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The Poetical Works

OF HIS ILLUSTRIOUS FATHER

ARE DEDICATED,

BY HIS AFFECTIONATE MOTHER,

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT SHELLEY.

LONDON,
21st January, 1839.
PREFACE.

BY THE EDITOR.

Obstacles have long existed to my presenting the public with a perfectedition
of Shelley's Poems. These being at last happily removed, I hasten to fulfil an
important duty,—that of giving the productions of a sublime genius to the world,
with all the correctness possible, and of, at the same time, detailing the history of
those productions, as they sprung, living and warm, from his heart and brain. I
abstain from any remark on the occurrences of his private life; except, inasmuch as
the passions which they engendered, inspired his poetry. This is not the time to
relate the truth; and I should reject any colouring of the truth. No account of
these events has ever been given at all approaching reality in their details, either as
regards himself or others; nor shall I further allude to them than to remark, that
the errors of action, committed by a man as noble and generous as Shelley, may,
as far as he only is concerned, be fearlessly avowed, by those who loved him, in the
firm conviction, that were they judged impartially, his character would stand in
fairer and brighter light than that of any contemporary. Whatever faults he had,
ought to find extenuation among his fellows, since they proved him to be human;
without them, the exalted nature of his soul would have raised him into something
divine.

The qualities that struck any one newly introduced to Shelley, were, first, a gentle
and cordial goodness that animated his intercourse with warm affection, and helpful
sympathy. The other, the eagerness and ardour with which he was attached to the
cause of human happiness and improvement; and the fervent eloquence with which
he discussed such subjects. His conversation was marked by its happy abundance,
and the beautiful language in which he clothed his poetic ideas and philosophical
notions. To defecate life of its misery and its evil, was the ruling passion of his
soul: he dedicated to it every power of his mind, every pulsation of his heart.
He looked on political freedom as the direct agent to effect the happiness of man-
kkind; and thus any new-sprung hope of liberty inspired a joy and an exultation
more intense and wild than he could have felt for any personal advantage. Those
who have never experienced the workings of passion on general and unselfish subjects,
cannot understand this; and it must be difficult of comprehension to the younger generation rising around, since they cannot remember the scorn and hatred with which the partisans of reform were regarded some few years ago, nor the persecutions to which they were exposed. He had been from youth the victim of the state of feeling inspired by the reaction of the French Revolution; and believing firmly in the justice and excellence of his views, it cannot be wondered that a nature as sensitive, as impetuous, and as generous as his, should put its whole force into the attempt to alleviate for others the evils of those systems from which he had himself suffered. Many advantages attended his birth; he spurned them all when balanced with what he considered his duties. He was generous to imprudence, devoted to heroism.

These characteristics breathe throughout his poetry. The struggle for human weal; the resolution firm to martyrdom; the impetuous pursuit; the glad triumph in good; the determination not to despair. Such were the features that marked those of his works which he regarded with most complacency, as sustained by a lofty subject and useful aim.

In addition to these, his poems may be divided into two classes,—the purely imaginative, and those which sprung from the emotions of his heart. Among the former may be classed "The Witch of Atlas," "Adonais," and his latest composition, left imperfect, "The Triumph of Life." In the first of these particularly, he gave the reins to his fancy, and luxuriated in every idea as it rose; in all, there is that sense of mystery which formed an essential portion of his perception of life—a clinging to the subtler inner spirit, rather than to the outward form—a curious and metaphysical anatomy of human passion and perception.

The second class is, of course, the more popular, as appealing at once to emotions common to us all; some of these rest on the passion of love; others on grief and despondency; others on the sentiments inspired by natural objects. Shelley's conception of love was exalted, absorbing, allied to all that is purest and noblest in our nature, and warmed by earnest passion; such it appears when he gave it a voice in verse. Yet he was usually averse to expressing these feelings, except when highly idealised; and many of his more beautiful effusions he had cast aside, unfinished, and they were never seen by me till after I had lost him. Others, as for instance, "Rosalind and Helen," and "Lines written among the Euganean Hills," I found among his papers by chance; and with some difficulty urged him to complete them. There are others, such as the "Ode to the Sky Lark," and "The Cloud," which, in the opinion of many critics, bear a purer poetical stamp than any other of his productions. They were written as his mind prompted, listening to the carolling of the bird, aloft in the azure sky of Italy; or marking the cloud as it sped across the heavens, while he floated in his boat on the Thames.
No poet was ever warmed by a more genuine and unforced inspiration. His extreme sensibility gave the intensity of passion to his intellectual pursuits; and rendered his mind keenly alive to every perception of outward objects, as well as to his internal sensations. Such a gift is, among the sad vicissitudes of human life, the disappointments we meet, and the galling sense of our own mistakes and errors, fraught with pain; to escape from such, he delivered up his soul to poetry, and felt happy when he sheltered himself from the influence of human sympathies, in the wildest regions of fancy. His imagination has been termed too brilliant, his thoughts too subtle. He loved to idealise reality; and this is a taste shared by few. We are willing to have our passing whims exalted into passions, for this gratifies our vanity; but few of us understand or sympathise with the endeavour to ally the love of abstract beauty, and adoration of abstract good, the τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ τὸ καλὸν of the Socratic philosophers, with our sympathies with our kind. In this Shelley resembled Plato; both taking more delight in the abstract and the ideal, than in the special and tangible. This did not result from imitation; for it was not till Shelley resided in Italy that he made Plato his study; he then translated his Symposium and his Ion; and the English language boasts of no more brilliant composition, than Plato's Praise of Love, translated by Shelley. To return to his own poetry. The luxury of imagination, which sought nothing beyond itself, as a child burthens itself with spring flowers, thinking of no use beyond the enjoyment of gathering them, often showed itself in his verses: they will be only appreciated by minds which have resemblance to his own; and the mystic subtlety of many of his thoughts will share the same fate. The metaphysical strain that characterises much of what he has written, was, indeed, the portion of his works to which, apart from those whose scope was to awaken mankind to aspirations for what he considered the true and good, he was himself particularly attached. There is much, however, that speaks to the many. When he would consent to dismiss these huntings after the obscure, which, entwined with his nature as they were, he did with difficulty, no poet ever expressed in sweeter, more heart-reaching, or more passionate verse, the gentler or more forcible emotions of the soul.

A wise friend once wrote to Shelley, "You are still very young, and in certain essential respects you do not yet sufficiently perceive that you are so." It is seldom that the young know what youth is, till they have got beyond its period; and time was not given him to attain this knowledge. It must be remembered that there is the stamp of such inexperience on all he wrote; he had not completed his nine-and-twentieth year when he died. The calm of middle life did not add the seal of the virtues which adorn maturity to those generated by the vehement spirit of youth. Through life also he was a martyr to ill health, and constant pain wound up his nerves to a pitch of susceptibility that rendered his views of life different from those of a man in the enjoyment of healthy sensations. Perfectly gentle and forbearing in manner, he suffered a good deal of internal irritability, or rather excitement, and his
Editor's Preface.

Fortitude to bear was almost always on the stretch; and thus, during a short life, had gone through more experience of sensation, than many whose existence is protracted. "If I die to-morrow," he said, on the eve of his unanticipated death, "I have lived to be older than my father." The weight of thought and feeling burdened him heavily; you read his sufferings in his attenuated frame, while you perceived the mastery he held over them in his animated countenance and brilliant eyes.

He died, and the world showed no outward sign; but his influence over mankind, though slow in growth, is fast augmenting, and in the ameliorations that have taken place in the political state of his country, we may trace in part the operation of his arduous struggles. His spirit gathers peace in its new state from the sense that, though late, his exertions were not made in vain, and in the progress of the liberty he so fondly loved.

He died, and his place among those who knew him intimately, has never been filled up. He walked beside them like a spirit of good to comfort and benefit—to enlighten the darkness of life with irradiations of genius, to cheer it with his sympathy and love. Any one, once attached to Shelley, must feel all other affections, however true and fond, as wasted on barren soil in comparison. It is our best consolation to know that such a pure-minded and exalted being was once among us, and now exists where we hope one day to join him;—although the intolerant, in their blindness, poured down anathemas, the Spirit of Good, who can judge the heart, never rejected him.

In the notes appended to the poems, I have endeavoured to narrate the origin and history of each. The loss of nearly all letters and papers which refer to his early life, renders the execution more imperfect than it would otherwise have been. I have, however, the liveliest recollection of all that was done and said during the period of my knowing him. Every impression is as clear as if stamped yesterday, and I have no apprehension of any mistake in my statements as far as they go. In other respects, I am, indeed, incompetent; but I feel the importance of the task, and regard it as my most sacred duty. I endeavour to fulfil it in a manner he would himself approve; and hope in this publication to lay the first stone of a monument due to Shelley's genius, his sufferings, and his virtues:

S' al seguii son tarda,
Forse avvevà che 'l bel nome gentile
Consacrèbò con questa stanza penna.

S' al seguii son tarda,
POSTSCRIPT.

In revising this new edition, and carefully consulting Shelley's scattered and confused papers, I found a few fragments which had hitherto escaped me, and was enabled to complete a few poems hitherto left unfinished. What at one time escapes the searching eye, dimmed by its own earnestness, becomes clear at a future period. By the aid of a friend I also present some poems complete and correct, which hitherto have been defaced by various mistakes and omissions. It was suggested that the Poem "To the Queen of my Heart," was falsely attributed to Shelley. I certainly find no trace of it among his papers, and as those of his intimate friends whom I have consulted never heard of it, I omit it.

Two Poems are added of some length, "Swellfoot the Tyrant," and "Peter Bell the Third." I have mentioned the circumstances under which they were written in the notes; and need only add, that they are conceived in a very different spirit from Shelley's usual compositions. They are specimens of the burlesque and fanciful; but although they adopt a familiar style and homely imagery, there shine through the radiance of the poet's imagination the earnest views and opinions of the politician and the moralist.

At my request the publisher has restored the omitted passages of Queen Mab.—I now present this edition as a complete collection of my husband's poetical works, and I do not foresee that I can hereafter add to or take away a word or line.

Putney, November 6th, 1839.
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To Harriet

Whose is the love that, gleaming through the world,
Wards off the poisonous arrow of its scorn?
Whose is the warm and partial praise,
Virtue's most sweet reward?

Beneath whose looks did my reviving soul
Riper in truth and virtuous daring grow?
Whose eyes have I gazed fondly on,
And loved mankind the more?

Queen Mab

I.
How wonderful is Death,
Death and his brother Sleep!
One, pale as yonder waning moon,
With lips of lurid blue;
The other, rosy as the morn
When throned on ocean's wave,
It blushes o'er the world:
Yet both so passing wonderful!

Hath then the gloomy Power
Whose reign is in the tainted sepulchres
Seized on her sinless soul?
Must then that peerless form
Leave nothing of this heavenly sight
Without a beating heart, those azure veins
Which steal like streams along a field of snow,
That lovely outline, which is fair
As breathing marble, perish!
Must putrefaction's breath
Leave nothing of this heavenly sight
But loathsomeness and ruin!
Spare nothing but a gloomy theme,
On which the lightest heart might moralize!
Or is it only a sweet slumber
Stealing o'er sensation,
Which the breath of roseate morining
Chaseth into darkness!

Will Ianthe wake again,
And give that faithful bosom joy
Whose sleepless spirit waits to catch
Light, life, and rapture, from her smile!

Yes! she will wake again,
Although her glowing limbs are motionless,
Once breathing eloquence
That might have soothed a tiger's rage,
Or thawed the cold heart of a conqueror.

Her dewy eyes are closed,
And on their lids, whose texture fine
Scarce hides the dark blue orbs beneath,
The baby Sleep is pillow'd:
Her golden tresses shade
The bosom's stainless pride,
Curling like tendrils of the parasite
Around a marble column.

Hark! whence that rushing sound!
'Tis like the wondrous strain
That round a lonely ruin swells,
Which, wandering on the echoing shore,
The enthusiast hears at evening:
'Tis softer than the west wind's sigh;
'Tis wilder than the unmeasured notes
Of that strange lyre whose strings.
QUEEN MAB.

The genius of the breezes sweep:
Those lines of rainbow light
Are like the moonbeams when they fall
Through some cathedral window, but the teints
Are such as may not find
Comparison on earth.

Behold the chariot of the Fairy Queen!
Celestial coursers paw the unyielding air;
Their filigree pennons at her word they furl,
And stop obedient to the reins of light:
These the Queen of Spells drew in,
She spread a charm around the spot,
And leaning graceful from the ethereal car,
Long did she gaze, and silently,
Upon the slumbering maid.

Oh ! not the visioned poet in his dreams,
When silvery clouds float through the wildered brain,
When every sight of lovely, wild and grand,
Astonishes, enraptures, elevates—
When fancy at a glance combines
The wond’rous and the beautiful,—
So bright, so fair, so wild a shape
Hath ever yet beheld,
As that which reined the coursers of the air,
And poured the magic of her gaze
Upon the sleeping maid.

The broad and yellow moon
Shone dimly through her form—
That form of faultless symmetry;
The pearly and pellucid car
Moved not the moonlight’s line:
’Twas not an earthly pageant;
Those who had look’d upon the sight,
Passing all human glory,
Saw not the yellow moon,
Saw not the mortal scene,
Heard not tho night-wind’s rush,
Heard not an earthly sound,
Saw but the fairy pageant,
Heard but the heavenly strains
That filled the lonely dwelling.

The Fairy’s frame was slight; yon fibrous cloud,
That catches but the palest tinge of even,
And which the straining eye can hardly seize
When melting into eastern twilight’s shadow,
Were scarce so thin, so slight; but the fair star
That gems the glittering coronet of morn,
Sheds not a light so mild, so powerful,
As that which, bursting from the Fairy’s form,
Spread a purpureal halo round the scene,
Yet with an undulating motion,
Swayed to her outline gracefully.

From her celestial car
The Fairy Queen descended,
And thrice she waved her wand
Circled with wreaths of amaranth:
Her thin and misty form
Moved with the moving air,
And the clear silver tones,
As thus she spoke, were such
As are unheard by all but gifted car.

FAIRY.
Stars! your balmiest influence shed!
Elements! your wrath suspend!
Sleep, Ocean, in the rocky bounds
That circle thy domain!
Let not a breath be seen to stir
Around yon grass-grown ruin’s height,
Let even the restless gossamer
Sleep on the moveless air!
Soul of Ianthe! thou,
Judged alone worthy of the envied boon
That waits the good and the sincere; that waits
Those who have struggled, and with resolute will
Vanquished earth’s pride and meanness, burst the
The icy chains of custom, and have shone [chains,
The day-stars of their age;—Soul of Ianthe!
Awake! arise!

Sudden arose
Ianthe’s Soul; it stood
All beautiful in naked purity,
The perfect semblance of its bodily frame.
Instinct with inexpressible beauty and grace,
Each stain of earthliness
Had passed away, it resumed
Its native dignity, and stood
Immortal amid ruin.

Upon the couch the body lay,
Wra|p|t in the depth of slumber:
Its features were fixed and meaningless,
Yet animal life was there,
And every organ yet performed
Its natural functions; ‘twas a sight
Of wonder to behold the body and soul.
The self-same lineaments, the same
Marks of identity were there;
Yet, oh how different! One aspires to heaven,
Pants for its sempiternal heritage,
And ever-changing, ever-rising still,
Wants in endless being.
The other, for a time the unwilling sport
Of circumstance and passion, struggles on;
Fleets through its sad duration rapidly;
Then like a useless and worn-out machine,
Rots, perishes and passes.

FAIRY.

Spirit! who hast dived so deep;
Spirit! who hast soar’d so high;
Thou the fearless, thou the mild,
Accept the boon thy worth hath earned,
Ascend the car with me.

SPIRIT.
Do I dream? Is this new feeling
But a visioned ghost of slumber?
If indeed I am a soul,
A free, a disembodied soul,
Speak again to me.

FAIRY.
I am the Fairy Mab: to me ’tis given
The wonders of the human world to keep.
The secrets of the immeasurable past,
In the unfailing consciences of men,
Those stern, unflattering chroniclers, I find:
The future, from the causes which arise
In each event, I gather: not the sting
Which retributive memory implants
In the hard bosom of the selfish man;
Nor that ecstatic and exulting throb
Which virtue’s votary feels when he sums up
The thoughts and actions of a well-spent day,
Are unforeseen, unregistered by me:
And it is yet permitted me to rend
The veil of mortal frailty, that the spirit,
Clothed in its changeless purity, may know
How soonest to accomplish the great end
For which it hath its being, and may taste
That peace, which in the end, all life will share.
This is the meed of virtue; happy Soul,
Ascend the car with me!

The chains of earth's immurement
Fall from Ianthe's spirit;
They shrank and brake like bandages of straw
Beneath a wakened giant's strength.
She knew her glorious change,
And felt in apprehension uncontrolled.

New raptures opening round:
Each day-dream of her mortal life,
Each frenzied vision of the slumbers
That closed each well-spent day,
Seemed now to meet reality.

The Fair and the Soul proceeded;
The silver clouds dispersed;
And as the car of magic they ascended,
Again the speechless music swelled,
Again the coursers of the air
Unfurled their azure pennons, and the Queen,
Shaking the beamy reins,
Bade them pursue their way.

The magic car moved on.
The night was fair, and countless stars
Studded heaven's dark blue vault,—
Just o'er the eastern wave
Peeped the first faint smile of morn:—
The magic car moved on—
From the celestial hoofs
The atmosphere in flaming sparkles flew,
And where the burning wheels
Eddied above the mountain's loftiest peak,
Was traced a line of lightning.

Now it flew far above a rock,
The rival of the Andes, whose dark brow
Seemed resting on the burnished wave,
Lowered o'er the silver sea.

Far, far below the chariot's path,
Calm as a slumbering babe,
Tremendous Ocean lay.
The mirror of its stillness showed
The pale and waning stars,
The chariot's fiery track,
And the grey light of morn
Tinging those fleecy clouds
That canopied the dawn.
Seemed it, that the chariot's way
Lay through the midst of an immense concave,
Radiant with million constellations, tinged
With shades of infinite colour,
And semicircled with a belt
Flashing incessant meteors.

In its rays of rapid light
Parted around the chariot's swifter course,
And fell, like ocean's feathery spray
Dashed from the boiling surge
Before a vessel's prow.

The magic car moved on.

Earth's distant orb appeared
The smallest light that twinkles in the heaven;
Whilst round the chariot's way
Innumerable systems rolled,
And countless spheres diffused
An ever-varying glory.

It was a sight of wonder: some
Were horned like the crescent moon;
Some shed a mild and silver beam
Like Hesperus o'er the western sea;
Some dashed athwart with trains of flame,
Like worlds to death and ruin driven.

Some shone like suns, and as the chariot passed,
Eclipsed all other light.

Spirit of Nature! here!
In this interminable wilderness
Of worlds, at whose immensity
Even soaring fancy staggers,
Here is thy fitting temple.

Yet not the lightest leaf
That quivers to the passing breeze
Is less instinct with thee:
Yet not the meanest worm
That lurks in graves and fattons on the dead
Less shares thy eternal breath.

Just o'er the eastern wave
Imperishable as this scene,
Here is thy fitting temple!—

II.
If solitude hath ever led thy steps
To the wild ocean's echoing shore,
And thou hast lingered there,
Until the sun's broad orb
Seemed resting on the burnished wave,
Thou must have marked the lines
Of purple gold, that motionless
Hung o'er the sinking sphere:
Thou must have marked the billowy clouds
Edged with intolerable radiance,
Towering like rocks of jet
Crowned with a diamond wreath.

And yet there is a moment,
When the sun's highest point
Peeps like a star o'er ocean's western edge,
When those far clouds of feathery gold
Shaded with deepest purple, gleam
Like islands on a dark blue sea;
Then has thy fancy soared above the earth,
And furled its wearied wing
Within the Fairy's fane.

Yet not the golden islands
Gleaming in yon flood of light,
Nor the feathery curtains
Stretching o'er the sun's bright couch,
Nor the burnished ocean-waves,
Paving that gorgeous dome,
So fair, so wonderful a sight
As Mab's ethereal palace could afford.
Yet likest evening's vault, that fairy Hall!
As Heaven, low resting on the wave, it spread
Its floors of flashing light,
Its vast and azure dome,
Its fertile golden islands
Floating on a silver sea;
Whilst suns their mingling beamings darted
Through clouds of circumambient darkness,
And pearly battlements around
Looked o'er the immense of Heaven.

The magic car no longer moved.
The Fairy and the Spirit
Entered the Hall of Spells:
Those golden clouds
That rolled in glittering billows
Beneath the azure canopy,
With the ethereal footsteps trembled not:
The light and crimson mists,
Floating to strains of thrilling melody
Through that unearthly dwelling,
Yielded to every movement of the will.
Upon their passiveswell the Spirit leaned,
And, for the varied bliss that pressed around,
Used not the glorious privilege
Of virtue and of wisdom.

Spirit! the Fairy said,
And pointed to the gorgeous dome,
This is a wondrous sight
And mocks all human grandeur;
But, were it virtue's only meed, to dwell
In a celestial palace, all resigned
To pleasurable impulses, immured
Within the prison of itself, the will
Of changeless nature would be unfulfilled.
Learn to make others happy. Spirit, come!
This is thine high reward:— the past shall rise;
Thou shalt behold the present; I will teach
The secrets of the future.

The Fairy and the Spirit
Approached the overhanging battlement—
Below lay stretched the universe!
There, far as the remotest line
That bounds imagination's flight,
Countless and unending orbs
In mazy motion intermingled,
Yet still fulfilled immutably
Eternal Nature's law.
Above, below, around
The circling systems formed
A wilderness of harmony;
Each with undeviating aim,
In eloquent silence, through the depths of space
Pursued its wondrous way.

There was a little light
That twinkled in the misty distance:
None but a spirit's eye
Might ken that rolling orb;
None but a spirit's eye,
And in no other place
But that celestial dwelling, might behold
Each action of this earth's inhabitants;
But matter, space and time,
In those aerial mansions cease to act;
And all-prevailing wisdom, when it reaps
The harvest of its excellence, o'er bounds
Those obstacles, of which an earthly soul
Fears to attempt the conquest.

The Fairy pointed to the earth.
The Spirit's intellectual eye
Its kindred beings recognized.
The thronging thousands, to a passing view,
Seemed like an ant-hill's citizens.
How wonderful! that even
The passions, prejudices, interests,
That sway the meanest being, the weak touch
That moves the finest nerve,
And in one human brain
Causes the faintest thought, becomes a link
In the great chain of nature.

Behold, the Fairy cried,
Palmyra's ruin'd palaces!—
Behold! where grandeur frowned;
Behold! where pleasure smiled;
What now remains—the memory
Of senselessness and shame—
What is immortal there?
Nothing—it stands to tell
A melancholy tale, to give
An awful warning: soon
Oblivion will steal silently
The remnant of its fame.
Monarchs and conquerors there
Proud o'er prostrate millions trod—
The earthquakes of the human race—
Like them, forgotten when the ruin
That marks their shock is past.

Beside the eternal Nile
The Pyramids have risen.
Nile shall pursue his changeless way;
Those Pyramids shall fall;
Yea! not a stone shall stand to tell
The spot whereon they stood;
Their very site shall be forgotten,
As is their builder's name!

Behold ye sterile spot;
Where now the wandering Arab's tent
Flaps in the desert-blast.
There once old Salem's haughty fane
Reared high to heaven its thousand golden domes,
And in the blushing face of day
Exposed its shameful glory.
Oh! many a widow, many an orphan cursed
The building of that fane; and many a father,
Worn out with toil and slavery, implored
The poor man's God to sweep it from the earth,
And spare his children the detested task
Of piling stone on stone, and poisoning
The choicest days of life,
To soothe a dotard's vanity.
There an inhuman and uncultured race
Howled hideous praises to their Demon-God;
Raze high to heaven its thousand golden domes,
And in the blushing face of day
Exposed its shameful glory.
Oh! many a widow, many an orphan cursed
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And all-prevailing wisdom, when it reaps
The harvest of its excellence, o'er bounds
Those obstacles, of which an earthly soul
Fears to attempt the conquest.
Where Athens, Rome, and Sparta stood,
There is a moral desert now:
The mean and miserable huts,
The yet more wretched palaces,
Contrasted with those ancient fanes,
Now crumbling to oblivion;
The long and lonely colonnades,
Through which the ghost of Freedom stalks,
Which, in some dear scene we have loved to hear,
Remembered now in sadness.

But, oh! how much more changed,
How gloomier is the contrast
Of human nature there!
Where Socrates expired, a tyrant's slave,
A coward and a fool, spreads death around—
Then, shuddering, meets his own.

Where Cicero and Antoninus lived,
A cowled and hypocritical monk
Prays, curses, and deceives.

Spirit! ten thousand years
Have scarcely passed away,
Since, in the waste where now the savage drinks
His enemy's blood, and aping Europe's sons,
Wakes the unholy song of war,
Arose a stately city,
Metropolis of the western continent:
There, now, the mossy column-stone,
Indented by time's unrelaxing grasp,
Which once appeared to brave all save its country's ruin;
There the wide forest scene,
Rode in the uncultivated loveliness
Of gardens long run wild,
Seems, to the unwilling sojourner, whose steps chance in that desert has delayed,
Thus to have stood since earth was what it is.

Yet once it was the busiest haunt,
Whither, as to a common centre, flocked strangers, and ships, and merchandize:
Once peace and freedom blest the cultivated plain:
But wealth, that curse of man, blighted the bud of its prosperity:
Virtue and wisdom, truth and liberty,
Fled, to return not, until man shall know
That they alone can give the bliss
Worthy a soul that claims its kindred with eternity.

Behold a gorgeous palace, that, amid yon populous city, rears its thousand towers
And seems itself a city. Gloomy troops of sentinel, in stern and silent ranks,
Encompass it around: the dweller there cannot be free and happy; hearest thou not the curses of the fatherless, the groans of those who have no friend? He passes on:

The King, the wearer of a gilded chain
That binds his soul to abjectness, the fool whom courtiers nickname monarch, whilst a slave even to the basest appetites—that man

There’s not one atom of yon earth but once was living man;
Nor the minutest drop of rain, that hangeth in its thinnest cloud,
But flowed in human veins:
And from the burning plains where Lybian monsters yell,
From the most gloomy glens of Greenland's sunless clime,
And from the sunniest fields of fertile England spread
Their harvest to the day,
Thou canst not find one spot whereon no city stood.

