin troop I may descry,  
 Like stars of mildest influence, gliding by.  
 O forms divine! O looks that might inspire  
 Even Jove himself, grown old, with young desire!

\* His Tutor, Chappell.

† Ovid.

‡ In Thebes—the guilty lords are Eteocles and Polynices the brothers—sons of Oedipus and Jocasta, who fell in their unnatural strife.

Oft have I gazed on gem-surpassing eyes,  
 Out-sparkling every star that gilds the skies,  
 Necks whiter than the ivory arm bestowed  
 By Jove on Pelops, or the milky road!  
 Bright locks, Love's golden snare! these falling low,  
 Those playing wanton o'er the graceful brow!  
 Cheeks, too, more winning sweet than after shower  
 Adonis turned to Flora's favourite flower!  
 Yield, heroines, yield, and ye who shared the embrace  
 Of Jupiter in ancient times, give place!  
 Give place, ye turbaned fair of Persia's coast!  
 And ye, not less renowned, Assyria's boast!  
 Submit, ye nymphs of Greece! ye, once the bloom  
 Of Ilion! and all ye of haughty Rome,  
 Who swept, of old, her theatres with trains  
 Redundant, and still live in classic strains!  
 To British damsels beauty's palm is due;  
 Aliens! to follow them is fame for you.  
 O city founded by Dardanian hands,  
 Whose towering front the circling realm commands,  
 Too blest abode! no loveliness we see  
 In all the earth, but it abounds in thee.  
 The virgin multitude that daily meets,  
 Radiant with gold and beauty, in thy streets,  
 Outnumbers all her train of starry fires  
 With which Diana gilds thy lofty spires.  
 Fame says that, wafted hither by her doves,  
 With all her host of quiver-bearing loves,  
 Venus, preferring Paphian scenes no more,  
 Has fixed her empire on thy nobler shore.  
 But, lest the sightless boy enforce my stay,  
 I leave these happy walls while yet I may.  
 Immortal moly\* shall secure my heart  
 From all the sorcery of Circæan art,  
 And I will e'en repass Cam's reedy pools  
 To face once more the warfare of the schools,  
 Meantime accept this trifle! rhymes though few,  
 Yet such as prove thy friend's remembrance true!

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\* Cowper thus translates the account given in the *Odyssey* of Moly, by the magical power of which Ulysses was enabled to escape from Circe:—

“So spake the Argicide, and from the earth  
 That plant extracting, placed it in my hand,  
 Then taught me all its powers. Black was the root,  
 Milk-white the blossom; moly is its name  
 In heaven; not easily by mortal man  
 Dug forth, but all is easy to the gods.”

*Odyssey*, x. 370-375.



## ELEGY II.

ON THE DEATH OF THE UNIVERSITY BEDEL  
AT CAMBRIDGE.\*

THEE, whose refulgent staff and summons clear,  
 Minerva's flock long time was wont to obey,  
 Although thyself a herald, famous here,  
 The last of heralds, Death, has snatched away.  
 He calls on all alike, nor even deigns  
 To spare the office that himself sustains.

Thy locks were whiter than the plumes displayed  
 By Leda's paramour† in ancient time;  
 But thou wast worthy ne'er to have decayed,  
 Or, Æson-like,‡ to know a second prime.  
 Worthy, for whom some goddess should have won  
 New life, oft kneeling to Apollo's son.§

Commissioned to convene with hasty call  
 The gown'd tribes, how graceful wouldst thou stand!  
 So stood Cyllenius|| erst in Priam's hall,  
 Wing-footed messenger of Jove's command!  
 And so Eurybates,¶ when he addressed  
 To Peleus' son, Atreides' proud behest.

Dread queen of sepulchres! whose rigorous laws  
 And watchful eyes run through the realms below,  
 Oh, oft too adverse to Minerva's cause!  
 Too often to the muse not less a foe!  
 Choose meaner marks, and with more equal aim  
 Pierce useless drones, earth's burthen, and its shame!

Flow, therefore, tears for him from every eye,  
 All ye disciples of the muses, weep!  
 Assembling all in robes of sable dye,  
 Around his bier lament his endless sleep!  
 And let complaining Elegy rehearse  
 In every school her sweetest, saddest verse.

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\* Richard Redding, of St. John's College, M.A. He died in October, 1626.

† The Swan—Jupiter had turned himself into that bird.

‡ Æson was restored to youth by his daughter Medea.

§ Esculapius, the god of medicine. || Mercury.

¶ One of the heralds sent to Achilles by Agamemnon.

## ELEGY III.

## ON THE DEATH OF THE BISHOP OF WINCHESTER.\*

Sept. 21, 1626.

SILENT I sat, dejected, and alone,  
 Making in thought the public woes my own,  
 When first arose the image in my breast  
 Of England's suffering by that scourge the pest!†  
 How Death, his funeral torch and scythe in hand,  
 Entering the lordliest mansions of the land,  
 Has laid the gem-illumined palace low,  
 And levelled tribes of nobles at a blow.  
 I next deplored the famed fraternal‡ pair,  
 Too soon to ashes turned and empty air!  
 The heroes next, whom snatched into the skies  
 All Belgia saw, and followed with her sighs;  
 But thee far most I mourned, regretted most,  
 Winton's chief shepherd, and her worthiest boast!  
 Poured out in tears I thus complaining said:—  
 "Death, next in power to him who rules the dead!  
 Is't not enough that all the woodlands yield  
 To thy fell force, and every verdant field;  
 That lilies, at one noisome blast of thine,  
 And e'en the Cyprian queen's own roses pine;  
 That oaks themselves, although the running rill  
 Suckle their roots, must wither at thy will;  
 That all the wingèd nations, even those  
 Whose heaven-directed flight the future shows,  
 And all the beasts that in dark forests stray,  
 And all the herds of Proteus§ are thy prey.  
 Ah envious! armed with powers so unconfined!  
 Why stain thy hands with blood of human kind?  
 Why take delight, with darts that never roam,  
 To chase a heaven-born spirit from her home?"

While thus I mourned, the star of evening stood,  
 Now newly risen above the western flood,  
 And Phœbus from his morning goal again  
 Had reached the gulfs of the Iberian main.  
 I wished repose, and, on my couch reclined,  
 Took early rest, to night and sleep resigned:

\* Lancelot Andrewes, Fuller's "peerless prelate."

† The plague which ravaged England in 1626.

‡ Prince Christian of Brunswick, and Count Mansfelt. They were brothers in arms and the Protestant champions. They both died in 1626.

§ Marine creatures. Proteus was the shepherd of the sea. See Georg. iv.

When—Oh for words to paint what I beheld !  
 I seemed to wander in a spacious field,  
 Where all the champaign glowed with purple light,  
 Like that of sunrise on the mountain height ;  
 Flowers over all the field, of every hue  
 That ever Iris wore, luxuriant grew.  
 Nor Chloris,\* with whom amorous zephyrs play,  
 E'er dressed Alcinous' garden half so gay.†  
 A silent current, like the Tagus, rolled  
 O'er golden sands, but sands of purer gold ;  
 With dewy airs Favonius fanned the flowers,  
 With airs awakened under rosy bowers.  
 Such, poets feign, irradiate all o'er  
 The sun's abode on India's utmost shore.

While I that splendour, and the mingled shade  
 Of fruitful vines, with wonder fixed, surveyed,  
 At once, with looks that beamed celestial grace,  
 The seer of Winton stood before my face.  
 His snowy vesture's hem, descending low,  
 His golden sandals swept, and, pure as snow  
 New fallen, shone the mitre on his brow.  
 Where'er he trod, a tremulous sweet sound  
 Of gladness shook the flowery scene around :  
 Attendant angels clap their starry wings,  
 The trumpet shakes the sky, all ether rings ;  
 Each chants his welcome, folds him to his breast,  
 And thus a sweeter voice than all the rest :  
 " Ascend, my son ! thy Father's kingdom share !  
 My son ! henceforth be freed from every care !"

So spake the voice, and at its tender close  
 With psaltery's sound the angelic band arose ;  
 Then night retired, and, chased by dawning day,  
 The visionary bliss passed all away.  
 I mourned my banished sleep with fond concern ;  
 Frequent to me may dreams like this return !

## ELEGY IV.

TO HIS TUTOR, THOMAS YOUNG.‡

CHAPLAIN TO THE ENGLISH FACTORY AT HAMBURGH.

HENCE my epistle—skim the deep—fly o'er  
 Yon smooth expanse to the Teutonic shore !

\* Flora.

† See the account of his gardens in the *Odyssey*.

‡ Young was private tutor to Milton before he went to St Paul's.

Haste—lest a friend should grieve for thy delay—  
 And the gods grant that nothing thwart thy way !  
 I will myself invoke the king\* who binds  
 In his Sicilian echoing vault the winds,  
 With Doris† and her nymphs, and all the throng  
 Of azure gods, to speed thee safe along.  
 But rather, to ensure thy happier haste,  
 Ascend Medea's chariot,‡ if thou mayst ;  
 Or that whence young Triptolemus§ of yore  
 Descended, welcome on the Scythian shore.  
 The sands that line the German coast descried,  
 To opulent Hamburga turn aside,  
 So called, if legendary fame be true,  
 From Hama,|| whom a club-armed Cimbrian slew !  
 There lives, deep learned and primitively just,  
 A faithful steward of his Christian trust,  
 My friend, and favourite inmate of my heart,  
 That now is forced to want its better part !  
 What mountains now, and seas, alas, how wide !  
 From me this other, dearer self divide,  
 Dear as the sage renowned for moral truth¶  
 To the prime spirit of the Attic youth !  
 Dear as the Stagyrte\*\* to Ammon's son,††  
 His pupil, who disdained the world he won !  
 Nor so did Chiron, or so Phoenix shine‡‡  
 In young Achilles' eyes, as he in mine.  
 First led by him through sweet Aonian§§ shade,  
 Each sacred haunt of Pindus I surveyed ;  
 And favoured by the Muse, whom I implored,  
 Thrice on my lip the hallowed stream I poured.  
 But thrice the sun's resplendent chariot rolled  
 To Aries, has new tinged his fleece with gold,  
 And Chloris twice has dressed the meadows gay,  
 And twice has summer parched their bloom away,  
 Since last delighted on his looks I hung,  
 Or my ear drank the music of his tongue :  
 Fly, therefore, and surpass the tempest's speed ;  
 Aware thyself that there is urgent need !  
 Him, entering, thou shalt haply seated see  
 Beside his spouse, his infants on his knee ;  
 Or turning, page by page, with studious look,  
 Some bulky father, or God's Holy Book ;

\* Eolus, god of the east wind. Sicania was a name for Sicily.

† Mother of the Nereids, or sea-nymphs.

‡ Drawn by winged dragons.

§ Triptolemus was presented by Ceres with a winged chariot.

A Saxon warrior slain by a giant. ¶ Socrates. \*\* Aristotle. †† Alexander.

‡‡ Chiron and Phoenix were the tutors of Achilles. §§ Helicon.

Or ministering (which is his weightiest care)  
 To Christ's assembled flock their heavenly fare.  
 Give him, whatever his employment be,  
 Such gratulation as he claims from me!  
 And, with a downcast eye, and carriage meek,  
 Addressing him, forget not thus to speak:

"If compassed round with arms thou canst attend

To verse, verse greets thee from a distant friend.  
 Long due, and late, I left the English shore;  
 But make me welcome for that cause the more!  
 Such from Ulysses, his chaste wife to cheer,  
 The slow epistle came, though late, sincere.  
 But wherefore this? why palliate I the deed  
 For which the culprit's self could hardly plead?  
 Self-charged, and self-condemned, his proper part  
 He feels neglected, with an aching heart;  
 But thou forgive—delinquents who confess,  
 And pray forgiveness, merit anger less;  
 From timid foes the lion turns away,  
 Nor yawns upon or rends a crouching prey,  
 Even pike-wielding Thracians learn to spare,  
 Won by soft influence of a suppliant prayer;  
 And Heaven's dread thunderbolt arrested stands  
 By a cheap victim and uplifted hands.  
 Long had he wished to write, but was withheld,  
 And writes at last, by Love alone compelled,  
 For Fame, too often true when she alarms,  
 Reports thy neighbouring fields a scene of arms;\*  
 Thy city against fierce besiegers barred,  
 And all the Saxon chiefs for fight prepared.  
 Envy† wastes thy country wide around,  
 And saturates with blood the tainted ground;  
 Mars rests contented in his Thrace no more,  
 But goads his steeds to fields of German gore,  
 The ever verdant olive fades and dies,  
 And Peace, the trumpet-hating goddess, flies,  
 Flies from that earth which Justice long had left,  
 And leaves the world of its last guard bereft.

Thus Horror girds thee round. Meantime alone  
 Thou dwellest, and helpless, in a soil unknown;  
 Poor, and receiving from a foreign hand  
 The aid denied thee in thy native land.  
 O ruthless country, and unfeeling more  
 Than thy own billow-beaten chalky shore!  
 Leavest thou to foreign care the worthies given

\* Alluding to the war between the Protestant League and the Imperialists.

† The goddess of war.

By providence to guide thy steps to heaven ?  
 His ministers, commissioned to proclaim  
 Eternal blessings in a Saviour's name !  
 Ah then most worthy, with a soul unfed,  
 In Stygian night to lie for ever dead !  
 So once the venerable Tishbite strayed  
 An exiled fugitive from shade to shade,  
 When, flying Ahab and his fury wife,  
 In lone Arabian wilds he sheltered life ;  
 So from Philippi wandered forth forlorn  
 Cilician Paul, with sounding scourges torn ;  
 And Christ himself so left, and trod no more  
 The thankless Gergesene's forbidden shore.

But thou take courage ! strive against despair !  
 Quake not with dread, nor nourish anxious care !  
 Grim war indeed on every side appears,  
 And thou art menaced by a thousand spears ;  
 Yet none shall drink thy blood, or shall offend  
 Even the defenceless bosom of my friend.  
 For thee the Ægis of thy God shall hide,  
 Jehovah's self shall combat on thy side,  
 The same who vanquished under Sion's towers  
 At silent midnight all Assyria's powers,  
 The same who overthrew in ages past  
 Damascus' sons that laid Samaria waste !  
 Their king he filled and them with fatal fears  
 By mimic sounds of clarions in their ears,  
 Of hoofs, and wheels, and neighings from afar,  
 Of clashing armour, and the din of war.

Thou, therefore (as the most afflicted may),  
 Still hope, and triumph o'er thy evil day !  
 Look forth, expecting happier times to come,  
 And to enjoy, once more, thy native home !

## ELEGY V.

## ON THE APPROACH OF SPRING.

TIME, never wandering from his annual round,  
 Bids Zephyr breathe the spring, and thaw the ground  
 Bleak Winter flies, new verdure clothes the plain,  
 And Earth assumes her transient youth again.  
 Dream I, or also to the spring belong  
 Increase of genius, and new powers of song ?

Spring gives them, and, how strange soe'er it seems,  
 Impels me now to some harmonious themes.  
 Castalia's fountain, and the forkèd hill\*  
 By day, by night, my raptured fancy fill ;  
 My bosom burns and heaves, I hear within  
 A sacred sound that prompts me to begin.  
 Lo ! Phœbus comes ! with his bright hair he blends  
 The radiant laurel wreath ; Phœbus descends !  
 I mount, and undepressed by cumbrous clay,  
 Through cloudy regions win my easy way ;  
 Rapt through poetic shadowy haunts I fly,  
 The shrines all open to my dauntless eye,  
 My spirit searches all the realms of light,  
 And no Tartarian gulfs elude my sight.  
 But this ecstatic trance—this glorious storm  
 Of inspiration—what will it perform ?  
 Spring claims the verse that with his influence glows,  
 And shall be paid with what himself bestows.  
 Thou, veiled with opening foliage, lead'st the throng  
 Of feathered minstrels, Philomel ! in song ;  
 Let us, in concert, to the season sing,  
 Civic and sylvan heralds of the spring.  
 With notes triumphant Spring's approach declare !  
 To Spring, ye muses, annual tribute bear !  
 The Orient left, and Ethiopia's plains,  
 The Sun now northward turns his golden reins ;  
 Night creeps not now, yet rules with gentle sway,  
 And drives her dusky horrors swift away ;  
 Now less fatigued, on this ethereal plain  
 Boötes follows his celestial wain ;†  
 And now the radiant sentinels above,  
 Less numerous, watch around the courts of Jove,  
 For, with the night, Force, Ambush, Slaughter fly,  
 And no gigantic guilt alarms the sky.  
 Now, haply says some shepherd, while he views  
 Recumbent on a rock, the reddening dews,  
 This night, this, surely, Phœbus missed the fair,  
 Who stops his chariot by her amorous care.  
 Cynthia,‡ delighted by the morning's glow,  
 Speeds to the woodland, and resumes her bow ;  
 Resigns her beams, and, glad to disappear,  
 Blesses his aid, who shortens her career.

---

\* Helicon.

† The Great Bear, called also Charles's Wain, or waggon. " Boötes " is the constellation called the Waggoner, who is said to be " less fatigued " because he drives the wain in the sky.

‡ Diana, or the moon.

"Come," Phœbus cries, "Aurora, come—too late  
 Thou lingerest, slumbering, with thy withered mate;\*  
 Leave him, and to Hymettus' top repair!  
 Thy darling Cephalus expects thee there."  
 The goddess with a blush her love betrays,  
 But mounts, and, driving rapidly, obeys.  
 Earth now desires thee, Phœbus! and, to engage  
 Thy warm embrace, casts off the guise of age;  
 Desires thee, and deserves; for who so sweet  
 When her rich bosom courts thy genial heat?  
 Her breath imparts to every breeze that blows  
 Arabia's harvest and the Paphian rose.  
 Her lofty front she diadems around  
 With sacred pines, like Ops on Ida crowned;  
 Her dewy locks, with various flowers new blown,  
 She interweaves, various, and all her own;  
 For Proserpine, in such a wreath attired,  
 Tænarian Dis† himself with love inspired.  
 Fear not, lest, cold and coy, the nymph refuse!  
 Herself, with all her sighing zephyrs, sues;  
 Each courts thee, fanning soft his scented wing,  
 And all her groves with warbled wishes ring.  
 Nor, unendowed and indigent, aspires  
 The amorous earth to engage thy warm desires,  
 But, rich in balmy drugs, assists thy claim,  
 Divine physician! to that glorious name.  
 If splendid recompense, if gifts can move  
 Desire in thee (gifts often purchase love),  
 She offers all the wealth her mountains hide,  
 And all that rests beneath the boundless tide.  
 How oft, when headlong from the heavenly steep  
 She sees thee playing in the western deep,  
 How oft she cries—"Ah Phœbus, why repair  
 Thy wasted force, why seek refreshment there?  
 Can Tethys‡ win thee? wherefore shouldst thou lave  
 A face so fair in her unpleasant wave?  
 Come seek my green retreats, and rather choose  
 To cool thy tresses in my crystal dew.  
 The grassy turf shall yield thee sweeter rest;  
 Come, lay thy evening glories on my breast,  
 And breathing fresh, through many a humid rose,  
 Soft whispering airs shall lull thee to repose!  
 No fears I feel like Semele§ to die,  
 Nor lest thy burning wheels approach too nigh.

\* Tithonus.

† Pluto.

‡ A water goddess—mother of the river gods and wife of Oceanus.

§ Semele was consumed by Jupiter's lightnings.



For thou canst govern them, here therefore rest,  
 And lay thy evening glories on my breast!"

Thus breathes the wanton Earth her amorous flame,  
 And all her countless offspring feel the same;  
 For Cupid now through every region strays,  
 Brightening his faded fires with solar rays;  
 His new-strung bow sends forth a deadlier sound,  
 And his new-pointed shafts more deeply wound;  
 Nor Dian's self escapes him now untried,  
 Nor even Vesta at her altar side;  
 His mother too repairs her beauty's wane,  
 And seems sprung newly from the deep again.  
 Exulting youths the hymeneal sing,  
 With Hymen's name roofs, rocks, and valleys ring;  
 He, new attired, and by the season drest,  
 Proceeds, all fragrant, in his saffron vest.  
 Now many a golden-cinctured virgin roves  
 To taste the pleasures of the fields and groves,  
 All wish, and each alike, some favourite youth  
 Hers, in the bonds of hymeneal truth.  
 Now pipes the shepherd through his reeds again,  
 Nor Phillis wants a song that suits the strain;  
 With songs the seaman hails the starry sphere,  
 And dolphins rise from the abyss to hear:  
 Jove feels himself the season, sports again  
 With his fair spouse, and banquets all his train.  
 Now too the Satyrs, in the dusk of eve,  
 Their mazy dance through flowery meadows weave,  
 And neither god nor goat, but both in kind,  
 Silvanus,\* wreathed with cypress, skips behind.  
 The Dryads leave their hollow sylvan cells  
 To roam the banks and solitary dells;  
 Pan riots now; and from his amorous chafe  
 Ceres and Cybele seem hardly safe,  
 And Faunus,† all on fire to reach the prize,  
 In chase of some enticing Oread‡ flies;  
 She bounds before, but fears too swift a bound,  
 And hidden lies, but wishes to be found.  
 Our shades entice the immortals from above,  
 And some kind power presides o'er every grove;  
 And long, ye powers, o'er every grove preside,  
 For all is safe, and blessed, where ye abide!  
 Return, O Jove! the age of gold restore—  
 Why choose to dwell where storms and thunder roar?