How strange is human pride!
I tell thee that those living things,
To whom the fragile blade of grass,
That springeth in the morn and perisheth ere noon,
Is an unbounded world;
I tell thee that those viewless beings,
Whose mansion is the smallest particle
Of the impassive atmosphere,
Think, feel and live like man;
That their affections and antipathies,
Like his, produce the laws ruling their moral state;
And the minutest throbbethat through their frame diffuses
The slightest, faintest motion,
Is fixed and indispensable as the majestic laws
That rule your rolling orbs.

The Fairy paused. The Spirit, in ecstasy of admiration, felt all knowledge of the past revived; the events of old and wondrous times, which dim tradition interruptedly teaches the credulous vulgar, were unfolded in just perspective to the view; yet dim from their infinitude.

The Spirit seemed to stand high on an isolated pinnacle:
The flood of ages combating below, the depth of the unbounded universe above, and all around nature's unchanging harmony.

Fairy! the Spirit said, and on the Queen of Spells fixed her ethereal eyes:
Judge me not, thou hast given a boon which I will not resign, and taught a lesson not to be unlearned. I know the past, and thence I will essay to glean a warning for the future, so that man may profit by his errors, and derive experience from his folly:
For, when the power of imparting joy is equal to the will, the human soul requires no other heaven.

The Fairy paused. The Spirit, in ecstasy of admiration, felt all knowledge of the past revived; the events of old and wondrous times, which dim tradition interruptedly teaches the credulous vulgar, were unfolded in just perspective to the view; yet dim from their infinitude.

The Spirit seemed to stand high on an isolated pinnacle:
The flood of ages combating below, the depth of the unbounded universe above, and all around nature's unchanging harmony.

III.

Fairy! the Spirit said,
And on the Queen of Spells
Fixed her ethereal eyes,
I thank thee. Thou hast given
A boon which I will not resign, and taught
A lesson not to be unlearned. I know
The past, and thence I will essay to glean
A warning for the future, so that man
May profit by his errors, and derive
Experience from his folly:
For, when the power of imparting joy
Is equal to the will, the human soul
Requires no other heaven.

Mab.

Turn thee, surpassing Spirit!
Much yet remains unscaned.
Thou knowest how great is man,
Thou knowest his imbecility:
Yet learn thou what he is;
Yet learn the lofty destiny
Which restless Time prepares
For every living soul.

Behold a gorgeous palace, that, amid yon populous city, rears its thousand towers
And seems itself a city. Gloomy troops of sentinel, in stern and silent ranks,
Encompass it around: the dweller there cannot be free and happy; hearest thou not the curses of the fatherless, the groans of those who have no friend? He passes on:

The King, the wearer of a gilded chain
That binds his soul to abjectness, the fool
Whom courtiers nickname monarch, whilst a slave
even to the basest appetites—that man...
Heeds not the shriek of penury; he smiles
At the deep curses which the destitute
Mutter in secret, and a sullen joy
Pervades his bloodless heart when thousands groan
But for those morsels which his wantonness
Wastes in unjoyous revelry, to save
All that they love from famine: when he hears
The tale of horror, to some ready-made face
Of hypocritical assent he turns,
Smothering the glow of shame, that, spite of him,
Flushes his bloated cheek.

Now to the meal
Of silence, grandeur, and excess, he drags
His palled unwilling appetite. If gold,
Gleaming around, and numerous viands culled
From every clime, could force the loathing sense
To overcome satiety,—if wealth
The spring it draws from poisons not,—or vice,
Unfeeling, stubborn vice, converteth not
Its food to deadliest venom; then that king
Is happy; and the peasant who fulfils
His unforced task, when he returns at even,
And by the blazing faggot meets again
Her welcome for whom all his toil is sped,
Tastes not a sweeter meal.

Behold him now
Stretched on the gorgeous couch; his fevered brain
Reels dizzyly awhile: but ah! too soon
The slumber of intemperance subsides,
And conscience, that undying serpent, calls
Her venomous brood to their nocturnal task.
Listen! he speaks: oh! mark that frenzied eye—
Oh! mark that deadly visage.

KING.
No cessation!
Oh! must this last for ever! Awful death,
I wish yet fear to clasp thee! Not one moment
Of dreamless sleep! O dear and blessed peace!
Oh! must this last for ever! Awful death,
I wish yet fear to clasp thee! Not one moment
Of dreamless sleep! O dear and blessed peace!
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I wish yet fear to clasp thee! Not one moment
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Oh! must this last for ever! Awful death,
I wish yet fear to clasp thee! Not one moment
Of dreamless sleep! O dear and blessed peace!
Oh! must this last for ever! Awful death,
Queen Mab.

When Nero,
High over flaming Rome, with savage joy
Lowered like a fiend, drank with unrapured ear
The shrieks of agonising death, beheld
The frightful desolations spread, and felt
A new-created sense within his soul
Thrill to the sight, and vibrate to the sound;
Thinnest thou his grandeur had not overcome
The force of human kindness! and, when Rome,
With one stern blow, hurled not the tyrant down,
The shrieks of agonising death, beheld
Thrill to the sight, and vibrate to the sound;
Hath quenched that eye, and death's relentless
Hath quenched that eye, and death's relentless
Sunk reason's simple eloquence, that rolled
Sunk reason's simple eloquence, that rolled
With which the happy spirit contemplates
With which the happy spirit contemplates
Now swellsthe intermingling din; the jar
Now swellsthe intermingling din; the jar
That wrapsthe moveless scene. Heaven's ebon
That wrapsthe moveless scene. Heaven's ebon
When vernal zephyrs breathe in evening's ear,
When vernal zephyrs breathe in evening's ear,
The falling beam, the shriek, the groan, the shout,
The falling beam, the shriek, the groan, the shout,
That shrouds the boilingsurge; the pitiless fiend,
That shrouds the boilingsurge; the pitiless fiend,
The falling beam, the shriek, the groan, the shout,
The falling beam, the shriek, the groan, the shout,
The ceaseless clangor, and the rush of men
The ceaseless clangor, and the rush of men
To curtain her sleeping world. Yon gentle hills,
To curtain her sleeping world. Yon gentle hills,
The ceaseless clangor, and the rush of men
The ceaseless clangor, and the rush of men
And the unbounded frame, which thou pervades,
And the unbounded frame, which thou pervades
Which vernal zephyrs breathe in evening's ear,
Which vernal zephyrs breathe in evening's ear.
That wrapsthe moveless scene. Heaven's ebon
That wrapsthe moveless scene. Heaven's ebon
The falling beam, the shriek, the groan, the shout,
The falling beam, the shriek, the groan, the shout,
That shrouds the boilingsurge; the pitiless fiend,
That shrouds the boilingsurge; the pitiless fiend,
And the unbounded frame, which thou pervades,
And the unbounded frame, which thou pervades
The falling beam, the shriek, the groan, the shout,
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And the unbounded frame, which thou pervades,
And the unbounded frame, which thou pervades
The falling beam, the shriek, the groan, the shout,
The falling beam, the shriek, the groan, the shout,
Queer MAB.

Inebriate with rage: loud, and more loud
The discord grows; till pale death shuts the scene,
And o'er the conqueror and the conquer'd draws
His cold and bloody shroud.—Of all the men
Whom day's departing beam saw blooming there
In proud and vigorous health; of all the hearts
That beat with anxious life at sun-set there;
How few survive, how few are beating now!
All is deep silence, like the fearful calm
That slumbers in the storm's portentous pause;
Save when the frantic wall of widowed love
Comes shuddering on the blast, or the faint moan
With which some soul bursts from the frame of clay
Wrapt round its struggling powers.

The grey morn
Dawns on the mournful scene; the sulphurous
Before the icy wind slow rolls away,
And the bright beams of frosty morning dance
Along the spangling snow. There tracks of blood
Even to the forest's depth, and scattered arms,
And lifeless warriors, whose hard lineaments
Death's self could change not; mark the dreadful
Of the outsallying victors: far behind,
Path black as notes where their proud city stood.
Within yon forest is a gloomy glen—
Each tree which guards its darkness from the day,
Waves o'er a warrior's tomb.

I see thee shrink,
Surpassing Spirit!—wrt thou human else?
I see a shade of doubt and horror fleet
Across thy stainless features; yet fear not;
This is no unconnected misery,
Nor stands uncaused, and irretrievable.
Man's evil nature, that apology
Which kings who rule, and cowards who crouch,
Set up
For their unnumbered crimes, sheds not the blood
Which desolates the discord-wasted land
From kings, and priests, and statesmen, war arose,
Whose safety is man's deep unbettered woe,
Whose grandeur he despairs of. Let the axe
Strike at the root, the poison-tree will fall;
And where its venomed exhalations spread
Ruin, and death, and woe, where millions lay
Quenching the serpent's famine, and whose bones
Bleaching unburied in the putrid blast,
A garden shall arise, in loveliness
Surpassing fabled Eden.

Hath Nature's soul,
That formed this world so beautiful, that spread
Earth's lap with plenty, and life's smallest chord
Strung to unchanging unison, that gave
The happy birds their dwelling in the grove,
That yielded to the wanderers of the deep
The lovely silence of the unfathomed main,
And filled the meanest worm that crawls in dust
With spirit, thought, and love; on Man alone
Partial in causeless malice, wantonly
Heaped ruin, vice, and slavery; his soul
Blasted with withering curses; placed afar
The meteor happiness, that shuns his grasp,
But serving on the frightful gulf to glare,
Rent wide beneath his footsteps!

Nature!—no!

Rings, priests, and statesmen blast the human flower,
Even in its tender bud; their influence darts
Like subtle poison through the bloodless veins
Of desolate society. The child,

Ere he can lisp his mother's sacred name,
Swells with the unnatural pride of crime, and lifts
His baby-award even in a hero's mood.
This infant arm becomes the bloodiest scourgé
Of devastated earth; whilst specious names
Of heaven, that renovate the insect tribes,
Serve as the sophisms with which manhood dims
Bright reason's ray, and sanctifies the sword
Upraised to shed a brother's innocent blood.
Let priest-led slaves cease to proclaim that man
Inherits vice and misery, when force
And falsehood hang even o'er the cradled babe,
Stifling with rudest grasp all natural good.

Ah! to the stranger-soul, when first it peeps
From its new tenement, and looks abroad
For happiness and sympathy, how stern
And desolate a tract is this wide world!
How withered all the buds of natural good!
No shade, no shelter from the sweeping storms
Of pitiless power! On its wretched frame,
Poisoned, perchance, by the disease and woe
Heaped on the wretched parent, whence it sprung,
By morals, law, and custom, the pure winds
Of heaven, that renovate the insect tribes,
May breathe not. The unlighting light of day
May visit not its longings. It is bound
To abjectness and bondage!
Their palaces, participate the crimes
That force defends, and from a nation's rage
Secure the crown, which all the curses reach
That famine, frenzy, war, and poverty breathe.
These are the hired braves who defend
The tyrant's throne—the bullies of his fear:
These are the sinks and channels of worst vice,
That famine, frenzy, woe and penury breathe.
Secure the crown, which all the curses reach
Of all that is most vile: their cold hearts blend
The refuge of society, the dregs
All that is mean and villainous, with rage
Which hopelessness of good, and self-contempt,
Alone might kindle; they are decked in wealth,
Honour and power, then are sent abroad
To do their work. The pestilence that stalks
In gloomy triumph through some Eastern land
Is less destroying. They cajoled with gold,
And promises of fame, the thoughtless youth
Already crushed with servitude: he knows
His wretchedness too late, and cherishes
Repentance for his ruin, when his doom
Is sealed in gold and blood!
Those too the tyrant serve, who skilled to snare
The feet of justice in the toils of law,
Stand, ready to oppress the weaker still;
And, right or wrong, will vindicate for gold,
Snearing at public virtue, which beneath
Their pitiless tread lies torn and trampled, where
Honour sits smiling at the sale of truth.

Then grave and hoary-headed hypocrites,
Without a hope, a passion, or a love,
Who, through a life of luxury and lies,
Have crept by flattery to the seats of power,
Support the system whence their honours flow—
They have three words; well tyrants know their use,
Will pay them for the loan, with usury. (Heaven.
Torn from a bleeding world!— God, Hell and
A vengeful, pitiless, and almighty fiend,
Whose mercy is a nick-name for the rage
Of tireless tigers, hungering for blood.
Hell, a red gulph everlasting fire,
Where poisonous and undying worms prolong
Eternal misery to those hapless slaves
Who love not the tyrant, who skilled to snare
The feet of justice in the toils of law;
Stand, ready to oppress the weaker still;
And, right or wrong, will vindicate for gold,
Snearing at public virtue, which beneath
Their pitiless tread lies torn and trampled, where
Honour sits smiling at the sale of truth.

These tyrants temper to his work,
Wields in his wrath, and as he wills, destroys,
Omnipotent in wickedness: the whole
Youth springs, age moulder, manhood tamely does
His bidding, bribed by short-lived joys to lend
Force to the weakness of his trembling arm.
They rise, they fall; one generation comes
Yielding its harvest to destruction's scythe.
It fades, another blossoms: yet behold!
Red glows the tyrant's stamp-mark on its bloom,
Withering and cankered deep its passive prime.
He has invested lying words and modes,
Empty and vain as his own coward heart;
Evasive meanings, nothing of much sound,
To lure the heedless victim to the toils
Spread round the valley of its paradise.

Look to thyself, priest, conqueror, or prince:
Whether thy trade is falsehood, and thy lusts
Deep wallow in the earnings of the poor,
With whom thy master was:—or thou delight'st
In numbering o'er the myriad of thy slain,
All misery weighing nothing in the scale
Against thy short-lived fame: or thou dost load
With cowardice and crime the groaning land,
A pomp-fed king. Look to thy wretched self!
Aye, art thou not the veriest slave that e'er
Crawled on the loathing earth! Are not thy days
Days of unsatisfying listlessness?
Dost thou not cry, ere night's long rack is o'er,
When will the morning come? Is not thy youth
A vain and feverish dream of sensualism?
Thy manhood blighted with unripe disease:
Are not thy views of unregretted death
Drear, comfortless, and horrible? Thy mind,
Is it not morbid as thy nerveless frame,
Incapable of judgment, hope, or love?
And dost thou wish the errors to survive
That bar thee from all sympathies of good,
Aftcr the miserable interest
Thou hold'st in their protraction? When the grave
Has swallowed up thy memory and thyself,
Dost thou desire the base that poisons earth
To twine its roots around thy coffin clay,
Spring from thy bones, and blossom on thy tomb,
That of its fruit thy bating may cut and die!

V.
Thus do the generations of the earth
Go to the grave, and issue from the womb.
Surviving still the imperishable change
That renovates the world; even as the flower
Which the keen frost-wind of the waning year
Has scattered on the forest soil, and heaped
For many seasons there, though long they choke,
Loading, with loathsome rottenness the land,
All grums of promise. Yet when the tall trees
From which they fell, shorn of their lovely shapes,
Lie level with the earth to moulder there,
They fertilize the land they long deformed,
Till from the breathing lawn a forest springs
Of youth, integrity, and loveliness,
Like that which gave it life, to spring and die.
Thus suicidal selfishness, that blights
The fairest feelings of the opening heart,
Is destined to decay, whilst from the soil
Shall spring all virtue, all delight, all love,
And judgment cease to wage unnatural war
With passion's unsaebtable array.
Twin-sister of religion, selfishness!
Rival in crime and falsehood, aping all
The wanton horrors of her bloody play;
Yet frozen, unimpassioned, spiritless,
Shunning the light, and owning not its name:
Compelled, by its deformity, to screen
With flimsy veil of justice and of right,
Its unattractive lineaments, that scare
All, save the brood of ignorance: at once
The cause and the effect of tyranny;
Unblushing, hardened, sensual, and vile;
Dead to all love but of its abjectness,
With heart impassive by more noble powers
Than unshared pleasure, sordid gain, or fame;
Despairing its own miserable being,
Which still it longs, yet fears, to disenthrall.
Hence commerce springs, the venal interchange
Of all that human art and nature yield;
The bitter poison of a nation's woe,
That grace the proud and noisy pomp of wealth!
Can turn the worship of the servile mob
Mere wheels of work and articles of trade,
The man of ease, who, by his warm fire-side,
From Virtue, trampled by its iron tread,
Although its dazzling pedestal be raised
On the deeps of prematurity and its decline;
To spring and fall with full-felt disease,
To all that shares the lot of human life,
Which poisoned body and soul, scarce drags the
That lengthens as it goes and clanks behind.

Commerce has set the mark of selfishness,
The signet of its all-enslaving power,
Upon a shining ore, and called it gold:
Before whose image bow the vulgar great,
The vainly rich, the miserable proud,
The mob of peasants, nobles, priests, and kings,
And with blind feelings reverence the power
That grinds them to the dust of misery.

But in the temple of their hireling hearts
Gold is a living god, and rules in scorn
All earthly things but virtue.

Since tyrants, by the sale of human life,
Heap luxuries to their sensualism, and fame
To their wide-wasting and insatiate pride,
Success has sanctioned to a credulous world
The ruin, the disgrace, the wo of war.
His hosts of blind and resisting dupes
The deepot numbers; from his cabinet
These puppetsofhis schemes he moves at will,
Beneath a vulgarmaster, to perform
A task of cold and brutal drudgery—
Hardened to hope, insensible to fear,
Scarce living pulleys of a dead machine,
Mere wheels of work and articles of trade,
That grace the proud and noisy pomp of wealth!

The harmony and happiness of man
Yield to the wealth of nations; that which lifts
His nature to the heaven of its pride,
Is bartered for the poison of his soul;
The weight that drags to earth his towering hopes,
Withering all passion but of slavish fear,
Extinguished all free and generous love
Of enterprise and daring, even the pulse
That fancy kindles in the beating heart
To light themidnightsofhis nativetown!
Were only specksoftinsel, fixed in heaven
Those mighty spheresthat gem infinity
His energies, no longer tamed, less then,
To mould a pin, or fabricate a nail!

Yet every heart contains perfection's germ:
The wisest of the sages of the earth,
That ever from the stores of reason drew
Science and truth, and virtue's dreadless tone,
Were but a weak and inexperienced boy,
Proud, sensual, unimpassioned, unimbued
With pure desire and universal love,
Untainted passion, elevated will,
Compared to that high being, of cloudless brain,
Untainted passion, elevated will.

Which death (who even would linger long in awe
Within his noble presence, and beneath
His changeless eye-beam), might alone subdue.
Him, every slave now dragging through the filth
Of some corrupted city his sad life,
Pining with famine, swollen with luxury,
Blunting the keenness of his spiritual sense
With many schemes and unworthy cares,
Or madly rushing through all violent crime,
To move the deep stagnation of his soul,—
Might imitate and equal.

And bare fulfilment of the common laws
Of decency and prejudice, confines
The strongest of its bounteous love,
Is duped by their cold sophistry: he sheds
A passing tear perchance upon the wreck
Of earthly peace, when near his dwelling's door
The frightful waves are driven,—when his son
Is murdered by the tyrant, or religion
Drives his weak and placid mind to madness.
But the poor man;
Whose life is misery, and fear, and care;
Whom the morn wakes but to fruitless toil;
Who ever hears his famished offspring's scream,
Whom their pale mother's uncomplaining gaze
For ever meets, and the proud rich man's eye
Flinging command, and the heart-breaking scene
Of thousands like himself; he little heeds
That rhetoric of tyranny, his hate
Is unquestionable, he laughs to scorn
The vain and bittern marshmellows of words,
Feeling the horror of the tyrant's deeds,
And unrestrained but by the arm of power,
That knows and dreads his enmity.

The iron rod of penury still compels
Her wretched slave to bow the knee to wealth,
And poison, with unprofitable toil,
A life too void of solace to confirm
The very chains that bind him to his doom.
Nature, impartial in munificence,
Has gifted man with all-subduing will:
Matter, with all its transitory shapes,
Lies subjected and plastic at his feet,
That, weak from bondage, tremble as they tread.
How many a rustic Milton has passed by,
Stifling the speechless longings of his heart,
In unremitting drudgery and care!
How many a vulgar Cato has compelled
His energies, no longer tameless then,
To mould a pin, or fabricate a nail!
How many a Newton, to whose passive ken
Those mighty spheres that gem infinity
Were only specks of tinsel, fixed in heaven
To light the mornings of his native town!

But mean lust
Has bound its chains so tight about the earth,
That all within it but the virtuous man
Is venal: gold or fame will surely reach
The price prefixed by selfishness, to all
But him of resolute and unchanging will;
Whom, nor the plaudits of a servile crowd,
Nor the vile joys of tainting luxury,
Can bribe to yield his elevated soul
With blood-red hand the sceptre of the world.
All things are sold: the very light of heaven
Is venal; earth's unsparing gifts of love,
The smallest and most despicable things
That lurk in the abysses of the deep,
All objects of our life, even life itself,
And the poor pittance which the laws allow
Of liberty, the fellowship of man,
Those duties which his heart of human love
Should urge him to perform instinctively,
Of undisguising selfishness, that sets
On each its price, the stamp-mark of her reign.
Falsehood demands but gold to pay the pangs
Of outraged conscience; for the slavish priest
Sets no great value on his hireling faith:
A little passing pomp, some servile souls,
Whom cowardice itself might safely chain,
Or the spare mite of avarice could bribe
To deck the triumph of their languid zeal,
Can make him minister to tyranny.
More daring crime requires a loftier meed:
Without a shudder the slave-soldier lends
His arm to murderous deeds, and steel his heart,
When the dread eloquence of dying men,
Low mingling on the lonely field of fame,
Assailsthat nature whose applause he sells
For the gross blessings of the patriot mob,
For the vile gratitude of heartless kings,
And for a cold world's good word,—viler still!
There is a nobler glory which survives
Until our being fades, and, solacing
All human care, accompanies its change;
Deserts not virtue in the dungeon's gloom,
And, in the precincts of the palace, guides
Its footsteps through that labyrinth of crime;
Imbues his lineaments with dauntlessness,
Even when, from power's avenging hand, he takes
Its sweetest, last and noblest title—death;
—The consciousness of good, which neither gold,
Nor sordid fame, nor hope of heavenly bliss,
Can purchase; but a life of resolute good,
Unalterable will, quenchless desire
Of universal happiness, the heart
That beats with it in unison, the brain,
Whose ever-wakeful wisdom toils to change
Reason's rich stores for its eternal weal.
This commerce of sincerest virtue needs
No mediating signs of selfishness,
No jealous intercourse of wretched gain,
No balancings of prudence, cold and long;
In just and equal measure all is weighed,
One scale contains the sum of human weal,
And one, the good man's heart.
Symphonious with the planetary spheres;  
When man, with changeless nature coalescing,  
Will undertake regeneration's work,  
When its ungenial poles no longer point  
To the red and baleful sun  
That faintly twinkles there.

Spirit, on yonder earth,  
Falsehood now triumphs; deadly power  
Has fixed its seal upon the lip of truth!  
Madness and misery are there!  
The happiest is most wretched! Yet confide  
Now, to the scene I show, in silence turn,  
Until pure health-drops, from the cup of joy  
Has fixed its seal upon the lip of truth!  
Falsehood now triumphs; deadly power  
Which nature soon, with re-creating hand,  
Will blot in mercy from the book of earth.

How calm and sweet the victories of life,  
How bold the flight of passion's wandering wing,  
How swift the step of reason's firmer tread,  
How powerless were the mightiest monarch's arm,  
Thou faintest all thou look'st upon!— the stars,  
Of thy untutored infancy: the trees,  
Vain his loud threat, and impotent his frown  
Of thy blind heart: yet still thy youthful hands  
Which on thy cradle beamed so bright and sweet,  
Were gods to the distempered playfulness  
How ludicrous the priest's dogmatic roar!  
The elements of all that thou didst know;  
The weight of his exterminating curse  
Reproached thine ignorance. Awhile thou standst  
The budding of the heaven-breathing trees,  
The changing seasons, winter's leafless reign,  
The eternal orbs that beautify the night,  
The sun-rise, and the setting of the moon,  
Earthquakes and wars, and poisons and disease,  
And all their causes, to an abstract point  
Converging, thou didst bend, and call'd it God!  
The self-sufficing, the omnipotent,  
The merciful, and the avenging God!  
Who, prototype of human misrule, sits  
High in heaven's realm, upon a golden throne,  
Even like an earthly king; and whose dread work,  
Hell, gapes for ever for the unhappy slaves

Of fate, whom he created in his sport,  
To triumph in their torments when they fell!  
Earth heard the name; earth trembled, as the smoke  
Of his revenge ascended up to heaven,  
Blotting the constellations; and the cries  
Of million butchers'd in sweet contentence  
And unsuspecting peace, even when the bonds  
Of safety were confirmed by wordy oaths  
Sworn in his dreadful name, rung through the land;  
Whilst ignorant babes writhed on thy stubborn spear,  
And thou didst laugh to hear the mother's shriek  
Of maniac gladness as the sacred steel  
Felt cold in her torn entrails!

Religion! thou wert then in manhood's prime:  
But age crept on: one God would not suffice  
For senile puerility; thou framedst  
A tale to suit thy dotage, and to glut  
Thy misery-thirsting soul, that the mad fiend  
Thy wickedness had pictured, might afford  
A plea for sating the unnatural thirst  
Of murder, rapine, violence, and crime,  
That still consumed thy being, even when [light  
Thou hearest the step of fate;— that flames might  
Thy funeral scene, and the shrill horrent shrieks  
Of parents dying on the pile that burn'd  
To light their children to thy paths, the roar  
Of the encircling flames, the exulting cries  
Of thine apostles, loud commingling there,  
Might sate thy hungry ear  
Even on the bed of death!

But now contempt is mocking thy grey hairs;  
Thou art descending to the darksome grave,  
Unhonoured and unpitied, but by those  
Whose pride is passing by like thine, and sheds,  
Like thine, a glare that fades before the sun  
Of truth, and shines but in the dreadful night  
That long has lowered above the ruined world.