---

\* The wood god.

† God of shepherds.

‡ A wood nymph.

At least thou, Phœbus! moderate thy speed!  
 Let not the vernal hours too swift proceed,  
 Command rough winter back, nor yield the pole  
 Too soon to night's encroaching, long control!

## ELEGY VI.

## TO CHARLES DIODATI,

Who, while he spent his Christmas in the country, sent the author a poetical epistle, in which he requested that his verses, if not so good as usual, might be excused on account of the many feasts to which his friends invited him, and which would not allow him leisure to finish them as he wished.

WITH no rich viands overcharged, I send  
 Health, which perchance you want, my pampered friend.  
 But wherefore should thy Muse tempt mine away  
 From what she loves, from darkness into day?  
 Art thou desirous to be told how well  
 I love thee, and in verse? verse cannot tell,  
 For verse has bounds, and must in measure move,  
 But neither bounds nor measure knows my love.  
 How pleasant, in thy lines described, appear  
 December's harmless sports, and rural cheer!  
 French spirits kindling with *cærulean* fires,\*  
 And all such gambols as the time inspires!

Think not that wine against good verse offends,  
 The Muse and Bacchus have been always friends;  
 Nor Phœbus blushes sometimes to be found  
 With ivy, rather than with laurel, crowned.  
 The Nine themselves oft-times have joined the song  
 And revels of the Bacchanalian throng;  
 Not even Ovid could in Scythian air  
 Sing sweetly—why? no vine would flourish there.  
 What in brief numbers sung Anacreon's muse?  
 Wine, and the rose that sparkling wine bedews.  
 Pindar with Bacchus glows—his every line  
 Breathes the rich fragrance of inspiring wine,  
 While, with loud crash o'erturned, the chariot lies,  
 And brown with dust the fiery courser flies.  
 The Roman lyrist steeped in wine his lays  
 So sweet in Glycera's and Chloe's praise.†

---

\* Brandy lighted in snapdragon.  
 See Horace, ode i., 19 and 23 lines.

Now too the plenteous feast and mantling bowl  
 Nourish the vigour of thy sprightly soul;  
 The flowing goblet makes thy numbers flow,  
 And casks not wine alone, but verse bestow.  
 Thus Phœbus favours, and the arts attend,  
 Whom Bacchus and whom Ceres both befriend.  
 What wonder, then, thy verses are so sweet,  
 In which these triple powers so kindly meet!  
 The lute now also sounds, with gold inwrought,  
 And touched with flying fingers nicely taught,  
 In tapestried halls, high roofed, the sprightly lyre  
 Directs the dancers of the virgin choir.  
 If dull repletion fright the Muse away,  
 Sight's gay as these may more invite her stay;  
 And, trust me, while the ivory keys resound,  
 Fair damsels sport, and perfumes steam around,  
 Apollo's influence, like ethereal flame,  
 Shall animate, at once, thy glowing frame,  
 And all the Muse shall rush into thy breast,  
 By love and music's blended powers possess.  
 For numerous powers light Elegy befriend,  
 Hear her sweet voice, and at her call attend;  
 Her, Bacchus, Ceres, Venus, all approve,  
 And, with his blushing mother, gentle Love.  
 Hence to such bards we grant the copious use  
 Of banquets, and the vine's delicious juice.  
 But they who demigods and heroes praise,  
 And feats performed in Jove's more youthful days,  
 Who now the counsels of high heaven explore,  
 Now shades that echo the Cerberean roar,  
 Simply let these, like him of Samos,\* live,  
 Let herbs to them a bloodless banquet give;  
 In beechen goblets let their beverage shine,  
 Cool from the crystal spring, their sober wine!  
 Their youth should pass in innocence secure  
 From stain licentious, and in manners pure,  
 Pure as the priest, when robed in white he stands,  
 The fresh lustration, ready in his hands.  
 Thus Linus† lived, and thus, as poets write,  
 Tiresias,‡ wiser for his loss of sight;  
 Thus exiled Chalcas,§ thus the Bard of Thrace,||  
 Melodious tamer of the savage race;

---

\* Pythagoras.

† A son of Apollo.

‡ He was gifted with the power of understanding the language of birds to atone for his loss of sight, by Pallas.

§ The Grecian soothsayer at the siege of Troy.

|| Orpheus.

Thus, trained by temperance, Homer led, of yore,  
 His chief of Ithaca\* from shore to shore,  
 Through magic Circe's monster-peopled reign,  
 And shoals insidious with the siren train;  
 And through the realms where grizzly spectres dwell,  
 Whose tribes he fettered in a gory spell;  
 For these are sacred bards, and from above  
 Drink large infusions from the mind of Jove.

Wouldst thou (perhaps 'tis hardly worth thine ear)  
 Wouldst thou be told my occupation here?  
 The promised King of Peace employs my pen,  
 The eternal covenant made for guilty men,  
 The new-born Deity with infant cries  
 Filling the sordid hovel where he lies,  
 The hymning angels, and the herald star,  
 That led the wise who sought him from afar,  
 And idols on their own unhallowed shore  
 Dashed, at his birth, to be revered no more.

This theme† on reeds of Albion I rehearse:  
 The dawn of that blest day inspired the verse;  
 Verse that, reserved in secret, shall attend  
 Thy candid voice, my critic, and my friend!

## ELEGY VII.

As yet a stranger to the gentle fires  
 That Amathusia's‡ smiling queen inspires,  
 Not seldom I derided Cupid's darts,  
 And scorned his claim to rule all human hearts.  
 "Go, child," I said, "transfix the timorous dove!  
 An easy conquest suits an infant love;  
 Enslave the sparrow, for such prize shall be  
 Sufficient triumph to a chief like thee!  
 Why aim thy idle arms at human kind?  
 Thy shafts prevail not 'gainst the noble mind."

The Cyprian heard, and kindling into ire,  
 (None kindles sooner) burned with double fire.

It was the spring, and newly risen day  
 Peeped o'er the hamlets on the first of May;  
 My eyes, too tender for the blaze of light,  
 Still sought the shelter of retiring night,  
 When Love approached, in painted plumes arrayed,  
 The insidious god his rattling darts betrayed,

\* Ulysses.

† The Hymn on the Nativity.

‡ Venus, so called from Amathus in Cyprus, where she had a temple.

Nor less his infant features, and the sly,  
Sweet intimations of his threatening eye.

Such the Sigeian boy\* is seen above  
Filling the goblet for imperial Jove;  
Such he on whom the nymphs bestowed their charms,  
Hylas,† who perished in a Naiad's arms.  
Angry he seemed, yet graceful in his ire,  
And added threats not destitute of fire.  
"My power," he said, "by others' pain alone,  
'Twere best to learn; now learn it by thy own!  
With those that feel my power, that power attest,  
And in thy anguish be my sway confest!  
I vanquished Phœbus, though returning vain  
From his new triumph o'er the Python slain,  
And when he thinks on Daphne,‡ even he  
Will yield the prize of archery to me.  
A dart less true the Parthian horseman sped,  
Behind him killed, and conquered as he fled:  
Less true the expert Cydonian,§ and less true  
The youth|| whose shaft his latent Procris slew.  
Vanquished by me see huge Orion bend,  
By me Alcides, and Alcides' friend.¶  
At me should Jove himself a bolt design,  
His bosom first should bleed transfixed by mine.  
But all thy doubts this shaft will best explain,  
Nor shall it reach thee with a trivial pain.  
Thy Muse, vain youth, shall not thy peace ensure,  
Nor Phœbus' serpent\*\* yield thy wound a cure."  
He spoke, and, waving a bright shaft in air,  
Sought the warm bosom of the Cyprian fair.  
That thus a child should bluster in my ear,  
Provoked my laughter more than moved my fear.  
I shunned not, therefore, public haunts, but strayed  
Careless in city or suburban shade,  
And, passing and repassing, nymphs that moved  
With grace divine beheld where'er I roved.  
Bright shone the vernal day with double blaze  
As beauty gave new force to Phœbus' rays.  
By no grave scruples checked I freely eyed  
The dangerous show, rash youth my only guide,  
And many a look of many a fair unknown  
Met full, unable to control my own.

\* Ganymede. † The nymphs fell in love with him and drew him into a fountain.

‡ She fled from Apollo, and was turned into a laurel.

§ The Cydonians were famed for their skill in archery. ¶ Telamon.  
|| Cephalus; he shot his wife Procris, by mistake.

\*\* Esculapius, who came to Rome in the form of a snake.

But one I marked (then peace forsook my breast),  
 One—Oh how far superior to the rest!  
 What lovely features! such the Cyprian queen  
 Herself might wish, and Juno wish her mien.  
 The very nymph was she, whom, when I dared  
 His arrows, Love had even then prepared!  
 Nor was himself remote, nor unsupplied  
 With torch well trimmed and quiver at his side;  
 Now to her lips he clung, her eyelids now,  
 Then settled on her cheeks, or on her brow;  
 And with a thousand wounds from every part  
 Pierced and transpierced my undefended heart.  
 A fever, new to me, of fierce desire  
 Now seized my soul, and I was all on fire;  
 But she, the while, whom only I adore,  
 Was gone, and vanished, to appear no more.  
 In silent sadness I pursue my way;  
 I pause, I turn, proceed, yet wish to stay,  
 And, while I follow her in thought, bemoan  
 With tears my soul's delight so quickly flown.  
 When Jove had hurled him to the Lemnian coast,  
 So Vulcan sorrowed for Olympus lost,  
 And so Cæclides,\* sinking into night,  
 From the deep gulf looked up to distant light.  
 Wretch that I am, what hopes for me remain,  
 Who cannot cease to love, yet love in vain?  
 Oh! could I once, once more, behold the fair,  
 Speak to her, tell her of the pangs I bear;  
 Perhaps she is not adamant; would show,  
 Perhaps, some pity at my tale of woe.  
 O inauspicious flame!—'tis mine to prove  
 A matchless instance of disastrous love.  
 Ah! spare me, gentle power!—If such thou be,  
 Let not thy deeds and nature disagree.  
 Spare me, and I will worship at no shrine  
 With vow and sacrifice save only thine.  
 Now I revere thy fires, thy bow, thy darts:  
 Now own thee sovereign of all human hearts.  
 Remove! no—grant me still this raging woe!  
 Sweet is the wretchedness that lovers know:  
 But pierce hereafter (should I chance to see  
 One destined mine) at once both her and me.  
 Such were the trophies that, in earlier days,  
 Py Vanity seduced, I toiled to raise;  
 Studious, yet indolent, and urged by Youth,  
 That worst of teachers! from the ways of Truth;

\* One of the Argonauts. He was swallowed up by the earth.



Till Learning taught me in his shady bower  
 To quit Love's servile yoke, and spurn his power.  
 Then, on a sudden, the fierce flame suppressed,  
 A frost continual settled on my breast,  
 Whence Cupid fears his flames extinct to see,  
 And Venus dreads a Diomede in me.

## EPIGRAMS.

## ON THE INVENTOR OF GUNS.

PRAISE in old time the sage Prometheus won,  
 Who stole ethereal radiance from the sun ;  
 But greater he, whose bold invention strove  
 To emulate the fiery bolts of Jove.

[The Poems on the subject of the Gunpowder Treason I have not translated, both because the matter of them is unpleasant, and because they are written with an asperity, which, however it might be warranted in Milton's day, would be extremely unseasonable now.—C.]

## TO LEONORA\* SINGING AT ROME.†

ANOTHER Leonora once inspired  
 Tasso, with fatal love to phrensy fired ;  
 But how much happier, lived he now, were he,  
 Pierced with whatever pangs for love of thee !  
 Since could he hear that heavenly voice of thine,  
 With Adriana's ‡ lute of sound divine,  
 Fiercer than Pentheus' § though his eye might roll,  
 Or idiot apathy benumb his soul,  
 You still, with medicinal sounds might cheer  
 His senses wandering in a blind career ;  
 And, sweetly breathing through his wounded breast,  
 Charm, with soul-soothing song, his thoughts to rest.

## TO THE SAME.

NAPLES, too credulous, ah ! boast no more  
 The sweet-voiced siren buried on thy shore,

\* Leonora Baroni, a celebrated singer. Milton heard her at Cardinal Barberini's.

† "I have translated only two of the three poetical compliments addressed to Leonora, as they appear to me far superior to what I have omitted."—C.

‡ Her mother, who accompanied her on the lute. § A mad king of Thebes.

That when Parthenope\* deceased, she gave  
 Her sacred dust to a Chalcidic† grave,  
 For still she lives, but has exchanged the hoarse  
 Pausilipo for Tiber's placid course,  
 Where, idol of all Rome, she now in chains  
 Of magic song both gods and men detains.

## THE COTTAGER AND HIS LANDLORD.

## A FABLE.

A PEASANT to his lord paid yearly court,  
 Presenting pippins of so rich a sort  
 That he, displeased to have a part alone,  
 Removed the tree, that all might be his own.  
 The tree, too old to travel, though before  
 So fruitful, withered, and would yield no more.  
 The squire, perceiving all his labour void,  
 Cursed his own pains, so foolishly employed,  
 And "Oh," he cried, "that I had lived content  
 With tribute, small indeed, but kindly meant!  
 My avarice has expensive proved to me,  
 Has cost me both my pippins and my tree."

## TO CHRISTINA, QUEEN OF SWEDEN.

WRITTEN AS FOR CROMWELL, AND TO BE SENT WITH HIS PICTURE.

CHRISTINA, maiden of heroic mien!  
 Star of the North! of northern stars the queen!  
 Behold what wrinkles I have earned, and how  
 The iron casque still chafes my veteran brow.  
 While, following Fate's dark footsteps, I fulfil  
 The dictates of a hardy people's will.  
 But softened in thy sight my looks appear,  
 Not to all queens or kings alike severe.

## ON THE DEATH OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR,

## A PHYSICIAN.‡

LEARN, ye nations of the earth,  
 The condition of your birth,

\* One of the syrens. † From Chalcis, whence the Greek colonies of South Italy came.

‡ The Vice Chancellor was Dr. John Goslyn, Regius Professor of Medicine at Cambridge.  
 He died on the 21st October, 1626.



Now be taught your feeble state !  
 Know, that all must yield to fate !

If the mournful rover, Death,  
 Say but once—" Resign your breath !"   
 Vainly of escape you dream,  
 You must pass the Stygian stream.

Could the stoutest overcome  
 Death's assault, and baffle doom,  
 Hercules had both withstood,  
 Undiseased by Nessus\* blood.

Ne'er had Hector pressed the plain,  
 By a trick of Pallas slain,  
 Nor the chief to Jove allied†  
 By Achilles' phantom died.

Could enchantments life prolong,  
 Circe, saved by magic song,  
 Still had lived, and equal skill  
 Had preserved Medea‡ still.

Dwelt in herbs and drugs a power  
 To avert man's destined hour,  
 Learned Machaon§ should have known  
 Doubtless to avert his own.

Chiron|| had survived the smart  
 Of the hydra-tainted dart,  
 And Jove's bolt had been, with ease,  
 Foiled by Asclepiades.¶

Thou too, sage ! of whom forlorn  
 Helicon and Cirrha\*\* mourn,  
 Still hadst filled thy princely place,  
 Regent of the gowned race :

Hadst advanced to higher fame  
 Still thy much ennobled name,  
 Nor in Charon's skiff explored  
 The Tartarean gulf abhorred.

\* A centaur whom Hercules shot with a poisoned arrow. The hero was poisoned by the centaur's blood-stained robe, which he was induced to put on.

† Sarpedon. ‡ Circe and Medea were enchantresses.

§ Son of Esculapius. He was leech to the Greeks during the siege of Troy.

|| A centaur learned in medicine. ¶ Esculapius. He was killed by lightning.

\*\* Delphi.

But resentful Proserpine,  
 Jealous of thy skill divine,  
 Snapping short thy vital thread,  
 Thee too numbered with the dead.

Wise and good ! untroubled be  
 The green turf that covers thee !  
 Thence, in gay profusion, grow  
 All the sweetest flowers that blow !

Pluto's consort bid thee rest !  
 Æacus\* pronounce thee blest !  
 To her home thy shade consign !  
 Make Elysium ever thine !

## ON THE DEATH OF THE BISHOP OF ELY†

My lids with grief were tumid yet,  
 And still my sullied cheek was wet  
 With briny dews, profusely shed  
 For venerable Winton dead ;‡  
 When Fame, whose tales of saddest sound,  
 Alas ! are ever truest found,  
 The news through all our cities spread  
 Of yet another mitred head  
 By ruthless fate to death consigned,  
 Ely, the honour of his kind !

At once a storm of passion heaved  
 My boiling bosom, much I grieved ;  
 But more I raged, at every breath  
 Devoting Death himself to death.  
 With less revenge did Naso§ teem  
 When hated Ibis was his theme ;  
 With less Archilochus|| denied  
 The lovely Greek his promised bride.

But lo ! while thus I execrate  
 Incensed the minister of fate,  
 Wondrous accents, soft, yet clear,  
 Wafted on the gale I hear.

“ Ah, much deluded ! lay aside  
 Thy threats, and anger misapplied !

\* One of the judges of the dead.

† Nicholas Felton, Bishop of Ely.

‡ Dr. Felton died a few days after Andrewes, Bishop of Winchester.

§ Ovid.

|| A Greek poet. He was refused as a suitor to his daughter by Lycambes, and in revenge lampooned the whole family. Lycambes' daughters hanged themselves.

Art not afraid with sounds like these  
 To offend where thou canst not appease?  
 Death is not (wherefore dreamest thou thus?)  
 The son of night and Erebus:  
 Nor was of fell Erynnis born  
 On gulfs where Chaos rules forlorn.  
 But sent from God, His presence leaves,  
 To gather home His ripened sheaves,  
 To call encumbered souls away  
 From fleshly bonds to boundless day,  
 (As when the winged hours excite,  
 And summon forth the morning light)  
 And each to convoy to her place  
 Before the Eternal Father's face.  
 But not the wicked—they, severe  
 Yet just, from all their pleasures here  
 He hurries to the realms below,  
 Terrific realms of penal woe!  
 Myself no sooner heard His call,  
 Than, 'scaping through my prison wall,  
 I bade adieu to bolts and bars,  
 And soared, with angels, to the stars.  
 Like him of old, to whom 'twas given  
 To mount on fiery wheels to heaven.  
 Boötes' waggon,\* slow with cold,  
 Appalled me not; nor to behold  
 The sword that vast Orion draws,  
 Or even the Scorpion's horrid claws.†  
 Beyond the sun's bright orb I fly,  
 And far beneath my feet descry  
 Night's dread goddess, seen with awe,  
 Whom her winged dragons draw.  
 Thus, ever wondering at my speed,  
 Augmented still as I proceed,  
 I pass the planetary sphere,  
 The milky way—and now appear  
 Heaven's crystal battlements, her door  
 Of massy pearl, and emerald floor.  
 "But here I cease. For never can  
 The tongue of once a mortal man  
 In suitable description trace  
 The pleasures of that happy place;  
 Suffice it, that those joys divine  
 Are all, and all for ever, mine!"

---

\* The Great Bear.

† The constellations.

## NATURE UNIMPAIRED BY TIME.

AH, how the human mind wearies herself  
 With her own wanderings, and, involved in gloom  
 Impenetrable, speculates amiss !  
 Measuring in her folly things divine  
 By human ; laws inscribed on adamant,  
 By laws of man's device, and counsels fixed  
 For ever, by the hours that pass and die.

How ?—shall the face of Nature then be ploughed  
 Into deep wrinkles, and shall years at last  
 On the great parent fix a sterile curse ?  
 Shall even she confess old age, and halt,  
 And, palsy-smitten, shake her starry brows ?  
 Shall foul Antiquity with rust, and Drought  
 And Famine, vex the radiant worlds above ?  
 Shall Time's unsated maw crave and engulf  
 The very heavens that regulate his flight ?  
 And was the Sire of All able to fence  
 His works, and to uphold the circling worlds,  
 But, through improvident and heedless haste,  
 Let slip the occasion ?—so then—all is lost—  
 And in some future evil hour, yon arch  
 Shall crumble and come thundering down, the poles  
 Jar in collision, the Olympian king  
 Fall with his throne, and Pallas, holding forth  
 The terrors of the Gorgon shield\* in vain,  
 Shall rush to the abyss, like Vulcan hurled  
 Down into Lemnos, through the gate of heaven.  
 Thou also, with precipitated wheels,  
 Phoebus ! thy own son's fall† shall imitate,  
 With hideous ruin shall impress the deep  
 Suddenly, and the flood shall reek and hiss,  
 At the extinction of the lamp of day.  
 Then too shall Hæmus, cloven to his base,  
 Be shattered, and the huge Ceraunian hills,  
 Once weapons of Tartarean Dis, immersed  
 In Erebus, shall fill himself with fear.

No. The Almighty Father surer laid  
 His deep foundations, and, providing well  
 For the event of all, the scales of Fate  
 Suspended in just equipoise, and bade

---

\* Minerva had the head of the Gorgon Medusa in her shield ; it turned all who looked on it to stone.

† Phaeton, who fell from the chariot of the sun while driving it.

His universal works, from age to age,  
One tenor hold, perpetual, undisturbed.