Throughout these infinite orbs of mingling light,  
Of which yon earth is one, is wide diffused  
A spirit of activity and life,  
That knows no rest, no change, no death;  
That fades not when the lamp of earthly life,  
Extinguished in the dampness of the grave,  
Awhile there slumbers, more than when the babe  
In the dim newness of its being feels  
The impulses of sublunary things,  
And all is wonder to unpractised sense:  
But, active, steadfast, and eternal, still  
Guides the fierce whirlwind, in the tempest roars,  
Cheers in the day, breathes in the balmy groves,  
Strengthens in health, and poisons in disease;  
And in the storm of change, that ceaselessly  
Rolls round the eternal universe, and shakes  
Its undecaying battlement, preserves,  
Apportioning with irresistible law  
The place each spring of its machine shall fill;  
So that, when waves on waves tumultuous heap  
Confusion to the clouds, and fiercely driven  
Heaven's lightnings scorch the uprooted ocean  
While, as the eye of shipwrecked mariners, fords,  
Lone setting on the bare and shuddering rock,  
All seems unlinked contingency and chance:  
No atom of this turbulence fulfils  
A vague and unnecessary task,  
Or acts but as it must and ought to act.  
Even the minutest molecule of light,
That, blind, they may dig each other's graves
When merciless ambition, or mad zeal,
The universal Spirit guides; nor less
That in an April sunbeam's fleeting glow
And call the sad work glory, does it rule
That from the depths of unrecorded time
Their servitude, to hide the Bhamc they feel,
Has led two hosts of dupes to battle-field,
No working of the tyrant's moody mind,
Nor one misgiving of the slaves who boast
Nor the events enchaining every will,
All passions: not a thought, a will, an act,
Have drawn all-influencing virtue, pass
Soul of the Universe! eternalspring
Fulfils its destined, though invisible work,
Spirit of Nature! all-sufficing Power.
Of all that chequers the phantasmal scene
Of life and death, of happiness and woe,
Requirest no prayers or praises; the caprice
Of man's weak will belongs no more to thee
That floats before our eyes in wavering light,
Than do the changeful passions of his breast
Thou knowest not: all that the wide world contains
Unlike the God of human error, thou
Necessity! thou mother of the world!
Which gleams but on the darkness of our prison,
Whose chains and massy walls
We feel but cannot see.

QUEEN MAB.

13

VII.

S.P.I.R.I.T.

I was an infant when my mother went
To see an atheist burned. She took me there:
The thirsty fire crept round his manly limbs;
Tempered disdain in his unaltering eye,
Mixed with a quiet smile, shone calmly forth:
The thirsty fire crept round his manly limbs;
His resolute eyes were scorched to blindness soon;
His death-pang rent my heart! the insensate mob
Uttered a cry of triumph, and I wept.
Weep not, child! cried my mother, for that man
Has said, There is no God.

F.A.I.R.Y.

Nature confirms the faith his death-groan seal'd:
Let heaven and earth, let man's revolving race,
His ceaseless generations, tell their tale;
Let every part depending on the chain
That links it to the whole, point to the hand
That grasps it term! Let every seed that falls,
In silent eloquence unfold its store
Of argument: infinity within,
Infinity without, belie creation;
The exterminable spirit it contains
Is nature's only God; but human pride
Is skilful to invent most serious names
To hide its ignorance.

The name of God

Has fenced about all crime with holiness,
Himself the creature of his worshippers,
Whose names and attributes and passions change,
Seeva, Buddha, Foh, Jehovah, God, or Lord,
Even with the human dupes who build his shrines,
Stil s serving o'er the war-polluted world
For desolation's watch-word; whether hosts
Stain his death-blushing chariot wheels, as on
Triumphantly they roll, whilst Brahmins raise
A sacred hymn to mingle with the groans;
Or countless partners of his power divide
His tyranny to weakness; or the smoke
Of burning towns, the cries of female helplessness,
Unarmed old age, and youth, and infancy,
Triumphantly they roll, whilst Brahmins raise
A sacred hymn to mingle with the groans;
Or countless partners of his power divide
His tyranny to weakness; or the smoke
Of burning towns, the cries of female helplessness,
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His tyranny to weakness; or the smoke
Of burning towns, the cries of female helplessness,
Unarmed old age, and youth, and infancy,
Triumphantly they roll, whilst Brahmins raise
A sacred hymn to mingle with the groans;
And fancy's thin creations to endow
With manner, being, and reality;
Therefore a wondrous phantom, from the dreams
Of human error's dense and purblind faith,
I will evoke, to meet thy questioning.

Ahaseurus, rise!

A strange and woe-worn wight
Arose beside the battlement,
And stood unmoving there.

His inessential figure cast no shade
Upon the golden floor;
His port and mien bore mark of many years,
And chronicles of untold ancientness
Were legible within his blemless eye:
Yet his cheek bore the mark of youth;
Freshness and vigour knitted manly frame;
The wisdom of old age was mingled there
With youth's primeval dauntlessness;
And inexpressible woe,
Chasten'd by fearless resignation, gave
An awful grace to his all-speaking brow.

SPIRIT.
Is there a God!

AHASEURUS.
Is there a God!—ay, an almighty God,
And vengeful as almighty! Once his voice
Was heard on earth: earth shudder'd at the sound;
The fiery-visaged firmament express'd
Abhorrence, and the grave of nature yawn'd
To swallow all the dauntless and the good
That dared to hurl defiance at his throne,
Girt as it was with power. None but slaves
Survived,—cold-blooded slaves, who did the work
Of tyrannous omnipotence; whose souls
No honest indignation ever urged
To elevated daring, to one deed
Which gross and sensual self did not pollute.

These slaves built temples for the omnipotent fiend,
Gorgeous and vast: the costly altarssmoked
With human blood, and hideous paeans rang
Through all the long-drawn aisles. A murderer
Heard

God omnipotent,
Is there no mercy! must our punishment
Be endless! I will long ages roll away,
And see no term! Oh! wherefore hast thou made
In mockery and wrath this evil earth!
Mercy becomes the powerful—be but just:
O God! repent and save.

One way remains:
I will beget a son, and he shall bear
The sins of all the world; he shall arise
In an unnoticed corner of the earth,
And there shall die upon a cross, and purge
The universal crime; so that the few
On whom my grace descends, those who are mark'd
As vessels to the honour of their God,
May credit this strange sacrifice, and save
Their souls alive: millions shall live and die,
Who ne'er shall call upon their Saviour's name,
But, unredeemed, go to the gaping grave.

Thus I shall finish it an old woman's tale,
Such as the nurses frighten babes withal:
These in a gulf of anguish and of flame
Shall curse their reprobation endlessly,
Yet tenfold pangsshall force them to avow,
Even on their beds of torment, where they howl,
My honour, and the justice of their doom.

What then avail their virtuous deeds, their thoughts
Of purity, with radiant genius bright,
Many are called, but few will I elect.
Do thou my bidding, Moses!

Even the murderer's cheek
Was blanched with horror, and his quivering lips
Scarce faintly uttered—O almighty one,
I tremble and obey!

O Spirit! centuries have set their seal
On this heart of many wounds, and loaded brain,
Since the Incarnate came: humbly he came,
Veiling his horrible Godhead in the shape
Of man, scorned by the world, his name unheard,
Save by the rabble of his native town,
Even as a parish demagogue. He led
The crowd; he taught them justice, truth, and
peace,
In semblance; but he lit within their souls
The quenchless flames of zeal, and blist the sword
He brought on earth to satiate with the blood
Of truth and freedom his malignant soul.

At length his mortal frame was led to death.
I stood beside him: on the torturing cross
No pain assailed his unterrestrialsense;
And yet he groaned. Indignantly I summed
The massacres and miseries which his name
Had sanctioned in my country, and I cried,
Go! go! in mockery.

A smile of godlike malefic reillumined
His fading lineaments— I go, he cried,
But thou shalt wander o'er the unquiet earth
Eternally.——The dampness of the grave
Bathed my imperishable front. I fell,
And long lay trance'd upon the charmed soil.
When I awoke hell burned within my brain,
Which staggered on its seat; for all around
The mouldering relics of my kindred lay,
Even as the Almighty's ire arrested them,
And in their various attitudes of death
My murdered children's mute and eyeless sculls
Glared ghastly upon me.

But my soul,
From sight and sense of the polluting woe
Of tyranny, had long learned to prefer
Hell's freedom to the servitude of heaven.
Therefore I rose, and dauntlessly began
My lonely and unending pilgrimage,
Resolved to wage unweariable war
With my almighty tyrant, and to hurl
Defiance at his impotence to harm
Beyond the curse I bore. The very hand
That barred my passage to the peaceful grave
Has crushed the earth to misery, and given
Itsempire to the chosen of his slaves.
These have I seen, even from the earliest dawn
Of weak, unstable, and precarious power ;
Then preaching peace, as now they practise war,
So, when they turned but from the massacre
Of unoffending infidels, to quench
Their thirst for ruin in the very blood
That flowedin theirown veins, and pitiless zeal
Froze every human feeling, as the wife
Sheathed in her husband's heart the sacred steel,
Even whilst its hopes were dreaming of her love;
And friends to friends, brothers to brothers stood
Opposed in bloodiest battle-field, and war,
Scarce satisifiable by fate's last death-draught waged,
Drunk from the wine-press of the Almighty's wrath;

Whilesthe red cross, in mockery of peace,
Pointed to victory! When the fray was done,
No remnant of the exterminated faith
Survived to tell its ruin, but the flesh,
With putrid smoke poisoning the atmosphere,
That rotted on the half-extinguished pile.

Yes ! I have seen God's worshippers unsheath
The sword of his revenge, when grace descended,
Confirming all unnatural impulses,
To sanctify their desolating deeds;
And frantic priests waved the ill-omened cross
O'er the unhappy earth : then shone the sun
On showers of gore from the upflashing steel
Of safe assassination, and all crime
Made stingles by the spirits of the Lord,
And blood-red rainbows canopied the land.

Spirit! no year of my eventful being
Has passed unstained by crime and misery,
Which flows from God's own faith. I've marked
his slaves,
With tongues whose lies are venomous, beguile
The insensate mob, and, whilst one hand was red
With murder, feign to stretch the other out
For brotherhood and peace; and, that they now
Bade each other love and mercy, whilst their deeds
Are marked with all the narrowness and crime
That freedom's young arm dares not yet chastise,
Reason may claim our gratitude, who now,
Establishing the imperishable throne
Of truth, and stubborn virtue, maketh vain
The unprevailing malice of my foe,
Whose bootless rage heaps impetuses for the brave,
Adds impotent eternities to pain,
Whilst keenest disappointment racks his breast
To see the smiles of peace around them play,
To frustrate or to sanctify their doom.

Thus have I stood,—through a wild waste of years
Struggling with whirlwinds of mad agony,
Yet peaceful, and serene, and self-enshrined,
Mocking my powerless tyrant's horrible curse
With stubborn and unalterable will,
Even as a giant oak, which heaven's fierce flame
Had scathed in the wilderness, to stand
A monument of fadeless ruin there;
Yet peacefully and movelessly it braves
The midnight conflict of the wintry storm,
As in the sun-light's calm it spreads
Its worn and withered arms on high
To meet the quiet of a summer's noon.

The Fairy waved her wand :
Ahasuerus fled
Fast as the shapes of mingled shade and mist,
That lurk in the glens of a twilight grove
Flee from the morning beam:
The matter of which dreams are made
Not more endowed with actual life
Than this phantasmal portraiture
Of wandering human thought.

VIII.

The present and the past thou hast beheld:
It was a desolate sight. Now Spirit, learn,
The secrets of the future.—Time!
Unfold the brooding pinion of thy gloom,
Render thou up thy half-devoured babes,
And from the cradles of eternity,
Where millions lie lulled to their portioned sleep
By the deep murmuring stream of passing things,
Tear thou that gloomy shroud.—Spirit, behold
Thy glorious destiny!

Joy to the Spirit came.
Through the wide rent in Time's eternal veil,
Hope was seen beaming through the mists of fear:
Earth was no longer hell;
Love, freedom, health, had given
Their ripeness to the manhood of its prime,
And all its pulses beat
Symphonioustotheplanetaryspheres:
Then dulcet music swelled
Concordant with the life-strings of the soul;
It thrrobbed in sweet and languid beatings there,
Catching new life from transitory death.—
Like the vague sighings ofa wind at even,
That wakes the wavelets of the slumbering sea,
And dies on the creation of its breath,
And sinks and rises, fails and swells by fits:
Was the pure stream of feeling
That sprang from these sweet notes,
And o'er the Spirit's human sympathies
With mild and gentle motion calmly flowed.

Joy to the Spirit came,—
Such joy as when a lover sees
The chosen of his soul in happiness,
And witnesses her peace
Whose woe to him were bitterer than death;
Sees her unfaded cheek
Then in her triumph spoke the Fairy Queen:
Glow mantling in first luxury of health,
To unfold the frightful secrets of its lore;
Which like two stars amid the heaving main
The wonders of the human world to keep,
And those events that desolate the earth
Have faded from the memory of Time,
Bound its broad zone of stillness, are unloosed;
By everlasting snow-storms round the poles,
Those wastes of frozen billows that were hurled
The habitable earth is full of bliss;
Space, matter, time, and mind. Futurity
Whose being I annul. To me is given
Renew and strengthen all thy failing hope.
Exposes now its treasure; let the sight
Who dares not give reality to that
Show somewhat stable, somewhat certain still,
To murmur through the heaven-breathing groves,
Whose roar is wakened into echoings sweet
RufHe the placid ocean-deep, that rolls
But ceaseless frost round the vast solitude
Where matter dared not vegetate nor live,
And, 'midst the ebb and flow of human things,
0 human Spirit! spur thee to the goal
Corn-fields and pastures and white cottages;
Broke on the sultry silence alone,
Where the shrill chirp of the green lizard's love
Now teem with countless rills and shady woods,
And where the startled wilderness beheld
Sloping and smooth the daisy-spangled lawn,
Offerings sweet incense to the sun-rise, smiles
To sec a babe before his mother's door,
With lightsome clouds and shining seas between,
With the green and golden basilisk
That comes to lick his feet
Sharing his morning's meal
With the green and golden basilisk
That comes to lick his feet.

Those deserts of immeasurable sand,
Whose age-collected favours scarce allowed
A bird to live, a blade of grass to spring,
Where the shrill chirp of the green lizard's love
Broke on the sultry silence alone,
Now teem with countless rills and shady woods,
Corn-fields and pastures and white cottages;
And where the startled wilderness beheld
A savage conqueror stained in kindred blood,
A tigress satiug with the flesh of lambs
The unnatural famine of her toothless cubs,
While shout and howlings through the desert rang;
Offering sweet incense to the sun-rise, smiles
To see a babe before his mother's door,

Those trackless deeps, where many a weary sail
Has seen above the illimitable plain,
Morning on night, and night on morning rise,
Whilst still no land to greet the wanderer spread
Its shadowy mountains on the sun-bright sea,
Where the loud roarings of the tempest-waves
So long have mingled with the gusty wind
In melancholy loneliness, and swept
The desert of those ocean solitudes,
But vocal to the sea-bird's harrowing shriek,
The bellowing monster, and the rushing storm;
Now to the sweet and many mingling sounds
Of kindliest human impulses respond.
Those lonely realms bright garden-isles begem,
With lighteous clouds and shining seas between,
And fertile valleys, resonant with blains,
Whilst green woods overcanopy the wave,
Which like a toil-worn labourer leaps to shore,
To meet the kisses of the flowrets there.

All things are recreated, and the flame
Of consentaneous love inspires all life:
The fertile bosom of the earth gives suck
To myriads, who still grow beneath her care,
Rewarding her with their pure perfectness:
The balmy breathings of the wind inhale
Her virtues, and diffuse them all abroad:
Health floats amid the gentle atmosphere,
Glows in the fruits, and mantles on the stream:
No storms deform the beaming brow of heaven,
Nor scatter in the freshness of its pride
The foliage of the ever-verdant trees;
But fruits are ever ripe, flowers ever fair,
And autumn proudly bears her matron grace,
Kindling a flush on the fair cheek of spring,
Whose virgin bloom beneath the ruddy fruit
Reflects its tint, and blushes into love.

The lion now forgets to thirst for blood:
There might you see him sporting in the sun
Beside the dreadful kid; his claws are sheathed,
His teeth are harmless, custom's force has made
His nature as the nature of a lamb.
Like passion's fruit, the nightshade's tempting bane
Poisons no more the pleasure it bestows:
All bitterness is past; the cup of joy
Unmingled mantles to the goblet's brim,
And courts the thirsty lips it fled before.

But chief, ambiguous man, he that can know
More misery, and dream more joy than all;
Whose keen sensations thrill within his breast
To mingle with a loftier instinct there,
Lending their power to pleasure and to pain,
Who stands amid the ever-varying world,
The burthen or the glory of the earth;
He chief perceives the change; his being notes
The gradual renovation, and defines
Each movement of its progress on his mind.

Man, where the gloom of the long polar night
Lowers o'er the snow-clad rocks and frozen soil,
Where scarce the hardest herb that braves the frost
Backs in the moonlight's ineffectual glow,
Shrank with the plants, and darkened with the night;
His chilled and narrow energies, his heart,
Insensible to courage, truth, or love,
His stunted stature and imbecile frame,
Marked him for some abortion of the earth.

Nor, where the tropics bound the realms of day
With a broad belt of mingling cloud and flame,
Queen Mab.

Where blue mist through the unmoving atmosphere
Scattered the seeds of pestilence, and fed
Unnatural vegetation, where the land
Teemed with all earthquake, tempest, and disease,
Was man a nobler being; slavery
Had crushed him to his country's blood-stained dust;
Or he was bartered for the name of God.

Even where the milder zone afforded man
A seeming shelter, yet contagion there,
Blighting his being with unnumbered ill,
Some flowering a quiver with the truth till late
Availed to arrest its progress, or create
That peace which first in bloodless victory waved
Her snowy standard o'er this favoured clime:
That peace which first in bloodless victory waved
She left the moral world without a law,
And priests first traded with the name of God.

Here now the human being stands adorning
This loveliest earth with taintless body and mind;
Blest from his birth with all bland impulses,
Which gently in his noble bosom wake
And man, once fleeting o'er the transients scene
Swift as an inremembered vision, stands
In time-destroying infiniteness, gift
With self-enshrined eternity, that mocks
The sacred sympathies of soul and sense,
Gathering a garland of the strangest flowers,
As swift as the wings of an aspiring change
Towards these dreadless partners of their play.

By the paths of an aspiring change
Have not the virtuous minds, the thoughts that rise
Here now the human being stands adorning
This loveliest earth with taintless body and mind;
Blest from his birth with all bland impulses,
Which gently in his noble bosom wake
And man, once fleeting o'er the transients scene
Swift as an inremembered vision, stands
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With self-enshrined eternity, that mocks
The sacred sympathies of soul and sense,
Gathering a garland of the strangest flowers,
As swift as the wings of an aspiring change
Towards these dreadless partners of their play.

Yet slow and gradual dawned the morn of love;
Long lay the clouds of darkness o'er the scene,
Till from its native heaven they rolled away:
First, crime triumphant o'er all hope careered
Unblushing, undisguising, bold and strong;
Whilst falsehood, tricked in virtue's attributes,
Long sanctified all deeds of vice and woe,
Till, done by her own venous sting to death,
She left the moral world without a law,
No longer fettering passion's fearless wing.

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Unblushing, undisguising, bold and strong;
Whilst falsehood, tricked in virtue's attributes,
Long sanctified all deeds of vice and woe,
Till, done by her own venous sting to death,
She left the moral world without a law,
No longer fettering passion's fearless wing.

Then steadily the happy ferment worked;
Reason was free; and wild though passion went
Through tangled glens and wood-embosomed meads,
Gathering a garland of the strangest flowers,
As swift as the wings of an aspiring change
Towards these dreadless partners of their play.

Yet slow and gradual dawned the morn of love;
Long lay the clouds of darkness o'er the scene,
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No longer fettering passion's fearless wing.

Then steadily the happy ferment worked;
Reason was free; and wild though passion went
Through tangled glens and wood-embosomed meads,
Gathering a garland of the strangest flowers,
As swift as the wings of an aspiring change
Towards these dreadless partners of their play.

Reason and passion cease to combat there;
Whilst each unfettered o'er the earth extends
Its all-subduing energies, and wields
The sceptre of a vast dominion there;
Whilst every shape and mode of matter lends
Its force to the omnipotence of mind,
Which from its dark mine drags the gem of truth
To decorate its paradise of peace.

O happy Earth! reality of Heaven!
To which those restless souls that ceaselessly
Throng through the human universe, aspire;
Thou consumption of all mortal hope!
Thou glorious prize of blindly-working will!
Whose rays, diffused throughout all space and time,
Verge to one point and blend for ever there:
Of purest spirits thou pure dwelling-place!
Where care and sorrow, impotence and crime,
Languor, disease, and ignorance, dare not come:
O happy Earth, reality of Heaven!

Genius has seen thee in her passionate dreams;
And dim forebodings tho' thy loveliness,
Haunting the human heart, have there entwined
Those rooted hopes of some sweet place of bliss,
Where friends and lovers meet to part no more.
Thou art the end of all desire and will,
The product of all action; and the souls
That by the paths of an aspiring change
Have reached thy haven of perpetual peace,
There rest from the eternity of toil
That framed the fabric of thy perfection.

Even Time, the conqueror, fled thee in his fear;
That hoary giant, who, in lonely pride,
So long had ruled the world, that nations fell
Beneath his silent footstep. Pyramids,
That for millenniums had withstood the tide
Of human things, his storm-breadth drove in sand
Across that desert where their stones survived
The name of him whose pride had heaped them
Yon monarch, in his solitary pomp,
Was but the mushroom of a summer day,
That his light-winged footstep pressed to dust:
Time was the king of earth: all things gave way
Before him, but the fixed and virtuous will,
The sacred sympathies of soul and sense,
That mocked his fury and prepared his fall.

Yet slow and gradual dawned the morn of love;
Long lay the clouds of darkness o'er the scene,
Till from its native heaven they rolled away:
First, crime triumphant o'er all hope careered
Unblushing, undisguising, bold and strong;
Whilst falsehood, tricked in virtue's attributes,
Long sanctified all deeds of vice and woe,
Till, done by her own venous sting to death,
She left the moral world without a law,
No longer fettering passion's fearless wing.

Then steadily the happy ferment worked;
Reason was free; and wild though passion went
Through tangled glens and wood-embosomed meads,
Gathering a garland of the strangest flowers,
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Whilst each unfettered o'er the earth extends
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The sceptre of a vast dominion there;
Whilst every shape and mode of matter lends
Its force to the omnipotence of mind,
Which from its dark mine drags the gem of truth
To decorate its paradise of peace.
Calm as a voyager to some distant land,
And full of wonder, full of hope as he.
The deadly germs of languor and disease
Died in the human frame, and purity
Blest with all gifts her earthly worshippers.
How vigorous then the athletic form of age!
How clear its open and unwrinkled brow!
Where neither avarice, cunning, pride, nor care,
Had stamped the seal of grey deformity
On all the mingling lineaments of time.
How lovely the intrepid front of youth!
Which meek-eyed courage decked with freshest
Courage of soul, that dreaded not a name, [grace;
And elevated will, that journeyed on
Through life's phantasms in scene, in fearlessness
With virtue, love, and pleasure, hand in hand.
Then, that sweet bondage which is freedom's self,
And rivets with sensation's softest tie
The kindred sympathies of human souls,
Needed no fetters of tyrannic law.
Those delicate and timid impulses
In nature's primal modesty arose,
And with undoubting confidence disclosed
The growing longings of its dawning love,
Unclogged by dull and selfish chastity,
That virtue of the cheaply virtuous,
Who pride themselves in senselessness and frost.
That virtue of the cheaply virtuous,
Who pride themselves in senselessness and frost.
No longer prostitution's venomed bane
Poisoned the springs of happiness and life;
Woman and man, in confidence and love,
Equal and free and pure, together trod
The mountain-paths of virtue, which no more
Were stained with blood from many a pilgrim's feet.

Then, where, through distant ages, long in pride
The palace of the monarch-slave had mocked
Famine's faint groan, and penury's silent tears,
A heap of crumbling ruins stood, and threw
Year after year their stones upon the field,
Wakening a lonely echo; and the leaves
Of the old thorn, that on the topmost tower
Usurped the royal ensign's grandeur, shook
In the stern storm that swayed the topmost tower,
And whispered strange tales in the whirlwind's ear.
Low through the lone cathedral's roofless aisles
Waking a lonely echo; and the leaves
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And whispered strange tales in the whirlwind's ear.
Low through the lone cathedral's roofless aisles
Waking a lonely echo; and the leaves
Year after year their stones upon the field,
Whose impotence an easy pardon gains,
Watching its wanderings as a friend's disease:
Thine is the brow whose mildness would defy
Watching its wanderings as a friend's disease:
Of passion lofty, pure and unsubdued.
And therefore art thou worthy of the boon
Thy footsteps in the path that thou hast trod,
And many days of beaming hope shall bless
Which thou hast now received: virtues shall keep
Free from heart-withering custom's cold control,
Thy spotless life of sweet and sacred love.
Itself's fierce strange, and brave its sternest will,
When fenced by power and master of the world.
Thou art sincere and good; of resolute mind,
Earth's pride and meanness could not vanquish
Whose impotence an easy pardon gains,
Speechless with bliss the Spirit mounts the car,
Go, happy one! and give that bosom joy,
Bending her beamy eyes in thankfulness.

NOTE.

Beyond our atmosphere the sun would appear a
Rayless orb of fire in the midst of a black concave.
The equal diffusion of its light on earth is owing to
The refraction of the rays by the atmosphere, and their
Reflection from other bodies. Light consists either of
Vibrations propagated through a subtle medium, or of
Numerous minute particles repelled in all directions
From the luminous body. Its velocity greatly exceeds
That of any substance with which we are acquainted:
Observations on the eclipses of Jupiter's satellites have
Demonstrated that light takes up no more than 8'7"
in passing from the sun to the earth, a distance of
93,000,000 miles. Some idea may be gained of the
Innumerable clusters of suns, each shining with its own light,
And illuminating numbers of planets that revolve around
Them. Millions and millions of suns are ranged around
Us, all attended by innumerable worlds, yet calm,
And harmonious, all keeping the paths of immutable
Necessity.