Hence the prime mover wheels itself about  
Continual, day by day, and with it bears  
In social measure swift, the heavens around.  
Not tardier now is Saturn than of old,  
Nor radiant less the burning casque of Mars.  
Phœbus, his vigour unimpaired, still shows  
The effulgence of his youth, nor needs the god  
A downward course, that he may warm the vales;  
But, ever rich in influence, runs his road,  
Sign after sign, through all the heavenly zone.  
Beautiful, as at first, ascends the star\*  
From odoriferous Ind, whose office is  
To gather home betimes the ethereal flock,  
To pour them o'er the skies again at eve,  
And to discriminate the night and day.  
Still Cynthia's changeful horn waxes and wanes  
Alternate, and with arms extended still  
She welcomes to her breast her brother's beams.  
Nor have the elements deserted yet  
Their functions; thunder with as loud a stroke  
As erst smites through the rocks and scatters them;  
The east still howls; still the relentless north  
Invades the shuddering Scythian, still he breathes  
The winter, and still rolls the storms along;  
The king of ocean, with his wonted force,  
Beats on Pelorus;† o'er the deep is heard  
The hoarse alarm of Triton's sounding shell;  
Nor swim the monsters of th' Ægean sea  
In shallows, or beneath diminished waves.  
Thou too, thy ancient vegetative power  
Enjoy'st, O Earth! Narcissus still is sweet;  
And, Phœbus! still thy favourite, and still  
Thy favourite, Cytherea,‡ both retain  
Their beauty; nor the mountains, ore enriched  
For punishment of man, with purer gold  
Teemed ever, or with brighter gems the deep.  
Thus in unbroken series all proceeds;  
And shall, till wide involving either pole,  
And the immensity of yonder heaven,  
The final flames of destiny absorb  
The world, consumed in one enormous pyre!

\* Venus.

† North-east promontory of Sicily.

‡ The hyacinth, favourite of Apollo. The anemone, favourite of Venus.

ON THE PLATONIC IDEA AS IT WAS UNDERSTOOD  
BY ARISTOTLE.

YE sister powers, who o'er the sacred groves  
 Preside, and thou, fair mother of them all,  
 Mnemosyne!\* and thou who, in thy grot  
 Immense, reclined at leisure, hast in charge  
 The archives and the ordinances of Jove,  
 And dost record the festivals of heaven,  
 Eternity!—inform us who is He,  
 That great original by nature chosen  
 To be the archetype of human kind,  
 Unchangeable, immortal, with the poles  
 Themselves coeval, one, yet everywhere,  
 An image of the God who gave him being?  
 Twin-brother of the goddess born from Jove,†  
 He dwells not in his father's mind, but, though  
 Of common nature with ourselves, exists  
 Apart, and occupies a local home.  
 Whether, companion of the stars, he spend  
 Eternal ages, roaming at his will  
 From sphere to sphere the tenfold heavens, or dwell  
 On the moon's side that nearest neighbours earth,  
 Or torpid on the banks of Lethe‡ sit  
 Among the multitude of souls ordained  
 To flesh and blood! or whether (as may chance)  
 That vast and giant model of our kind  
 In some far distant region of this globe  
 Sequestered stalk, with lifted head on high  
 O'ertowering Atlas, on whose shoulders rest  
 The stars, terrific even to the gods.  
 Never the Theban seer,§ whose blindness proved  
 His best illumination, him beheld  
 In secret vision; never him the son  
 Of Pleione,|| amid the noiseless night  
 Descending, to the prophet-choir revealed;  
 Him never knew the Assyrian priest,¶ who yet  
 The ancestry of Ninus chronicles,  
 And Belus, and Osiris, far renowned;  
 Nor even thrice great Hermes,\*\* although skilled  
 So deep in mystery, to the worshippers  
 Of Isis showed a prodigy like him.

\* Goddess of Memory and mother of the Muses.

† Pallas.

‡ Waters of oblivion or forgetfulness.

§ Tiresias, already named.

|| Hermes or Mercury.

¶ Sanchoniathon.

\*\* Hermes Trismegistus, the author of Neo-Platonic works much esteemed.

And thou,\* who hast immortalized the shades  
 Of Academus, if the schools received  
 This monster of the fancy first from thee,  
 Either recall at once the banished bards  
 To thy republic, or thyself, evinced  
 A wilder fabulist, go also forth.

## TO HIS FATHER.

OH that Pieria's† spring would through my breast  
 Pour its inspiring influence, and rush  
 No rill, but rather an o'erflowing flood!  
 That, for my venerable father's sake  
 All meaner themes renounced, my Muse, on wings  
 Of duty borne, might reach a loftier strain.  
 For thee, my father! howsoe'er it please,  
 She frames this slender work; nor know I aught  
 That may thy gifts more suitably requite;  
 Though to requite them suitably would ask  
 Returns much nobler, and surpassing far  
 The meagre stores of verbal gratitude:  
 But, such as I possess, I send thee all.  
 This page presents thee in their full amount  
 With thy son's treasures, and the sum is nought;  
 Nought, save the riches from that airy dream  
 In secret grottos and in laurel bowers,  
 I have, by golden Clío's‡ gift, acquired.  
 Verse is a work divine; despise not thou  
 Verse therefore, which evinces (nothing more)  
 Man's heavenly source, and which, retaining still  
 Some scintillations of Promethean fire,  
 Bespeaks him animated from above.  
 The gods love verse; the infernal powers themselves  
 Confess the influence of verse, which stirs  
 The lowest deep, and binds in triple chains  
 Of adamant both Pluto and the shades.  
 In verse the Delphic priestess, and the pale  
 Tremulous Sibyl, make the future known;  
 And he who sacrifices, on the shrine  
 Hangs verse, both when he smites the threatening bull,  
 And when he spreads his reeking entrails wide  
 To scrutinise the fates enveloped there.  
 We too, ourselves, what time we seek again  
 Our native skies, and one eternal now  
 Shall be the only measure of our being,

\* Plato.

† A fount sacred to the Muses.

‡ The Muse of History.

Crowned all with gold, and chanting to the lyre  
 Harmonious verse, shall range the courts above,  
 And make the starry firmament resound.  
 And, even now, the fiery spirit pure  
 That wheels yon circling orbs, directs himself  
 Their mazy dance with melody of verse  
 Unutterable, immortal, hearing which  
 Huge Ophiuchus\* holds his hiss suppressed;  
 Orion, softened, drops his ardent blade,  
 And Atlas stands unconscious of his load.  
 Verse graced of old the feasts of kings, ere yet  
 Luxurious dainties, destined to the gulf  
 Immense of gluttony, were known, and ere  
 Lyæus† deluged yet the temperate board.  
 Then sat the bard a customary guest  
 To share the banquet, and, his length of locks  
 With beechen honours bound, proposed in verse  
 The characters of heroes, and their deeds  
 To imitation, sang of chaos old,  
 Of Nature's birth, of gods that crept in search  
 Of acorns fallen, and of the thunderbolt  
 Not yet produced from Ætna's fiery cave.  
 And what avails, at last, tune without voice,  
 Devoid of matter? Such may suit perhaps  
 The rural dance, but such was ne'er the song  
 Of Orpheus, whom the streams stood still to hear,  
 And the oaks followed. Not by chords alone  
 Well touched, but by resistless accents more  
 To sympathetic tears the ghosts themselves  
 He moved; these praises to his verse he owes.  
 Nor thou persist, I pray thee, still to slight  
 The sacred Nine, and to imagine vain  
 And useless, powers, by whom inspired, thyself  
 Art skilful to associate verse with airs  
 Harmonious, and to give the human voice  
 A thousand modulations, heir by right  
 Indisputable of Arion's fame.‡  
 Now say, what wonder is it, if a son  
 Of thine delight in verse, if, so conjoined  
 In close affinity, we sympathise  
 In social arts and kindred studies sweet?  
 Such distribution of himself to us  
 Was Phœbus' choice; thou hast thy gift, and I  
 Mine also, and between us we receive,  
 Father and son, the whole inspiring God.

---

\* The Serpent, a constellation. † Bacchus.

‡ Milton's father was a fine musician.



No! howsoe'er the semblance thou assume  
Of hate, thou hatest not the gentle Muse,  
My father! for thou never bad'st me tread  
The beaten path, and broad, that leads right on  
To opulence, nor didst condemn thy son  
To the insipid clamours of the bar,  
To laws voluminous, and ill observed;  
But, wishing to enrich me more, to fill  
My mind with treasure, ledst me far away,  
From city din to deep retreats, to banks  
And streams Aonian, and, with free consent,  
Didst place me happy at Apollo's side.  
I speak not now, on more important themes  
Intent, of common benefits, and such  
As nature bids, but of thy larger gifts,  
My father! who, when I had opened once  
The stores of Roman rhetoric, and learned  
The full toned language of the eloquent Greeks,  
Whose lofty music graced the lips of Jove,  
Thyself didst counsel me to add the flowers  
That Gallia boasts; those too, with which the smooth  
Italian his degenerate speech adorns,  
That witnesses his mixture with the Goth;  
And Palestine's prophetic songs divine.  
To sum the whole, whate'er the heaven contains,  
The earth beneath it, and the air between,  
The rivers and the restless deep, may all  
Prove intellectual gain to me, my wish  
Concurring with thy will; science herself,  
All cloud removed, inclines her beauteous head,  
And offers me the lip, if, dull of heart,  
I shrink not, and decline her gracious boon.

Go now, and gather dross, ye sordid minds,  
That covet it; what could my father more?  
What more could Jove himself, unless he gave  
His own abode, the heaven in which he reigus?  
More eligible gifts than these were not  
Apollo's to his son, had they been safe  
As they were insecure, who made the boy  
The world's vice-luminary, bade him rule  
The radiant chariot of the day, and bind  
To his young brows his own all-dazzling wreath.  
I therefore, although last and least, my place  
Among the learned in the laurel grove  
Will hold, and where the conqueror's ivy twines,  
Henceforth exempt from the unlettered throng  
Profane, nor even to be seen by such.  
Away then, sleepless Care, Complaint, away,

And Envy, with thy "jealous leer malign!"  
 Nor let the monster Calumny shoot forth  
 Her venom'd tongue at me. Detested foes!  
 Ye all are impotent against my peace,  
 For I am privileged, and bear my breast  
 Safe, and too high, for your viperean wound.

But thou! my father, since to render thanks  
 Equivalent, and to requite by deeds  
 Thy liberality, exceeds my power,  
 Suffice it, that I thus record thy gifts,  
 And bear them treasured in a grateful mind!  
 Ye, too, the favourite pastime of my youth,  
 My voluntary numbers, if ye dare  
 To hope longevity, and to survive  
 Your master's funeral, not soon absorbed  
 In the oblivious Lethæan gulf,  
 Shall to futurity perhaps convey  
 This theme, and by these praises of my sire  
 Improve the fathers of a distant age!

#### TO SALSILLUS, A ROMAN POET, MUCH INDISPOSED.

The original is written in a measure called Scazon, which signifies limping, and the measure is so denominated, because, though in other respects Iambic, it terminates with a Spondee, and has, consequently, a more tardy movement.

The reader will immediately see that this property of the Latin verse cannot be imitated in English.

My halting Muse, that dragg'st by choice along  
 Thy slow, slow step, in melancholy song,  
 And lik'st that pace, expressive of thy cares,  
 Not less than Deiopeia's\* sprightlier airs,  
 When in the dance she beats with measured tread  
 Heaven's floor, in front of Juno's golden bed;  
 Salute Salsillus, who to verse divine  
 Prefers, with partial love, such lays as mine.  
 Thus writes that Milton, then, who, wafted o'er  
 From his own nest on Albion's stormy shore,  
 Where Eurus, fiercest of the Æolian band,  
 Sweeps with ungoverned rage the blasted land,  
 Of late to more serene Ausonia came  
 To view her cities of illustrious name,  
 To prove, himself a witness of the truth,  
 How wise her elders, and how learn'd her youth.  
 Much good, Salsillus! and a body free  
 From all disease, that Milton asks for thee,

---

\* One of Juno's nymphs.

Who now endur'st the languor and the pains  
That bile inflicts, diffused through all thy veins;  
Relentless malady, not moved to spare  
By thy sweet Roman voice and Lesbian air!

Health, Hebe's sister, sent us from the skies,  
And thou, Apollo, whom all sickness flies,  
Pythius, or Pæan, or what name divine  
Soe'er thou choose, haste, heal a priest of thine!  
Ye groves of Faunus, and ye hills that melt  
With vinous dew, where meek Evander dwelt!\*  
If aught salubrious in your confines grow,  
Strive which shall soonest heal your poet's woe,  
That, rendered to the Muse he loves, again  
He may enchant the meadows with his strain.  
Numa, reclined in everlasting ease  
Amid the shade of dark embowering trees,  
Viewing with eyes of unabated fire  
His loved *Ægeria*, shall that strain admire:  
So soothed, the tumid Tiber shall revere  
The tombs of kings, nor desolate the year,  
Shall curb his waters with a friendly rein,  
And guide them harmless, till they meet the main.

## TO GIOVANNI BATTISTA MANSO,

MARQUIS OF VILLA.

### MILTON'S ACCOUNT OF MANSO.

Giovanni Battista Manso, Marquis of Villa, is an Italian nobleman of the highest estimation among his countrymen, for genius, literature, and military accomplishments. To him Torquato Tasso addressed his dialogues on Friendship, for he was much the friend of Tasso, who has also celebrated him among the other princes of his country, in his poem entitled, *Gerusalemme Conquistata*, book xx.

*Fra cavalier magnanimi, e cortesi,  
Risplende il Manso.*

During the Author's stay at Naples he received at the hands of the Marquis a thousand kind offices and civilities, and desirous not to appear ungrateful, sent him this poem a short time before his departure from that city.

THESE verses also to thy praise, the Nine,  
O Manso! happy in that theme, design,  
For, Gallus and Mæcenæ gone, they see  
None such besides, or whom they love as thee;

---

\* The Aventine hill. For "Evander," see page 491.

And if my verse may give the meed of fame,  
 Thine too shall prove an everlasting name.  
 Already such, it shines in Tasso's page  
 (For thou wast Tasso's friend) from age to age,  
 And, next, the Muse consigned (not unaware  
 How high the charge) Marino to thy care,  
 Who, singing to the nymphs Adonis' praise,  
 Boasts thee the patron of his copious lays.  
 To thee alone the poet would entrust  
 His latest vows, to thee alone his dust;  
 And thou with punctual piety hast paid,  
 In laboured brass, thy tribute to his shade.  
 Nor this contented thee—but lest the grave  
 Should aught absorb of theirs which thou couldst save,  
 All future ages thou hast deigned to teach  
 The life, lot, genius, character of each,  
 Eloquent as the Carian sage, who, true  
 To his great theme, the life of Homer drew.

I, therefore, though a stranger youth, who come,  
 Cnilled by rude blasts that freeze my northern home,  
 Thee, dear to Olio, confident proclaim,  
 And thine, for Phœbus' sake, a deathless name.  
 Nor thou, so kind, wilt view with scornful eye  
 A muse scarce reared beneath our sullen sky  
 Who fears not, indiscreet as she is young,  
 To seek in Latium hearers of her song.  
 We too, where Thames with its unsullied waves  
 The tresses of the blue-haired Ocean laves,  
 Hear oft, by night, or, slumbering, seem to hear,  
 O'er his wide stream, the swan's voice warbling clear;  
 And we could boast a Tityrus\* of yore  
 Who trod, a welcome guest, your happy shore.

Yes—dreary as we own our northern clime,  
 Even we to Phœbus raise the polished rhyme,  
 We too serve Phœbus; Phœbus has received  
 (If legends old may claim to be believed)  
 No sordid gifts from us, the golden ear,  
 The burnished apple, ruddiest of the year,  
 The fragrant crocus, and, to grace his fane,  
 Fair damsels chosen from the Druid train;  
 Druids, our native bards in ancient time,  
 Who gods and heroes praised in hallowed rhyme!  
 Hence, often as the maids of Greece surround  
 Apollo's shrine with hymns of festive sound,  
 They name the virgins who arrived of yore  
 With British offerings on the Delian shore,

---

\* Chaucer, called in Spenser's *Pastorals* Tityrus.

Loxo,\* from giant Corineus sprung,  
 Upis,† on whose blest lips the future hung,  
 And Hecæerge, with the golden hair,  
 All decked with Pictish hues, and all with bosoms bare.

Thou, therefore, happy sage, whatever clime  
 Shall ring with Tasso's praise in after time,  
 Or with Marino's, shalt be known their friend,  
 And with an equal flight to fame ascend.  
 The world shall hear how Phœbus and the Nine  
 Were inmates once, and willing guests of thine.  
 Yet Phœbus, when of old constrained to roam  
 The earth, an exile from his heavenly home,  
 Entered, no willing guest, Admetus' door,‡  
 Though Hercules had ventured there before.  
 But gentle Chiron's cave was near, a scene  
 Of rural peace, clothed with perpetual green,  
 And thither, oft as respite he required  
 From rustic clamours loud, the god retired.  
 There, many a time, on Peneus' bank reclined  
 At some oak's root with ivy thick entwined,  
 Won by his hospitable friend's desire,  
 He soothed his pains of exile with the lyre.  
 Then shook the hills, then trembled Peneus' shore,  
 Nor Cæta felt his load of forest more;  
 The upland elms descended to the plain,  
 And softened lynxes wondered at that strain.

Well may we think, O dear to all above!  
 Thy birth distinguished by the smile of Jove,  
 And that Apollo shed his kindest power,  
 And Maia's son,§ on that propitious hour,  
 Since only minds so born can comprehend  
 A poet's worth, or yield that worth a friend.  
 Hence on thy yet unfaded cheek appears  
 The lingering freshness of thy greener years;  
 Hence in thy front and features we admire  
 Nature unwithered and a mind entire.  
 Oh! might so true a friend to me belong,  
 So skilled to grace the votaries of song,  
 Should I recall hereafter into rhyme  
 The kings and heroes of my native clime,  
 Arthur the chief, who even now prepares,  
 In subterraneous being, future wars,  
 With all his martial knights, to be restored  
 Each to his seat around the federal board;

\* One of the British maidens who brought offerings to Apollo. † A Druidical prophetess.

‡ Admetus was king of Thessaly. Apollo was for a year his shepherd.

§ Hermes.

And Oh! if spirit fail me not, disperse  
 Our Saxon plunderers in triumphant verse!  
 Then, after all, when, with the past content,  
 A life I finish, not in silence spent;  
 Should he, kind mourner, o'er my deathbed bend,  
 I shall but need to say—"Be yet my friend!"  
 He, too, perhaps, shall bid the marble breathe  
 To honour me, and with the graceful wreath,  
 Or of Parnassus or the Paphian isle,  
 Shall bind my brows—but I shall rest the while.  
 Then, also, if the fruits of faith endure,  
 And virtue's promised recompense be sure,  
 Borne to those seats to which the blessed aspire  
 By purity of soul and virtuous fire,  
 These rites, as Fate permits, I shall survey  
 With eyes illumined by celestial day,  
 And, every cloud from my pure spirit driven,  
 Joy in the bright beatitude of heaven!

## ON THE DEATH OF DAMON.

## THE ARGUMENT.

Thyrsis and Damon, shepherds and neighbours, had always pursued the same studies, and had, from their earliest days, been united in the closest friendship. Thyrsis, while travelling for improvement, received intelligence of the death of Damon, and, after a time, returning and finding it true, deploras himself, and his solitary condition, in this poem.

By Damon is to be understood Charles Diodati, connected with the Italian city of Lucca by his father's side, in other respects an Englishman; a youth of uncommon genius, erudition, and virtue.

YE nymphs of Himera,\* (for ye have shed  
 Erewhile for Daphnis, and for Hylas dead,  
 And over Bion's long-lamented bier,  
 The fruitless meed of many a sacred tear)  
 Now through the villas laved by Thames rehearse  
 The woes of Thyrsis in Sicilian verse,  
 What sighs he heaved, and how with groans profound  
 He made the woods and hollow rocks resound,  
 Young Damon dead; nor even ceased to pour  
 His lonely sorrows at the midnight hour.

The green wheat twice had nodded in the ear,  
 And golden harvest twice enriched the year,  
 Since Damon's lips had gasped for vital air  
 The last, last time, nor Thyrsis yet was there;

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\* In Sicily

For he, enamoured of the muse, remained  
 In Tuscan Fiorenza long detained,  
 But, stored at length with all he wished to learn,  
 For his flock's sake now hasted to return;  
 And when the shepherd had resumed his seat  
 At the elm's root, within his old retreat,  
 Then 'twas his lot, then, all his loss to know,  
 And from his burthened heart he vented thus his woe:

"Go, seek your home, my lambs; my thoughts are due  
 To other cares than those of feeding you.

Alas! what deities shall I suppose  
 In heaven, or earth, concerned for human woes,  
 Since, oh my Damon! their severe decree  
 So soon condemns me to regret of thee!  
 Depart'st thou thus, thy virtues unrepaid  
 With fame and honour, like a vulgar shade!  
 Let him forbid it whose bright rod controls,  
 And separates sordid from illustrious souls;  
 Drives far the rabble, and to thee assign  
 A happier lot with spirits worthy thine!

"Go, seek your home, my lambs; my thoughts are due  
 To other cares than those of feeding you.