The plurality of worlds,—the indefinite immensity of the universe,—is a most awful subject of contemplation.
He who rightly feels its mystery and grandeur is
In no danger of seduction from the falsehoods of religious
Systems, or of defying the principle of the universe. It is
Impossible to believe that the Spirit that pervades
This infinite machine beget a son upon the body of a
Jewish woman, or is angered at the consequences of
That necessity which is a synonyme of itself. All that
Miserable tale of the Devil, and Eve, and an Inter-
censor, with the childish mummeries of the God of the Jews, is irreconcilable with the knowledge of the stars. The works of his fingers have borne witness against him.
The nearest of the fixed stars is inconceivably distant from the earth, and they are probably proportionately distant from each other. By a calculation of the velocity of light, Sirius is supposed to be at least
54,224,000,000,000 miles from the earth. That
Which appears only like a thin and silvery cloud,
Streaking the heaven, is in effect composed of innumerable clusters of suns, each shining with its own light,
And illuminating numbers of planets that revolve around them. Millions and millions of suns are ranged around us, all attended by innumerable worlds, yet calm, regular, and harmonious, all keeping the paths of immutable necessity.

To employ murder as a means of justice, is an idea
Which a man of an enlightened mind will not dwell
Upon with pleasure. To march forth in rank and file,
And all the pomp of streamers and trumpets, for the
Purpose of shooting at our fellow-men as a mark; to
Inflict upon them all the variety of wound and anguish;
To leave them wretched in their blood; to wander over
The field of desolation, and count the number of the
Dying and the dead,—are employments which in this
Season may maintain to be necessary, but which no good
Man will contemplate with gratulation and delight. A
Battle so suppose is won,—thus truth is established,
And the cause of justice is confirmed! It surely
Requires no common sagacity to discern the connexion

* See Nicholson's Encyclopedia, art. Light.

NOTES ON QUEEN MAB.
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between this immense heap of calamities and the assertion of truth or the maintenance of justice.

Kings, and ministers of state, the real authors of the calamity, sit un molested in their cabinet, while those against whom the fury of the storm is directed are, for the most part, persons who have been trepanned into the service, or who are dragged unwillingly from their peaceful homes into the field of battle. A soldier is a man whose business it is to kill those who never offended him, and who are the innocent martyrs of other men's inequities. Whatever may become of the abstract question of the justifiableness of war, it seems impossible that the soldier should not be a depraved and unnatural being.

To these more serious and momentous considerations it may be proper to add a recollection of the ridiculousness of the military character. Its first constituent is obedience; a soldier is, of all descriptions of men, the most completely a machine; yet his profession inevitably teaches him something of dogmatism, swag-
gering, and self-consequence: he is like the puppet of the calamity, sit unmolested in their cabinet, while into the service, or who are dragged unwillingly from those against whom the fury of the storm is directed is obedience, a soldier is, of all descriptionsof men,
it may be proper to add a recollection of theridiculousness of the militarycharacter. Itsfirstconstituent

Theบริษัทม้า reputer than to these hateful sons of heaven

keen, and ministers of state, the real authorsof the calamity, sit unmolested in their cabinet, while

They thought 'twas theirs,—but mine the deed!
They dream that tyrants god them there
With poisonous war to taint the air:
These tyrants, on their beds of thorn,
Swell with the thoughts of murderous fame,
And with their gains to lift my name.
Restless they plan from night to morn:
I— I do all; without my aid
Thy daughter, that relentless maid,
Could never o'er a death-bed urge
The fury of her venomed scourge.

FALSEHOOD.

Brother, well!— the world is ours;
And whether thou or I have won,
The pestilence expectant lowers
On all beneath you blasted sun.
Our joys, our toils, our honours, meet
In the milk-white and wormy winding-sheet;
Some heartless scraps of godly prayer,
A short-lived hope, unceasing care,
Our joys, our toils, our honours, meet
In the milk-white and wormy winding-sheet;
A judge's frown, a courtier's smile,
A tyrant's dream, a coward's start,
A system admirably fitted to produce all the varieties of disease and crime, which never fail to characterise the two extremes of opulence and penury. A speculator takes pride to himself as the promoter of his country's prosperity, who employs a number of hands in the manufacture of articles avowedly destitute of use, or subser- rient only to the unhallowed cravings of luxury and ostentation. The nobleman who employs the peasants of his neighbourhood in building his palaces, until
"Jam pauca aratro jugera, region moles relinquent," flatters himself that he has gained the title of a patriot by yielding to the impulses of vanity. The show and pomp of courts adduce the same apology for their con- tinuance; and many a fête has been given, many a woman has eclipsed her beauty by her dress, to benefit the labouring poor and to encourage trade. Who does not see that this is a remedy which aggravates, whilst it palliates, the countless diseases of society? The poor are set to labour,—for what? Not the food for which they famish: not the blankets for want of which their babes are frozen by the cold of their miserable hovels: not those comforts of civilisation without which civilised man is far more miserable than the meanest savage; oppressed as he is by all its insidious evils, within the daily and taunting prospect of its innumerable benefits assiduously exhibited before him: no; for the pride of power, for the miserable isolation of pride, for the false pleasures of the hundredth part of society. No greater evidence is afforded of the wide-extended and radical mistakes of civilised man than this fact: those arts which are essential to his very being are held in the greatest contempt; employ- ments are lucrative in an inverse ratio to their usefulness: the jeweller, the toymaker, the actor, gains fame and wealth by the exercise of his useless and ridiculous art; whilst the cultivator of the earth, he without whom society must cease to subsist, struggles through contempt and penury, and perishes by that famine which, but for his unceasing exertion, would annihilate the rest of mankind.
I will not insult common sense by insisting on the doctrine of the natural equality of man. The question is not concerning its desirableness, but its practicability; so far as it is practicable, it is desirable. That state of human society which approaches nearer to an equal partition of its benefits and evils should, ceteris paribus, be preferred; but so long as we conceive that a wanton expenditure of human labour, not for the necessities, not even for the luxuries, of the mass of society, but for the egotism and ostentation of a few of its members, is defensible on the ground of public justice, so long we neglect to approximate to the re- demption of the human race.
Labour is required for physical, and leisure for moral improvement: from the former of these advantages the rich, and from the latter the poor, by the inevitable conditions of their respective situations, are pre- excluded. A state which should combine the advantages of both would be subjected to the evils of neither. He is deficient in firm health, or vigorous intellect, is but half a man; hence it follows, that, to subject the labouring classes to unnecessary labour, is wantonly to deprive them of any opportunities of intellectual im- provement: and that the rich are heaping up for their own mischief the disease, lasitude, and ennui, by which their existence is rendered an intolerable burden.
English reformers set too much of their case upon the true pension list is the rent-roll of the landed pro-
priest: wealth is a power snatched by the few, to compel the many to labour for their benefit. The laws which support this system derive their force from the ignorance and credulity of its victims: they are the result of a conspiracy of the few against the many, who are themselves obliged to purchase this pre-eminence by the loss of all real comfort.

The commodities that substantially contribute to the subsistence of the human species form a very short catalogue: they demand from us but a slender portion of industry. If these only were produced, and sufficiently produced, the species of man would be continued. If the labour necessarily required to produce them were equitably divided among the poor, and, still more, if it were equitably divided among all, each man's share of labour would be light, and his portion of leisure would be ample. There was a time when this leisure would have been of small comparative value: it is to be hoped that the time will come when it will be applied to the most important purposes. Those hours, which are not required for the production of the necessaries of life, may be devoted to the cultivation of the understanding, the enlargement of our stock of knowledge, the refinement of our taste, and thus open to us new and more exquisite sources of enjoyment.

It was perhaps necessary that a period of monopoly and oppression should subsist, before a period of cultivated equality could subsist. Savages perhaps would never have been excited to the discovery of truth and the invention of art, but by the narrow motives which such a period affords. But, surely, after the savage state has ceased, and men have set out in the glorious career of discovery and invention, monopoly and oppression cannot be necessary to prevent them from returning to a state of barbarism.—Godwin's Enquirer, Essay II. See also Pol. Jus. book viii. chap. 11.

It is a calculation of this admirable author, that all the conveniences of civilised life might be produced, if society would divide the labour equally among its members, by each individual being employed in labour two hours during the day.

P. 10, col. 2, l. 8.

Or religion

Drives his wife raving mad.

I am acquainted with a lady of considerable accomplishments, and the mother of a numerous family, whom the Christian religion has goaded to incalculable insanity. A parallel case is, I believe, within the experience of every physician.

Nam jam sepe homines patriam, caroque parentes
Prodiderunt, vitare Aeternam tempus potentes.


P. 11, col. 1, l. 19.

Even love is sold.

Not even the intercourse of the sexes is exempt from the despotism of positive institution. Law pretends even to govern the indisciplinable wanderings of passion, to put fetters on the clearest deductions of reason, and, by appeals to the will, to subdue the involuntary affections of our nature. Love is inevitably consequent upon the perception of loveliness. Love withers under constraint: its very essence is liberty: it is compatible neither with obedience, jealousy, nor fear: it is there most pure, perfect, and unlimited, where its votaries live in confidence, equality, and unreserve.

How long then ought the sexual connexion to last? what law ought to specify the extent of the grievances which should limit its duration? A husband and wife ought to continue so long united as they love each other: any law, which should bind them to cohabitation for one moment after the decay of their affection, would be a most intolerable tyranny, and the most unworthy of toleration. How odious a usurpation of the right of private judgment should that law be considered which should make the ties of friendship indissoluble, in spite of the caprices, the inconstancy, the fallibility, and capacity for improvement of the human mind? And by so much would the fetters of love be heavier and more unendurable than those of friendship, as love is more vehement and capricious, more dependent on those delicate peculiarities of imagination, and less capable of reduction to the ostensible merits of the object.

The state of society in which we exist is a mixture of feudal savagery and imperfect civilisation. The narrow and unenlightened morality of the Christian religion is an aggravation of these evils. It is not even until lately that mankind have admitted that happiness is the sole end of the science of ethics, as of all other sciences; and that the fanatical idea of mortifying the flesh for love of God has been discarded. I have heard, indeed, an ignorant collegian adduce, in favour of Christianity, its hostility to every worldly feeling.

But if happiness be the object of morality, of all human unions and disunions; if the worthiness of every action is to be estimated by the quantity of pleasurable sensation it is calculated to produce, then the connexion of the sexes is so long continued as it contributes to the comfort of the parties, and is naturally dissolved when its evils are greater than its benefits.

There is nothing immoral in this separation. Constancy has nothing virtuous in itself, independently of the pleasure it confers, and partakes of the temporising spirit of vice in proportion as it endures. Thus defects of magnitude in the object of its indirect choice. Love is free: to promise for ever to love the same woman, is not less absurd than to promise to believe the same creed: such a vow, in both cases, excludes us from all inquiry. The language of the votarist is this: The woman I now love may be in open enemies. Persons of delicacy and virtue, unhappily united to those whom they find it impossible to

* The first Christian emperor made a law by which seduction was punished with death: if the female pleaded her own consent, she also was punished with death; if the parties endeavoured to screen the seduction, they were banished and their estates confiscated; the slaves who might be accessories were burned alive, or forced to swallow melted lead. The very offering of an illegal love were involved in the consequences of the sentence—Gibbon's Decline and Fall, 4th., vol. ii. page 210. See also, for the hatred of the primitive Christians to love, and even marriage, page 320.
love, spend the loveliest season of their life in unproductive efforts to appear otherwise than they are, for the sake of the feelings of their partner, or the welfare of their mutual offspring; those of less generosity and refinement openly avow their disappointment, and linger out the remnant of that union, which only death can dissolve, in a state of incurable bickering and hostility. The early education of the children takes its colour from the squabbles of the parents; they are nursed in a systematic school of ill humour, violence, and falsehood. Had they been suffered to part at the moment when indifference rendered their union irksome, they would have been spared many years of misery; they would have connected themselves more suitably, and would have found that happiness in the society of more congenial partners which is for ever denied them by the despotism of marriage. They would have been separately useful and happy members of society, who, whilst united, were miserable, and rendered misanthropical by misery. The conviction of all temptations to the perverse: they indulged without restraint in acrimony, and all the little tyrannies of domestic life, which they knew that the victim to without appeal. If this connection were put on a rational basis, each would be assured that habitual ill temper would terminate in separation, and would check nursed in a systematic school of ill humour, violence, would have been separately useful and happy members of their mutual offspring: those of less generosity and lingered out the remnant of that union, which only death and falsehood. Had they been suffered to part at its colour from the squabbles of the parents; they are hostility. The early education of the children takes this vicious and dangerous propensity.

Prostitution is the legitimate offspring of marriage and its accompanying errors. Women, for no other crime than having followed the dictates of a natural appetite, are driven with fury from the comforts and sympathies of society. It is less venial than murder: and the punishment which is inflicted on her who destroys her child to escape reproach, is lighter than the life of agony and disease to which the prostitute is irrecoverably doomed. Has a woman obeyed the impulse of unerring nature?—society declares war against her, pitiless and eternal war: she must be the same slave, she must make no reprisals; theirs is the right of persecution, hers the duty of endurance. She lives a life of infamy: the loud and bitter laugh of society exempted from restraint.

That family twinkle* there.

The north polar star, to which the axis of the earth, in its present state of obliquity, points. It is exceedingly probable, from many considerations, that this obliquity will gradually diminish, until the equator coincides with the ecliptic: the nights and days will then become equal on the earth throughout the year, and probably the seasons also. In presuming that the progress of the perpendicularity of the poles may be as rapid as the progress of intellect; or that there should be a perfect identity between the moral and physical improvement of the human species. It is certain that wisdom is not compatible with disease, and that, in the present state of the climates of the earth, health, in the true and comprehensive sense of the word, is out of the reach of civilized man. Astronomy teaches us that the earth is now in its progress, and that the poles are every year becoming more and more perpendicular to the ecliptic. The strong evidence afforded by the history of mythology and geological researches, that some event of this nature has taken place already, affords a strong presumption that this progress is not merely an oscillation, as has been surmised by some late astronomers*. Bones of animals peculiar to the torrid zone have been found in the north of Siberia, on the banks of the river Ohio. Plants have been found in the fossil state in the interior of Germany, which demand the present climate of Hindostan for their production†. The researches of M. Bailly‡ establish the existence of a people who inhabited a tract in Tartary 49° north latitude, of greater antiquity than either the Indians, the Chinese, or the Chaldeans, from whom these nations derived their sciences and theology. We find, from the testimony of ancient writers, that Britain, Germany, and France, were much colder than at present, and that their great rivers were annually frozen over.

Astronomy teaches us also, that since this period the obliquity of the earth's position has been considerably diminished. It conceives that, from the abolition of marriage, the fit and natural arrangement of sexual connexion would result. I by no means assert that the intercourse would be promiscuous: on the contrary, it appears, from the relation of parent to child, that this union is generally of long duration, and marked above all others with generosity and self-devotion. But this is a subject which it is perhaps premature to discuss. That which will result from the abolition of marriage, will be natural and right, because choice and change will be exempted from restraint.

In fact, religion and morality, as they now stand, compose a practical code of misery and servitude: the genius of human happiness must tear every leaf from the accursed book of God, ere man can read the inscription on his heart. How would morality, dressed up in stiff stays and finery, start from her own disgusting image, should she look in the mirror of nature! P. 19, col. 1, l. 5.

To the red and baleful sun
That faintly twinkle there.

* Laplace, Système du Monde.
‡ Lettres sur les Sciences, 1st Voltaire—Bailly.
Deux exemples serviront à nous rendre plus sensible le principe qui vient d'être posé; nous emprunterons l'un du physique et l'autre du moral. Dans un tourbillon de poussière qui éveille un vent impétueux, quelques confus qu'il paraisse à nos yeux; dans la plus affreuse tempête excité par des vents opposés qui soulevant les flots, il n'y a pas une seule molécule de poussière ou d'eau qui soit placée au hasard, qui n'ait sa cause suffisante pour occuper le lieu où elle se trouve, et qui n'agisse rigoureusement de la manière dont elle doit agir. Un géomètre qui connaît exactement les différentes forces qui agissent dans ces deux cas, et les propriétés des molécules qui sont mises, démontrerait que d'après des causes données, chaque molécule agit précisément comme elle doit agir, et ne peut agir autrement qu'elle ne fait.

Dans les convulsions terribles qui agitent quelquefois les sociétés politiques, et qui produisent souvent le renversement d'un empire, il n'y a pas une seule action, une seule parole, une seule pensée, une seule volonté, une seule passion dans les agents qui concourent à la révolution comme destructeurs ou comme victimes, qui ne soit nécessaire, qui n'agisse comme elle doit agir, qui n'opère infaiblement les effets qu'elle doit opérer suivant la place qu'occupent ces agents dans ce tourbillon moral. Cela paraît évident pour une intelligence qui sera en état de saisir et d'apprécier toutes les actions et réactions des esprits et des corps de ceux qui contribuent à cette révolution.

Necessity, thou mother of the world!

No atom of this turbulence fulfills
A vague and unnecessary task,
But as it must and ought to act.

Ho who asserts the doctrine of Necessity, means that, contemplating the events which compose the moral and material universe, he beholds only an immense and uninterrupted chain of causes and effects, no one of which could occupy any other place than it does occupy, or act in any other place than it does act. The idea of necessity is obtained by our experience of the connection between objects, the uniformity of the operations of nature, the constant conjunction of similar events, and the consequent inference of one from the other. Mankind are therefore agreed in the admission of necessity, if they admit that these two circumstances take place in voluntary action. Motive is, to voluntary action in the human mind, what cause is to effect in the material universe. The word liberty, as applied to mind, is analogous to the word chance as applied to matter: they spring from an ignorance of the certainty that the conjunction of antecedents and consequents.

Every human being is irresistibly impelled to act precisely as he does act: in the eternity which preceded his birth a chain of causes was generated, which, operating under the name of motives, made it impossible that any thought of his mind, or any action of his life, should be otherwise than it is. Were the doctrine of Necessity false, the human mind would no longer be a legitimate object of science; from like causes it would be in vain that we should expect like effects; the strongest motive would no longer be paramount over the conduct; all knowledge would be vague and undeterminate; we could not predict with any certainty that we might not meet as an enemy to-morrow him from whom we have parted in friendship to-night; the most probable inducements and the clearest reasons would lose the highest claim to the belief of the mind, they possess. The contrary of this is demonstrably the fact. Similar circumstances produce invariably similar effects. The precise character and motives of any man on any occasion being given, the moral philosophier could predict his actions with as much certainty, as the natural philosophier could predict the effects of the mixture of any particular chemical substances.

Why is the aged husbandman more experienced than the young beginner? Because there is a uniform, undeniable necessity in the operations of the material universe. Why is the old statesman more skilful than the raw politician? Because, relying on the necessary conjunction of motive and action, he proceeds to produce moral effects, by the application of those moral causes which experience has shown to be effectual. Some actions may be found to which we can attach no motives, but these are the effects of causes with which we are unacquainted. Hence the relation which motive bears to voluntary action, is that of cause to effect; nor, placed in this point of view, is it, or ever has it been, the subject of popular or philosophical dispute. None but the few fanatics who are engaged in the herculean task of reconciling the justice of their God with the misery of man, will longer outrage common sense by the supposition of an event without a cause, a voluntary action without a motive. History, politics, morals, criticism, all grounds of reasoning, all principles of science, alike assume the truth of the doctrine of Necessity. No farmer carrying his corn to market doubts the sale of it at the market price. The master of a manufacturer no more doubts that he can purchase the human labour necessary for his purposes, than that his machines will act as they have been accustomed to act.

But, whilst none have scrupled to admit necessity as influencing matter, many have disputed its dominion over mind. Independent of its mitigating with the received ideas of the justice of God, it is by no means obvious to a superficial inquiry. When the mind observes its own operations, it feels no connection of motive and action: but as we know "nothing more of causation than the constant conjunction of objects and the consequent inference of one from the other, as we find that these two circumstances are universally allowed to have place in voluntary action, we may be easily led to own that they are subjected to the necessity common to all causes." The actions of the will have a regular conjunction with circumstances and characters; motive is, to voluntary action, what cause is to effect. But the only idea that we can form of causation is a constant conjunction of similar objects, and the consequent inference of one from the other: wherever this is the case, necessity is clearly established.

The idea of liberty, applied metaphorically to the will, has sprung from a misconception of the meaning of the word power. What is power?—id quod potest, that which can produce any given effect. To deny power, is to say that nothing can or has the power to be or act. In the same point of view, it applies with equal force to the loadstone as to the human will. Do you think these motives, which I shall present, are powerful enough to rouse him? is a question just as common as, Do you think this lever has the power of raising this weight? The advocates of free-will assert, that the will has the power of refusing to be determined by the strongest motive: but
the strongest motive is that which, overcoming all others, ultimately prevails; this assertion therefore amounts to a denial of the will being ultimately determined by that motive which does determine it, which is absurd. But it is equally certain that a man cannot resist the strongest motive, as that he cannot overcome a physical impossibility. The doctrine of Necessity tends to introduce a great change into the established notions of morality, and utterly to destroy religion. Reward and punishment must be considered, by the Necessarian, merely as motives which he would employ in order to procure the adoption or abandonment of the given line of conduct. Desert, in the present sense of the word, would no longer have any meaning; and he, who should inflict pain upon another for no better reason than that he deserved it, would only gratify his revenge under pretense of satisfying justice. It is not enough, says the advocate of free-will, that a criminal should be prevented from a repetition of his crime; he should feel pain; and its torments, when justly inflicted, ought precisely to be proportioned to his fault. But utility is morality; that which is incapable of producing happiness is useless; and though the crime of Damiens is nugatory and vain. But will is only a mode of operation, or, even more, to hesitate in destroying the delusions of free-will. 

Religion is the perception of the relation in which we stand to the principle of the universe. But if the principle of the universe be not an organic being, the model and prototype of man, the relation between it and human beings is absolutely none. Without some insight into its will respecting our actions, religion is nugatory and vain. But will is only a mode of animal mind; moral qualities also are such as only a human being can possess; to attribute them to the principle of the universe, is to annex to it properties incompatible with any possible definition of its nature. It is probable that the word God was originally only an epithet having relation to our own peculiar mode of thought. God chose for his apostle, and entrusted with his inspired mission, that he might possess a sufficient knowledge of the existence of this hypo-

But the doctrine of Necessity teaches us, that in no case could any event have happened otherwise than it did happen; and that, if God is the author of good, he is also the author of evil; that, if he is entitled to our gratitude for the one, he is entitled to our hatred for the other; that admitting the existence of this hypothetic being, he is also subjected to the dominion of an immutable necessity. It is plain that the same arguments which prove that God is the author of food, light, and life, prove him also to be the author of poison, darkness and death. The wide-wasting earthquake, the storm, the battle, and the tyranny, are attributable to this hypothetic being, in the same degree as the fairest forms of nature, sunshine, liberty, and peace.

But we are taught, by the doctrine of Necessity, that there is neither good nor evil in the universe, otherwise than as the events to which we apply these epithets have relation to our own peculiar mode of being. Still less than with the hypothesis of a God, will the doctrine of Necessity accord with the belief of a future state of punishment. God made man such as he is, and then damned him for being so: for to say that God was the author of all good, and man the author of all evil, is to say that one man made a straight line and a crooked one, and another man made the incongruity.

A Mahometan story, much to the present purpose, is recorded, wherein Adam and Moses are introduced disputing before God in the following manner. "Thou," says Moses, "art Adam, whom God created, and animated with the breath of life, and caused to be worshipped by the angels, and placed in Paradise, from whence mankind have been expelled for thy fault." Whereeto Adam answered, "Thou art Moses, whom God chose for his apostle, and entrusted with his word, by giving thee the tables of the law, and whom he vouchsafed to admit to discourse with himself. How many years dost thou find the law was written before I was created?" Says Moses, "Forty." "And dost thou not find," replied Adam, "these words therein, 'and Adam rebelled against his Lord and transgressed?'" Which Moses confessing, "Dost thou therefore blame me," continued he, "for doing that which God wrote for me to do, forty years before I was created? Nay, for what was decreed connected with my refusal in concerning me fifty thousand years before the creation of heaven and earth?" —Sale's Prelim. Disc. to the Koran, page 164.


There is no God!

This negation must be understood solely to affect a creative Deity. The hypothesis of a pervading Spirit, coeternal with the universe, remains unshaken.

A close examination of the validity of the proofs adduced to support any proposition, is the only secure way of attaining truth, on the advantages of which it is unnecessary to descant: our knowledge of the existence of a Deity is a subject of such importance, that it cannot be too minutely investigated; in consequence of this conviction we proceed briefly and impartially to examine the proofs which have been adduced. It is necessary first to consider the nature of belief.

When a proposition is offered to the mind, it perceives the agreement or disagreement of an idea of which it is competent to perceive, and the perception of their agreement is termed belief. Many obstacles frequently prevent this perception from being immediate; these the mind attempts to remove, in order that the perception may be distinct. The mind is active in the inves-
tigation, in order to perfect the state of perception of the relation which the component ideas of the proposition bear to each, which is passive; the investigation, being confused with the perception, has induced many falsely to imagine that the mind is active in belief,—that belief is an act of volition,—in consequence of which it may be regulated by the mind. Pursuing, continuing this mistake, they have attached a degree of criminality to disbelief; of which, in its nature, it is incapable: it is equally incapable of merit.

Belief, then, is a passion, the strength of which, like every other passion, is in precise proportion to the degrees of excitement.

The degrees of excitement are three.

The senses are the sources of all knowledge to the mind; consequently their evidence claims the strongest assent.

The decision of the mind, founded upon our own experience, derived from these sources, claims the next degree.

The experience of others, which addresses itself to the former one, occupies the lowest degree.

(A graduated scale, on which should be marked the capabilities of propositions to approach the test of the senses, would be a just barometer of the belief which ought to be attached to them.)

Consequently, no testimony can be admitted which is contrary to reason; reason is founded on the evidence of our senses.

Every proof may be referred to one of these three divisions: it is to be considered what arguments we receive from each of them, which should convince us of the existence of a Deity.

1st. The evidence of the senses. If the Deity should appear to us, if he should convince our senses of his existence, this revelation would necessarily command belief. Those to whom the Deity has thus appeared have the strongest possible conviction of his existence. But the God of theologians is incapable of local visibility.

2d. Reason. It is urged that man knows that whatever is, must either have had a beginning, or have existed from all eternity: he also knows, that whatever is not eternal must have had a cause. When this reason is applied to the universe, it is necessary to prove that it was created: until that is clearly demonstrated, we may reasonably suppose that it has endured from all eternity. We must prove design before we can infer a designer. The only idea which we can form of causation is derivable from the constant conjunction of objects, and the consequent inference of one from the other. In a case where two propositions are diametrically opposite, the mind believes that which is least incomprehensible;—it is easier to suppose that the universe has existed from all eternity, than to conceive a being beyond its limits capable of creating it: if the mind sinks beneath the weight of one, it is an alleviation to increase the intolerability of the other?

The other argument, which is founded on a man's knowledge of his own existence, stands thus. A man knows not only that he now is, but that once he was not; consequently there must have been a cause. But our idea of causation is alone derivable from the constant conjunction of objects and the consequent inference of one from the other; and, reasoning experimentally, we can only infer from effects, causes exactly adequate to those effects. But there certainly is a generative power which is effectuated by certain instruments: we cannot prove that it is inherent in these instruments; nor is the contrary hypothesis capable of demonstration; we admit that the generative power is incomprehensible; but to suppose that the same effect is produced by an eternal, omniscient, omnipotent being, leaves the cause in the same obscurity, but renders it more incomprehensible.

3d. Testimony. It is required that testimony should not be contrary to reason. The testimony that the Deity convinces the senses of men of his existence can only be admitted by us, if our mind considers it less probable that these men should have been deceived, than that the Deity should have appeared to them. Our reason can never admit the testimony of men, who not only declare that they were eye-witnesses of miracles, but that the Deity was irrational; for he commanded that he should be believed, he proposed the highest rewards for faith, eternal punishments for disbelief. We can only command voluntary actions; belief is not an act of volition; the mind is even passive, or involuntarily active: from this it is evident that we have no sufficient testimony, or rather that testimony is insufficient, to prove the being of a God. It has been before shown that it cannot be deduced from reason. They alone, then, who have been convinced by the evidence of the senses, can believe it.

Hence it is evident that, having no proofs from any of the three sources of conviction, men cannot believe the existence of a creative God: it is also evident that, as belief is a passion of the mind, no degree of criminality is attachable to disbelief; and that only are reprehensible who neglect to remove the false medium through which their mind views any subject of discussion. Every reflecting mind must acknowledge, that there is no proof of the existence of a Deity.

God is an hypothesis, and as such, stands in need of proof; the onus probandi rests on the theist. Sir Isaac Newton says:—"Hypotheses non fingo, quiquid coit ex phenonienia non deductor hypothpsis vocanda est, et hypothesis vel meta physica, vel physica, vel qualitatum occultarum, seu mechanism, in philosophi locum non habent.* To all proofs of the existence of a creative God apply this valuable rule. We see a variety of bodies possessing a variety of powers; we merely know their effects; we are in a state of ignorance with respect to their essences and causes. These Newton calls the phenomena; but the pride of philosophy is unwilling to admit its ignorance of their causes. From the phenomena, which are the objects of our senses, we attempt to infer a cause, which we call God, and gratuitously endow it with all negative and contradictory qualities. From this hypothesis we invent this general name, to conceal our ignorance of causes and essences. The being called God by no means answers with the conditions prescribed by Newton; it boors every mark of a veil woven by philosophical conceit, to hide the ignorance of philosophers even from themselves. They borrow the threads of its texture from the anthropomorphism of the vulgar. Words have been used by sophists for the same purposes, from the occult qualities of the Perlapietides to the effluvium of Boyle and the oriniis of nebuile of herschel. God is represented as infinite, eternal, incomprehensible; he is contained under every predicate in non that the logic of ignorance could fabricate. Even his worshippers allow that it is impossible to form any idea of him; they exclaim with the French poet,

Pour dire ce qu'il est, il faut être lui-même.

Lord Bacon says, that "atheism leaves to man reason, philosophy, natural piety, laws, reputation, and every thing that can serve to conduct him to virtue; but
La première théorie de l'homme lui fit d'abord craindre et adorer les éléments même, des objets matériels et grossiers ; il rendit ensuite ses hommages à des agents présidents aux éléments, à des génies inférieurs, à des héros, ou à des hommes doués de grandes qualités. A force de réfléchir, il crut simplifier les choses en soumettant la nature entière à un seul agent, à un esprit, à une ame universelle, qui mettait cette nature et ses parties en mouvement. En remotant des causes en causes, les mortels ont fini par ne rien voir ; et c'est dans cette obscurité qu'ils ont placé leur Dieu ; c'est dans cet abîme ténébreux que leur imagination inquiète travaille toujours à se fabriquer des chimères, qui les affligent jusqu'à ce que la connaissance de la nature les débrouille des fantômes qu'ils ont toujours si vainement adorés.

Si nous voulons nous rendre compte de nos idées sur la Divinité, nous serons obligés de convenir que, par le mot Dieu, les hommes n'ont jamais pu désigner que la cause la plus cachée, la plus éloignée, la plus incompréhensible des effets qu'ils voyaient : ils ont pris de ce mot, que lorsque le jeu des causes naturelles et con- nus cessera d'être visible pour eux ; dès qu'ils perdent le fil de ces causes, ou dès que leur esprit ne peut plus, en suivre la chaîne, ils tranchent leur difficulté, et terminent leurs recherches en appelant Dieu la dernière des causes, c'est-à-dire celle qui est au-delà de toutes les causes qu'ils connaissent ; ainsi ils ne font qu'assigner une dénomination vague à une cause ignorée, à laquelle leur paresse ou les bornes de leurs connaissances les forcent de s'arrêter. Toutes les fois qu'on nous dit que Dieu est l'auteur de quelque phénomène, cela signifie qu'on ignore comment un tel phénomène a pu s'opérer au moyen des moyens de résister aux efforts de bien des dieux, leurs prêtres, leurs prophètes, ou à des génies inférieurs, qu'ils ont mis dans leurs recherches sur la Divinité. Ils n'ont pas cherché comment nous avons pu acquérir la connaissance de la nature, où l'ignorance et le malheur ont fait de nous les plus méprisés.

 ils dit, "des dioses que vous ne pouvez comprendre ; rapports-vous-en à notre sage profonde ; nous en savons plus que vous sur la Divinité." Mais pourquoi m'en rapporterons-nous à vous ? C'est que Dieu les suit ainsi, c'est qu'il vous punira si vous osiez résister. Mais ce Dieu n'est-il donc pas la chose en question ? Cependant les hommes se sont toujours payés de ce cercle vicieux ; la passion de leur esprit leur fit trouver plus court de s'arrêter au jugement des autres. Toutes les Opinions religieuses sont fondées uniquement sur l'autorité ; toutes les religions de l'humanité se sont fondées sur l'autorité de quelques hommes qui prétendaient le connaître, et venir de sa part pour l'annoncer à la terre. Un Dieu fait par les hommes, a sans doute besoin des hommes pour se faire connaître aux hommes. Ne seroit-ce donc que pour des prêtres, des inspirés, des métaphysi- ques, qui servent réservées la conviction de l'existence d'un Dieu, que l'on dit néanmoins si nécessaire à tout le genre humain ? Mais nous en sommes de l'harmonie entre les opinions théologiques des différents inspirés, ou des penseurs répandus sur la terre ? Ceux même qui font profession d'adorer le même Dieu, sont-ils d'accord sur son compte ? Sont-ils contents des preuves que leurs collègues apportent de son existence ? S'ils sont-ils ainsi unanimement aux idées qu'ils présentent sur sa nature, sur sa conduite, sur la façon d'entendre ses prétendus oracles ? Est-il une contrée sur la terre, où la science de Dieu se soit réellement perfectionnée ? A-t-elle pris quelque part la consistance et l'uniformité que nous voyons prendre aux connaissances humaines, aux arts les plus futiles, aux médias les plus méprisés ? Des mots d'esprit, d'im- materialité, de création, de prédetermination, de grâce ; cette foule de distinctions subtilles dont la théologie s'est partout remplie dans quelques pays, ces inventions si ingénieuses, imaginées par des penseurs qui se sont succédé depuis tant de siècles, n'ont fait, hélas ! qu'emboîter les choses, et jamais la science la plus nécessaire aux hommes n'a jusqu'à puis acquérir la moindre fixité. Depuis des milliers d'années, ces rêveurs osés se sont perpétuellement relayés pour mériter la Divinité, pour dévorer ses voies cachées, pour inventer des hypothèses propres à développer le caractère des dieux, car cette énigme importante nous est donnée par son ignorance l'empêche de démêler. Ce fut sur les débris de la nature que les hommes élé- vèrent le colossal imaginaire de la Divinité.

Si l'ignorance de la nature donna la naissance aux dieux, la connaissance de la nature est faite pour les détruire. A mesure que l'homme s'instruit, ses forces et ses ressources augmentent avec ses lumières ; les sciences, les arts conservateurs, l'industrie, lui four- nissent des secours ; l'expérience le rassure ou lui fait douter qu'on ne voit que de sa part pour l'annoncer à la terre. Un Dieu fait par les hommes, a sans doute besoin des hommes pour se faire connaître aux hommes. Ne seroit-ce donc que pour des prêtres, des inspirés, des métaphysiciens, que seroit réservée la conviction de l'existence d'un Dieu, que l'on dit néanmoins si nécessaire à tout le genre humain ? Mais nous en sommes de l'harmonie entre les opinions théologiques des différents inspirés, ou des penseurs répandus sur la terre ? Ceux même qui font profession d'adorer le même Dieu, sont-ils d'accord sur son compte ? Sont-ils contents des preuves que leurs collègues apportent de son existence ? S'ils sont-ils ainsi unanimement aux idées qu'ils présentent sur sa nature, sur sa conduite, sur la façon d'entendre ses prétendus oracles ? Est-il une contrée sur la terre, où la science de Dieu se soit réellement perfectionnée ? A-t-elle pris quelque part la consistance et l'uniformité que nous voyons prendre aux connaissances humaines, aux arts les plus futiles, aux médias les plus méprisés ? Des mots d'esprit, d'im- materialité, de création, de prédetermination, de grâce ; cette foule de distinctions subtilles dont la théologie s'est partout remplie dans quelques pays, ces inventions si ingénieuses, imaginées par des penseurs qui se sont succédé depuis tant de siècles, n'ont fait, hélas ! qu'emboîter les choses, et jamais la science la plus nécessaire aux hommes n'a jusqu'à puis acquérir la moindre fixité. Depuis des milliers d'années, ces rêveurs osés se sont perpétuellement relayés pour mériter la Divinité, pour dévorer ses voies cachées, pour inventer des hypothèses propres à développer le caractère des dieux, car cette énigme importante nous est donnée par son ignorance l'empêche de démêler. Ce fut sur les débris de la nature que les hommes élé- vèrent le colossal imaginaire de la Divinité.

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NOTES ON QUEEN MAB.
la plus prompte à s'alamer, et la plus propre à produire de très-grandes folies.

Si, écartant pour un moment les idées fâcheuses que la théologie nous donne d'un Dieu capricieux, dont les décrets partiaux et despotiques décident sort des humains, nous ne voulons fixer nos yeux que sur la bonté manifeste que tous les hommes, même en tremblant devant ce Dieu, s'accordent à lui donner ; si nous lui supposons le projet qu'on lui prête, de n'avoir que pour sa propre gloire ; d'exiger les hommages des êtres intelligents ; de ne chercher dans ses œuvres que le bien-être du genre humain ; comment concilier ses vues et ses dispositions avec l'ignorance vraiment incivile dans laquelle ce Dieu, si glorieux et si bon, laisse la plupart des hommes sur son compte ?

Si Dieu veut être connu, cheri, remercié, que ne se montre-t-il sous des traits favorables à tous ces êtres intelligens dont il veut être aimé et adoré ? Pourquoi ne point se manifeste il toute la terre d'une façon non équivoque, bien plus capable de nous convaincre, que ces révélations particulaires qui semblent accuser la Divinité d'une partialité fâcheuse pour quelques-unes de ses créatures ? Le Tout-Puissant n'aurait-il donc pas des moyens plus convainquants de se montrer aux hommes que ces métamorphoses ridicules, ces incarnations prétendues, qui nous sont attestées par des écrits si peu d'accord entre eux dans les récits qu'ils en font ?

Au lieu de tant de miracles inventés pour prouver la mission divine de tant de législateurs jaloux de sa gloire et bien-intentionné pour l'homme, des esprits ne pouvoit-il pas convaincre tout d'un coup l'esprit humain des choses qu'il a voulu lui faire connaître ? Au lieu de suspendre un soleil dans la voûte du firmament ; au lieu de répandre sans ordre les étoiles et les constellations qui remplissent l'espace, n'eût-il pas été plus conforme aux vues d'un Dieu jaloux de sa gloire et si bien-intentionné pour l'homme, d'écrire d'une façon non sujette à dispute, son nom, ses attributs, ses volontés permanentes, en caractères inéffacables, et lisibles également pour tous les habitants de la terre ? Personne alors n'aurait pu douter de l'existence d'un Dieu, de ses volontés claires, de ses intentions visibles. Sous les yeux de ce Dieu si terrible personne n'aurait eu l'audace de violer ses ordonnances ; si mortel n'eût eu le front d'en imposer en son nom, ou d'interpréter ses volontés suivant ses propres fantaisies. En effet, quand même on admettroit l'existence du Dieu théologique, et la réalité des attributs qu'il discor dans qu'on lui donne, on ne peut en rien conclure, pour autoriser la conduite des cultes qu'on prescrit de lui rendre. La théologie est vraiment le teneur de Denioides.* A force de qualités contradictoires et d'assertions hasardées, elle a, pour ainsi dire, tellement garrotté son Dieu qu'elle l'a mis dans l'impossibilité d'agir. S'il est infiniment bon, quelle raison surions-nous de le craindre ? S'il est infiniment sage, de quoi nous inquiéter sur notre sort ? S'il sait tout, pourquoi l'avertir de nos besoins, et le fatiguer de nos prières ? S'il est partout, pourquoi lui élever des temples ? S'il est maître de tout, pourquoi lui faire des sacrifices et des offrandes ? S'il est juste, comment croire qu'il punisse des créatures qu'il a remplies de foliesse ? Si la grace fait tout en elles, qu'elle raison aurait-il de les récompenser ? S'il est tout-puissant, comment l'offenser, comment lui resister ? S'il est raisonnable, comment peut-on se mettre dans le bateau, sans regarder s'il sait nager, ou s'il laissera la liberté de dériver ? S'il est immuable, de quel droit prétendions-nous faire changer ses décrets ? S'il est incovnerçable, pourquoi nous en occuper ? S'il a parlé, pourquoi l'univers n'est-il pas convaincu ! Si la connaissance d'un Dieu est la plus nécessaire, pourquoi n'est-elle pas la plus évidente, et la plus claire ? — Système de la Nature. London, 1781.

Le enlightened and benevolent Pliny thus publicly professes himself an atheist. — Quapropter efifiem Dei, formamque querere, imbecilliatis humanae reor.

Quisquía est Deus (si modo est alius) et quacumque in parte, totus est senus, totus est viciosus, totus animus, totus animi, totus sui.

Imperfecta vero in hominis natura precipue solutia ne deum quidem posse omnia.

Namque scis sibi potest mortem conscire, si velit, quod homini dedit optimunm in tantis vita posita: nec mortales eternitatem donare, aut revocare defunctos; nec facere ut qui visent non viserint, qui honores gestae non gesseint, nullumque habere in prateritum jus, praterquam obliviones, (atque ut facies quoque argumenta societas hunc cum deo copulae, ut) bis dies virgint ina sint, et multa simulata efficere non posse. — Per quern, declaratur huiusdubio, nature potentiam id quoque esses, quod Deum vocamus.

P. 14, col. 1. 6. Ahasuerus, vie !

"Ahasuerus the Jew crept forth from the dark cave of Mount Carmel. Near two thousand years have elapsed since he was first grasped by never-ending restlessness to rove the globe from pole to pole. When our Lord was wearied with the burden of his ponderous cross, and wanted to rest before the door of Ahasuerus, the unfeeling wheel drove him away with brutality. The savour of mankind staggered, sinking under the heavy load, but uttered no complaint. An angel of death appeared before Ahasuerus, and exclaimed indignantly, ‘Barbarian! thou hast denied rest to the Son of Man; be it denied thee also, until he comes to judge the world.’"

"A black demon, let loose from hell upon Ahasuerus, goads him now from country to country; he is denied the consolation which death affords, and precluded from the rest of the peaceful grave.

"Ahasuerus crept forth from the dark cave of Mount Carmel—he shook the dust from his beard—and taking up one of the sculls heaped there, hurled it down the eminence: it rebounded from the earth in shivered atoms. ‘This was my father!’ roared Ahasuerus. Seven
more skulls rolled down from rock to rock; while the infuriate Jew, following them with ghastly looks, exclaimed—'And these were my wives!' He still continued to hurl down skulls after skulls, roaring in dreadful accents—'A curse on you, accursed wretches!—and these, and these, and these were my children! They could die; but I! I repudiate wretch, alas! I cannot die! Dreadful beyond conception is the judgment that hangs over me. Jerusalem fell— I crushed the sucking-babe, and precipitated myself into the destructive flames. I cursed the Romans—but, alas! alas! the restless curse held me by the hair,—and I could not die!"

"From the giantess fell—I placed myself before the falling statue—she fell, and did not crush me. Nations sprang up and disappeared before me; but I remained, and did not die. From cloud-encircled cliffs did I precipitate myself into the ocean; but the foaming billows cast me upon the shore, and the burning arrow of existence pierced my cold heart again. I leaped into Egypt's flaming abyss, and roared with the giants for ten long months, polluting with my groans the mountain's sulphureous mouth—ah! ten long months. The volcano fermented, and in a fiery stream of lava cast me up. I lay torn by the torture-snakes of hell amid the glowing cinders, and yet continued to exist. A forest was on fire. I darted on wings of fury and despair, into the crackling wood. Fire dropped upon me from the trees, but the flames only singed my limbs; alas! it could not consume them. I now mixed with the butchers of mankind, and plunged in the tempest of the raging battle. I roared defiance to the infuriate Gaul, defiance to the victorious German; but arrows and spears rebounded in shivers from my body. The Saracen's flaming sword broke upon my skull: balls in vain hissed upon me: the lightnings of battle glared harmless around my loins: in vain did the elephant trample on me, in vain the iron hoof of the wrathful steed! The mine, big with destructive power, burst under me, and hurled me high in the air— I fell on heaps of smoking ruins, but was only singed. The giant's steel club rebounded from my body: the executioner's hand could not strangle me, the tiger's tooth could not pierce me, nor would the hungry lion in the circus devour me. I cohabited with poisonous snakes, and pinched the red crest of the dragon. The serpent stung, but could not destroy me. I lay torn by the torture-snakes of hell; but dared not to devour me. I now provoked the fury of tyrants: I said to Nero, Thou art a bloodhound! I said to Christierr, Thou art a bloodhound! I said to Muley Ismail, Thou art a bloodhound! The tyrants invented cruel torments, but did not kill me. Ha! I not to be able to die—not to be able to die, not to be permitted to rest after the toils of life—to be doomed to be imprisoned forever in this clay-formed dungeon—to be forever clogged with this worthless body, its load of diseases and infirmities—to be condemned to hold for millenniums that yawning monster Sameness, and Time, that hungry hyenas, ever bearing children, and ever devouring again her offspring!—Ha! I not to be permitted to die! Awful avenger in heaven, last thou in thine armoury of wrath a punishment more dreadful I then let it thunder upon me, command a hurricaneto sweep me down to the foot of Carmel, that there may lie extended; may pant, and writhe, and die!"

"This fragment is the translation of part of some German work, whose title I have vainly endeavoured to discover. I picked it up, dirty and torn, some years ago, in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

-- P. 14, col. 1, l. 13.

I will beget a son, and he shall bear The throne of all the world.

A book is put into our hands when children, called the Bible, the purport of whose history is briefly this: That God made the earth in six days, and there planted a delightful garden, in which he placed the first pair of human beings. In the midst of the garden he planted a tree, whose fruit, although within their reach, they were forbidden to touch. That the Devil, in the shape of a snake, persuaded them to eat of this fruit; in consequence of which God condemned both them and their posterity yet unborn, to satisfy his justice by their eternal misery. That, four thousand years after these events (the human race in the meanwhile having gone unredeemed to perdition), God engendered with the betrothed wife of a carpenter in Judea (whose virginity was nevertheless uninjured), and begat a Son, whose name was Jesus Christ; and roared who was crucified and died, in order that no more men might be devoted to hell-fire, he bearing the burden of his Father's displeasure by proxy. The book states, in addition, that the soul of whoever disbelieves this sacrifice will be burned with everlasting fire.

During many ages of misery and darkness this story gained implicit belief; but at length men arose who suspected that it was a fable and imposture, and that Jesus Christ, so far from being a God, was only a man like themselves. But a numerous set of men, who derived and still derive immense emoluments from this opinion, in the shape of a popular belief, told the vulgar, that, if they did not believe in the Bible, they would be damned to all eternity; and burned, imprisoned, and poisoned all the unbiased and unconnected inquirers who occasionally arose. They still oppress them, so far as the people, now become more enlightened, will allow.

The belief in all that the Bible contains, is called Christianity. A Roman governor of Judea, at the instances of a priest-led mob, crucified a man called Jesus eighteen centuries ago. He was a man of pure life, who desired to rescue his countrymen from the tyranny of their barbarous and degrading superstitions. The common fate of all who desire to benefit mankind is to be confounded. It is of importance, therefore, to distinguish between the pretended character of this being as the son of God and the flavour of the world, and his real character as a man, who, for a vain attempt to reform the world, paid the forfeit of his life to that overbearing tyranny which has since long desolated the universe in his name. Whilst the one is a hypocritical demon, who announces himself as the God of compassion and peace, even whilst he stretches forth his blood-red hand with the sword of discord to waste the earth, having confessedly devised this scheme of desolation from eternity; the other stands in the foremost list of those true heroes, who have died in the glorious martyrdom of liberty, and have braved torture, contempt, and poverty, in the cause of suffering humanity. The vulgar, ever in extremes, became persuaded that the crucifixion of Jesus was a supernatural event.

Since writing this note, I have seen reason to suspect that Jesus was an ambitious man, who aspired to the throne of Judea.

NOTES ON QUEEN MAB. 29
Testimonies of miracles, so frequent in unenlightened ages, were not wanting to prove that he was something divine. This belief, rolling through the lapse of ages, met with the reveries of Plato and the reasoning of Aristotle, and acquired for its divinity, until the divinity of Jesus became a dogma, which to dispute was death, which to doubt was infamy.

Christianity is now the established religion; he who attempts to impugn it, must be contented to behold murderers and traitors take precedence of him in public opinion; though, if his genius be equal to his courage, and assisted by a peculiar coalition of circumstances, future ages may exalt him to a divinity, and persecute others in his name, as he was persecuted in the name of his predecessors in the homage of the world.

The same means that have supported every other popular belief, have supported Christianity. War, imprisonment, assassination, and falsehood; doeds of unexampled and incomparable atrocity have made it what it is. The blood shed by the votaries of the God of mercy and peace, since the establishment of his religion, would probably suffice to drown all other sects from the habitable globe. We derive from our ancestors a faith thus fostered and supported: we quarrel, persecute, and hate, for its maintenance. Even under a government which, whilst it inflicts the very right of thought and speech, boasts of permitting the liberty of the press, a man is pilloried and imprisoned because he is a deist, and no one raises his voice in the indignation of outraged humanity. But it is ever a proof that the falsehood of a proposition is felt by those who use coercion, not reasoning, to procure its admission: and a dispassionate observer would feel himself more powerfully interested in favour of a man, who depending on the truth of his opinions, simply stated his reasons for entertaining them, than in that of his aggressor, who, daringly avowing his unwillingness or incapacity to answer them by argument, proceeded to repress the energies and break the spirit of their promoter by that torture and imprisonment whose infliction he could command.

Analogy seems to favour the opinion, that as, like other systems, Christianity has arisen and augmented, so like them it will decay and perish; that, as violence, darkness, and deceit, not reasoning and persuasion, have procured its admission among mankind, so, when enthusiasm has subsided, and time, that infallible counter-verter of false opinions, has involved its pretended evidences in the darkness of antiquity, it will become obsolete; that Milton's poem alone will give permanency to the remembrance of its absurdities; and that men will laugh as heartily at grace, faith, redemption, and original sin, as they now do at the metamorphoses of Jupiter, the miracles of Remish saints, the efficacy of witchcraft, and the appearance of departed spirits.

Had the Christian religion commenced and continued by the mere force of reasoning and persuasion, the preceding analogy would be inadmissible. We should never speculate on the future obsoleteness of a system perfectly conformable to nature and reason; it would endure so long as they endured; it would be a truth as indisputable as the light of the sun, the criminality of murder, and other facts, whose evidence, depending on our organisation and relative situations, must remain acknowledged as satisfactory so long as man is man. It is an incontrovertible fact, the consideration of which ought to repress the hasty conclusions of credulity, or moderate its obstinacy in maintaining them, that, had the Jews not been a fanatical race of men, had even the resolution of Pontius Pilate been equal to his candour, the Christian religion never could have prevailed, it could not even have existed: on so feeble a thread hangs the main columns of that system which so prodigiously exerts its influence on the spirit of man. On will the vulgar learn humility? When will the pride of ignorance blush at having believed before it could comprehend?

Either the Christian religion is true, or it is false; if true, it comes from God, and its authenticity can admit of no dispute; if false, the omnipotent author is willing to allow. Either the power or the goodness of God is called in question, if he leaves those doctrines most essential to the well-being of man in doubt and dispute; the only ones which, since their promulgation, have been the subject of unceasing cavil, the cause of irreconcilable hatred. If God has spoken, why is the universe not convinced?

There is this passage in the Christian Scriptures: "Those who obey not God, and believe not the Gospel of his Son, shall be punished with everlasting destruction." This is the pivot upon which all religions turn: they all assume that it is in our power to believe or not to believe, and one can only believe that which it thinks true. A human being can only be supposed accountable for those actions which are influenced by his will. But belief is utterly distinct from and unconnected with volition: it is the apprehension of the agreement or disagreement of the ideas that compose any proposition. Belief is a passion, or involuntary operation of the mind, and, like other passions, its intensity is precisely proportionate to the degrees of excitement. Volition is essential to merit or demerit. But the Christian religion attaches the highest possible degrees of merit and demerit to that which is worthy of neither, and which is totally unconnected with the peculiar faculty of the mind, whose presence is essential to their being.