Whate'er befall, unless by cruel chance  
 The wolf first give me a forbidding glance,  
 Thou shalt not moulder undeplord, but long  
 Thy praise shall dwell on every shepherd's tongue.  
 To Daphnis first they shall delight to pay,  
 And, after him, to thee, the votive lay,  
 While Pales shall the flocks and pastures love,  
 Or Faunus to frequent the field or grove;  
 At least, if ancient piety and truth,  
 With all the learned labours of thy youth,  
 May serve thee aught, or to have left behind  
 A sorrowing friend, and of the tuneful kind.

"Go, seek your home, my lambs; my thoughts are due  
 To other cares than those of feeding you.

Yes, Damon! such thy sure reward shall be;  
 But ah, what doom awaits unhappy me?  
 Who, now, my pains and perils shall divide,  
 As thou wast wont, for ever at my side,  
 Both when the rugged frost annoyed our feet,  
 And when the herbage all was parched with heat;  
 Whether the grim wolf's ravage to prevent,  
 Or the huge lion's, armed with darts we went?  
 Whose converse now shall calm my stormy day,  
 With charming song who now beguile my way?

"Go, seek your home, my lambs; my thoughts are due  
 To other cares than those of feeding you.

In whom shall I confide ? Whose counsel find  
 A balmy medicine for my troubled mind ?  
 Or whose discourse with innocent delight  
 Shall fill me now, and cheat the wintry night,  
 While hisses on my hearth the pulpy pear,  
 And blackening chestnuts start and crackle there,  
 While storms abroad the dreary meadows whelm,  
 And the wind thunders through the neighbouring elm.

"Go, seek your home, my lambs ; my thoughts are due  
 To other cares than those of feeding you.  
 Or who, when summer suns their summit reach,  
 And Pan sleeps hidden by the sheltering beech,  
 When shepherds disappear, nymphs seek the sedge,  
 And the stretched rustic snores beneath the hedge,  
 Who then shall render me thy pleasant vein  
 Of Attic wit, thy jests, thy smiles, again ?

"Go, seek your home, my lambs ; my thoughts are due  
 To other cares than those of feeding you.  
 Where glens and vales are thickest overgrown  
 With tangled boughs, I wander now alone,  
 Till night descend, while blustering wind and shower  
 Beat on my temples through the shattered bower.

"Go, seek your home, my lambs ; my thoughts are due  
 To other cares than those of feeding you.  
 Alas ! what rampant weeds now shame my fields,  
 And what a mildewed crop the furrow yields ;  
 My rambling vines, unwedded to the trees,  
 Bear shrivelled grapes ; my myrtles fail to please :  
 Nor please me more my flocks : they, slighted, turn  
 Their unavailing looks on me, and mourn.

"Go, seek your home, my lambs ; my thoughts are due  
 To other cares than those of feeding you.  
 Ægon invites me to the hazel grove,  
 Amyntas, on the river's bank to rove,  
 And young Alpheisibœus to a seat  
 Where branching elms exclude the midday heat.  
 'Here fountains spring—here mossy hillocks rise ;  
 Here zephyr whispers, and the stream replies.'—  
 Thus each persuades, but, deaf to every call,  
 I gain the thickets, and escape them all.

"Go, seek your home, my lambs ; my thoughts are due  
 To other cares than those of feeding you.  
 Then Mopsus said, (the same who reads so well  
 The voice of birds, and what the stars foretell,  
 For he by chance had noticed my return)  
 'What means thy sullen mood, this deep concern ;  
 Ah, Thyrsis ! thou art either crazed with love,  
 Or some sinister influence from above ;



Dull Saturn's influence oft the shepherds rue;  
His leaden shaft oblique has pierced thee through,'

"Go, go, my lambs, unpastured as ye are,  
My thoughts are all now due to other care.  
The nymphs amazed, my melancholy see,  
And, 'Thyrsis!' cry—'what will become of thee?  
What wouldst thou, Thyrsis? such should not appear  
The brow of youth, stern, gloomy, and severe;  
Brisk youth should laugh and love—ah, shun the fate  
Of those, twice wretched mopes! who love too late!"

"Go, go, my lambs, unpastured as ye are;  
My thoughts are all now due to other care.  
Ægle with Hyas came, to soothe my pain,  
And Baucis' daughter, Dryope the vain,  
Fair Dryope, for voice and finger neat  
Known far and near, and for her self-conceit;  
Chloris too came, whose cottage on the lands  
That skirt the Idumanian current stands;  
But all in vain they came, and but to see  
Kind words, and comfortable, lost on me.

"Go, go, my lambs, unpastured as ye are;  
My thoughts are all now due to other care.  
Ah blest indifference of the playful herd,  
None by his fellow chosen, or preferred!  
No bonds of amity the flocks intral,  
But each associates, and is pleased with all:  
So graze the dappled deer in numerous droves,  
And all his kind alike the zebra loves;  
The same law governs where the billows roar,  
And Proteus' shoals o'erspread the desert shore;  
The sparrow, meanest of the feathered race,  
His fit companion finds in every place,  
With whom he picks the grain that suits him best,  
Flirts here and there, and late returns to rest,  
And whom, if chance the falcon make his prey,  
Or hedger with his well-aimed arrow slay,  
For no such loss the gay survivor grieves,  
New love he seeks, and new delight receives.  
We only, an obdurate kind, rejoice,  
Scorning all others, in a single choice.  
We scarce in thousands meet one kindred mind,  
And if the long-sought good at last we find,  
When least we fear it, Death our treasure steals,  
And gives our heart a wound that nothing heals.  
"Go, go, my lambs, unpastured as ye are;  
My thoughts are all now due to other care.  
Ah, what delusion lured me from my flocks,  
To traverse Alpine snows and rugged rocks!"

What need so great had I to visit Rome,  
 Now sunk in ruins, and herself a tomb?  
 Or, had she flourished still, as when, of old,  
 For her sake Tityrus forsook his fold,  
 What need so great had I to incur a pause  
 Of thy sweet intercourse for such a cause,  
 For such a cause to place the roaring sea,  
 Rocks, mountains, woods, between my friend and me?  
 Else, had I grasped thy feeble hand, composed  
 Thy decent limbs, thy drooping eyelids closed,  
 And, at the last, had said—'Farewell—ascend—  
 Nor even in the skies forget thy friend!'

"Go, go, my lambs, untended homeward fare;  
 My thoughts are all now due to other care.  
 Although well pleased, ye tuneful Tuscan swains!  
 My mind the memory of your worth retains,  
 Yet not your worth can teach me less to mourn  
 My Damon lost.—He too was Tuscan born,  
 Born in your Lucca, city of renown!  
 And wit possessed, and genius, like your own.  
 Oh how elate was I, when stretched beside  
 The murmuring course of Arno's breezy tide,  
 Beneath the poplar grove I passed my hours,  
 Now cropping myrtles, and now vernal flowers,  
 And hearing, as I lay at ease along,  
 Your swains contending for the prize of song!  
 I also dared attempt (and, as it seems,  
 Not much displeased attempting) various themes,  
 For even I can presents boast from you,  
 The shepherd's pipe, and osier basket too,  
 And Dati, and Francini, both have made  
 My name familiar to the beechen shade,  
 And they are learned, and each in every place  
 Renowned for song, and both of Lydian race.

"Go, go, my lambs, untended homeward fare;  
 My thoughts are all now due to other care.  
 While bright the dewy grass with moonbeams shone,  
 And I stood hurdling in my kids alone,  
 How often have I said (but thou hadst found  
 Ere then thy dark cold lodgment underground)  
 Now Damon sings, or springes sets for hares,  
 Or wickerwork for various use prepares!  
 How oft, indulging fancy, have I planned  
 New scenes of pleasure that I hoped at hand,  
 Called thee abroad as I was wont, and cried—  
 'What, ho! my friend—come, lay thy task aside  
 Haste, let us forth together, and beguile  
 The heat beneath yon whispering shades awhile,

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Or on the margin stray of Colne's clear flood,  
 Or where Cassibelan's\* gray turrets stood!  
 There thou shalt cull me simples, and shalt teach  
 Thy friend the name and healing powers of each,  
 From the tall bluebell to the dwarfish weed,  
 What the dry land, and what the marshes breed,  
 For all their kinds alike to thee are known,  
 And the whole art of Galen is thy own.  
 Ah, perish Galen's art, and withered be  
 The useless herbs that gave not health to thee!  
 Twelve evenings since, as in poetic dream  
 I meditating sat some statelier theme,  
 The reeds no sooner touched my lip, though new,  
 And unessayed before, than wide they flew;  
 Bursting their waxen bands, nor could sustain  
 The deep-toned music of the solemn strain;  
 And I am vain perhaps, but I will tell  
 How proud a theme I chose—ye groves, farewell!  
 "Go, go, my lambs, untended homeward fare;  
 My thoughts are all now due to other care.  
 Of Brutus, Dardan chief, my song shall be,  
 How with his barks he ploughed the British sea,  
 First from Rutupia's towering headland seen,  
 And of his consort's reign, fair Imogen;  
 Of Brennus and Belinus, brothers bold,  
 And of Arviragus, and how of old  
 Our hardy sires the Armorican controlled;  
 And of the wife of Gorlois,† who, surprised  
 By Uther, in her husband's form disguised,  
 (Such was the force of Merlin's art) became  
 Pregnant with Arthur of heroic fame.  
 These themes I now revolve—and oh! if Fate  
 Proportion to these themes my lengthened date,  
 Adieu my shepherd's reed—yon pine tree bough  
 Shall be thy future home, there dangle thou  
 Forgotten and disused, unless ere long  
 Thou change thy Latian for a British song:  
 A British?—even so—the powers of man  
 Are bounded; little is the most he can;  
 And it shall well suffice me, and shall be  
 Fame and proud recompense enough for me,  
 If Usa,‡ golden-haired, my verse may learn,  
 If Alain bending o'er his crystal urn,  
 Swift-whirling Abra, Trent's o'ershadowed stream,  
 Thames, lovelier far than all in my esteem,

---

\* St. Albans.

† Iogerne.

‡ The Ouse. The *Alain* is the *Alne*. The *Abra*, the *Humber*.

Tamar's ore-tinctured flood, and, after these,  
The wave-worn shores of utmost Orcades.

"Go, go, my lambs, untended homeward fare!

My thoughts are all now due to other care.

All this I kept in leaves of laurel rind

Enfolded safe, and for thy view designed,

This—and a gift from Manso's hand beside,

(Manso, not least his native city's pride)

Two cups that radiant as their giver shone,

Adorned by sculpture with a double zone.

The spring was graven there; here slowly wind

The Red Sea shores with groves of spices lined;

Her plumes of various hues amid the boughs

The sacred, solitary phoenix shows,

And, watchful of the dawn, reverts her head

To see Aurora leave her watery bed.

—In other part, the expansive vault above,

And there too, even there, the god of love;

With quiver armed he mounts, his torch displays

A vivid light, his gem-tipped arrows blaze,

Around his bright and fiery eyes he rolls,

Nor aims at vulgar minds or little souls,

Nor deigns one look below, but, aiming high,

Sends every arrow to the lofty sky;

Hence forms divine, and minds immortal, learn

The power of Cupid, and enamoured burn.

"Thou also Damon, (neither need I fear

That hope delusive) thou art also there;

For whither should simplicity like thine

Retire? where else such spotless virtue shine?

Thou dwell'st not (thought profane) in shades below,

Nor tears suit thee—cease then, my tears, to flow.

Away with grief: on Damon ill bestowed!

Who, pure himself, has found a pure abode,

Has passed the showery arch, henceforth resides

With saints and heroes, and from flowing tides

Quaffs copious immortality and joy

With hallowed lips!—Oh! blest without alloy,

And now enriched with all that faith can claim,

Look down, entreated by whatever name,

If Damon please thee most (that rural sound

Shall oft with echoes fill the groves around)

Or if Deodatus, by which alone

In those ethereal mansions thou art known.

Thy blush was maiden, and thy youth the taste

Of wedded bliss knew never, pure and chaste.

The honours, therefore, by divine decree

The lot of virgin worth, are given to thee:

## TRANSLATIONS

Than Iön kept (Iön,\* Eretheus' son  
 Illustrious, of the fair Creüsa born)  
 In the resplendent temple of his god,  
 Tripods of gold, and Delphic gifts divine.

## ANTISTROPHE.

Haste, then, to the pleasant groves,  
 The Muses' favourite haunt;  
 Resume thy station in Apollo's dome,  
 Dearer to him  
 Than Delos, or the forked Parnassian hill!  
 Exulting go,  
 Since now a splendid lot is also thine,  
 And thou art sought by my propitious friend  
 For there thou shalt be read  
 With authors of exalted note,  
 The ancient glorious lights of Greece and Rome.

## EPODE.

Ye, then, my works, no longer vain  
 And worthless deemed by me!  
 Whate'er this sterile genius has produced,  
 Expect, at last, the rage of envy spent,  
 An unmolested happy home,  
 Gift of kind Hermes, and my watchful friend,  
 Where never flippant tongue profane  
 Shall entrance find,  
 And whence the coarse unlettered multitude  
 Shall babble far remote.  
 Perhaps some future distant age,  
 Less tinged with prejudice, and better taught,  
 Shall furnish minds of power  
 To judge more equally.  
 Then, Malice silenced in the tomb,  
 Cooler heads and sounder hearts,  
 Thanks to Rous, if aught of praise  
 I merit, shall with candour weigh the claim.

---

\* Iön kept the treasures in the Temple of Delphi.

## TRANSLATIONS OF THE ITALIAN POEMS.

## SONNET.

FAIR Lady! whose harmonious name the Rhine,\*  
 Through all his grassy vale, delights to hear,  
 Base were indeed the wretch who could forbear  
 To love a spirit elegant as thine,  
 That manifests a sweetness all divine,  
 Nor knows a thousand winning acts to spare,  
 And graces, which Love's bow and arrows are,  
 Tempering thy virtues to a softer shine.  
 When gracefully thou speak'st, or singest gay,  
 Such strains as might the senseless forest move,  
 Ah then—turn each his eyes and ears away,  
 Who feels himself unworthy of thy love!  
 Grace can alone preserve him ere the dart  
 Of fond desire yet reach his inmost heart.

## SONNET.

As on a hill-top rude, when closing day  
 Imbrowns the scene, some pastoral maiden fair  
 Waters a lovely foreign plant with care,  
 Borne from its native genial airs away,  
 That scarcely can its tender bud display,  
 So, on my tongue these accents, new and rare,  
 Are flowers exotic, which Love waters there.  
 While thus, O sweetly scornful! I essay  
 Thy praise in verse to British ears unknown,  
 And Thames exchange for Arno's fair domain;  
 So Love has willed, and ofttimes Love has shown  
 That what he wills, he never wills in vain.  
 Oh that this hard and sterile breast might be  
 To Him, who plants from Heaven, a soil as free.

## CANZONE.

THEY mock my toil—the nymphs and amorous swains—  
 “And whence this fond attempt to write,” they cry,  
 “Love-songs in language that thou little know'st?”  
 How dar'st thou risk to sing these foreign strains?

---

\* In the original “Rhenó.” Perhaps the Reno, Masson thinks, which flows near Bologna.

Say truly. Find'st not oft thy purpose crossed,  
 And that thy fairest flowers here fade and die?"  
 Then, with pretence of admiration high—  
 "Thee other shores expect, and other tides,  
 Rivers, on whose grassy sides  
 Her deathless laurel leaf, with which to bind  
 Thy flowing locks, already Fame provides;  
 Why then this burthen, better far declined?"  
 Speak, Muse! for me—the fair one said, who guides  
 My willing heart, and all my fancy's flights,  
 "This is the language in which Love delights."

### SONNET, TO CHARLES DIODATI

CHARLES—and I say it wondering—thou must know  
 That I, who once assumed a scornful air  
 And scoffed at Love, am fallen in his snare,  
 (Full many an upright man has fallen so :)  
 Yet think me not thus dazzled by the flow  
 Of golden locks, or damask cheek; more rare  
 The heartfelt beauties of my foreign fair;  
 A mien majestic, with dark brows that show  
 The tranquil lustre of a lofty mind;  
 Words exquisite, of idioms more than one,  
 And song, whose fascinating power might bind,  
 And from her sphere draw down, the labouring moon;  
 With such fire-darting eyes that, should I fill  
 My ears with wax, she would enchant me still.

### SONNET.

LADY ! It cannot be but that thine eyes  
 Must be my sun, such radiance they display,  
 And strike me even as Phœbus him whose way  
 Through horrid Libya's sandy desert lies.  
 Meantime, on that side steamy vapours rise  
 Where most I suffer. Of what kind are they,  
 New as to me they are, I cannot say,  
 But deem them, in the lover's language—sighs.  
 Some, though with pain, my bosom close conceals,  
 Which, if in part escaping thence, they tend  
 To soften thine, thy coldness soon congeals.  
 While others to my tearful eyes ascend,  
 Whence my sad nights in showers are ever drowned,  
 Till my Aurora comes, her brow with roses bound.

## SONNET.

ENAMOURED, artless, young, on foreign ground,  
 Uncertain whither from myself to fly;  
 To thee, dear lady, with an humble sigh  
 Let me devote my heart, which I have found  
 By certain proofs, not few, intrepid, sound,  
 Good, and addicted to conceptions high :  
 When tempests shake the world, and fire the sky,  
 It rests in adamant self-wrapt around,  
 As safe from envy, and from outrage rude,  
 From hopes and fears that vulgar minds abuse,  
 As fond of genius, and fixed fortitude,  
 Of the resounding lyre, and every Muse.  
 Weak you will find it in one only part,  
 Now pierced by Love's immedicable dart.

## TRANSLATION OF A SIMILE IN PARADISE LOST.

"As when, from mountain-tops, the dusky clouds  
 Ascending," &c.—Book ii. l. 488.

QUALES aërii montis de vertice nubes  
 Cum surgunt, et jam Boreæ tumida ora quiêrunt,  
 Cœlum hilares abdit, spissâ caligine, vultus :  
 Tum si jucundo tandem sol prodeat ore,  
 Et croceo montes et pascua lumine tingat,  
 Gaudent omnia, aves mulcent concentibus agros,  
 Balatuque ovium colles vallesque resultant.

## TRANSLATION OF DRYDEN'S EPIGRAM ON MILTON.

(July, 1780.)

TRES tria, sed longè distantia, sæcula vates  
 Ostentant tribus è gentibus eximios.  
 Græcia sublimem, cum majestate disertum  
 Roma tulit, felix Anglia utrique parem.  
 Partubus ex binis Natura exhausta, coacta est,  
 Tertius ut fieret, consociare duos.



## TRANSLATIONS FROM VINCENT BOURNE.\*

## THE THRACIAN.

THRACIAN parents, at his birth,  
Mourn their babe with many a tear,  
But with undissembled mirth  
Place him breathless on his bier.

Greece and Rome with equal scorn,  
"O the savages!" exclaim,  
"Whether they rejoice or mourn,  
Well entitled to the name!"

But the cause of this concern,  
And this pleasure, would they trace,  
Even they might somewhat learn  
From the savages of Thrace.

## RECIPROCAL KINDNESS THE PRIMARY LAW OF NATURE.

ANDROCLES, from his injured lord, in dread  
Of instant death, to Libya's desert fled.  
Tired with his toilsome flight, and parched with heat,  
He spied at length a cavern's cool retreat;  
But scarce had given to rest his weary frame,  
When, hugest of his kind, a lion came:  
He roared approaching: but the savage din  
To plaintive murmurs changed—arrived within,  
And with expressive looks, his lifted paw  
Presenting, aid implored from whom he saw.  
The fugitive, through terror at a stand,  
Dared not awhile afford his trembling hand;  
But bolder grown, at length inherent found  
A pointed thorn, and drew it from the wound.  
The cure was wrought; he wiped the sanious blood,  
And firm and free from pain the lion stood.  
Again he seeks the wilds, and day by day  
Regales his inmate with the parted prey.  
Nor he disdains the dole, though unprepared,  
Spread on the ground, and with a lion shared.  
But thus to live—still lost—sequestered still—  
Scarce seemed his lord's revenge a heavier ill.

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\* Vincent Bourne was usher of the fifth form at Westminster when Cowper was in it.  
He is known now as an excellent Latin poet.

Home! native home! Oh might he but repair!  
 He must—he will, though death attends him there.  
 He goes, and doomed to perish, on the sands  
 Of the full theatre unpitied stands:  
 When lo! the selfsame lion from his cage  
 Flies to devour him, famished into rage.  
 He flies, but viewing in his purposed prey  
 The man, his healer, pauses on his way,  
 And, softened by remembrance into sweet  
 And kind composure, crouches at his feet.  
 Mute with astonishment, the assembly gaze:  
 But why, ye Romans? Whence your mute amaze?  
 All this is natural: Nature bade him rend  
 An enemy; she bids him spare a friend.

## A MANUAL,

MORE ANCIENT THAN THE ART OF PRINTING, AND NOT TO BE FOUND IN ANY  
 CATALOGUE.

THERE is a book, which we may call  
 (Its excellence is such)  
 Alone a library, though small;  
 The ladies thumb it much.  
 Words none, things numerous it contains:  
 And things with words compared,  
 Who needs be told, that has his brains,  
 Which merits most regard?  
 Ofttimes its leaves of scarlet hue  
 A golden edging boast;  
 And opened, it displays to view  
 Twelve pages at the most.  
 Nor name nor title, stamped behind,  
 Adorns its outer part;  
 But all within 'tis richly lined,  
 A magazine of art.  
 The whitest hands that secret hoard  
 Oft visit: and the fair  
 Preserve it in their bosoms stored,  
 As with a miser's care.  
 Thence implements of every size,  
 And formed for various use,  
 (They need but to consult their eyes)  
 They readily produce.

## TRANSLATIONS

The largest and the longest kind  
 Possess the foremost page,  
 A sort most needed by the blind,  
 Or nearly such from age.

The full charged leaf, which next ensues,  
 Presents in bright array  
 The smaller sort, which matrons use,  
 Not quite so blind as they.

The third, the fourth, the fifth supply  
 What their occasions ask,  
 Who with a more discerning eye  
 Perform a nicer task.

But still with regular decrease  
 From size to size they fall,  
 In every leaf grow less and less;  
 The last are least of all.

Oh! what a fund of genius, pent  
 In narrow space is here!  
 This volume's method and intent  
 How luminous and clear.

It leaves no reader at a loss  
 Or posed, whoever reads:  
 No commentator's tedious gloss,  
 Nor even index needs.

Search Bodley's many thousands o'er!  
 No book is treasured there,  
 Nor yet in Granta's numerous store,  
 That may with this compare.

No!—rival none in either host  
 Of this was ever seen,  
 Or, that contents could justly boast,  
 So brilliant and so keen.

## AN ENIGMA.

A NEEDLE, small as small can be,  
 In bulk and use surpasses me,  
 Nor is my purchase dear;  
 For little, and almost for nought,  
 As many of my kind are bought  
 As days are in the year.

Yet though but little use we boast,  
 And are procured at little cost,  
     The labour is not light;  
 Nor few artificers it asks,  
 All skilful in their several tasks,  
     To fashion us aright.

One fuses metal o'er the fire,  
 A second draws it into wire,  
     The sheers another plies,  
 Who clips in length the brazen thread  
 For him who, chafing every shred  
     Gives all an equal size.

A fifth prepares, exact and round,  
 The knob with which it must be crowned;  
     His follower makes it fast:  
 And with his mallet and his file  
 To shape the point, employs awhile  
     The seventh and the last.

Now therefore, Œdipus! declare  
 What creature, wonderful, and rare,  
     A process that obtains  
 Its purpose with so much ado  
 At last produces!—tell me true,  
     And take me for your pains!

#### SPARROWS SELF-DOMESTICATED IN TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

NONE ever shared the social feast,  
 Or as an inmate or a guest,  
 Beneath the celebrated dome  
 Where once Sir Isaac had his home,  
 Who saw not (and with some delight  
 Perhaps he viewed the novel sight)  
 How numerous, at the tables there,  
 The sparrows beg their daily fare.  
 For there, in every nook and cell  
 Where such a family may dwell,  
 Sure as the vernal season comes  
 Their nest they weave in hope of crumbs,  
 Which kindly given, may serve with food  
 Convenient their unfeathered brood;  
 And oft as with its summons clear  
 The warning bell salutes their ear,

## TRANSLATIONS

Sagacious listeners to the sound,  
 They flock from all the fields around,  
 To reach the hospitable hall,  
 None more attentive to the call.  
 Arrived, the pensionary band,  
 Hopping and chirping, close at hand,  
 Solicit what they soon receive,  
 The sprinkled, plenteous donative.  
 Thus is a multitude, though large,  
 Supported at a trivial charge:  
 A single doit would overpay  
 The expenditure of every day,  
 And who can grudge so small a grace  
 To suppliants, natives of the place?

## FAMILIARITY DANGEROUS.

As in her ancient mistress' lap  
 The youthful tabby lay,  
 They gave each other many a tap,  
 Alike disposed to play.

But strife ensues. Puss waxes warm,  
 And with protruded claws  
 Ploughs all the length of Lydia's arm,  
 Mere wantonness the cause.

At once, resentful of the deed,  
 She shakes her to the ground  
 With many a threat that she shall bleed  
 With still a deeper wound.

But, Lydia, bid thy fury rest:  
 It was a venial stroke:  
 For she that will with kittens jest,  
 Should bear a kitten's joke.

## INVITATION TO THE REDBREAST.

SWEET bird, whom the winter constrains—  
 And seldom another it can—  
 To seek a retreat while he reigns  
 In the well sheltered dwellings of man,  
 Who never can seem to intrude,  
 Though in all places equally free,  
 Come, oft as the season is rude,  
 Thou art sure to be welcome to me.

At sight of the first feeble ray  
 That pierces the clouds of the east,  
 To inveigle thee every day  
 My windows shall show thee a feast;  
 For, taught by experience, I know  
 Thee mindful of benefit long,  
 And that, thankful for all I bestow,  
 Thou wilt pay me with many a song.

Then, soon as the swell of the buds  
 Bespeaks the renewal of spring,  
 Fly hence, if thou wilt, to the woods,  
 Or where it shall please thee to sing:  
 And shouldst thou, compelled by a frost,  
 Come again to my window or door,  
 Doubt not an affectionate host,  
 Only pay as thou paidst me before.

Thus music must needs be confessed  
 To flow from a fountain above;  
 Else how should it work in the breast  
 Unchangeable friendship and love?  
 And who on the globe can be found,  
 Save your generation and ours,  
 That can be delighted by sound,  
 Or boasts any musical powers?

## STRADA'S NIGHTINGALE

THE shepherd touched his reed; sweet Philomel  
 Essayed, and oft essayed to catch the strain,  
 And treasuring, as on her ear they fell,  
 The numbers, echoed note for note again.

The peevish youth, who ne'er had found before  
 A rival of his skill, indignant heard,  
 And soon (for various was his tuneful store)  
 In loftier tones defied the simple bird.

She dared the task, and, rising as he rose,  
 With all the force that passion gives inspired,  
 Returned the sounds awhile, but in the close  
 Exhausted fell, and at his feet expired.

Thus strength, not skill prevailed. O fatal strife,  
 By thee, poor songstress, playfully begun;  
 And, O sad victory, which cost thy life,  
 And he may wish that he had never won!

ODE ON THE DEATH OF A LADY,  
WHO LIVED ONE HUNDRED YEARS, AND DIED ON HER  
BIRTHDAY, 1728.

ANCIENT dame, how wide and vast  
To a race like ours appears,  
Rounded to an orb at last,  
All thy multitude of years !

We, the herd of human kind,  
Frailer and of feebler powers ;  
We, to narrow bounds confined,  
Soon exhaust the sum of ours.

Death's delicious banquet—we  
Perish even from the womb,  
Swifter than a shadow flee,  
Nourished but to feed the tomb.

Seeds of merciless disease  
Lurk in all that we enjoy ;  
Some that waste us by degrees,  
Some that suddenly destroy.

And, if life o'erleap the bourn  
Common to the sons of men,  
What remains, but that we mourn,  
Dream, and dote, and drivel then ?

Fast as moons can wax and wane  
Sorrow comes ; and while we groan,  
Pant with anguish, and complain,  
Half our years are fled and gone.

If a few (to few 'tis given),  
Lingering on this earthly stage,  
Creep and halt with steps uneven  
To the period of an age,

Wherefore live they, but to see  
Cunning, arrogance, and force,  
Sights lamented much by thee,  
Holding their accustomed course ?

Oft was seen, in ages past,  
All that we with wonder view ;  
Often shall be to the last ;  
Earth produces nothing new.

Thee we gratulate, content  
 Should propitious Heaven design  
 Life for us as calmly spent,  
 Though but half the length of thine.

## THE CAUSE WON.

Two neighbours furiously dispute;  
 A field—the subject of the suit.  
 Trivial the spot, yet such the rage  
 With which the combatants engage,  
 'Twere hard to tell who covets most  
 The prize—at whatsoever cost.  
 The pleadings swell. Words still suffice:  
 No single word but has its price.  
 No term but yields some fair pretence  
 For novel and increased expense.  
 Defendant thus becomes a name,  
 Which he that bore it may disclaim,  
 Since both, in one description blended,  
 Are plaintiffs—when the suit is ended.

## THE SILKWORM.

THE beams of April, ere it goes,  
 A worm, scarce visible, disclose;  
 All winter long content to dwell  
 The tenant of his native shell.  
 The same prolific season gives  
 The sustenance by which he lives,  
 The mulberry leaf, a simple store,  
 That serves him—till he needs no more!  
 For, his dimensions once complete,  
 Thenceforth none ever sees him eat;  
 Though till his growing time be past  
 Scarce ever is he seen to fast.  
 That hour arrived, his work begins,  
 He spins and weaves, and weaves and spins;  
 Till circle upon circle wound  
 Careless around him and around,  
 Conceals him with a veil, though slight,  
 Impervious to the keenest sight.  
 Thus self-enclosed as in a cask,  
 At length he finishes his task;  
 And, though a worm when he was lost,  
 Or caterpillar at the most,

o o



When next we see him, wings he wears,  
 And in papilio-pomp appears ;  
 Becomes oviparous ; supplies  
 With future worms and future flies  
 The next ensuing year—and dies !  
 Well were it for the world, if all  
 Who creep about this earthly ball,  
 Though shorter lived than most he be,  
 Were useful in their kind as he.

### THE INNOCENT THIEF.

Not a flower can be found in the fields,  
 Or the spot that we till for our pleasure,  
 From the largest to least, but it yields  
 The bee, never wearied, a treasure.

Scarce any she quits unexplored  
 With a diligence truly exact ;  
 Yet, steal what she may for her hoard,  
 Leaves evidence none of the fact.

Her lucrative task she pursues,  
 And pilfers with so much address,  
 That none of their odour they lose,  
 Nor charm by their beauty the less.

Not thus inoffensively preys  
 The cankerworm, indwelling foe !  
 His voracity not thus allays  
 The sparrow, the finch, or the crow.

The worm, more expensively fed,  
 The pride of the garden devours ;  
 And birds peck the seed from the bed,  
 Still less to be spared than the flowers.

But she, with such delicate skill,  
 Her pillage so fits for her use,  
 That the chemist in vain with his still  
 Would labour the like to produce.

Then grudge not her temperate meals,  
 Nor a benefit blame as a theft ;  
 Since, stole she not all that she steals,  
 Neither honey nor wax would be left.

## DENNER'S OLD WOMAN.\*

IN this mimic form of a matron in years,  
 How plainly the pencil of Denner appears !  
 The matron herself, in whose old age we see  
 Not a trace of decline, what a wonder is she !  
 No dimness of eye, and no cheek hanging low,  
 No wrinkle, or deep-furrowed frown on the brow !  
 Her forehead indeed is here circled around  
 With locks like the riband with which they are bound ;  
 While glossy and smooth, and as soft as the skin  
 Of a delicate peach, is the down of her chin ;  
 But nothing unpleasant, or sad, or severe,  
 Or that indicates life in its winter—is here.  
 Yet all is expressed with fidelity due,  
 Nor a pimple or freckle concealed from the view.

Many fond of new sights, or who cherish a taste  
 For the labours of art, to the spectacle haste.  
 The youths all agree, that could old age inspire  
 The passion of love, hers would kindle the fire,  
 And the matrons with pleasure confess that they see  
 Ridiculous nothing or hideous in thee.  
 The nymphs for themselves scarcely hope a decline,  
 O wonderful woman ! as placid as thine.

Strange magic of art ! which the youth can engage  
 To peruse, half enamoured, the features of age ;  
 And force from the virgin a sigh of despair,  
 That she when as old shall be equally fair !  
 How great is the glory that Denner has gained,  
 Since Apelles not more for his Venus obtained.

## THE TEARS OF A PAINTER.

APELLES, hearing that his boy  
 Had just expired—his only joy !  
 Although the sight with anguish tore him,  
 Bade place his dear remains before him.  
 He seized his brush, his colours spread ;  
 And—" Oh ! my child, accept,"—he said,  
 " ('Tis all that I can now bestow),  
 This tribute of a father's woe !"  
 Then, faithful to the twofold part,  
 Both of his feelings and his art,

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\* It is stated in a note to the editions of Bourne's Poems, that Denner's picture was exhibited in Old Palace Yard near Westminster Abbey.

He closed his eyes with tender care,  
 And formed at once a fellow pair.  
 His brow with amber locks beset,  
 And lips he drew not livid yet;  
 And shaded all that he had done  
 To a just image of his son.  
 Thus far is well. But view again  
 The cause of thy paternal pain!  
 Thy melancholy task fulfil!  
 It needs the last, last touches still.  
 Again his pencil's powers he tries,  
 For on his lips a smile he spies:  
 And still his cheek unfaded shows  
 The deepest damask of the rose.  
 Then, heedful to the finished whole,  
 With fondest eagerness he stole,  
 Till scarce himself distinctly knew  
 The cherub copied from the true.  
 Now, painter cease! Thy task is done.  
 Long lives this image of thy son;  
 Nor short lived shall the glory prove  
 Or of thy labour or thy love.

#### THE MAZE.

FROM right to left, and to and fro,  
 Caught in a labyrinth you go,  
 And turn, and turn, and turn again,  
 To solve the mystery, but in vain;  
 Stand still, and breathe, and take from me  
 A clue, that soon shall set you free!  
 Not Ariadne, if you met her,  
 Herself could serve you with a better,  
 You entered easily—find where—  
 And make with ease your exit there!

#### NO SORROW PECULIAR TO THE SUFFERER.

THE lover, in melodious verses,  
 His singular distress rehearses.  
 Still closing with a rueful cry,  
 "Was ever such a wretch as I!"  
 Yes! thousands have endured before  
 All thy distress; some, haply, more.  
 Unnumbered Corydons complain,  
 And Strephons, of the like disdain;

And if thy Chloe be of steel,  
Too deaf to hear, too hard to feel;  
Not her alone that censure fits,  
Nor thou alone hast lost thy wits.

THE SNAIL.

To grass, or leaf, or fruit, or wall,  
The Snail sticks close, nor fears to fall,  
As if he grew there, house and all  
Together.

Within that house secure he hides,  
When danger imminent betides  
Of storm, or other harm besides  
Of weather.

Give but his horns the slightest touch,  
His self-collecting power is such,  
He shrinks into his house with much  
Displeasure.

Where'er he dwells, he dwells alone,  
Except himself has chattels none,  
Well satisfied to be his own  
Whole treasure.

Thus, hermit-like, his life he leads,  
Nor partner of his banquet needs,  
And if he meets one, only feeds  
The faster.

Who seeks him must be worse than blind,  
(He and his house are so combined)  
If, finding it, he fails to find  
Its master.

THE CANTAB.

With two spurs, or one, and no great matter which,  
Boots bought, or boots borrowed, a whip or a switch,  
Five shillings or less for the hire of his beast,  
Paid part into hand;—you must wait for the rest.  
Thus equipt, Academicus climbs up his horse,  
And out they both sally for better or worse;  
His heart void of fear, and as light as a feather;  
And in violent haste to go not knowing whither:

Through the fields and the towns (see !) he scampers along,  
 And is looked at and laughed at by old and by young,  
 Till at length overspent, and his sides smeared with blood,  
 Down tumbles his horse, man and all, in the mud.  
 In a waggon or chaise shall he finish his route ?  
 Oh ! scandalous fate ! he must do it on foot.

Young gentlemen, hear !—I am older than you !  
 The advice that I give I have proved to be true :  
 Wherever your journey may be, never doubt it,  
 The faster you ride, you're the longer about it.

## EPIGRAMS TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN OF OWEN.\*

### ON ONE IGNORANT AND ARROGANT.

THOU mayst of double ignorance boast,  
 Who know'st not that thou nothing know st.

### PRUDENT SIMPLICITY.

THAT thou mayst injure no man, dovelike be,  
 And serpentlike, that none may injure thee !

### TO A FRIEND IN DISTRESS.

I WISH thy lot, now bad, still worse, my friend ;  
 For when at worst, they say, things always mend.

### SELF-KNOWLEDGE.

WHEN little more than boy in age,  
 I deemed myself almost a sage :  
 But now seem worthier to be styled,  
 For ignorance, almost a child.

\* John Owen was a well-known Epigrammatist, who lived in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. Born 1560 ; died 1622.

## RETALIATION.

THE works of ancient bards divine,  
Aulus, thou scorn'st to read;  
And should posterity read thine,  
It would be strange indeed!

## SUNSET AND SUNRISE.

CONTEMPLATE, when the sun declines,  
Thy death with deep reflection!  
And when again he rising shines,  
Thy day of resurrection!

## ON THE SHORTNESS OF HUMAN LIFE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN OF DR. JORTIN.\*

SUNS that set, and moons that wane,  
Rise and are restored again;  
Stars that orient day subdues,  
Night at her return renews.  
Herbs and flowers, the beauteous birth  
Of the genial womb of earth,  
Suffer but a transient death  
From the winter's cruel breath.  
Zephyr speaks; serenest skies  
Warm the glebe, and they arise.  
We, alas! earth's haughty kings,  
We, that promise mighty things,  
Losing soon life's happy prime,  
Droop and fade in little time.  
Spring returns, but not our bloom;  
Still 'tis winter in the tomb.

\* This little poem was sent to Newton by Cowper, on the 25th January, 1784. He prefaced it with a copy of the original by Dr. Jortin, and the following introduction:—

“ The late Doctor Jortin  
Had the good fortune  
To write these verses  
Upon tombs and hearses,  
Which I, being Jnglish,  
Have done into English.”

TRANSLATIONS FROM THE FRENCH OF  
MADAME DE LA MOTTE GUYON.\*

THE NATIVITY.

'Tis Folly all—let me no more be told  
Of Parian porticos, and roofs of gold;  
Delightful views of Nature, dressed by Art,  
Enchant no longer this indifferent heart:  
The Lord of all things, in His humble birth,  
Makes mean the proud magnificence of earth;  
The straw, the manger, and the mouldering wall,  
Eclipse its lustre; and I scorn it all.

Canals, and fountains, and delicious vales,  
Green slopes, and plains whose plenty never fails;  
Deep-rooted groves, whose heads sublimely rise,  
Earth-born, and yet ambitious of the skies;  
The abundant foliage of whose gloomy shades,  
Vainly the sun in all its power invades,  
Where warbled airs of sprightly birds resound,  
Whose verdure lives while Winter scowls around;  
Rocks, lofty mountains, caverns dark and deep,  
And torrents raving down the rugged steep;  
Smooth downs, whose fragrant herbs the spirits cheer:  
Meads crowned with flowers; streams musical and clear,  
Whose silver waters, and whose murmurs, join  
Their artless charms, to make the scene divine;  
The fruitful vineyard, and the furrowed plain,  
That seems a rolling sea of golden grain;  
All, all have lost the charms they once possessed:  
An infant God reigns sovereign in my breast;  
From Bethlehem's bosom I no more will rove;  
There dwells the Saviour, and there rests my love.  
Ye mightier rivers, that, with sounding force,  
Urge down the valleys your impetuous course!  
Winds, clouds, and lightnings! and ye waves, whose heads,  
Curled into monstrous forms, the seaman dreads!  
Horrid abyss, where all experience fails,  
Spread with the wreck of planks and shattered sails;

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\* A very celebrated French lady. She preached *Quietism*, a calm devotion resting on the love of God, but her opinions were undoubtedly fanatical and exaggerated. She suffered much persecution on account of them, and was imprisoned in the Bastille for four years. She wrote much and well. Cowper's friend, Mr. Bull, brought him her poems in 1782, and he began translating them.

On whose broad back grim Death triumphant rides,  
While havoc floats on all thy swelling tides,  
Thy shores a scene of ruin, strewed around  
With vessels bulged, and bodies of the drowned !

Ye fish, that sport beneath the boundless waves,  
And rest, secure from man, in rocky caves ;  
Swift-darting sharks, and whales of hideous size,  
Whom all the aquatic world with terror eyes !  
Had I but faith immoveable and true,  
I might defy the fiercest storm, like you :  
The world, a more disturbed and boisterous sea,  
When Jesus shows a smile, affrights not me ;  
He hides me, and in vain the billows roar,  
Break harmless at my feet, and leave the shore.

Thou azure vault, where, through the gloom of night,  
Thick sown we see such countless worlds of light !  
Thou moon, whose car, encompassing the skies,  
Restores lost nature to our wondering eyes ;  
Again retiring, when the brighter sun  
Begins the course he seems in haste to run !  
Behold him where he shines ! His rapid rays,  
Themselves unmeasured, measure all our days ;  
Nothing impedes the race he would pursue,  
Nothing escapes his penetrating view,  
A thousand lands confess his quickening heat,  
And all he cheers are fruitful, fair, and sweet.

Far from enjoying what these scenes disclose,  
I feel the thorn, alas ! but miss the rose :  
Too well I know this aching heart requires  
More solid good to fill its vast desires ;  
In vain they represent His matchless might,  
Who called them out of deep primeval night ;  
Their form and beauty but augment my woe :  
I seek the Giver of the charms they show :  
Nor, Him beside, throughout the world He made,  
Lives there in whom I trust for cure or aid.

Infinite God, thou great unrivalled ONE !  
Whose glory makes a blot of yonder sun ;  
Compared with Thine, how dim his beauty seems !  
How quenched the radiance of his golden beams !  
Thou art my bliss, the light by which I move ;  
In Thee alone dwells all that I can love ;  
All darkness flies when Thou art pleased to appear,  
A sudden spring renews the fading year ;  
Where'er I turn, I see Thy power and grace,  
The watchful guardians of our heedless race ;  
Thy various creatures in one strain agree,  
All, in all times and places, speak of Thee ;



Even I, with trembling heart and stammering tongue,  
Attempt Thy praise, and join the general song.