Christianity was intended to reform the world: had an all-wise Being planned it, nothing is more improbable than that it should have failed: consciousness would infallibly have foreseen the inutility of a scheme which experience demonstrates, to this age, to have been utterly unsuccessful.

Christianity inculcates the necessity of supplicating the Deity. Prayer may be considered under two points of view: as an endeavour to change the intentions of God, or as a formal testimony of our obedience. But the former case supposes that the caprices of a limited intelligence can occasionally instruct the Creator of the world how to regulate the universe; and the latter, a certain degree of servility analogous to the loyalty demanded by earthly tyrants. Obedience indeed is only the pitiful and cowardly egotism of him who thinks that he can do something better than reason.

Christianity, like all other religions, rests upon miracles, prophecies, and martyrdoms. No religion ever existed, which had not its prophets, its attested miracles, and above all, crowds of devotees who would bear patiently the most horrible tortures to prove its authenticity. It should appear that in no case can a discriminating mind subscribe to the genuineness of a miracle. A miracle is an infraction of nature's law, by a supernatural cause; by a cause acting beyond that eternal circle within which all things are included. God breaks through the law of nature, that he may convince mankind of the truth of that revelation, which, in spite of his precautions, has been, since its introduction, the subject of unceasing schism and civil.
Miracles resolve themselves into the following question:—Whether it is more probable the laws of nature, hitherto so immutably harmonious, should have undergone violation, or that a man should have told a lie? Whether it is more probable that we are ignorant of the natural cause of an event, or that we know the supernatural one? That, in most times, when the powers of nature were less known than at present, a certain set of men were themselves deceived, or had some hidden motive for deceiving others; or that God begat a son, who, in his legislation, measuring merit by belief, evidenced himself to be totally ignorant of the powers of the human mind—of what is voluntary, and what is the contrary? We have many instances of men telling lies;—none of an infraction of nature's laws, those laws of whose government alone we have any knowledge or experience. The records of all nations afford innumerable instances of men deceiving others either from vanity or interest, or themselves being deceived both from credulity of their views and their ignorance of natural causes; but where is the accredited case of God having come upon earth to give the lie to his own creations? There would be something truly wonderful in the appearance of a ghost; but the assertion of a child that he saw one as he passed through the church-yard is universally admissible to be less miraculous. But even supposing that a man should raise a dead body to life before your eyes, and on this fact rest his claim to being considered the son of God;—the Humane Society restores drowned persons, and as it makes no mystery of the method it employs, its members are not mistaken for the sons of God. And that we have a right to infer from our ignorance of the cause of any event, is that we do not know it: had the Mexicans attended to this simple rule when they heard the cannon of the Spaniards, they would not have considered them as gods: the experiments of modern chemistry would have defied the wisest philosophers of ancient Greece and Rome to have accounted for them on natural principles. An author of strong common sense has observed, that "a miracle is no miracle at second-hand;" he might have added, that a miracle is no miracle in any case; for until we are acquainted with all natural causes, we have no reason to imagine others. There remains to be considered another proof of Christianity—prophecy. A book is written before a certain event, in which this event is foretold; how could the prophet have foreknown it without inspiration? how could he have been inspired without God? The greatest stress is laid on the prophecies of Moses and Hosea on the dispersion of the Jews, and that of Isaiah concerning the coming of the Messiah. The prophecy of Moses is a collection of every possible cursing and blessing, and it is so far from being marvellous that the one of dispersion should have been fulfilled, that it would have been more surprising if, out of all these, none should have taken effect. In Deuteronomy, chap. xxviii, ver. 64, where Moses explicitly foretells the dispersion, he states that they shall there serve gods of wood and stone: "And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even to the other, and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known. And the Lord shall scatter thee from this good land, which he hath given thee and thy fathers, into a land that is not the land of thy fathers, and there shalt thou serve other gods, which are at this day remarkably tenacious of their religion. Moses also declares that they shall be subjected to these curses for disobedience to his ritual: "And it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all the commandments and statutes which I command you this day, that all these curses shall come upon thee and overtake thee." Is this the real reason? The third, fourth, and fifth chapters of Hosea are a piece of immodest confession. The indelicacy of this might apply in a hundred senses to a hundred things. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is more explicit, yet it does not exceed in clearness the oracles of Delphos. The historical proof, that Moses, Isaiah and Hosea did write when they are said to have written, is far from being clear and circumstantial. But prophecy requires proof in its character as a miracle; we have no right to suppose that a man fore-knew future events from God, until it is demonstrated that he neither could know them by his own exertions, nor that the writings which contain the prediction could possibly have been fabricated after the event pretended to be foretold. It is more probable that writings, pretending to divine inspiration, should have been fabricated after the fulfilment of their pretended prediction, than that they should have really been divinely inspired; when we consider that the latter supposition makes God at once the creator of the human mind and ignorant of its primary powers, particularly as we have numberless instances of false religions, and forged prophecies of things long past, and no accredited case of God having conversed with men directly or indirectly. It is also possible that the description of an event might have foregone its occurrence; but this is far from being a legitimate proof of a divine revelation, as many men, not pretending to the character of a prophet, have nevertheless, in this sense, prophesied. Lord Chesterfield was never yet taken for a prophet, even by a bishop, yet he uttered this remarkable prediction:—"The despotic government of France is screwed up to the highest pitch; a revolution is fast approaching; that revolution, I am convinced, will be radical and sanguinary." This appeared in the letters of the prophet long before the accomplishment of this wonderful prediction. Now, have these particulars come to pass, or have they not? If they have, how could the earl have foreknown them without inspiration? If we admit the truth of the Christian religion on testimony such as this, we must admit the strength of evidence, that God has affixed the highest rewards to belief, and the eternal torments of the never-dying worm to disbelief; both of which have been demonstrated to be involuntary. The last proof of the Christian religion depends on the influence of the Holy Ghost. Theologians divide the influence of the Holy Ghost into its ordinary and extraordinary modes of operation. The latter is supposed to be that which inspired the prophets and apostles; and the former to be the grace of God, which summarily makes known the truth of his revelation, to those whose minds are fitted for its reception by a submissive perusal of his word. Persons convinced in this manner, can do anything but account for their conviction, describe the time at which it happened, or the manner in which it came upon them. It is supposed to enter the mind by other channels than those of the senses, and therefore professes to be superior to reason founded on their experience. Admitting, however, that the influence or possibility of a divine revelation, unless we demolish the foundations of all human knowledge, it is requisite that our reason should previously demonstrate its genuineness; for, before we extinguish the steady ray of reason and...
common sense, it is fit that we should discover whether we cannot do without their assistance, whether or no there be any other which may suffice to guide us through the labyrinth of life: * for, if a man is to be inspired upon all occasions, if he is to be sure of a thing because he is sure, if the ordinary operations of the spirit are not to be considered very extraordinary modes of demonstration, if enthusiasm is to usurp the place of proof, and madness that of sanity, all reasoning is superfluous. The Mahometan dies fighting for his prophet, the Indian immolates himself at the chariot-wheels of Brahma, the Hottentot worships an insect, the Negro a bunch of feathers, the Mexican sacrifices human victims! Their degree of conviction must certainly be very strong: it cannot arise from conviction, it must from feelings, the reward of their prayers. If each of these should affirm, in opposition to the strongest possible arguments, that inspiration carried internal evidence, I fear their inspired brethren, the orthodox missionaries, would be so uncharitable as to pronounce them obtinate.

Mirsacles cannot be received as testimonies of a disputed fact, because all human testimony has ever been insufficient to establish the possibility of miracles. That, which is incapable of proof itself, is no proof of anything else. Prophecy has also been rejected by the common sense, it is fit that we should discover whether we cannot do without their assistance, whether or no there be any other which may suffice to guide us through the labyrinth of life: * for, if a man is to be inspired upon all occasions, if he is to be sure of a thing because he is sure, if the ordinary operations of the spirit are not to be considered very extraordinary modes of demonstration, if enthusiasm is to usurp the place of proof, and madness that of sanity, all reasoning is superfluous. The Mahometan dies fighting for his prophet, the Indian immolates himself at the chariot-wheels of Brahma, the Hottentot worships an insect, the Negro a bunch of feathers, the Mexican sacrifices human victims! Their degree of conviction must certainly be very strong: it cannot arise from conviction, it must from feelings, the reward of their prayers. If each of these should affirm, in opposition to the strongest possible arguments, that inspiration carried internal evidence, I fear their inspired brethren, the orthodox missionaries, would be so uncharitable as to pronounce them obtinate.

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before the time of Prometheus, mankind were exempt from suffering; that they enjoyed a vigorous youth, and that death, when at length it came, approached like sleep, and gently closed their eyes. Again, so general was this opinion, that Horace, a poet of the Augustan age, writes—

Audax omnia perpetui,
Genus humana ruisset veritati manae.
Audax Iapetigenus
Ignem fraude mala gentibus intulit:
Post ignem aesthias domo
Subductum, macles et nova fabrium
Terris incubuit cohors,
Semiotique prius tarda necessitas
Lethi corripit gradum.

How plain a language is spoken by all this! Prometheus (who represents the human race) effected some great change in the condition of his nature, and applied himself resolutely to culinary purposes; thus inventing an expedient to screen from his disgust the horrors of the sham-bles. From this moment his vitals were devoured by the vulture of disease. It consumed his being in every event of the allegory as time might produce after the arrival of puberty, necessarily spring: the putrid atmosphere of crowded cities; the exhalations of chemical processes; the unsufficing of our bodies in superfluous apparel; the absurd treatment of infants;— all these, and innumerable other causes, contribute their mite to the mass of human evil.

Comparative anatomy teaches us that man resembles frugivorous animals in everything, and carnivorous in nothing; he has neither claws wherewith to seize his prey, nor distinct and pointed teeth to tear the living fibre. A mandarin "of the first class," with nails two inches long, would probably find them alone insufficient to hold even a hare. After every subterfuge of gluttony, the bull must be degraded into the ox, and the ram into the lamb, with his teeth, and plunging his head into its vitals, slake his thirst with the steaming blood; when fresh from the deed of horror, let him revert to the irresistible instinct of nature that would rise in judgment against it, and say, Nature formed me for such work as this. Then, and only, would he be consistent.

Man resembles no carnivorous animal. There is no exception, unless man be one, to the rule of herbivorous animals having cellulated colons.

The orang-outang perfectly resembles man both in the order and number of his teeth. The orang-outang is the most anthropomorphous of the ape tribe, all of which are strictly frugivorous. There is no other species of animals, which live on different food, in which this analogy exists*. In many frugivorous animals, the canine teeth are more pointed and distinct than those of man. The resemblance also of the human stomach to that of the orang-outang, is greater than to that of any other animal.

The intestines are also identical with those of herbivorous animals, which present a larger surface for absorption, and have ample and cellulated colons.

* Cuvier, Lecons d'Anat. Comp. tom. iii. pages 169, 373, 448, 465, 480. Rees's Cyclopaedia, article "Man."
The cecum also, though short, is larger than that of carnivorous animals; and even here the orang-outang retains its accustomed similarity.

The structure of the human frame then is that of one fitted to a pure vegetable diet in every essential particular. It is true, that the reluctance to abstain from animal food, in those who have been long accustomed to its stimulus, is so great in some persons of weak minds, as to be scarcely overcome; but this is far from bringing any argument in its favour. A lamb, which was fed for some time on flesh by a ship's crew, refused its natural diet at the end of the voyage. There are numerous instances of horses, sheep, oxen, and even wood-pigeons, having been taught to live upon flesh, until they have lost their natural aliment. Young children evidently prefer pastry, oranges, apples, and other fruit, to the flesh of animals; until, by the gradual deprivation of the digestive organs the free use of vegetables has for a time produced serious inconveniences; for a time I say, since there never was an instance wherein a change, from spirituous liquors and animal food to vegetables and pure water, has failed ultimately to invigorate the body, by rendering its juices bland and consentaneous, and to restore to the mind that cheerfulness and elasticity which not one in fifty possesses on the present system. A love of strong liquors is also with difficulty taught to infants. Almost every one remembers the wry faces which the first glass of port produced. Unsophisticated instinct is invariably unerring; but to decide on the fitness of animal food from the perverted appetites which its constrained adoption produces, is to make the criminal a judge of his own cause; it is even worse; for it is appealing to the infatuated drunkard in a question of the salubrity of brandy.

What is the cause of morbid action in the animal system? Not the air we breathe, for our fellow-denizens of nature breathe the same uninjured; not the water we drink, (if remote from the pollutions of man and his inventions,) for the animals drink it too; not the earth we tread upon; not the unobscured sight of glorious nature, in the wood, the field, or the expanse of sky and ocean; nothing that we are or do in common with the undiseased inhabitants of the forest; but something then wherein we differ from these denizens of nature, the habit of diet, so that our appetite is no longer a just criterion for the fitness of its gratification. Except in children, there remain no traces of that instinct which determines, in all other animals, what aliment is natural or otherwise; and so perfectly obliterated are they in the reasoning minds of our species, that it has become necessary to urge considerations drawn from comparative anatomy to prove that we are naturally frugivorous.

Crime is madness. Madness is disease. Whenever the cause of disease shall be discovered, the root, from which all vice and misery have so long overshadowed the globe, will lie bare to the axe. All the exertions of man, from that moment, may be considered as tending to the clear profit of his species. No sane mind in a sane body resolves upon a real crime. It is a man of violent passions, blood-shot eyes, and swollen veins, that alone can grasp the knife of murder. The system of a simple diet promises no Utopian advantages. It is no mere reform of legislation, whilst the furious passions and evil propensities of the human heart, in which it had its origin, are still unassuaged. It strikes at the root of all evil, and is an experiment which may be tried with success not alone by nations, but by small societies, of the kind of individuals. In no cases has a return to vegetable diet produced the slightest injury; in most it has been attended with changes unabashedly beneficial. Should ever a physician be born with the genius of Locke, I am persuaded that he might trace all bodily and mental derangements to our unnatural habits, as clearly as that philosopher has traced all knowledge to sensation. What prolific sources of disease are not those mineral and vegetable poisons that have been introduced for its extirpation! How many thousands have become murderers and robbers, bigots and domestic tyrants, dissolute and abandoned adventurors, from the use of fermented liquors! Who, had they asked their thirst only with pure water, would have lived but to diffuse the happiness of their own unperturbed feelings! How many groundless opinions and absurd institutions have received a general sanction from the sottishness and the intemperance of individuals! Who will assert that, had the populace of Paris satisfied their hunger at the ever-furnished table of vegetables, they would have lost their brutal suffrage to the proscription-list of Robespierre? Could a set of men, whose passions were not perverted by unnatural stimuli, look with coolness on an auto do feu? Is it to be believed that a being of gentle feelings, rising from his meal of roots, would take delight in sports of blood? Was Nero a man of temperate life? Could you read calm health in his cheek, flushed with ungovernable propensities of hatred for the human race? Did Muley Israel's pulse beat evenly, was his skin transparent, did his eyes beam with healthfulness, and its invariable concomitants, cheerfulness and benignity? Though history has decided none of these questions, a child could not hesitate to answer in the negative. Surely the bile-suffused cheek of Buonaparte, his wrinkled brow, and yellow eye, the ceaseless inquietude of his nervous system, speak no less plainly the character of his unremitting ambition, than his murders and his victories. It is impossible, had Buonaparte been a devotee of vegetable feeders, that he could have had either the inclination or the power to ascend the throne of the Bourbons. The desire of tyranny could scarcely be excited in the individual, the power to tyrannize would certainly not be delegated by a society neither fertilized by inebriation nor rendered impotent and irrational by disease. Pregnant indeed with inexhaustible calamity is the renunciation of instinct, as it concerns our physical nature; arithmetical cannot enumerate, nor reason perhaps suspect, the multitudinous sources of disease in civilised life. Even common water, that apparently innoxious pabulum, when corrupted by the filth of populous cities, is a deadly and insidious destroyer.

There is no disease, bodily or mental, which adoption of vegetable diet and pure water has not infallibly mitigated, wherever the experiment has been fairly tried. Debility is gradually converted into strength, disease into healthfulness, madness in all its hideous variety, from the ravings of the fettered maniac and the unaccountable irrationalities of ill temper, that make a hell of domestic life, into a calm and considerate evenness of temper, that alone might offer a certain pledge of
the future moral reformation of society. On a natural system of diet, old age would be our last and our only malady; the term of our existence would be protracted; we should enjoy life, and no longer preclude others from the enjoyment of it; all sensorial delights would be infinitely more exquisite and perfect; the very sense of being would then be a continued pleasure, such as we now feel it in some few and favoured moments of our youth. By all that is sacred in our hopes for the human race, I conjure those who love happiness and truth to give a fair trial to the vegetable system! Reasoning is surely superfluous on a subject whose merits an experience of six months would be mathematically proved; when it is as clear, at random. Seventeen persons of all ages (the families of Dr. Lambe and Mr. Newton) have lived for seven years on this diet without a death, and almost with the slightest illness. Surely when we consider some of these were infants, and one a martyr to asthma, now nearly subdued, we may challenge any of those multitudinous articles of luxury, for which every corner of the globe is rifled, and which are the causes of so much individual rivalry, such calamitous and sanguinary national disputes. In the history of modern times, the avarice of commercial monopoly, no less than the ambition of weak and wicked chiefs, seems to have fomented the universal record, to have added stubbornness to the mistakes of cabinets, and indolency to the infatuation of the people. Let it ever be remembered, that it is the direct influence of commerce to make the interval between the richest and the poorest man wider and more unconquerable. Let it be remembered, that it is a foe to everything of real worth and excellence in the human character. The odious and disgusting aristocracy of wealth is built upon the ruins of all that is good in chivalry or republicanism; and luxury is the forerunner of a barbarism scarce capable of cure. Is it impossible to realise a state of society, where all the energies of man shall be directed to the production of his happiness? Simply, if this advantage (the object of all political speculation) be in any degree attainable, it is attainable only by a community which holds no factitious incentives to the avarice and ambition of the few, and which is internally organised for the liberty, security, and comfort of the many. None must be intrusted with power (and money is the completest species of power) who do not stand pledged to use it exclusively for the general benefit. But the use of animal flesh and fermented liquors directly militates with this equality of the rights of man. The peasant cannot gratify these fashionable cravings without leaving his family to starve. Without disease and war, those sweeping curtailers of population, pasturage would include a waste too great to be afforded. The labour requisite to support a family is far lighter than is usually supposed. The peasantry work, not

able globe are now actually cultivated by men for animals, at a delay and waste of aliment absolutely incapable of calculation. It is only the wealthy that can, to any great degree, even now, indulge the unnatural craving for dead flesh, and they pay for the greater licence of the privilege by subjection to supernumerary diseases. Again, the spirit of the nation, that should take the lead in this great reform, would insensibly become agricultural; commerce, with all its vices, selfishness, and corruption, would gradually decline; more natural habits would produce gentler manners, and the excessive complication of political relations would be so far simplified, that every individual might feel and understand why he loved his country, and took a personal interest in its welfare. How would England, for example, depend on the caprices of foreign rulers, if she contained within herself all the necessaries, and despaired whatever they possessed of the luxuries of life? How could they starve her into compliance with their views? Of what consequence would it be that they refused to take her woollen manufactures, when large and fertile tracts of the island ceased to be allotted to the waste of pasturage? On a natural system of diet, we should require no spices from India; no wines from Portugal, Spain, or Madeira; and all the most sottish of mankind will feel a preference towards a long and tranquil, contrasted with a short and painful, life. On the average, out of sixty persons, four die in three years. Hopes are entertained that, in April, 1814, a statement will be given, that sixty persons, all having lived more than three years on vegetables and pure water, are then in perfect health. More than two years have now elapsed; not one of them has died; no such example will be found in any sixty persons taken at random. Seventeen persons of all ages (the families of Dr. Lambe and Mr. Newton) have lived for seven years on this diet without a death, and almost without the slightest illness. Surely when we consider that some of these were infants, and one a martyr to asthma, now nearly subdued, we may challenge any of those multitudinous articles of luxury, for which every corner of the globe is rifled, and which are the causes of so much individual rivalry, such calamitous and sanguinary national disputes. In the history of modern times, the avarice of commercial monopoly, no less than the ambition of weak and wicked chiefs, seems to have fomented the universal record, to have added stubbornness to the mistakes of cabinets, and indolency to the infatuation of the people. Let it ever be remembered, that it is the direct influence of commerce to make the interval between the richest and the poorest man wider and more unconquerable. Let it be remembered, that it is a foe to everything of real worth and excellence in the human character. The odious and disgusting aristocracy of wealth is built upon the ruins of all that is good in chivalry or republicanism; and luxury is the forerunner of a barbarism scarce capable of cure. Is it impossible to realise a state of society, where all the energies of man shall be directed to the production of his happiness? Simply, if this advantage (the object of all political speculation) be in any degree attainable, it is attainable only by a community which holds no factitious incentives to the avarice and ambition of the few, and which is internally organised for the liberty, security, and comfort of the many. None must be intrusted with power (and money is the completest species of power) who do not stand pledged to use it exclusively for the general benefit. But the use of animal flesh and fermented liquors directly militates with this equality of the rights of man. The peasant cannot gratify these fashionable cravings without leaving his family to starve. Without disease and war, those sweeping curtailers of population, pasturage would include a waste too great to be afforded. The labour requisite to support a family is far lighter than is usually supposed. The peasantry work, not

a Return to Nature, or Defence of Vegetable Regimen. Cadell, 1811.
only for themselves, but for the aristocracy, the army, and the manufacturers.

The advantage of a reform in diet is obviously greater than that of any other. It strikes at the root of the evil. To remedy the abuses of legislation, before the immediate prosperity by which they are produced, is to suppose, that, by taking away the effect, the cause will cease to operate. But the efficacy of this system depends entirely on the propensities of individuals, and grounds its merits, as a benefit to the community, upon the total change of the dietetic habits in its members. It proceeds securely from a number of particular cases to one that is universal, and has this advantage over the contrary mode, that one error does not invalidate all that has gone before.

Let not too much, however, be expected from this system. The healthiest among us is not exempt from hereditary disease. The most symmetrical, athletic, and long-lived, is a being inexpensively inferior to what he would have been, had not the unnatural habits of his ancestors accumulated for him a certain portion of malady and deformity. In the most perfect specimen of civilised man, something is still found wanting by the physiological critic. Can a return to nature, therefore, in an instantaneously eradicate predispositions that have been slowly engendered in the time of the unnumbered ages? — Indubitably not. All that I contend for is, that, from the moment of relinquishing all unnatural habits, no new disease is generated; and that the predisposition to hereditary maladies gradually passes for want of its accustomed supply. In cases of consumption, cancer, gout, asthma, and scrofula, such is the invariable tendency of a diet of vegetables and pure water.

Those who may be induced by these remarks to give the vegetable system a fair trial should, in the first place, date the commencement of their practice from the moment of their conviction. All depends upon breaking down the pernicious habit resolutely and at once. Dr. Trotter asserts, that no drunkard was ever reformed by gradually relinquishing his dram. Animal flesh, in its effects on the human stomach, is analogous to a dram. It is similar to the kind, though differing in the degree, of its operation. The proserlye to pure diet must be warned to expect a temporary diminution of animal strength. The abstraction of a powerful stimulus will suffice to account for this event. But it is only temporary, and is succeeded by an equable capability for exertion, far surpassing his former various and fluctuating strength. Above all, he will acquire an easiness of breathing, by which such exertion is performed, with a remarkable exemption from that painful and difficult panting now felt by almost every one after hastily climbing an ordinary mountain. He will be equally capable of bodily exertion, or mental application, after as before his simple meal. He will feel none of the narcotic effects of ordinary diet. Irritability, the direct consequence of exhausting stimulii, would yield to the power of natural and tranquil impulses. He will no longer pine under the lethargy of ennui, that unconquerable weariness of life, more to be dreaded than death itself. He will hate the brutal pleasures of the chase by instinct; it will be a contemplation full of horror and disapprobation to his mind, that beings, capable of the most admirable symphonies, should take delight in the death-pangs and last convulsions of dying animals. The elderly man, whose youth has been poisoned by intemperance, or who has lived with apparent moderation, and is afflicted with a variety of painful maladies, would find his account in a beneficial change produced without the risk of poisonous medicines. The mother to whom the perpetual restlessness of disease, and unaccountable deaths incident to her children, are the causes of incurable unhappiness, would on this diet experience the satisfaction of beholding their perpetual health and natural playfulness. The most valuable lives are daily destroyed by diseases that it is dangerous to palliate, and impossible to cure, by medicine. How much longer will man continue to pine for the gluttony of death, his most insidious, implacable, and eternal foe?

' ΄ΑΛΛΑ ΔΙΑΔΕΣΤΑ ΑΡΓΟΝ ΚΑΛΕΙΤΩ, ΚΑΙ ΠΑΡΕΔΕΙΖ, ΚΑΙ ΛΟΥΝΤΑ, ΑΥΤΟΙ ΔΗ ΜΑΥΡΟΙΤΗΤΑ ΕΙ, ΑΠΟΚΤΑΝΟΤΩ, ΕΤΕΙΝΟΝ ΟΔΕΝ— ΕΤΕΙΝΟΝ ΜΗ ΥΨΑΝΤΑΙ ΚΩΔΩΝ ΣΕ ΧΩΡΑΧΩΝ.'

The vegetable system is constituted by the society of one amiable woman, whose beauty, its simplicity, and its promise of wide-extended benefit; unless custom has turned poison into food, he will hate the brutal pleasures of the chase by instinct; it will be a contemplation full of horror and disapprobation to his mind, that beings, capable of the most admirable symphonies, should take delight in the death-pangs and last convulsions of dying animals. The elderly man, whose youth has been poisoned by intemperance, or who has lived with apparent moderation, and is afflicted with a variety of painful maladies, would find his account in a beneficial change produced without the risk of poisonous medicines. The mother to whom the perpetual restlessness of disease, and unaccountable deaths incident to her children, are the causes of incurable unhappiness, would on this diet experience the satisfaction of beholding their perpetual health and natural playfulness. The most valuable lives are daily destroyed by diseases that it is dangerous to palliate, and impossible to cure, by medicine. How much longer will man continue to pine for the gluttony of death, his most insidious, implacable, and eternal foe?