Almighty Former of this wondrous plan,  
Faintly reflected in Thine image, man—  
Holy and just—the greatness of whose name  
Fills and supports this universal frame,  
Diffused throughout the infinitude of space,  
Who art Thyself Thine own vast dwelling-place;  
Soul of our soul, whom yet no sense of ours  
Discerns, eluding our most active powers;  
Encircling shades attend Thine awful throne,  
That veil Thy face, and keep Thee still unknown;  
Unknown, though dwelling in our inmost part,  
Lord of the thoughts, and Sovereign of the heart.

Repeat the charming truth, that never tires,  
No God is like the God my soul desires;  
He at whose voice heaven trembles, even He,  
Great as He is, knows how to stoop to me—  
Lo! there He lies—that smiling infant said,  
“Heaven, Earth, and Sea, exist!”—and they obeyed.  
Even He whose being swells beyond the skies,  
Is born of woman, lives, and mourns, and dies;  
Eternal and Immortal, seems to cast  
That glory from His brows, and breathes His last.  
Trivial and vain the works that man has wrought,  
How do they shrink and vanish at the thought!

Sweet Solitude, and scene of my repose!  
This rustic sight assuages all my woes—  
That crib contains the Lord, whom I adore;  
And earth's a shade, that I pursue no more.  
He is my firm support, my rock, my tower,  
I dwell secure beneath His sheltering power,  
And hold this mean retreat for ever dear,  
For all I love, my soul's delight, is here.  
I see the Almighty swathed in infant bands,  
Tied helpless down the Thunder-bearer's hands!  
And in this shed that mystery discern,  
Which Faith and Love, and they alone, can learn.

Ye tempests, spare the slumbers of your Lord!  
Ye zephyrs, all your whispered sweets afford!  
Confess the God that guides the rolling year;  
Heaven, do Him homage; and thou, Earth, revere!  
Ye shepherds, monarchs, sages, hither bring  
Your hearts an offering, and adore your King!  
Pure be those hearts and rich in Faith and Love;  
Join in His praise, the harmonious world above;  
To Bethlehem haste, rejoice in His repose,  
And praise Him there for all that He bestows!

Man, busy man, alas, can ill afford  
 To obey the summons and attend the Lord;  
 Perverted reason revels and runs wild,  
 By glittering shows of pomp and wealth beguiled;  
 And, blind to genuine excellence and grace,  
 Finds not her Author in so mean a place.  
 Ye unbelieving! learn a wiser part,  
 Distrust your erring sense, and search your heart;  
 There soon ye shall perceive a kindling flame  
 Glow for that infant God, from whom it came;  
 Resist not, quench not, that divine desire,  
 Melt all your adamant in heavenly fire!

Not so will I requite thee, gentle Love!  
 Yielding and soft this heart shall ever prove;  
 And every heart beneath thy power should fall,  
 Glad to submit, could mine contain them all.  
 But I am poor, oblation I have none,  
 None for a Saviour, but Himself alone:  
 Whate'er I render Thee, from Thee it came;  
 And if I give my body to the flame,  
 My patience, love, and energy divine  
 Of heart, and soul, and spirit, all are Thine.  
 Ah, vain attempt to expunge the mighty score!  
 The more I pay, I owe Thee still the more.

Upon my meanness, poverty, and guilt,  
 The trophy of my glory shall be built;  
 My self-disdain shall be the unshaken base,  
 And my deformity its fairest grace;  
 For destitute of good, and rich in ill,  
 Must be my state and my description still.

And do I grieve at such an humbling lot?  
 Nay, but I cherish and enjoy the thought—  
 Vain pageantry and pomp of earth, adieu!  
 I have no wish, no memory for you.  
 The more I feel my misery, I adore  
 The sacred inmate of my soul the more;  
 Rich in his Love, I feel my noblest pride  
 Spring from the sense of having nought beside.

In Thee I find wealth, comfort, virtue, might;  
 My wanderings prove Thy wisdom infinite;  
 All that I have I give Thee; and then see  
 All contrarieties unite in Thee;  
 For Thou hast joined them, taking up our woe,  
 And pouring out Thy bliss on worms below,  
 By filling with Thy grace and love divine  
 A gulf of evil in this heart of mine.  
 This is, indeed, to bid the valleys rise,  
 And the hills sink—'tis matching earth and skies!

I feel my weakness, thank Thee, and deplore  
 An aching heart, that throbs to thank Thee more;  
 The more I love Thee, I the more reprove  
 A soul so lifeless, and so slow to love;  
 Till, on a deluge of Thy mercy tossed,  
 I plunge into that sea, and there am lost.

### GOD NEITHER KNOWN NOR LOVED BY THE WORLD.

YE Linnets, let us try, beneath this grove,  
 Which shall be loudest in our Maker's praise!  
 In quest of some forlorn retreat I rove,  
 For all the world is blind, and wanders from His ways.

That God alone should prop the sinking soul,  
 Fills them with rage against His empire now:  
 I traverse earth in vain from pole to pole,  
 To seek one simple heart, set free from all below.

They speak of Love, yet little feel its sway,  
 While in their bosoms many an idol lurks;  
 Their base desires, well satisfied, obey,  
 Leave the Creator's hand, and lean upon His works.

'Tis therefore I can dwell with man no more;  
 Your fellowship, ye warblers! suits me best:  
 Pure Love has lost its price, though prized of yore,  
 Profaned by modern tongues, and slighted as a jest.

My God, who formed you for His praise alone,  
 Beholds His purpose well fulfilled in you;  
 Come, let us join the choir before His throne,  
 Partaking in His praise with spirits just and true!

Yes, I will always love; and, as I ought,  
 Tune to the praise of Love my ceaseless voice;  
 Preferring Love too vast for human thought,  
 In spite of erring men, who cavil at my choice.

Why have I not a thousand thousand hearts,  
 Lord of my soul! that they might all be Thine?  
 If Thou approve—the zeal Thy smile imparts,  
 How should it ever fail! Can such a fire decline?

Love, pure and holy, is a deathless fire;  
 Its object heavenly, it must ever blaze:  
 Eternal Love a God must needs inspire,  
 When once He wins the heart, and fits it for His praise.

Self-love dismissed—'tis then we live indeed—  
In her embrace, death, only death, is found :  
Come, then, one noble effort, and succeed,  
Cast off the chain of Self with which thy soul is bound !

Oh ! I would cry, that all the world might hear,  
Ye self-tormentors, love your God alone :  
Let His unequalled excellence be dear,  
Dear to your inmost souls, and make Him all your own !

They hear me not—alas ! how fond to rove  
In endless chase of Folly's specious lure !  
'Tis here alone, beneath this shady grove,  
I taste the sweets of Truth—here only am secure.

### THE SWALLOW.

I AM fond of the Swallow—I learn from her flight,  
Had I skill to improve it, a lesson of Love :  
How seldom on earth do we see her alight !  
She dwells in the skies, she is ever above.

It is on the wing that she takes her repose,  
Suspended and poised in the regions of air,  
'Tis not in our fields that her sustenance grows,  
It is winged like herself, 'tis ethereal fare.

She comes in the spring, all the summer she stays,  
And, dreading the cold, still follows the sun—  
So, true to our Love, we should covet his rays,  
And the place where he shines not, immediately shun.

Our light should be Love, and our nourishment prayer ;  
It is dangerous food that we find upon earth ;  
The fruit of this world is beset with a snare,  
In itself it is hurtful, as vile in its birth.

'Tis rarely, if ever, she settles below,  
And only when building a nest for her young ;  
Were it not for her brood, she would never bestow  
A thought upon any thing filthy as dung.

Let us leave it ourselves ('tis a mortal abode),  
To bask every moment in infinite Love ;  
Let us fly the dark winter, and follow the road  
That leads to the dayspring appearing above.

## THE TRIUMPH OF HEAVENLY LOVE DESIRED.

AH! reign, wherever man is found,  
 My Spouse, beloved and divine!  
 Then I am rich, and I abound,  
 When every human heart is thine.

A thousand sorrows pierce my soul,  
 To think that all are not thine own:  
 Ah! be adored from pole to pole;  
 Where is thy zeal? arise; be known!

All hearts are cold, in every place,  
 Yet earthly good with warmth pursue;  
 Dissolve them with a flash of grace,  
 Thaw these of ice, and give us new!

A FIGURATIVE DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCEDURE  
OF DIVINE LOVE,

IN BRINGING A SOUL TO THE POINT OF SELF-RENUNCIATION AND ABSOLUTE  
 ACQUIESCENCE.

'Twas my purpose, on a day,  
 To embark, and sail away;  
 As I climbed the vessel's side,  
 Love was sporting in the tide;  
 "Come," he said,—“ascend—make haste,  
 Launch into the boundless waste.”

Many mariners were there,  
 Having each his separate care;  
 They that rowed us held their eyes  
 Fixed upon the starry skies;  
 Others steered, or turned the sails  
 To receive the shifting gales.

Love, with power divine supplied,  
 Suddenly my courage tried;  
 In a moment it was night,  
 Ship and skies were out of sight;  
 On the briny wave I lay,  
 Floating rushes all my stay.

Did I with resentment burn  
 At this unexpected turn?  
 Did I wish myself on shore,  
 Never to forsake it more?

No—"My soul," I cried, "be still;  
If I must be lost, I will."

Next he hastened to convey  
Both my frail supports away;  
Seized my rushes; bade the waves  
Yawn into a thousand graves:  
Down I went, and sunk as lead,  
Ocean closing o'er my head.

Still, however, life was safe;  
And I saw him turn and laugh:  
"Friend," he cried, "adieu! lie low,  
While the wintry storms shall blow;  
When the spring has calmed the main,  
You shall rise and float again."

Soon I saw him, with dismay,  
Spread his plumes, and soar away;  
Now I mark his rapid flight;  
Now he leaves my aching sight;  
He is gone whom I adore,  
'Tis in vain to seek him more.

How I trembled then and feared,  
When my love had disappeared!  
"Wilt thou leave me thus," I cried,  
"Whelmed beneath the rolling tide?"  
Vain attempt to reach his ear!  
Love was gone and would not hear.

"Ah! return, and love me still;  
See me subject to thy will;  
Frown with wrath, or smile with grace,  
Only let me see thy face!  
Evil I have none to fear,  
All is good, if thou art near."

Yet He leaves me—cruel fate!  
Leaves me in my lost estate—  
"Have I sinned? Oh, say wherein;  
Tell me, and forgive my sin;  
King, and Lord, whom I adore,  
Shall I see thy face no more?"

"Be not angry; I resign,  
Henceforth, all my will to thine:  
I consent that thou depart,  
Though thine absence breaks my heart;  
Go, then, and for ever too;  
All is right that thou wilt do."

This was just what Love intended,  
 He was now no more offended ;  
 Soon as I became a child,  
 Love returned to me and smiled ;  
 Never strife shall more betide  
 'Twixt the Bridegroom and his Bride.

### TRUTH AND DIVINE LOVE REJECTED BY THE WORLD.

O Love, of pure and heavenly birth !  
 O simple Truth, scarce known on earth !  
 Whom men resist with stubborn will ;  
 And, more perverse and daring still,  
 Smother and quench, with reasonings vain,  
 While Error and Deception reign.

Whence comes it, that, your power the same  
 As His on high, from whence you came,  
 Ye rarely find a listening ear,  
 Or heart that makes you welcome here ?—  
 Because ye bring reproach and pain,  
 Where'er ye visit, in your train.

The world is proud, and cannot bear  
 The scorn and calumny ye share ;  
 The praise of men the mark they mean,  
 They fly the place where ye are seen ;  
 Pure Love, with scandal in the rear,  
 Suits not the vain ; it costs too dear.

Then, let the price be what it may,  
 Though poor, I am prepared to pay ;  
 Come Shame, come Sorrow ; spite of tears,  
 Weakness, and heart-oppressing fears ;  
 One soul, at least, shall not repine,  
 To give you room ; come reign in mine !

### DIVINE JUSTICE AMIABLE.\*

Thou hast no lightnings, O Thou Just !  
 Or I their force should know ;  
 And if Thou strike me into dust,  
 My soul approves the blow.

---

\* Written when her son died.

The heart, that values less its ease  
 Than it adores Thy ways,  
 In Thine avenging anger sees  
 A subject of its praise.

Pleased I could lie, concealed and lost,  
 In shades of central night;  
 Not to avoid Thy wrath, Thou knowest,  
 But lest I grieve Thy sight.

Smite me, O Thou whom I provoke!  
 And I will love Thee still:  
 The well-deserved and righteous stroke  
 Shall please me, though it kill.

Am I not worthy to sustain  
 The worst Thou canst devise:  
 And dare I seek Thy throne again,  
 And meet Thy sacred eyes?

Far from afflicting, Thou art kind;  
 And, in my saddest hours,  
 An unction of Thy grace I find,  
 Pervading all my powers.

Alas! Thou sparest me yet again;  
 And, when Thy wrath should move,  
 Too gentle to endure my pain,  
 Thou sooth'st me with Thy Love.

I have no punishment to fear;  
 But, ah! that smile from Thee  
 Imparts a pang far more severe  
 Than woe itself would be.

#### THE SOUL THAT LOVES GOD FINDS HIM EVERYWHERE.\*

O Thou, by long experience tried,  
 Near whom no grief can long abide;  
 My Love! how full of sweet content  
 I pass my years of banishment!

All scenes alike engaging prove  
 To souls impressed with sacred Love!  
 Where'er they dwell, they dwell in Thee;  
 In heaven, in earth, or on the sea.

P P



## TRANSLATIONS

To me remains nor place nor time;  
 My country is in every clime;  
 I can be calm and free from care,  
 On any shore, since God is there.

While place we seek, or place we shun,  
 The soul finds happiness in none;  
 But with a God to guide our way,  
 'Tis equal joy to go or stay.

Could I be cast where Thou art not,  
 That were indeed a dreadful lot;  
 But regions none remote I call,  
 Secure of finding God in all.

My country, Lord, art Thou alone;  
 Nor other can I claim or own;  
 The point where all my wishes meet;  
 My Law, my Love; life's only sweet!

I hold by nothing here below;  
 Appoint my journey, and I go;  
 Though pierced by scorn, oppressed by pride,  
 I feel Thee good—feel nought beside.

No frowns of men can hurtful prove  
 To souls on fire with heavenly Love;  
 Though men and devils both condemn,  
 No gloomy days arise from them.

Ah then! to His embrace repair;  
 My soul, thou art no stranger there;  
 There Love Divine shall be thy guard,  
 And peace and safety thy reward.

## A CHILD OF GOD LONGING TO SEE HIM BELOVED.

THERE's not an echo round me,  
 But I am glad should learn,  
 How pure a fire has found me,—  
 The Love with which I burn.  
 For none attends with pleasure  
 To what I would reveal;  
 They slight me out of measure,  
 And laugh at all I feel.

The rocks receive less proudly  
 The story of my flame;  
 When I approach, they loudly  
 Reverberate His name.

I speak to them of sadness,  
And comforts at a stand;  
They bid me look for gladness,  
And better days at hand.

Far from all habitation,  
I heard a happy sound;  
Big with the consolation,  
That I have often found;  
I said "My lot is sorrow,  
My grief has no alloy;"  
The rocks replied—"To-morrow,  
To-morrow brings thee joy."

These sweet and secret tidings,  
What bliss it is to hear!  
For, spite of all my chidings,  
My weakness, and my fear,  
No sooner I receive them,  
Than I forget my pain,  
And, happy to believe them,  
I love as much again.

I fly to scenes romantic,  
Where never men resort;  
For in an age so frantic  
Impiety is sport.  
For riot and confusion  
They barter things above;  
Condemning, as delusion,  
The joy of perfect Love.

In this sequestered corner,  
None hears what I express;  
Delivered from the scorner,  
What peace do I possess!  
Beneath the boughs reclining  
Or roving o'er the wild,  
I live as undesigning  
And harmless as a child.

No troubles here surprise me,  
I innocently play,  
While Providence supplies me,  
And guards me all the day:  
My dear and kind Defender  
Preserves me safely here,  
From men of pomp and splendour,  
Who fill a child with fear.

## ASPIRATIONS OF THE SOUL AFTER GOD.

My Spouse ! in whose presence I live,  
 Sole object of all my desires,  
 Who know'st what a flame I conceive,  
 And canst easily double its fires ;  
 How pleasant is all that I meet !  
 From fear of adversity free,  
 I find even sorrow made sweet ;  
 Because 'tis assigned me by Thee.

Transported I see Thee display  
 Thy riches and glory divine ;  
 I have only my life to repay,  
 Take what I would gladly resign.  
 Thy will is the treasure I seek,  
 For Thou art as faithful as strong ;  
 There let me, obedient and meek,  
 Repose myself all the day long.

My spirit and faculties fail ;  
 Oh finish what Love has begun !  
 Destroy what is sinful and frail,  
 And dwell in the soul Thou hast won !  
 Dear theme of my wonder and praise,  
 I cry, who is worthy as Thou !  
 I can only be silent and gaze :  
 'Tis all that is left to me now.

O glory, in which I am lost,  
 Too deep for the plummet of thought !  
 On an ocean of deity tossed,  
 I am swallowed, I sink into nought.  
 Yet, lost and absorbed as I seem,  
 I chant to the praise of my King ;  
 And, though overwhelmed by the theme,  
 Am happy whenever I sing.

## GRATITUDE AND LOVE TO GOD.\*

ALL are indebted much to thee,  
 But I far more than all,  
 From many a deadly snare set free,  
 And raised from many a fall.

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\* Written when she believed herself converted.

Overwhelm me, from above,  
Daily, with Thy boundless Love.

What bonds of gratitude I feel,  
No language can declare ;  
Beneath the oppressive weight I reel,  
'Tis more than I can bear :  
When shall I that blessing prove,  
To return thee Love for Love ?

Spirit of Charity, dispense  
Thy grace to every heart ;  
Expel all other spirits thence,  
Drive Self from every part ;  
Charity divine, draw nigh,  
Break the chains in which we lie !

All selfish souls, whate'er they feign,  
Have still a slavish lot ;  
They boast of Liberty in vain,  
Of Love, and feel it not.  
He whose bosom glows with Thee,  
He, and he alone, is free.

O blessedness, all bliss above,  
When thy pure fires prevail !  
Love only teaches what is Love ;  
All other lessons fail :  
We learn its name, but not its powers,  
Experience only makes it ours.

#### HAPPY SOLITUDE—UNHAPPY MEN.

My heart is easy, and my burthen light ;  
I smile, though sad, when Thou art in my sight :  
The more my woes in secret I deplore,  
I taste Thy goodness, and I love, the more.

There, while a solemn stillness reigns around,  
Faith, Love, and Hope within my soul abound ;  
And, while the world suppose me lost in care,  
The joys of angels, unperceived, I share.

Thy creatures wrong thee, O Thou Sovereign Good !  
Thou art not loved, because not understood ;  
This grieves me most, that vain pursuits beguile  
Ungrateful men, regardless of Thy smile.

Frail beauty and false honour are adored :  
 While Thee they scorn, and trifle with Thy Word ;  
 Pass, unconcerned, a Saviour's sorrows by ;  
 And hunt their ruin with a zeal to die.

## LIVING WATER.

THE fountain in its source  
 No drought of summer fears ;  
 The farther it pursues its course,  
 The nobler it appears.

But shallow cisterns yield  
 A scanty, short supply ;  
 The morning sees them amply filled,  
 At evening they are dry.

## THE TESTIMONY OF DIVINE ADOPTION.

How happy are the new-born race ;  
 Partakers of adopting grace ;  
 How pure the bliss they share !  
 Hid from the world and all its eyes,  
 Within their heart the blessing lies,  
 And Conscience feels it there.

The moment we believe, 'tis ours ;  
 And if we love with all our powers  
 The God from whom it came ;  
 And if we serve with hearts sincere,  
 'Tis still discernible and clear,  
 An undisputed claim.

But, ah ! if foul and wilful sin  
 Stain and dishonour us within,  
 Farewell the joy we knew ;  
 Again the slaves of Nature's sway,  
 In labyrinths of our own we stray,  
 Without a guide or clue.

The chaste and pure, who fear to grieve  
 The gracious Spirit they receive,  
 His work distinctly trace :  
 And, strong in undissembling love,  
 Boldly assert and clearly prove  
 Their hearts His dwelling-place.

O messenger of dear delight,  
Whose voice dispels the deepest night,  
Sweet peace-proclaiming Dove!  
With thee at hand, to soothe our pains,  
No wish unsatisfied remains,  
No task but that of Love.

'Tis Love unites what Sin divides;  
The centre where all bliss resides,  
To which the soul once brought,  
Reclining on the first great Cause,  
From His abounding sweetness draws  
Peace passing human thought.

Sorrow foregoes its nature there,  
And life assumes a tranquil air,  
Divested of its woes;  
There sovereign Goodness soothes the breast,  
Till then incapable of rest,  
In sacred sure repose.

## DIVINE LOVE ENDURES NO RIVAL.

Love is the Lord whom I obey,  
Whose will transported I perform;  
The centre of my rest, my stay,  
Love! all in all to me, myself a worm.

For uncreated charms I burn,  
Oppressed by slavish fear no more;  
For One in whom I may discern,  
Even when He frowns, a sweetness I adore.

He little loves Him who complains,  
And finds Him rigorous and severe;  
His heart is sordid, and he feigns,  
Though loud in boasting of a soul sincere.