* See Mr. Newton's book. His children are the most beautiful and healthy creatures it is possible to conceive: the girls are perfect models for a sculptor; their dispositions are also the most gentle and conciliating: the judicious treatment which they experience on other points may be a correlative cause of this. In the first five years of their life, of 16,000 children that are born, 2700 die of various diseases, and how many more of those that survive are rendered immediately mortal! The quality and quantity of a woman's milk are materially injured by the use of dead flesh. In an island near Ireland, where no vegetables are to be got, the children daily die of tetanus before they are ten years old, and the population is supplied from the main land.

Sir G. Mackenzie's History of Ireland. See also Emile, chap. I, pages 33, 34, 35.
NOTE ON QUEEN MAB. BY THE EDITOR.

Shelley was eighteen when he wrote "Queen Mab;" he never published it. When it was written, he had come to the decision that he was too young to be a "judge of controversies;" and he was desirous of acquiring "that sobriety of spirit which is the characteristic of true heroism." But he never doubted the truth or utility of his opinions; and in printing and privately distributing "Queen Mab" he believed that he should further the dissemination, without occasioning the mischief either to others or himself that might arise from publication. It is doubtful whether he would himself have admitted it into a collection of his works. His severe classical taste, refined by the constant study of the Greek poets, might have discovered defects that escape the ordinary reader, and the change his opinions underwent in many points, would have prevented him from putting forth the speculations of his boyish days. But the poem is too beautiful in itself, and far too remarkable as the production of a boy of eighteen, to allow of its being passed over: besides that having been frequently reprinted, the omission would be vain. In the former edition certain portions were left out, shocking the general reader from the violence of their attack on religion. I myself had a painful feeling that such erasures might be looked upon as a mark of disrespect towards the author, and was glad to have the opportunity of restoring them. The notes also are reprinted entire; not because they are models of reasoning or lessons of truth; but because Shelley wrote them. And that all that a man, at once so distinguished and so excellent, ever did, deserves to be preserved.

The alterations his opinions underwent ought to be recorded, for they form his history.

A series of articles was published in the "New Monthly Magazine," during the autumn of the year 1832, written by a man of great talent, a fellow collegian and warm friend of Shelley: they describe admirably the state of his mind during his collegiate life. Inspired with ardour for the acquisition of knowledge; endowed with the keenest sensibility, and with the fortitude of a martyr, Shelley came among his fellow-creatures, congregrated for the purposes of education, like a spirit from another sphere, to delicately organise for the rough treatment man uses towards man, especially in the season of youth; and too resolute in carrying out his own sense of good and justice not to become a victim. To a devoted attachment to those he loved, he added a determined resistance to oppression. Refusing to fag at Eton, he was treated with revolting cruelty by masters and boys: this roused, instead of taming his spirit, and he rejected the duty of obedience, when it was enforced by menaces and punishment. To aversion to the society of his fellow-creatures, such as he found them when collected together in societies, where one egged on the other to acts of tyranny, was joined the deepest sympathy and compassion; while the attachment he felt for individuals and the admiration with which he regarded their powers and their virtues, led him to entertain a high opinion of the perfectibility of human nature, and he believed that all could reach the highest grade of moral improvement, did not the customs
and prejudices of society foster evil passions, and excuse evil actions.

The oppression which, trembling at every nerve yet resolute to heroism, it was his ill fortune to encounter at school and at college, led him to dissent in all things from those whose arguments were blows, whose faith appeared to engender blame and hatred. "During my existence," he wrote to a friend in 1812, "I have incessantly speculated, thought, and read." His readings were not always well chosen; among them were the works of the French philosophers; as far as metaphysical argument went, he temporarily became a convert. At the same time, it was the cardinal article of his faith, that if men were but taught and induced to treat their fellow with love, charity, and equal rights, this earth would realize Paradise. He looked upon religion as it is professed, and, above all, practised, as hostile, instead of friendly, to the cultivation of those virtues, which would make men brothers.

Can this be wondered at? At the age of seventeen, fragile in health and frame, of the purest habits in morals, full of devoted generosity and universal kindness, glowing with ardour to attain right, burning with a desire for affection and sympathy,— he was treated as a reprobate, cast forth as a criminal.

The cause was, that he was sincere; that he believed the opinions which he entertained, to be true; and he loved truth with a martyr's love: he was ready to sacrifice station and fortune, and his dearest affections, at its shrine. The sacrifice was demanded from, and made by, a youth of seventeen. It is a singular fact in the history of society in the civilised nations of modern times, that no false step is so irretrievable as one made in early youth. Older men, it is true, when they oppose their fellows, and transgress ordinary rules, carry a certain prudence or hypocrisy as a shield along with them. But youth is rash; nor can it imagine, while asserting what it believes to be true, and doing what it believes to be right, that it should be denounced as vicious, and pursued as a criminal.

Shelley possessed a quality of mind which experience has shown me to be of the rarest occurrence among human beings: this was his unworldliness. The usual motives that rule men, prospects of present or future advantage, the rank and fortune of those around, the taunts and censures, or the praise of those who were hostile to him, had no influence whatever over his actions, and apparently none over his thoughts. It is difficult even to express the simplicity and directness of purpose that adorned him. Some few might be found in the history of mankind, and some one at least among his own friends, equally disinterested and scornful, even to severe personal sacrifices, of every baser motive. But no one, I believe, ever joined this noble but passive virtue to equal active endeavours, for the benefit of his friends and mankind in general, and to equal power to produce the advantages he desired. The world's brightest gauds, and its most solid advantages, were of no worth in his eyes, when compared to the cause of what he considered truth, and the good of his fellow-creatures. Born in a position which, to his inexperienced mind, afforded the greatest facilities to practise the tenets he espoused, he boldly declared the use he would make of fortune and station, and enjoyed the belief that he should materially benefit his fellow-creatures by his actions; while, conscious of surpassing powers of reason and imagination, it is not strange that he should, even while so young, have believed that his written thoughts would tend to disseminate opinions, which he believed conducive to the happiness of the human race.

If man were a creature devoid of passion, he might have said and done all this with quietness. But he was too enthusiastic, and too full of hatred of all the ills he witnessed, not to scorn danger. Various disappointments tortured, but could not tame, his soul. The more enmity he met, the more earnestly he became attached to his peculiar views, and hostile to those of the men who persecuted him.

He was animated to greater zeal by compassion for his fellow-creatures. His sympathy was excited by the misery with which the world is bursting. He witnessed the sufferings of the poor, and was aware of the evils of ignorance. He desired to induce every rich man to despoil himself of superfluity, and to create a brotherhood of property and service, and was ready to be the first to lay down the advantages of his birth. He was of too uncompromising a disposition to join any party. He did not in his youth look forward to gradual improvement: nay, in those days of intolerance, now almost forgotten, it seemed as easy to look forward to the sort of millennium of freedom and brotherhood, which he thought the proper state of mankind, as to the present reign of moderation and improvement. Ill health made him believe that his race would soon be run; that a year or two was all he had of life. He desired that these years should be useful and illustrious. He saw, in a fervent call on his fellow-creatures to share
alike the blessings of the creation, to love and serve each other, the noblest work that life and time permitted him. In this spirit he composed **Queen Mab**.

He was a lover of the wonderful and wild in literature; but had not fostered those tastes at their genuine sources—the romances and chivalry of the middle ages; but in the perusal of such German works as were current in those days. Under the influence of these, he, at the age of fifteen, wrote two short prose romances of slender merit. The sentiments and language were exaggerated, the composition imitative and poor. He wrote also a poem on the subject of Ahasuerus—being led to it by a German fragment he picked up, dirty and torn, in Lincoln's-inn-Fields. This fell afterwards into other hands—and was considerably altered before it was printed. Our earlier English poetry was almost unknown to him. The love and knowledge of nature developed by Wordsworth—the lofty melody and mysterious beauty of Coleridge's poetry—and the wild fantastic machinery and gorgeous scenery adopted by Southey, composed his favourite reading; the rhythm of Queen Mab was founded on that of Thalaba, and the first few lines bear a striking resemblance in spirit, though not in idea, to the opening of that poem. His fertile imagination, and ear, tuned to the finest sense of harmony, preserved him from imitation. Another of his favourite books was the poem of Gebir, by Walter Savage Landor. From his boyhood he had a wonderful facility of versification which he carried into another language, and his Latin school verses were composed with an ease and correctness that procured for him prizes—and caused him to be resorted to by all his friends for help. He was, at the period of writing Queen Mab, a great traveller within the limits of England, Scotland, and Ireland. His time was spent among the loveliest scenes of these countries. Mountain and lake and forest were his home; the phenomena of nature were his favourite study. He loved to inquire into their causes, and was addicted to pursuits of natural philosophy and chemistry, as far as they could be carried on, as an amusement. These tastes gave truth and vivacity to his descriptions, and warmed his soul with that deep admiration for the wonders of Nature which constant association with her inspired.

He never intended to publish Queen Mab as it stands; but a few years after, when printing Alastor, he extracted a small portion which he entitled “The Demon of the World” in this he changed somewhat the versification—and made other alterations scarcely to be called improvements.

I extract the invocation of Queen Mab to the Soul of Ianthe, as altered in “The Daemon of the World.” I give it as a specimen of the alterations made. It well characterizes his own state of mind:

**INVOCATION.**

Maiden, the world's supreme spirit
Beneath the shadow of her wings
Folds all thy memory doth inherit
From ruin of divinest things,
Feelingsthat lure thee to betray,
And light of thoughts that pass away.

For thou hast earned a mighty boon;
The truths which wisest poets see
Dimly, thy mind may make its own,
Rewarding its own majesty,
Entranced in some diviner mood
Of self-oblivious solitude.

Custom and faith and power thou spurnest,
From hate and fear thy heart is free;
Ardent and pure as day thou burnest
For dark and cold mortality;
A living light to cheer it long,
The watch-fires of the world among.

Therefore, from nature's inner shrine,
Where gods and fiends in worship bend,
Majestic Spirit, be it thine
The flame to seize, the veil to rend,
Where the vast snake Eternity
In charmed sleep doth ever lie.

All that inspires thy voice of love,
Or speaks in thy unclosing eyes,
Or through thy frame doth burn and move,
Or think, or feel, awake, arise!
Spirit, leave for mine and me
Earth's unsubstantial mimicry!

Some years after, when in Italy, a bookseller published an edition of Queen Mab as it originally stood. Shelley was hastily written to by his friends, under the idea that, deeply injurious as the mere distribution of the poem had proved, the publication might awaken fresh persecutions. At the suggestion of these friends he wrote a letter on the subject, printed in “The Examiner” newspaper—with which I close this history of his earliest work.
EDITOR'S NOTE ON QUEEN MAB.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE EXAMINER."

"Sir,

"Having heard that a poem, entitled 'Queen Mab,' has been surreptitiously published in London, and that legal proceedings have been instituted against the publisher, I request the favour of your insertion of the following explanation of the affair, as it relates to me.

"A poem, entitled 'Queen Mab,' was written by me, at the age of eighteen, I dare say in a sufficiently intemperate spirit—but even then was not intended for publication, and a few copies only were struck off, to be distributed among my personal friends. I have not seen this production for several years; I doubt not but that it is perfectly worthless in point of literary composition; and that in all that concerns moral and political speculation, as well as in the subtler discriminations of metaphysical and religious doctrine, it is still more crude and immature. I am a devoted enemy to religious, political, and domestic oppression; and I regret this publication not so much from literary vanity, as because I fear it is better fitted to injure than to serve the sacred cause of freedom. I have directed my solicitor to apply to Chancery for an injunction to restrain the sale; but after the precedent of Mr. Southey's 'Wat Tyler,' (a poem, written, I believe, at the same age, and with the same unreflecting enthusiasm,) with little hope of success.

"Whilst I exonerate myself from all share in having divulged opinions hostile to existing sanctions, under the form, whatever it may be, which they assume in this poem; it is scarcely necessary for me to protest against the system of inculcating the truth of Christianity or the excellence of Monarchy, however true or however excellent they may be, by such equivocal arguments as confiscation and imprisonment, and invective and slander, and the insolent violation of the most sacred ties of nature and society.

"Sir,

"I am your obliged and obedient servant,

"PERCY B. SHELLEY.

"Pisa, June 22, 1821."

END OF QUEEN MAB.
ALASTOR;
OR,
THE SPIRIT OF SOLITUDE.

Nondum amabam, et amare amabam, querebam quid amarem amans amare.

Confess. St. August.

PREFACE.

The poem entitled "Alastor," may be considered allegorical of one of the most interesting situations of the human mind. It represents a youth of uncorrupted feelings and adventurous genius, led forth by an imagination inflamed and purified through familiarity with all that is excellent and majestic, to the contemplation of the universe. He drinks deep of the fountain of knowledge, and is still insatiate. The magnificence and beauty of the external world sinks profoundly into the frame of his conceptions, and afford to their modifications a variety not to be exhausted. So long as it is possible for his desires to point towards objects thus infinite and unmeasured, he is joyous, and tranquil, and self-possessed. But the period arrives when these objects cease to suffice. His mind is at length suddenly awakened, and thirsts for intercourse with an intelligence similar to itself. He images to himself the Being whom he loves. Conversant with speculations of the sublime and most perfect natures, the vision in which he embodies his own imaginations, unites all of wonderful, or wise, or beautiful, which the poet, the philosopher, or the lover, could depicture. The intellectual faculties, the imagination, the functions of sense, have their respective requisitions on the sympathy of corresponding powers in other human beings. The Poet is represented as uniting these requisitions, and attaching them to a single image. He seeks in vain for a prototype of his conception. Blasted by his disappointment, he descends to an untimely grave.

The picture is not barren of instruction to actual men. The Poet's self-centred seclusion was avenged by the furies of an irresistible passion pursuing him to speedy ruin. But that Power which strikes the luminaries of the world with sudden darkness and extinction, by awakening them to too exquisite a perception of its influences, dooms to a slow and poisonous decay those meaner spirits that dare to abjure its dominion. Their destiny is more abject and inglorious, as their delinquency is more contemptible and pernicious. They who, deluded by no generous error, instigated by no sacred thirst of doubtful knowledge, duped by no illus- trious superstition, loving nothing on this earth, and cherishing no hopes beyond, yet keep aloof from sympathies with their kind, rejoicing neither in human joy nor mourning with human grief; these, and such as they, have their apportioned curse. They languish, because none feel with them their common nature. They are morally dead. They are neither friends, nor lovers, nor fathers, nor citizens of the world, nor bene-

factors of their country. Among those who attempt to exist without human sympathy, the pure and tender-hearted perish through the intensity and passion of their search after its communities, when the vacancy of their spirit suddenly makes itself felt. All else, selfish, blind, and torpid, are those unforeseeing multitudes who constitute, together with their own, the lasting misery and loneliness of the world. Those who love not their fellow-beings, live unfruitful lives, and prepare for their old age a miserable grave.

The good die first,
And those whose hearts are dry as summer's dust
Burn to the socket!

Earth, ocean, air, beloved brotherhood!
If our great Mother have imbued my soul
With aught of natural piety to feel
Your love, and recompense the boon with mine;
If dewy morn, and odorous noon, and even,
With sunset and its gorgeous ministers,
And solemn midnight's tingling stillness;
If autumn's hollow sighs in the sere wood,
And winter robing with pure snow and crowns
Of starry ice the grey grass and bare boughs;
If spring's voluptuous pantings when she breathes
Her first sweet kisses, have been dear to me;
If no bright bird, insect, or gentle beast
I consciously have injured, but still loved
And cherished these my kindred;—then forgive
This boast, beloved brethren, and withdraw
No portion of your wonted favour now!

Mother of this unfathomable world!
Favour my solemn song, for I have loved
Thee ever, and thee only; I have watched
Thy shadow, and the darkness of thy steps,
And my heart ever gazes on the depth
Of thy deep mysteries. I have made my bed
In charnels and on coffins, where black death
Keeps record of the trophies won from thee,
Hoping to still these obstinate questionings
Of thee and thine, by forcing some lone ghost,
Thy messenger, to render up the tale
Of what we are. In lone and silenthours,
When night makes a weird sound of its own stillness,
Like an inspired and desperate alchymist
Staking his very life on some dark hope,
Have I mixed awful talk and asking looks
With my most innocent love, until strange tears,
Uniting with those breathless kisses, made

December 14, 1815.

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Uniting with those breathless kisses, made
Such magic as compels the charmed night
To render up thy charge: and, though ne'er yet
Thou hast unveiled thy utmost sanctuary;
Enough from incommunicable dream,
And visions, and deep noonday thought,
Has shone within me, that serenely now
And moveless, as a long-forgotten lyre
Suspended in the solitary dome
Of some mysterious and deserted fane,
I wait thy breath, Great Parent, that my strain
May modulate with murmur of the air;
And motions of the forests and the sea,
And voice of living beings, and woven hymns
Of night and day, and the deep heart of man.

There was a Poet whose untimely tomb
No human hands with pious reverence reared,
But the charmed eddies of autumnal winds
Built o'er his mouldering bones a pyramid
Of mouldering leaves in the waste wilderness;
A lovely youth,—no mourning maiden decked
With weeping flowers, or votive cypress wreath,
The lone couch of his everlasting sleep:
Gentle, and brave, and generous, no lorn bard
Braved o'er his dreariest fate one melodious sigh:
He lived, he died, he sang in solitude.
Strangers have wept to hear his passionate notes,
And virgins, as unknown he passed, have pined
From duties and reposè to tend his steps:—
Enamoured, yet not daring for deep awe
To speak her love:—and watched his nightly sleep.

Meanwhile an Arab maiden brought his food,
Her daily portion, from her father's tent,
And spread her matting for his couch, and stole
Her love to speak:—and watched his nightly sleep.

The dry leaf rustles in the brake,
Suspend her timid steps, to gaze upon a form
More graceful than her own.

His wandering step,
Obedient to high thoughts, has visited
The awful ruins of the days of old:
Athens, and Tyre, and Balbec, and the waste
Where stood Jerusalem, the fallen towers
Of Babylon, the eternal pyramids,
Memphis and Thebes, and whatsoever strange
Sculptured on alabaster obelisk,
Or jasper tomb, or mutilated sphinx,
Dark Ethiopia on her desert hills
Conceals. Among the ruined temples there,
Stupendous columns, and wild images
Of more than man, where marble demons watch
The Zodiac's brazen mystery, and dead men
Hang their mute thoughts on the mute walls around;
He lingered, poring on memorials
Of the world's youth, through the long burning day
Gazed on those speechless shapes, nor, when the moon
Filled the mysterious halls with floating shades
Suspended be that task, but ever gazed
And gazed, till meaning on his vacant mind
Flashed like strong inspiration, and he saw
The thrilling secrets of the birth of time.

The Poet wandering on, through Arabia
And Persia, and the wild Carmanian waste,
And o'er the sacred mountains which pour down
Indus and Oxus from their icy caves,
In joy and exultation held his way;
Indus and Oxus from their icy caves,
In joy and exultation held his way;
Till in the vale of Cachmire, far within
Its loneliest dell, where odorous plants entwine
Beneath the hollow rocks a natural bower,
Beside a sparkling rivulet he stretched
His languid limbs. A vision on his sleep
There came, a dream of hopes that never yet
Had flushed his cheek. He dreamed a veiled maid
Sate near him, talking in low solemn tones.
Her voice was like the voice of his own soul
Heard in the calm of thought; its music long,
Like woven sounds of streams and breezes, held
His inmost sense suspended in its web
Of many-coloured wool and shifting hues.
Knowledge and truth and virtue were her theme,
And lofty hopes of divine liberty,
Thoughts the most dear to him, and poesy,
Himself a poet. Soon the solemn mood
Of her pure mind kindled through all her frame
A permeating fire: wild numbers then
She raised, with voice stilled in tumultuous sobs
Subdued by its own pathos: her fair hands
Were bare alone, sweeping from some strange harp
Strange symphony, and in their branching veins
The eloquent blood told an ineftable tale.

By solemn vision and bright silver dream,
His infancy was nurtured. Every sight
And sound from the vast earth and ambient air,
Sent to his heart its choicest impulses.
The fountains of divine philosophy
Fled not his thirsting lips; and all of great,
Or good, or lovely, which the sacred past
Of innocent dreams arose: then, when red morn
The fire of those soft orbs has ceased to burn,
And motion of the forests and the sea,
May modulate with murmurs of the air,
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Her daily portion, from her father's tent,
And spread her matting for his couch, and stole
Her love to speak:—and watched his nightly sleep.
The beating of her heart was heard to fill
The pauses of her music, and her breath
Tumultuously accorded with those fits
Of intermittent song. Sudden she rose,
As if her heart impatiently endured
Its bursting burthen: at the sound he turned,
And saw by the warm light of their own life
Her beaming hands, and the slumbering limbs beneath the sun
Of woven wind; her outspread arms now bare,
Her dark locks floating in the breast of night,
Her beamy bending eyes, her parted lips
Outstretched, and pale, and quivering eagerly.
His strong heart sank and sickened with excess
Of love. He reared his shuddering limbs, and
quelled
His gasping breath, and spread his arms to meet
Her panting bosom:— she drew back awhile,
Then, yielding to the irresistible joy,
With frantic gesture and short breathless cry
Folded his frame in her dissolving arms.
New Blackness veiled his dizzy eyes, and night
Involved and swallowed up the vision; sleep,
Like a dark flood suspended in its course,
Involved and swallowed up the vision; sleep,
Beneath the cold glare of the desolate night,
Gaped wide with many a rift, and its frail joints

Beneath the cold glare of the desolate night,
Through tangled swamps and deep precipitous dells,
Startling with careless step the moon-light snake,
He fled. Red morning dawned upon his flight,
Shedding the mockery of its vital hues
Upon his cheek of death. He wandered on,
Till vast Aornos, seen from Petra's steep,
Hung o'er the low horizon like a cloud;
Through Balk, and where the desolated tombs
Of Parthian kings scatter to every wind
Their wasting dust, wildly he wandered on,
Day after day, a weary waste of hours,
Bearing within his life the brooding care
That ever fed on its decaying flame.
And now his limbs were lean; his scattered hair,
Sered by the autumn of strange sufferings,
Sung dirges in the wind; his listless hand
Hung like dead bone within its withered skin;
Life, and the lustre that consumed it, shone
As in a furnace burning secretly
From his dark eyes alone. The cottagers,
Who ministered with human charity
His human wants, beheld with wondering awe
Their fleeting visitant. The mountaineer,
Encountering on some dizzy precipice
That spectral form, deemed that the Spirit of wind
With lightning eyes, and eager breath, and feet
Disturbing not the drifted snow, had paused
In his career: the infant would conceal
His troubled visage in his mother's robe
In terror at the glare of those wild eyes,
To remember their strange light in many a dream
Of after times; but youthful maidens, taught
By nature, would interpret half the woe
That wasted him, would call him with false names
Brother, and friend, would press his pallid hand
At parting, and watch, dim through tears, the path
Of his departure from their father's door.

At length upon the lone Chorasmian shore
He paused, a wide and melancholy waste
Of putrid marshes. A strong impulse urged
His steps to the sea-shore. A swan was there,
Beside a sluggish stream among the reeds.
It rose as he approached, and with strong wings
Scaling the upward sky, bent its bright course
High over the immeasurable moun MEN.
Its precocious flight:—"Thou hast a home,
Beautiful bird! thou voyag'est to thine home,
Where thy sweet mate will twine her downy neck
With thine, and welcome thy return with eyes
Bright in the lustre of their own fond joy.
And what am I that I should linger here,
With voice far sweeter than thy dying notes,
Spirit more vast than thine, frame more attuned
To beauty, wasting these surpassing powers
In the dead air, to the blind earth, and heaven
That echoes not my thoughts!" A gloomy smile
Of desperate hope wrinkled his quivering lips.
For sleep, he knew, kept most relentlessly
Its precious charge, and silent death exposed,
Faithless perhaps as sleep, a shadowy lure,
With doubtful smile mocking its own strange charms.

While daylight held
The sky, the Poet kept mute conference
With his still soul. At night the passion came,
Like the fierce fiend of a distempered dream,
And shook him from his rest, and led him forth
Into the darkness.—As an eagle grasped
In folds of the green serpent, feels her breast
Burn with the poison, and precipitates
[cloud, Through night and day, temp, and calm and
Frantic with dizzying anguish, her blind flight
O'er the wide airy wilderness: thus driven
By the bright shadow of that lovely dream,
Beneath the cold glare of the desolate night,
The day was fair and sunny: sea and sky
Drank its inspiring radiance, and the wind
Swept strongly from the shore, blackening the waves.
Leaped in the boat, he spread his cloak aloft
Following his eager soul, the wanderer
And felt the boat speed o'er the tranquil sea
Like a torn cloud before the hurricane.

As one that in a silver vision floats
Obedient to the sweep of odorous winds
Along the dark and ruffled waters fled
The swaying boat.—A whirlwind swept it on,
With fierce gusts and precipitating force,
Leaped in the boat, he spread his cloak aloft
Following his eager soul, the wanderer
Their fierceness writhed beneath the tempest's

As if their genii were the ministers
Of those beloved eyes, the Poet sate
Holding the steady helm. Evening came on,
The beams of sunset hung their rainbow hues
High 'mid the shifting domes of sheeted spray
That canopied his path o'er the waste deep;

The noonday sun
Now shone upon the forest, one vast mass
Of mingling shade, whose brown magnificence
A narrow vale embosoms. There, huge caves,
Scooped in the dark base of those aery rocks
A narrow vale embosoms. There, huge caves,
Among the stars like sunlight, and around
Whose caverned base the whirlpools and the waves,
Bursting and eddying irresistibly,
Rage and resound for ever.—Who shall save it?
The boat pursued
The windings of the cavern. Day-light shone
At length upon that gloomy river's flow;
Now, where the fiercest war among the waves
Is calm, on the unfathomable stream
The boat moved slowly. Where the mountain,
Exposed those black depths to the azure sky,
Ere yet the flood's enormous volume fell
Even to the base of Caucasus, with sound
That shook the everlasting rocks, the mass
Filled with one whirlpool all that ample chasm;
Stair above stair the eddying waters rose,
Circling immeasurably fast, and laved
With alternating dash the gnarled roots
Of mighty trees, that stretched their giant arms
In darkness over it. 'T he midst was left,
Reflecting, yet disturbing every cloud,
A pool of treacherous and tremendous calm,
Seized by the sway of the ascending stream;
With dizzy swiftness, round, and round, and round,
Rage and resound for ever.—Who shall save T—
The meeting boughs and implicated leaves

And meet Tone Death on the drear ocean's waste;
44 ALASTOR; OR, THE SPIRIT OF SOLITUDE.