Love causes grief, but 'tis to move  
And stimulate the slumbering mind;  
And he has never tasted Love,  
Who shuns a pang so graciously designed.

Sweet is the cross, above all sweets,  
To souls enamoured with Thy smiles;  
The keenest woe life ever meets,  
Love strips of all its terrors, and beguiles.

## TRANSLATIONS

'Tis just that God should not be dear,  
Where Self engrosses all the thought,  
And groans and murmurs make it clear,  
Whatever else is loved, the Lord is not.

The Love of Thee flows just as much  
As that of ebbing Self subsides;  
Our hearts, their scantiness is such,  
Bear not the conflict of two rival tides.

Both cannot govern in one soul;  
Then let Self-love be dispossessed;  
The Love of God deserves the whole,  
And will not dwell with so despised a guest.

## SELF-DIFFIDENCE.

SOURCE of love, and light of day,  
Tear me from myself away;  
Every view and thought of mine  
Cast into the mould of Thine;  
Teach, oh teach, this faithless heart,  
A consistent, constant part;  
Or, if it must live to grow  
More rebellious, break it now!

Is it thus that I requite  
Grace and goodness infinite?  
Every trace of every boon,  
Cancelled and erased so soon!  
Can I grieve Thee, whom I love;  
Thee, in whom I live and move?  
If my sorrow touch Thee still,  
Save me from so great an ill!

Oh! the oppressive, irksome weight  
Felt in an uncertain state;  
Comfort, peace, and rest, adieu,  
Should I prove at last untrue!  
Still I choose Thee, follow still  
Every notice of Thy will;  
But, unstable, strangely weak,  
Still let slip the good I seek.

Self-confiding wretch, I thought  
I could serve thee as I ought,  
Win thee, and deserve to feel  
All the Love Thou canst reveal;

Trusting Self, a bruised reed,  
Is to be deceived indeed :  
Save me from this harm and loss,  
Lest my gold turn all to dross !

Self is earthly—Faith alone  
Makes an unseen world our own ;  
Faith relinquish'd, how we roam,  
Feel our way, and leave our home !  
Spurious gems our hopes entice,  
While we scorn the pearl of price ;  
And, preferring servants' pay,  
Cast the children's bread away.

### THE ACQUIESCENCE OF PURE LOVE.

Love ! if Thy destined sacrifice am I,  
Come, slay thy victim, and prepare thy fires :  
Plunged in Thy depths of mercy, let me die  
The death which every soul that lives desires !

I watch my hours, and see them fleet away ;  
The time is long that I have languished here ;  
Yet all my thoughts Thy purposes obey,  
With no reluctance, cheerful and sincere.

To me 'tis equal, whether Love ordain  
My life or death, appoint me pain or ease ;  
My soul perceives no real ill in pain ;  
In ease or health no real good she sees.

One Good she covets, and that Good alone,  
To choose Thy will, from selfish bias free ;  
And to prefer a cottage to a throne,  
And grief to comfort, if it pleases Thee.

That we should bear the cross is Thy command,  
Die to the world, and live to Self no more ;  
Suffer, unmoved, beneath the rudest hand,  
As pleased when shipwrecked as when safe on shore.

### REPOSE IN GOD.

Blest ! who, far from all mankind,  
This world's shadows left behind,  
Hears from heaven a gentle strain  
Whispering Love, and loves again.



## TRANSLATIONS

Blest ! who, free from Self-esteem,  
Dives into the Great Supreme,  
All desire besides discards,  
Joys inferior none regards.

Blest ! who in Thy bosom seeks  
Rest that nothing earthly breaks,  
Dead to self and worldly things,  
Lost in thee, thou King of kings !

Ye that know my secret fire,  
Softly speak and soon retire ;  
Favour my divine repose,  
Spare the sleep a God bestows.

## GLORY TO GOD ALONE.

Oh loved ! but not enough—though dearer far  
Than Self and its most loved enjoyments are ;  
None duly loves Thee, but who, nobly free  
From sensual objects, finds his all in Thee.

Glory of God ! thou stranger here below,  
Whom man nor knows, nor feels a wish to know ;  
Our faith and reason are both shocked to find  
Man in the post of honour—Thee behind.

Reason exclaims—" Let every creature fall,  
Ashamed, abased, before the Lord of all ;"  
And Faith, o'erwhelmed with such a dazzling blaze,  
Feebly describes the beauty she surveys.

Yet man, dim-sighted man, and rash as blind,  
Deaf to the dictates of his better mind,  
In frantic competition dares the skies,  
And claims precedence of the Only Wise.

Oh lost in vanity, till once self-known !  
Nothing is great, or good, but God alone ;  
When thou shalt stand before His awful face,  
Then, at the last, thy pride shall know his place.

Glorious, Almighty, First, and Without End !  
When wilt Thou melt the mountains and descend ?  
When wilt Thou shoot abroad Thy conquering rays,  
And teach these atoms Thou hast made, thy praise ?

Thy Glory is the sweetest heaven I feel ;  
And, if I seek it with too fierce a zeal,  
Thy Love, triumphant o'er a selfish will,  
Taught me the passion, and inspires it still.

My reason, all my faculties, unite,  
To make Thy glory their supreme delight ;  
Forbid it, Fountain of my brightest days,  
That I should rob Thee, and usurp Thy praise !

My roul ! rest happy in thy low estate,  
Nor hope, nor wish, to be esteemed or great ;  
To take the impression of a will divine,  
Be that thy glory, and those riches thine.

Confess Him righteous in His just decrees,  
Love what He loves, and let His pleasure please ;  
Die daily ; from the touch of sin recede ;  
Then thou hast crowned Him, and He reigns indeed.

#### SELF-LOVE AND TRUTH INCOMPATIBLE.

FROM thorny wilds a monster came,  
That filled my soul with fear and shame ;  
The birds, forgetful of their mirth,  
Drooped at the sight, and fell to earth ;  
When thus a sage addressed mine ear,  
Himself unconscious of a fear.

“ Whence all this terror, and surprise,  
Distracted looks, and streaming eyes ?  
Far from the world and its affairs,  
The joy it boasts, the pain it shares,  
Surrender, without guile or art,  
To God, an undivided heart ;  
The savage form, so feared before,  
Shall scare your trembling soul no more ;  
For loathsome as the sight may be,  
’Tis but the Love of Self you see.  
Fix all your Love on God alone,  
Choose but His will, and hate your own :  
No fear shall in your path be found,  
The dreary waste shall bloom around,  
And you, through all your happy days,  
Shall bless His name, and sing His praise.”

O lovely solitude, how sweet  
The silence of this calm retreat !  
Here Truth, the fair whom I pursue,  
Gives all her beauty to my view ;

The simple, unadorned display  
Charms every pain and fear away.  
O Truth! whom millions proudly slight;  
O Truth! my treasure and delight;  
Accept this tribute to thy name,  
And this poor heart from which it came!

LOVE FAITHFUL IN THE ABSENCE OF THE  
BELOVED.

In vain ye woo me to your harmless joys,  
Ye pleasant bowers, remote from strife and noise;  
Your shades, the witnesses of many a vow,  
Breathed forth in happier days, are irksome now  
Denied that smile 'twas once my heaven to see,  
Such scenes, such pleasures, are all past with me.

In vain He leaves me, I shall love Him still;  
And though I mourn, not murmur at His will;  
I have no cause—an object all divine  
Might well grow weary of a soul like mine;  
Yet pity me, great God! forlorn, alone,  
Heartless and hopeless, Life and Love all gone.

THE LOVE OF GOD, THE END OF LIFE.

SINCE life in sorrow must be spent,  
So be it—I am well content,  
And meekly wait my last remove,  
Seeking only growth in Love.

No bliss I seek, but to fulfil  
In life, in death, Thy lovely will;  
No succours in my woes I want,  
Save what Thou art pleased to grant.

Our days are numbered, let us spare  
Our anxious hearts a needless care:  
'Tis thine to number out our days;  
Ours to give them to Thy praise.

Love is our only business here,  
Love, simple, constant, and sincere;  
O blessed days, thy servants see!  
Spent, O Lord! in pleasing Thee.

## LOVE PURE AND FERVENT.

JEALOUS, and with Love o'erflowing,  
God demands a fervent heart;  
Grace and bounty still bestowing,  
Calls us to a grateful part.

Oh, then, with supreme affection  
His paternal will regard!  
If it cost us some dejection,  
Every sigh has its reward.

Perfect Love has power to soften  
Cares that might our peace destroy,  
Nay, does more—transforms them often,  
Changing sorrow into joy.

Sovereign Love appoints the measure,  
And the number of our pains;  
And is pleased when we find pleasure  
In the trials He ordains.

## THE ENTIRE SURRENDER.

PEACE has unveiled her smiling face,  
And woos thy soul to her embrace,  
Enjoyed with ease, if thou refrain  
From earthly Love, else sought in vain;  
She dwells with all who truth prefer,  
But seeks not them who seek not her.

Yield to the Lord, with simple heart,  
All that thou hast, and all thou art;  
Renounce all strength but strength divine;  
And peace shall be for ever thine;  
Behold the path which I have trod,  
My path, till I go home to God.

## THE PERFECT SACRIFICE.

I PLACE an offering at thy shrine,  
From taint and blemish clear,  
Simple and pure in its design,  
Of all that I hold dear.

I yield thee back thy gifts again,  
Thy gifts which most I prize;  
Desirous only to retain  
The notice of Thine eyes.

## TRANSLATIONS

But if, by Thine adored decree,  
That blessing be denied;  
Resigned, and unreluctant, see  
My every wish subside.

Thy will in all things I approve,  
Exalted or cast down!  
Thy will in every state I love,  
And even in thy frown.

## GOD HIDES HIS PEOPLE.

To lay the soul that loves him low,  
Becomes the Only-Wise:  
To hide, beneath a veil of woe,  
The children of the skies.

Man, though a worm, would yet be great;  
Though feeble, would seem strong;  
Assumes an independent state,  
By sacrilege and wrong.

Strange the reverse, which, once abased,  
The haughty creature proves!  
He feels his soul a barren waste,  
Nor dares affirm he loves.

Scorned by the thoughtless and the vain,  
To God he presses near;  
Superior to the world's disdain,  
And happy in its sneer.

Oh welcome, in his heart he says,  
Humility and shame!  
Farewell the wish for human praise,  
The music of a name!

But will not scandal mar the good  
That I might else perform?  
And can God work it, if He would,  
By so despised a worm?

Ah, vainly anxious!—leave the Lord  
To rule thee, and dispose;  
Sweet is the mandate of His word,  
And gracious all He does.

He draws from human littleness  
His grandeur and renown ;  
And generous hearts with joy confess  
The triumph all His own.

Down then with self-exalting thoughts ;  
Thy faith and hope employ,  
To welcome all that He allots,  
And suffer shame with joy.

No longer, then, thou wilt encroach  
On His eternal right ;  
And He shall smile at thy approach,  
And make thee His delight.

#### SECRETS OF DIVINE LOVE ARE TO BE KEPT.

SUN ! stay thy course, this moment stay—  
Suspend the o'erflowing tide of day,  
Divulge not such a Love as mine,  
Ah ! hide the mystery divine ;  
Lest man, who deems my glory shame,  
Should learn the secret of my flame.

O Night ! propitious to my views,  
Thy sable awning wide diffuse ;  
Conceal alike my joy and pain,  
Nor draw thy curtain back again,  
Though morning, by the tears she shows,  
Seems to participate my woes.

Ye Stars ! whose faint and feeble fires  
Express my languishing desires,  
Whose slender beams pervade the skies  
As silent as my secret sighs,  
Those emanations of a soul,  
That darts her fires beyond the Pole ;

Your rays, that scarce assist the sight,  
That pierce, but not displace, the night,  
That shine indeed, but nothing show  
Of all those various scenes below,  
Bring no disturbance, rather prove  
Incentives of a sacred Love.

Thou Moon ! whose never-failing course  
Bespeaks a providential force,

## TRANSLATIONS

Go, tell the tidings of my flame  
To Him who calls the stars by name;  
Whose absence kills, Whose presence cheers;  
Who blots, or brightens, all my years.

While, in the blue abyss of space,  
Thine orb performs its rapid race;  
Still whisper in His listening ears  
The language of my sighs and tears;  
Tell Him, I seek Him, far below,  
Lost in a wilderness of woe.

Ye thought-composing, silent Hours!  
Diffusing peace o'er all my powers;  
Friends of the pensive! who conceal,  
In darkest shades, the flames I feel;  
To you I trust, and safely may,  
The love that wastes my strength away.

In sylvan scenes, and caverns rude,  
I taste the sweets of solitude;  
Retired, indeed, but not alone,  
I share them with a Spouse unknown,  
Who hides me here, from envious eyes,  
From all intrusion and surprise.

Embowering Shades, and Dens profound!  
Where Echo rolls the voice around;  
Mountains! whose elevated heads,  
A moist and misty veil o'erspreads;  
Disclose a solitary bride  
To Him I love—to none beside.

Ye Rills, that murmuring all the way,  
Among the polished pebbles stray;  
Creep silently along the ground,  
Lest, drawn by that harmonious sound,  
Some wanderer, whom I would not meet,  
Should stumble on my loved retreat.

Enamelled Meads, and Hillocks green,  
And streams that water all the scene!  
Ye torrents, loud in distant ears!  
Ye Fountains, that receive my tears!  
Ah! still conceal, with caution due,  
A charge I trust with none but you.

If, when my pain and grief increase,  
I seem to enjoy the sweetest peace,

It is because I find so fair  
The charming object of my care,  
That I can sport and pleasure make  
Of torment suffered for His sake.

Ye Meads and Groves, unconscious things !  
Ye know not whence my pleasure springs ;  
Ye know not, and ye cannot know,  
The source from which my sorrows flow :  
The dear sole Cause of all I feel,—  
He knows, and understands them well.

Ye Deserts ! where the wild beasts rove,  
Scenes sacred to my hours of love ;  
Ye Forests ! in whose shades I stray,  
Benighted under burning day !  
Ah ! whisper not how blest am I,  
Nor while I live, nor when I die.

Ye Lambs ! who sport beneath these shades,  
And bound along the mossy glades ;  
Be taught a salutary fear,  
And cease to bleat when I am near :  
The wolf may hear your harmless cry,  
Whom ye should dread as much as I.

How calm, amid these scenes, my mind !  
How perfect is the peace I find !  
Oh ! hush, be still, my every part,  
My tongue, my pulse, my beating heart !  
That Love, aspiring to its cause,  
May suffer not a moment's pause.

Ye swift-finned Nations, that abide  
In seas, as fathomless as wide ;  
And unsuspecting of a snare,  
Pursue at large your pleasures there :  
Poor sportive fools ! how soon does man  
Your heedless ignorance trepan !

Away ! dive deep into the brine,  
Where never yet sunk plummet line ;  
Trust me, the vast leviathan  
Is merciful, compared with man ;  
Avoid his arts, forsake the beach,  
And never play within his reach.

My soul her bondage ill endures ;  
I pant for liberty like yours ;

Q Q



I long for that immense profound,  
That knows no bottom and no bound;  
Lost in infinity, to prove  
The incomprehensible of Love.

Ye Birds! that lessen as ye fly,  
And vanish in the distant sky;  
To whom yon airy waste belongs,  
Resounding with your cheerful songs;  
Haste to escape from human sight;  
Fear less the vulture and the kite.

How blest and how secure am I,  
When quitting earth, I soar on high;  
When lost, like you I disappear,  
And float in a sublimer sphere!  
Whence falling, within human view,  
I am ensnared, and caught like you.

Omniscient God, whose notice deigns  
To try the heart and search the reins;  
Compassionate the numerous woes,  
I dare not, even to Thee, disclose;  
Oh! save me from the cruel hands  
Of men, who fear not thy commands!

Love, all-subduing and divine,  
Care for a creature truly Thine;  
Reign in a heart, disposed to own  
No sovereign but Thyself alone;  
Cherish a Bride who cannot rove,  
Nor quit thee for a meaner Love!

#### THE VICISSITUDES EXPERIENCED IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

I SUFFER fruitless anguish day by day,  
Each moment, as it passes, marks my pain;  
Scarce knowing whither, doubtfully I stray,  
And see no end of all that I sustain.

The more I strive, the more I am withstood,  
Anxiety increasing every hour;  
My spirit finds no rest, performs no good,  
And nought remains of all my former power.

My peace of heart is fled, I know not where;  
My happy hours, like shadows, passed away;  
Their sweet remembrance doubles all my care,  
Night darker seems, succeeding such a day.

Dear faded joys, and impotent regret,  
What profit is there in incessant tears?  
O Thou, whom once beheld, we ne'er forget,  
Reveal thy love, and banish all my fears!

Alas! He flies me—treats me as his foe,  
Views not my sorrows, hears not when I plead;  
Woe such as mine, despised, neglected woe,  
Unless it shortens life, is vain indeed.

Pierced with a thousand wounds, I yet survive;  
My pangs are keen, but no complaint transpires;  
And, while in terrors of thy wrath I live,  
Hell seems to lose its less tremendous fires.

Has Hell a pain I would not gladly bear,  
So thy severe displeasure might subside?  
Hopeless of ease, I seem already there,  
My life extinguished, and yet death denied.

Is this the joy so promised—this the Love,  
The unchanging Love, so sworn in better days?  
Ah! dangerous glories! shown me, but to prove  
How lovely Thou, and I how rash to gaze.

Why did I see them? had I still remained  
Untaught, still ignorant how fair Thou art,  
My humbler wishes I had soon obtained,  
Nor known the torments of a doubting heart.

Deprived of all, yet feeling no desires,  
Whence then, I cry, the pangs that I sustain?  
Dubious and uninformed, my soul inquires,  
Ought she to cherish, or shake off her pain.

Suffering, I suffer not—sincerely love,  
Yet feel no touch of that enlivening flame;  
As chance inclines me, unconcerned I move,  
All times, and all events, to me the same.

I search my heart, and not a wish is there,  
But burns with zeal that hated Self may fall;  
Such is the sad disquietude I share,  
A sea of doubts, and Self the source of all.

I ask not life, nor do I wish to die;  
 And, if thine hand accomplish not my cure,  
 I would not purchase, with a single sigh,  
 A free discharge from all that I endure.

I groan in chains, yet want not a release;  
 Am sick, and know not the distempered part;  
 Am just as void of purpose as of peace;  
 Have neither plan, nor fear, nor hope, nor heart.

My claim to life, though sought with earnest care,  
 No light within me, or without me, shows;  
 Once I had faith, but now in self-despair  
 Find my chief cordial, and my best repose.

My soul is a forgotten thing; she sinks,  
 Sinks and is lost, without a wish to rise;  
 Feels an indifference she abhors, and thinks  
 Her name erased for ever from the skies.

Language affords not my distress a name,—  
 Yet is it real, and no sickly dream;  
 'Tis Love inflicts it; though to feel that flame  
 Is all I know of happiness supreme.

When Love departs, a chaos wide and vast,  
 And dark as Hell, is opened in the soul;  
 When Love returns, the gloomy scene is past,  
 No tempests shake her, and no fears control.

Then tell me why these ages of delay?  
 O Love! all excellent once more appear;  
 Disperse the shades, and snatch me into day,  
 From this abyss of night, these floods of fear!

No—Love is angry, will not now endure  
 A sigh of mine, or suffer a complaint;  
 He smites me, wounds me, and withholds the cure;  
 Exhausts my powers, and leaves me sick and faint.

He wounds, and hides the hand that gave the blow;  
 He flies, he reappears, and wounds again—  
 Was ever heart that loved Thee treated so?  
 Yet I adore Thee, though it seem in vain.

And wilt Thou leave me, whom, when lost and blind,  
 Thou didst distinguish, and vouchsafe to choose,  
 Before Thy laws were written in my mind,  
 While yet the world had all my thoughts and views

Now leave me ? when enamoured of Thy laws,  
I make Thy glory my supreme delight ;  
Now blot me from Thy register, and cause  
A faithful soul to perish from Thy sight ?

What can have caused the change which I deplore ?  
Is it to prove me if my heart be true ?  
Permit me then, while prostrate I adore,  
To draw, and place its picture in Thy view.

'Tis Thine without reserve, most simply Thine ;  
So given to Thee, that it is not my own ;  
A willing captive of Thy grace divine ;  
And loves, and seeks Thee, for Thyself alone.

Pain cannot move it, danger cannot scare ;  
Pleasure and wealth, in its esteem are dust ;  
It loves Thee, even when least inclined to spare  
Its tenderest feelings, and avows Thee just.

'Tis all Thine own ; my spirit is so too,  
An undivided offering at Thy shrine ;  
It seeks Thy glory with no double view,  
Thy glory with no secret bent to mine.

Love, Holy Love ! and art Thou not severe,  
To slight me, thus devoted, and thus fixed ?  
Mine is an everlasting ardour, clear  
From all self-bias, generous and unmixed.

But I am silent, seeing what I see—  
And fear, with cause, that I am self-deceived ;  
Not even my faith is from suspicion free,  
And, that I love, seems not to be believed.

Live Thou, and reign for ever, Glorious Lord !  
My last, least offering, I present Thee now—  
Renounce me, leave me, and be still adored !  
Slay me, my God, and I applaud the blow.

#### WATCHING UNTO GOD IN THE NIGHT SEASON.

SLEEP at last has fled these eyes,  
Nor do I regret his flight,  
More alert my spirits rise,  
And my heart is free and light.

## TRANSLATIONS

Nature silent all around,  
 Not a single witness near;  
 God as soon as sought is found;  
 And the flame of Love burns clear.

Interruption, all day long,  
 Checks the current of my joys;  
 Creatures press me with a throng,  
 And perplex me with their noise.

Undisturbed I muse all night,  
 On the first Eternal Fair;  
 Nothing there obstructs delight,  
 Love is renovated there.

Life, with its perpetual stir,  
 Proves a foe to Love and me;  
 Fresh entanglements occur—  
 Comes the night and sets me free,

Never more, sweet sleep, suspend  
 My enjoyments, always new:  
 Leave me to possess my friend;  
 Other eyes and hearts subdue.

Hush the world, that I may wake  
 To the taste of pure delights;  
 Oh! the pleasures I partake—  
 God, the partner of my nights!

David, for the self-same cause,  
 Night preferred to busy day:  
 Hearts whom heavenly beauty draws  
 Wish the glaring sun away.

Sleep, self-lovers, is for you—  
 Souls that love celestial know,  
 Fairer scenes by night can view  
 Than the sun could ever show.

## ON THE SAME.

SEASON of my purest pleasure,  
 Sealer of observing eyes!  
 When, in larger, freer measure,  
 I can commune with the skies;  
 While, beneath thy shade extended,  
 Weary man forgets his woes;  
 I, my daily trouble ended,  
 Find, in watching, my repose.

Silence all around prevailing,  
Nature hushed in slumber sweet,  
No rude noise my ears assailing,  
Now my God and I can meet:  
Universal nature slumbers,  
And my soul partakes the calm,  
Breathes her ardour out in numbers,  
Plaintive song or lofty psalm.

Now my passion, pure and holy,  
Shines and burns without restraint;  
Which the day's fatigue and folly  
Cause to languish, dim and faint:  
Charming hours of relaxation!  
How I dread the ascending sun!  
Surely, idle conversation  
Is an evil, matched by none.

Worldly prate and babble hurt me;  
Unintelligible prove;  
Neither teach me nor divert me;  
I have ears for none but Love.  
Me they rude esteem, and foolish,  
Hearing my absurd replies;  
I have neither art's fine polish,  
Nor the knowledge of the wise.

Simple souls, and unpolluted,  
By conversing with the great,  
Have a mind and taste, ill suited  
To their dignity and state;  
All their talking, reading, writing,  
Are but talents misapplied;  
Infants' prattle I delight in,  
Nothing human choose beside.

'Tis the secret fear of sinning  
Checks my tongue, or I should say,  
When I see the night beginning,  
I am glad of parting day;  
Love this gentle admonition  
Whispers soft within my breast;  
"Choice befits not thy condition,  
Acquiescence suits thee best."

Henceforth, the repose and pleasure  
Night affords me I resign;  
And thy will shall be the measure,  
Wisdom infinite, of mine:

## TRANSLATIONS

Wishing is but inclination  
 Quarrelling with thy decrees ;  
 Wayward nature finds the occasion—  
 'Tis her folly and disease.

Night, with its sublime enjoyments,  
 Now no longer will I choose ;  
 Nor the day with its employments,  
 Irrksome as they seem, refuse ;  
 Lessons of a God's inspiring  
 Neither time nor place impedes ;  
 From our wishing and desiring  
 Our unhappiness proceeds.

## ON THE SAME.

NIGHT ! how I love thy silent shades,  
 My spirits they compose ;  
 The bliss of heaven my soul pervades,  
 In spite of all my woes.

While sleep instils her poppy dew  
 In every slumbering eye,  
 I watch, to meditate and muse,  
 In blest tranquillity.

And when I feel a God immense  
 Familiarly impart,  
 With every proof He can dispense,  
 His favour to my heart ;

My native meanness I lament,  
 Though most divinely filled  
 With all the ineffable content  
 That Deity can yield.

His purpose and His course He keeps ;  
 Treads all my reasonings down ;  
 Commands me out of Nature's deeps,  
 And hides me in His own.

When in the dust, its proper place,  
 Our pride of heart we lay,  
 'Tis then a deluge of His grace  
 Bears all our sins away.

Thou whom I serve, and whose I am,  
 Whose influence from on high  
 Refines, and still refines my flame,  
 And makes my fetters fly,

How wretched is the creature's state  
Who thwarts Thy gracious power;  
Crushed under sin's enormous weight,  
Increasing every hour!

The night, when passed entire with thee,  
How luminous and clear!  
Then sleep has no delights for me,  
Lest Thou shouldst disappear.

My Saviour! occupy me still  
In this secure recess;  
Let Reason slumber if she will,  
My joy shall not be less:

Let Reason slumber out the night;  
But if Thou deign to make  
My soul the abode of truth and light,  
Ah, keep my heart awake!

#### THE JOY OF THE CROSS.

Long plunged in sorrow, I resign  
My soul to that dear hand of thine,  
Without reserve or fear;  
That hand shall wipe my streaming eyes;  
Or into smiles of glad surprise  
Transform the falling tear.

My sole possession is Thy Love;  
In earth beneath, or heaven above,  
I have no other store;  
And though with fervent suit I pray,  
And importune Thee night and day,  
I ask Thee nothing more.

My rapid hours pursue the course  
Prescribed them by Love's sweetest force;  
And I Thy sovereign will,  
Without a wish to escape my doom;  
Though still a sufferer from the womb,  
And doomed to suffer still.

By Thy command, where'er I stray,  
Sorrow attends me all my way,  
A never-failing friend;  
And if my sufferings may augment  
Thy praise behold me well content—  
Let Sorrow still attend!



It costs me no regret, that she,  
 Who followed Christ, should follow me;  
 And though where'er she goes,  
 Thorns spring spontaneous at her feet,  
 I love her, and extract a sweet  
 From all my bitter woes.

Adieu! ye vain delights of earth;  
 Insipid sports and childish mirth,  
 I taste no sweets in you;  
 Unknown delights are in the Cross,  
 All joy beside to me is dross;  
 And Jesus thought so too.

The Cross! O ravishment and bliss!  
 How grateful even its anguish is;  
 Its bitterness how sweet!  
 There every sense, and all the mind,  
 In all her faculties refined,  
 Tastes happiness complete.

Souls once enabled to disdain  
 Base sublunary joys, maintain  
 Their dignity secure;  
 The fever of desire is passed,  
 And Love has all its genuine taste,  
 Is delicate and pure.

Self-love no grace in sorrow sees,  
 Consults her own peculiar ease;  
 'Tis all the bliss she knows:  
 But nobler aims true Love employs;  
 In self-denial is her joy,  
 In suffering her repose.

Sorrow and Love go side by side;  
 Nor height nor depth can e'er divide  
 Their heaven-appointed bands;  
 Those dear associates still are one,  
 Nor, till the race of life is run,  
 Disjoin their wedded hands.

Jesus, avenger of our fall,  
 Thou faithful Lover, above all  
 The Cross has ever borne!  
 Oh tell me,—life is in Thy voice—  
 How much afflictions were Thy choice,  
 And sloth and ease Thy scorn!

Thy choice and mine shall be the same,  
Inspirer of that holy flame  
Which must for ever blaze !  
To take the Cross and follow Thee,  
Where Love and Duty lead, shall be  
My portion and my praise.

## JOY IN MARTYRDOM.

SWEET tenants of this grove !  
Who sing, without design,  
A song of artless love,  
In unison with mine :  
These echoing shades return  
Full many a note of ours,  
That wise ones cannot learn,  
With all their boasted powers.

O Thou ! whose sacred charms  
These hearts so seldom love,  
Although thy beauty warms  
And blesses all above ;  
How slow are human things,  
To choose their happiest lot ;  
All-glorious King of kings,  
Say why we love thee not ?

This heart, that cannot rest,  
Shall thine for ever prove ;  
Though bleeding and distressed,  
Yet joyful in thy love ;  
'Tis happy, though it breaks  
Beneath thy chastening hand ;  
And speechless, yet it speaks  
What thou canst understand.

## SIMPLE TRUST.

STILL, still, without ceasing,  
I feel it increasing,  
This fervour of holy desire ;  
And often exclaim,  
Let me die in the flame  
Of a Love that can never expire !

## TRANSLATIONS

Had I words to explain  
 What she must sustain  
 Who dies to the world and its ways;  
 How joy and affright,  
 Distress and delight,  
 Alternately chequer her days;

Thou, sweetly severe!  
 I would make Thee appear,  
 In all Thou art pleased to award,  
 Not more in the sweet,  
 Than the bitter I meet,  
 My tender and merciful Lord.

This Faith, in the dark  
 Pursuing its mark,  
 Through many sharp trials of Love;  
 Is the sorrowful waste  
 That is to be passed  
 In the way to the Canaan above.

## THE NECESSITY OF SELF-ABASEMENT.

SOURCE of Love, my brighter Sun,  
 Thou alone my comfort art;  
 See, my race is almost run;  
 Hast Thou left this trembling heart?

In my youth thy charming eyes  
 Drew me from the ways of men;  
 Then I drank unmingled joys;  
 Frown of thine saw never then.

Spouse of Christ was then my name;  
 And devoted all to thee,  
 Strangely jealous, I became  
 Jealous of this Self in me.

Thee to love, and none beside,  
 Was my darling, sole employ;  
 While alternately I died,  
 Now of grief, and now of joy.

Through the dark and silent night  
 On Thy radiant smiles I dwelt;  
 And to see the dawning light  
 Was the keenest pain I felt.

Thou my gracious teacher wert ;  
And Thine eye, so close applied  
While it watched Thy pupil's heart,  
Seemed to look at none beside.

Conscious of no evil drift,  
This, I cried, is Love indeed—  
'Tis the giver, not the gift,  
Whence the joys I feel proceed.

But soon humbled, and laid low,  
Stripped of all Thou hast conferred,  
Nothing left but sin and woe,  
I perceived how I had erred.

Oh, the vain conceit of man,  
Dreaming of a good his own,  
Arrogating all he can,  
Though the Lord is good alone !

He the graces Thou hast wrought  
Makes subservient to his pride ;  
Ignorant, that one such thought  
Passes all his sin beside.

Such his folly—proved, at last,  
By the loss of that repose  
Self-complacence cannot taste,  
Only Love Divine bestows.

'Tis by this reproof severe,  
And by this reproof alone,  
His defects at last appear,  
Man is to himself made known.

Learn, all Earth ! that feeble man,  
Sprung from this terrestrial clod,  
Nothing is, and nothing can ;  
Life and power are all in God.

#### LOVE INCREASED BY SUFFERING.

"I LOVE the Lord," is still the strain  
This Heart delights to sing  
But I reply—"Your thoughts are vain,  
Perhaps 'tis no such thing."

## TRANSLATIONS

Before the power of Love Divine  
 Creation fades away;  
 Till only God is seen to shine  
 In all that we survey.

In gulfs of awful night we find  
 The God of our desires;  
 'Tis there he stamps the yielding mind,  
 And doubles all its fires.

Flames of encircling Love invest,  
 And pierce it sweetly through;  
 'Tis filled with sacred joy, yet pressed  
 With sacred sorrow too.

Ah Love! my heart is in the right—  
 Amidst a thousand woes,  
 To Thee, its ever new delight,  
 And all its peace, it owes.

Fresh causes of distress occur  
 Where'er I look or move;  
 The comforts I to all prefer  
 Are Solitude and Love.

Nor exile I nor prison fear;  
 Love makes my courage great;  
 I find a Saviour everywhere,  
 His grace in every state.

Nor castle walls, nor dungeons deep,  
 Exclude His quickening beams;  
 There I can sit, and sing, and weep,  
 And dwell on heavenly themes.

There sorrow, for His sake, is found  
 A joy beyond compare;  
 There no presumptuous thoughts abound,  
 No pride can enter there.

A Saviour doubles all my joys,  
 And sweetens all my pains,  
 His strength in my defence employs,  
 Consoles me and sustains.

I fear no ill, resent no wrong,  
 Nor feel a passion move,  
 When Malice whets her slanderous tongue;  
 Such patience is in Love.

## SCENES FAVOURABLE TO MEDITATION.

WILDS horrid and dark with o'ershadowing trees,  
Rocks that ivy and briers enfold,  
Scenes Nature with dread and astonishment sees,  
But I with a pleasure untold.

Though awfully silent, and shaggy, and rude,  
I am charmed with the peace ye afford,  
Your shades are a temple where none will intrude,  
The abode of my Lover and Lord.

I am sick of thy splendour, O fountain of day,  
And here I am hid from its beams,  
Here safely contemplate a brighter display  
Of the noblest and holiest themes.

Ye forests, that yield me my sweetest repose,  
Where stillness and solitude reign,  
To you I securely and boldly disclose  
The dear anguish of which I complain.

Here sweetly forgetting, and wholly forgot  
By the world and its turbulent throng,  
The birds and the streams lend me many a note  
That aids meditation and song.

Here wandering in scenes that are sacred to night,  
Love wears me and wastes me away,  
And often the sun has spent much of his light  
Ere yet I perceive it is day.

While a mantle of darkness envelopes the sphere,  
My sorrows are safely rehearsed,  
To me the dark hours are all equally dear,  
And the last is as sweet as the first.

Here I and the beasts of the desert agree,  
Mankind are the wolves that I fear,  
They grudge me my natural right to be free,  
But nobody questions it here.

Though little is found in this dreary abode  
That appetite wishes to find,  
My spirit is soothed by the presence of God,  
And appetite wholly resigned.

## TRANSLATIONS

Ye desolate scenes, to your solitude led,  
 My life I in praises employ,  
 And scarce know the source of the tears that I shed,  
 Proceed they from sorrow or joy.

There is nothing I seem to have skill to discern,  
 I feel out my way in the dark;  
 Love reigns in my bosom, I constantly burn,  
 Yet hardly distinguish the spark.

I live, yet I seem to myself to be dead,  
 Such a riddle is not to be found;  
 I am nourished without knowing how I am fed,  
 I have nothing, and yet I abound.

O Love, who in darkness art pleased to abide!  
 Though dimly yet surely I see,  
 That these contrarieties only reside  
 In the soul that is chosen of Thee.

Ah! send me not back to the race of mankind,  
 Perversely by folly beguiled,  
 For where, in the crowds I have left, shall I find  
 The spirit and heart of a child.

Here let me, though fixed in a desert, be free;  
 A little one whom they despise,  
 Though lost to the world, if in union with Thee,  
 Shall be holy and happy and wise.

## TRANSLATIONS FROM THE FABLES OF GAY.

## LEPUS MULTIS AMICIS.

Lusus amicitia est, uni nisi dedita, cen fit,  
 Simplice ni nexus foedere, lusus amor.  
 Incerto genitore puer, non sæpe paternæ  
 Tutamen novit, deliciasque domûs:  
 Quique sibi fidos fore multos sperat, amicus,  
 Mirum est huic misero si ferat ullus opem.  
 Comis erat, mitisque, et nolle et velle paratus  
 Cum quovis, Gaii more modoque, Lepus.  
 Ille, quot in sylvis et quot spatiantur in agris

Quadrupedes, nôrat conciliare sibi;  
 Et quisque innocuo, invitoque lacessere quenquam  
 Labra tenus saltim fidus amicus erat.  
 Ortum sub lucis dum pressa cubilia linquit,  
 Rorantes herbas, pabula sueta, petens,  
 Venatorum audit clangores ponè sequentem,  
 Fulmineumque sonum territus erro fugit.  
 Corda pavor pulsant, sursum sedet, erigit aures,  
 Respicit, et sentit jam prope adesse necem.  
 Utque canes fallat latè circumvagus, illuc,  
 Unde abiit, mirâ calliditate redit;  
 Viribus at fractis tandem se projicit ultro  
 In mediâ miserum semianimemque viâ.  
 Vix ibi stratus, equi sonitum pedis audit, et, oh spe  
 Quam lætâ adventu cor agitur equi!  
 Dorsum (inquit) mihi, chare, tuum concede, tuoque  
 Auxilio nares fallere, vimque canum.  
 Me meus, ut nôsti, pes prodit—fidus amicus  
 Fert quodcumque lubens, nec grave sentit, onus.  
 Belle miselle lepuscule (equus respondet) amara,  
 Omnia quæ tibi sunt, sunt et amara mihi.  
 Verum age—sume animos—multi, me pone, bonique  
 Adveniunt, quorum sis citò salvus ope.  
 Proximus armenti dominus bos sollicitatus  
 Auxilium his verbis se dare posse negat.  
 Quando quadrupedum, quot vivunt, nullus amicum  
 Me nescire potest usque fuisse tibi,  
 Libertate æquus, quam cedit amicus amico,  
 Utar, et absque metu ne tibi displiceam;  
 Hinc me mandat amor. Juxta istum messis acervum  
 Me mea, præ cunctis chara, juvenca manet;  
 Et quis non ultro quæcumque negotia linquit,  
 Pareat ut dominæ, curâ vocat ipsa suæ?  
 Neu me crudelem dicas—discedo—sed hircus,  
 Cujus ope effugias integer, hircus adest.  
 Febrem (ait hircus) habes. Heu, sicca ut lumina languent!  
 Utque caput, collo deficiente, jacet!  
 Hirsutum mihi tergum; et forsân læserit ægrum,  
 Vellere eris melius fultus, ovisque venit.  
 Me mihi fecit onus natura, ovis inquit, anhelans  
 Sustineo læta pondera tanta meæ;  
 Me nec velocem nec fortem jacto, solentque  
 Nos etiam sævi dilacerare canes.  
 Ultimus accedit vitulus, vitulumque precatur,  
 Ut peritulum alias ocyus eripiat.  
 Remne ego, respondet vitulus, suscepero tantam.  
 Non depulsus adhuc ubere, natus heri  
 Te, quem maturi canibus validique relinquunt,



## TRANSLATIONS

Incolumem potero reddere parvus ego?  
 Præterea tollens quem illi aversantur, amicis  
 Forte parum videar consuluisse meis.  
 Ignoscas oro. Fidissima dissociantur  
 Corda, et tale tibi sat liquet esse meum.  
 Ecce autem ad calces canis est! te quanta preempto  
 Tristitia est nobis ingruitura!—Vale!

## AVARUS ET PLUTUS.

ICTA fenestra Euri flatu stridebat, avarus  
 Ex somno trepidus surgit, opumque memor.  
 Lata silenter humi ponit vestigia, quemque  
 Respicit ad sonitum respiciensque tremit;  
 Angustissima quæque foramina lampade visit,  
 Ad vectes, obices, fertque refertque manum.  
 Dein reserat crebris junctam compagibus arcam  
 Exultansque omnes conspicit intus opes.  
 Sed tandem furiis ultrioribus actus ob artes  
 Queis sua res tenuis creverat in cumulum.  
 Contortis manibus nunc stat, nunc pectora pulsans  
 Aurum execratur, perniciemque vocat;  
 O mihi, ait, misero mens quam tranquilla fuisset,  
 Hoc celasset adhuc si modo terra malum!  
 Nunc autem virtus ipsa est venalis; et aurum  
 Quid contra vitii tormina sæva valet?  
 O inimicum aurum! O homini infestissima pestis;  
 Cui datur illecebras vincere posse tuas?  
 Aurum homines suasit contemnere quicquid honestum est,  
 Et præter nomen nil retinere boni.  
 Aurum cuncta mali per terras semina sparsit;  
 Aurum nocturnis furibus arma dedit.  
 Bella docet fortes, timidosque ad pessima ducit,  
 Fœdifragas artes, multiplicesque dolos,  
 Nec vitii quicquam est, quod non inveneris ortum  
 Ex malesuadâ auri sacrilegæque fame.  
 Dixit, et ingemuit; Plutusque suum sibi numen  
 Ante oculos, irâ fervidus, ipse stetit.  
 Arcam clausit avarus, et ora horrentia rugis  
 Ostendens; tremulum sic Deus increpuit.  
 Questibus his raucis mihi cur, stulte, obstrepis aures?  
 Ista tui similis tristitia quisque canit.  
 Commaculavi egone humanum genus, improbe? Culpa,  
 Dum rapis, et captas omnia, culpa tua est.  
 Mene execrandum censes, quia tam pretiosa  
 Criminibus fiunt perniciose tuis?

Virtutis specie, pulchro ceu pallio amictus  
 Quisque catus nebulo sordida facta tegit.  
 Atque suis manibus commissa potentia, durum  
 Et dirum subito vergit ad imperium.  
 Hinc, nimium dum latro aurum detrudit in arcam,  
 Idem aurum latet in pectore pestis edax ;  
 Nutrit avaritiam et fastum, suspendere adunco  
 Suadet naso inopes, et vitium omne docet.  
 Auri at larga probo si copia contigit, instar  
 Roris dilapsi ex æthere cuncta beat :  
 Tum, quasi numen inesset, alit, foveat, educat orbos,  
 Et viduas lacrymis ora rigare vetat.  
 Quo sua crimina jure auro derivet avarus,  
 Aurum animæ pretium qui cupit atque capit ?  
 Lege pari gladium incuset sicarius atrox  
 Cæso homine, et ferrum judicet esse reum.

## PAPILIO ET LIMAX.\*

QUI subito ex imis, rerum in fastigia surgit  
 Nativas sordes, quicquid agitur, olet.

\* \* \* \* \*

\* The two first lines only of the "Butterfly and Snail."

THE END.



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