The moon arose: and lo! the ethereal cliffs
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Most solemn domes within, and far below,
Like clouds suspended in an emerald sky,
The ash and the acacia floating hang
Most solemn domes within, and far below,
Like clouds suspended in an emerald sky,

Beside the grassy shore
Of the small stream he went; he did impress
On the green moss his tremulous step, that caught
Strong shuddering from his burning limbs. As one
Roused by some joyous madness from the couch
Of fever, he did move; yet, not like him,
Forgetful of the grave, where, when the flame
Of his frail exultation shall be spent,
He must descend. With rapid steps he went
Beneath the shade of trees, beside the flow
Of the wild babbling rivulet; and now
For the uniform and lightsome evening sky.

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Of the small stream he went; he did impress
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The windings of the dell.—The rivulet
Wanton and wild, through many a green ravine
Beneath the forest flowed. Sometimes it fell
Among the moss, with hollow harmony
Dark and profound. Now on the polished stones
It relaxed; like childhood laughing as it went:
Then, through the plain the rivulet ran
Reflecting every herb and drooping bud
That overhung its quietness.—"O stream!
Whose source is inaccessibly profound,
Whither do thy mysterious waters tend!
Thou imagest my life. Thy darksome stillness,
Thy dazzling waves, thy loud and hollow gulfs,
Thy searchless fountain, and invisible course
Have each their type in me: And the wide sky,
And measureless ocean may declare as soon
What cozy cavern or what wandering cloud
Contains thy waters, as the universe
Tell where these living thoughts reside, when
Upon thy flowers my bloodless limbs shall waste
I the passing wind!"

Obedient to the light
That shone within his soul, he went, pursuing
The windings of the dell.—The rivulet
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The struggle brook: tall spires of windlestrae
Threw their thin shadows down the rugged slope,
And nought but gnarled roots of ancient pines
Branchlessand blasted, clenched with grasping roots
The unwilling soil. A gradual change was here,
Yet ghastly. For, as fast years flow away,
The smooth brow gathers, and the hair grows thin
And white; and where irradiated dewy eyes
Have spread their glories to the gaze of noon.

The stream, that with a larger volume now
Rolled through the labyrinthinedell; and there
Fretted a path through its descending curves
With its wintry speed. On every side now rose
Robes, which, in unimaginable forms,
Lifted their black and barren pinnacles
In the light of evening, and its precipice
Obscuring the ravine, disclosed above,
'Mid toppling stones, black gulfs, and yawning caves,
Whose windings gave ten thousand various tongues
To the loud stream. Lo! where the pass expands
Its stony jaws, the abrupt mountain breaks,
And seems, with its accumulated crags,
To overhang the world: for wide expand
Beneath the wan stars and descending moon
Islanded seas, blue mountains, mighty streams,
Dim tracks and vast, robed in the lustrous gloom
Of leaden-coloured even, and fiery hills
Mingling its flames with twilight, on the verge
Of the remote horizon. The near scene,
In naked and severe simplicity,
Made contrast with the universe. A pine,
Rock-rooted, stretched athwart the valley
Its swinging boughs, to each inconstant blast
Yielding one only response, at each pause,
In most familiar cadence, with the howl
The thunder and the hiss of homeless streams
Mingling its solemn song, while the red river,
Foaming and hurrying o'er its rugged path,
Fell into that immeasurable void,
Scattering its waters to the pining winds.
Yet the grey precipice, and solemn pine
And torrent, were not all,—one silent nook
Wasthere. Even on the edge of that vast mountain,
Upramp by knotty roots and fallen rocks,
It overlooked in its serenity
The dark earth, and the bending vault of stars.
It was a tranquil spot, that seemed to smile
Even in the lap of horror. I try clasped
The fissured stones with its entwining arms,
And did embower with leaves forever green,
And berries dark, the smooth and even space
Of its inviolated floor, and here
The children of the autumnal whirlwind bore,
In wanton sport, those bright leaves, whose decay,
Red, yellow, or ethereally pale,
Rival the pride of summer. 'Tis the haunt
Of every gentle wind, whose breath can teach
The wilds to love tranquillity. One step,
One human step alone, has ever broken
The stillness of its solitude. One voice
Alone inspired its echoes.; even that voice
Which hither came, floating among the winds,
And cast its loveliest images among human souls
To make their wild haunts the depository
Of all the grace and beauty that endured
Its motions, render up its majesty,
Scatter its music on the unfeeling storm,
And to the damp leaves and blue cavern mould,
Nurses of rainbow flowers and branching moss,
Of its inviolated floor, and here
Through some dim latticed chamber. He did place
Of the old pine. Upon an ivied stone
Likewise that vessel of deathless wrath, a slave that feels
Of dark magician in his visioned cave,
Raking the cinders of a crucible,
Whose sightless speed divides this sullen night:
A mighty voice invokes thee. Ruin calls
His brother Death. A rare and regal prey
He bears, over the world wanders forever,
No proud exemption in the blighting curse
Of this phantasmal scene, who have to thee
Rival the pride of summer. 'Tis the haunt
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Likewise that vessel of deathless wrath, a slave that feels
Of dark magician in his visioned cave,
Raking the ciders of a crucible
For life and power, even when his feeble hand
Shakes in its last decay, were the true law
Of this so lovely world! But thou art fled
Like some frail exhalation, which the dawn
Robes in its golden beams,— ah ! thou hast fled!
The brave, the gentle, and the beautiful,
The child of grace and genius. Heartless things
Are done and said i'th world, and many worms
Are safe from the worm's outrage, let no tear
Be shed— noteven in thought. Nor, when those hues
Are gone, and these divinest lineaments,
EDITOR'S NOTE ON ALASTOR.

NOTE ON ALASTOR. BY THE EDITOR.

"Alastor" is written in a very different tone from "Queen Mab." In the latter, Shelley poured out all the cherished speculations of his youth—all the irrepressible emotions of sympathy, censure, and hope, to which the present suffering, and what he considers the proper destiny of his fellow-creatures, gave birth. "Alastor," on the contrary, contains an individual interest only. A very few years, with their attendant events, had checked the ardour of Shelley's hopes, though he still thought them well grounded, and that to advance their fulfilment was the noblest task man could achieve.

This is neither the time nor place to speak of the misfortunes that chequered his life. It will be sufficient to say, that in all he did, he at the time of doing it believed himself justified to his own conscience; while the various ills of poverty and loss of friends brought home to him the sad realities of life. Physical suffering had also considerable influence in causing him to turn his eyes inward; inclining him rather to brood over the thoughts and emotions of his own soul, than to glance abroad, and to make, as in "Queen Mab," the whole universe the object and subject of his song. In the spring of 1815, an eminent physician pronounced that he was dying rapidly of a consumption; abscesses were formed on his lungs, and he suffered acute spasms. Suddenly a complete change took place; and through life he was a martyr to pain and debility, every symptom of pulmonary disease vanished. His nerves, which nature had formed sensitive to an unexampled degree, were rendered still more susceptible by the state of his health.

As soon as the peace of 1814 had opened the Continent, he went abroad. He visited some of the more magnificent scenes of Switzerland, and returned to England from Lucerne, by the Reuss and the Rhine. This river navigation enchanted him. In his favourite poem of "Thalaba," his imagination had been excited by a description of such a voyage. In the summer of 1815, after a tour along the southern coast of Devonshire and a visit to Clifton, he rented a house on Bishopgate Heath, on the borders of Windsor Forest, where he enjoyed several months of comparative health and tranquil happiness. The later summer months were warm and dry. Accompanied by a few friends, he visited the source of the Thames, making the voyage in a wherry from Windsor to Crichlade. His beautiful stanzas in the churchyard of Lechlade were written on that occasion. "Alastor" was composed on his return. He spent his days under the oak-shades of Windsor Great Park; and the magnificent woodland was a fitting study to inspire the various descriptions of forest scenery we find in the poem.

None of Shelley's poems is more characteristic than this. The solemn spirit that reigns throughout, the worship of the majesty of nature, the broodings of a poet's heart in solitude—the mingling of the exulting joy which the various aspect of the visible universe inspires, with the sad and struggling pangs which human passion imparts, give a touching interest to the whole. The death which he had often contemplated during the last months as certain and near, he here represented in such colours as had, in his lonely musings, soothed his soul to peace. The versification sustains the solemn spirit which breathes throughout; it is peculiarly melodious. The poem ought rather to be considered didactic than narrative: it was the out-pouring of his own emotions, embodied in the purest form he could conceive, painted in the ideal hues which his brilliant imagination inspired, and softened by the recent anticipation of death.
THE REVOLT OF ISLAM.

A Poem.

IN TWELVE CANTOS.

Ousis de bronte õvov áglaiai ántímesa
Peraikei prox ékhaton
Pléon návni ð' orbe péxh thou ñv áprioi
Ex õperboiwn ágána ñamaqtaq õðón.

PREFACE.

The Poem which I now present to the world, is an
attempt from which I scarcely dare to expect success,
and in which a writer of established fame might fail
without disgrace. It is an experiment on the temper
of the public mind, as to how far a thirst for a happier
condition of moral and political society survives, among
the enlightened and refined, the tempests which have
shaken the age in which we live. I have sought to
enlist the harmony of metrical language, the ethereal
combinations of the fancy, the rapid and subtle transi-
tions of human passion, all those elements which
essentially compose a Poem, in the cause of a liberal
and comprehensive morality; and in the view of
kindling within the bosoms of my readers, a virtuous
enthusiasm for those doctrines of liberty and justice,
that faith and hope in something good, which neither
violence, nor misrepresentation, nor prejudice, can ever
totally extinguish among mankind.

For this purpose, I have chosen a story of human
passion in its most universal character, diversified with
moving and romantic adventures, and appealing, in
contempt of all artificial opinions or institutions, to the
common sympathies of every human breast. I have
made no attempt to recommend the motives which I
would substitute for those at present governing man-
kind, by methodical and systematic argument. I
would only awaken the feelings so that the reader
should see the beauty of true virtue, and be incited to
those inquiries which have led to my moral and politi-
cal creed, and that of some of the sublime intellects
in the world. The Poem, therefore, (with the excep-
tion of the first Canto, which is purely introductory,) is
narrative, not didactic. I would only awaken the feelings so that the reader
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society and the improvement or gradual abolition of political institutions. The year 1783 may be assumed as the epoch of one of the most important crises produced by this feeling. The sympathies connected with that event extended to every bosom. The most generous and amiable natures were those which participated the most extensively in these sympathies. But such a degree of unmingled good was expected, as it was impossible to realize. That impression had been in every respect prosperous, then misrule and superstition would lose half their claims to our abhorrence, as fetters which the captive can unlock with the slightest motion of his fingers, and which do not eat with poison- 

what I have produced be worthless, it should still be properly my own. Nor have I permitted, even relating to mere words, to divert the attention of the reader from whatever interest I may have succeeded in creating, to my own ingenuity in contriving to disgust them according to the rules of criticism. I have simply clothed my thoughts in what appeared to me the most obvious and appropriate language. A person familiar with nature and with most of the productions of the human mind, can scarcely err in following the instinct, with respect to selection of language, produced by that familiarity.

There is an education peculiarly fitted for a Poet, without which, genius and sensibility can hardly fill the circle of their capacities. No education indeed can entitle to this appellation a dull and unobservant mind, or one, though neither dull nor unobservant, in which the channels of communication between thought and expression have been obstructed or closed. How far it is my fortune to belong to either of the latter classes, I cannot know. I aspire to be something better. The circumstances of my accidental education have been favourable to this ambition. I have been familiar from boyhood with mountains and lakes, and the sea, and the solitude of forests: Danger, which sports upon the brink of precipices, has been my playmate. I have trodden the glaciers of the Alps, and lived under the eye of Mont Blanc. I have been a wanderer among distant fields. I have sailed down mighty rivers, and seen the sun rise and set, and the stars come forth, whilst I have sailed night and day down a rapid stream among mountains. I have seen populous cities, and have watched the passions which rise and spread, and sink and change, amongst assembled multitudes of men. I have been the theatre of the more visible ravages of tyranny and war, cities and villages reduced to scattered groups of black and roofless houses, and the naked inhabitants sitting famished upon their desolated thresholds. I have conversed with living men of genius. The poetry of ancient Greece and Rome, and modern Italy, and our own country, has been to me like external nature, a passion and an enjoyment. Such are the sources from which the materials for the imagery of my Poem have been drawn. I have considered Poetry in its most comprehensive sense, and have read the Poets and the Historians, and the Metaphysicians whose writings have been accessible to me, and have looked upon the beautiful and majestic scenery of the earth as common sources of those elements which it is the province of the Poet to embody and combine. Yet the experience and the feelings to which I refer, do not in themselves constitute men Poets, but only prepare them to be the auditors of those who are. How far I shall be found to possess that more essential attribute of Poetry, the power of awakening in others sensations like those which animate my own bosom, is that which, to speak sincerely, I know not; and which, with an acquired and contented spirit, I expect to be taught by the effect which I shall produce upon those whom I now address.

I have avoided, as I have said before, the imitation of any contemporary style. But there must be a resemblance, which does not depend upon their own will, between all the writers of any particular age. They cannot escape from subjection to a common influence.
which arises out of an infinite combination of circum-
stances belonging to the time in which they live, 
though each is in a degree the author of the very in-
fluence by which his being is thus pervaded. Thus, 
the tragic Poets of the age of Pericles; the Italian 
revivers of ancient learning; those mighty intellects of our 
country that succeeded the Reformations, the translators 
of the Bible, Shakespeare, Spenser, the Dramatists of 
the reign of Elizabeth, and Lord Bacon*; the colder 
spirits of the interval that succeeded;—all resemble 
each other, and differ from every other in their several 
classes. In this view of things, Ford can no more 
be called the imitator of Shakespeare, than Shakespeare 
the imitator of Ford. There were perhaps few other 
points of resemblance between these two men, than 
that which the universal and inevitable influence of 
their age produced. And this is an influence which 
neither the meanest scribbler, nor the sublimest genius 
of any era, can escape; and which I have not attempted 
to escape.

I have adopted the stanza of Spenser (a measure 
inexpressibly beautiful), not because I consider it a 
finer model of poetical harmony than the blank verse 
of Shakespeare and Milton, but because in the latter 
there is no shelter for mediocrity: you must either 
succeed or fail. This perhaps an aspiring spirit should 
desire. But I was enticed, also, by the brilliancy and 
magnificence of sound which a mind that has been 
nourished upon musical thoughts, can produce by a 
just and harmonious arrangement of the pauses of 
this measure. Yet there will be found some instances 
where I have completely failed in this attempt, and 
one, which I here request the reader to consider as an 
effort, where there is left most inadvertently an 
alexandrine in the middle of a stanza.

But in this, as in every other respect, I have written 
fearlessly. It is the misfortune of this age, that its 
Writers, too thoughtless of immortality, are exquisitely 
sensible to temporary praise or blame. They write 
with the fear of Reviews before their eyes. This sys-
tem of criticism sprung up in that torpid interval when 
Poetry was not. Poetry, and the art which professes 
to regulate and limit its powers, cannot subsist together. 
Longinus could not have been the contemporary of 
Homer, nor Boileau of Horace. Yet this species of 
criticism never presumed to assert an understanding of 
itself: it has always, under the true science, followed, 
not preceived, the opinion of mankind, and would even 
now bribe with worthless adulation some of our greatest 
Poets to impose gratuitous fetters on their own imagi-
 nations, and become unconscious accomplices in the daily 
murder of all genius either not so aspiring or not so 
fortunate as their own. I have sought therefore to 
write, as I believe that Homer, Shakespeare, and Milton 
rote, with an utter disregard of anonymous censure. 
I am certain that calumni and misrepresentation, though 
it may move me to compassion, cannot disturb my 
peace. I shall understand the expressive silence of 
those suppossession enemies who dare not trust themselves 
to speak. I shall endeavour to extract from the midst 
of insult, and contempt, and malaplications, those admis-
sions which may tend to correct whatever imperfections 
such censurers may discover in this my first serious appeal 
to the Public. If certain Critics were as clear-sighted 
as they are malignant, how great would be the benefit 

* Milton stands alone in the age which he illuminated.
DEDICATION.

There is no danger to a Man, that knows
What life and death is: there's not any law
Exceeds his knowledge: neither is it lawful
That he should stoop to any other law.

TO MARY — — — —.

So now my summer-task is ended, Mary,
And I return to thee, mine own heart's home;
As to his Queen some victor Knight of Faery,
Earning bright spoils for her enchanted dome;
Nor thou disdain, that ere my fame become
A star among the stars of mortal night,
If it indeed may cleave its natal gloom,
Its doubtful promise thus I would unite
With thy beloved name, thou Child of love and light.

The toil which stole from thee so many an hour
Is ended — and the fruit is at thy feet!
No longer where the woods to frame a bower
With interlaced branches mix and meet,
Or where with sound like many voices sweet,
Water-falls leap among wild islands green,
Which framed for my lone boat a lone retreat
Of moss-grown trees and weeds shall I be seen:
But beside thee, where still my heart has ever been.

Thoughts of great deeds were mine, dear Friend,
when first [pass.
The clouds which wrap this world from youth did
I do remember well the hour which burst
My spirit's sleep: a fresh May-dawn it was,
When I walked forth upon the glittering grass,
And wept, I knew not why: until there rose
From the near school-room, voices, that, alas!
Were but one echo from a world of woes —
The harsh and grating strife of tyrants and of foes.

And then I clasped my hands and looked around,
But none was near to mock my streaming eyes,
Which poured their warm drops on the sunny
ground —
So without shame, I spake: — I will be wise,
And just, and free, and mild, if in me lies
Such power, for I grow weary to behold
The selfish and the strong still tyrannise
Without reproach or check. I then controlled
My tears, my heart grew calm, and I was meek
And bold.

And from that hour did I with earnest thought
Heap knowledge from forbidden mines of lore,
Yet nothing that my tyrants knew or taught
I cared to learn, but from that secret store
Wrought linked armour for my soul, before
It might walk forth to war among mankind:
Thus power and hope were strengthened more and
Within me, till there came upon my mind [more
A sense of loneliness, a thirst with which I pined.
They say that thou wert lovely from thy birth, Of glorious parents thou aspiring Child: I wonder not—for One then left this earth Whose life was like a setting planet mild, Which clothed thee in the radiance unfeigned Of its departing glory; still her fame Shines on thee, through the tempests dark and wild Which shake these latter days; and thou canst claim The shelter, from thy Sire, of an immortal name.

One voice came forth from many a night's spirit, Which was the echo of three thousand years; And the tumultuous world stood mute to hear it, As some lone man who in a desert hears The music of his home:—unwonted fears Fell on the pale oppressors of our race, And Faith, and Custom, and low-thoughted cares, Like thunder-stricken dragons, for a space Left the torn human heart, their food and dwelling-place.

Truth's deathless voice pauses among mankind! If there must be no response to my cry— If men must rise and stamp with fury blind On his pure name who lovest them,—thou and I, Sweet Friend! can look from our tranquillity Likelamps into the world's tempestuous night,— Two tranquil stars, while clouds are passing by Which wrap them from the foundering seaman's sight, That burn from year to year with unextinguished light.

When the last hope of trampled France had failed Like a brief dream of unremaining glory, From visions of despair I rose, and scaled The peak of an aerial promontory, whose caverned base With the vexed surge was And saw the golden dawn break forth, and woken Each cloud, and every wave:—but transitory The calm: for sudden, the firm earth was shaken, As if by the last wreck its frame were overtaken.

So as I stood, one blast of muttering thunder Burst in far peals along the waveless deep, When, gathering fast, around, above, and under, Long trains of tremulous mist began to creep, Until their complicating lines did steep The orient sun in shadow:—not a sound Was heard; one horrid repose did keep The forests and the floods, and all around Darkness more dread than night was poured upon the ground.

Hark! 'tis the rushing of a wind that sweeps Earth and the ocean. See! the lightnings yawn Deluging Heaven with fire, and the lashed deeps Glitter and boil beneath: it races on, One mighty stream, whirlwind and waves up thrown, Lightning, and hail, and darkness eddying by, There is a pause—the sea-birds, that were gone Into their caves to shriek, come forth to spy What calm has fall'n on earth, what light is in the sky.
Around, around, in ceaseless circles wheeling
With clang of wings and scream, the Eagle sailed
Incessantly— sometimes on high concealing
Its lessening orbs, sometimes as if it failed,
Dropped through the air; and still it shrieked and
And casting back its eager head, with beak [wailed,
And talon unremittingly assailed
The wreathed Serpent, who did ever seek
Upon his enemy's heart a mortal wound to wreak.

What life, what power, was kindled and arose
Within the sphere of that appalling fray!
For, from the encounter of those wond'rous foes,
A vapour like the sea's suspended spray
Hung gathered: in the void air, far away, [leap,
Floated the shattered plumes; bright scales did
Where'er the Eagle's talons made their way,
Like sparks into the darkness;— as they sweep,
Blood stains the snowy foam of the tumultuous deep.

Swift chances in that combat— many a check,
And many a change, a dark and wild turmoil;
Sometimesthe Snake around his enemy's neck
Locked in stiffrings his adamantine coil,
Until the Eagle, faint with pain and toil,
Remitted his strong flight, and near the sea
Languidly fluttered, hopeless so to foil
His adversary, who then reared on high
His red and burning crest, radiant with victory.

Then on the white edge of the bursting surge,
Where they had sunk together, would the Snake
Relax his suffocating grasp, and scourge
The wind with his wild writhings; for to break
That chain of torment, the vast bird would shake
The strength of his unconquerable wings
As in despair, and with his snaky wrist
Dissolve in sudden shock those linked rings,
Then soar— as swift as smoke from a volcano springs.

Thick, baffled wife, and strength encountered
Thus long, but unprevailing:— the event [strength,
Of that portentous fight appeared at length:
Until the lamp of day was almost spent
It had endured, when lifeless, stark, and rent,
Hung high that mighty Serpent, and at last
Fell to the sea, while o'er the continent,
With clang of wings and scream the Eagle past,
Heavily borne away on the exhausted blast.

And with it fled the tempest, so that ocean
And earth and sky shone through the atmosphere—
Only, it was strange to see the red commotion
Of waves like mountains o'er the sinking sphere
Of sunset sweep, and their fierce roar to hear
Amid the calm: down the steep path I wound
To the sea-shore— the evening was most clear
And beautiful, and there the sea I found
Calm as a cradled child in dreamless slumber.

There was a Woman, beautiful as morning,
Sitting beneath the rocks upon the sand
Of the waste sea— fair as one flower adorning
An icy wilderness— each delicate hand
Lay crossed upon her bosom, and the band
Of her dark hair had fallen, and so she sat
Looking upon the waves; on the bare strand
Upon the sea-mark a small boat did wait,
Fair as herself, like Love by Hope left desolate.

It seemed that this fair Shape had looked upon
That unimaginable fight, and now
That her sweet eyes were weary of the sun,
As brightly it illustrated her woe;
For in the tears which silently to flow
Paused not, its lustre hung: she watching eye
The foam-wreaths which the faint tide wave below
Upon the spangled sands, groaned heavily,
And after every groan looked up over the sea.

And when she saw the wounded Serpent make
His path between the waves, her lips grew pale,
Parted, and quivered; the tears ceased to break
From her immovable eyes; no voice of wail
Escaped her; but she rose, and on the gale
Loosening her star-bright robe and shadowy hair,
Poured forth her voice; the caverns of the vale
That opened to the ocean, caught it there,
And filled with silver sounds the overflowing air.

She spake in language whose strange melody
Might not belong to earth. I heard, alone,
What made its music more melodious be,
The pity and the love of every tone;
But to the Snake those accentssweet were known,
His native tongue and hers: nor did he beat
The hoar spray idly then, but winding on
Through the green shadows of the waves that meet
Near to the shore, did pause beside her snowy feet.

Then on the sands the Woman sate again,
And wept and clasped her hands, and all between,
Renewed the unintelligible strain
Of her melodious voice and eloquent mien;
And she unveiled her bosom, and the green
And glancing shadows of the sea did play
O'er its marmoreal depth:— one moment seen,
For ere the next, the Serpent did obey
Her voice, and, coiled in rest, in her embrace it lay.

Then she arose, and smiled on me with eyes
Serene yet sorrowing, like that planet fair,
While yet the day-light lingered in the skies
Which cleaves with arrowy beams the dark-red air,
And said: To grieve is wise, but the despair
Was weak and vain which led thee here from sleep:
This shalt thou know, and more, if thou dost dare
With me and with this Serpent, o'er the deep,
A voyage divine and strange, companionship to keep.
THE REVOLT OF ISLAM.

Her voice was like the wildest, saddest tone,
Yet sweet, of some loved voice heard long ago.
I wept. Shall this fair woman all alone
Over the sea with that fierce Serpent go!
His head is on her heart, and who can know
How soon he may devour his feeble prey?

A boat of rare device, which had no sail
But its own curved prow of thin moonstone,
Wrought like a web of texture fine and frail,
To catch those gentlest winds which are not known
To breathe, but by the steady speed alone
With which it cleaves the sparkling sea; and now
We are embarked, the mountains hang and frown
Over the starry deep that gleams below
A vast and dim expanse, as o'er the waves we go.

And as we sailed, a strange and awful tale
That Woman told, like such mysterious dream
As makes the slumberer's cheek with wonder pale!
'Twas midnight, and around, a shoreless stream,
Wide ocean rolled, when that majestic theme
Shrined in her heart found utterance, and she bent
Her looks on mine ; those eyes a kindling beam
Of love divine into my spirit sent,
And, ere her lips could move, made the aireloquent.

Speak not to me, but hear! much shalt thou learn,
Much must remain unthought, and more untold,
In the dark Future's ever-flowing urn:
Know then, that from the depth of ages old
Two Powers o'er mortal things dominion hold,
Ruling the world with a divided lot,
Immortal, all-pervading, manifold,
Twin Genii, equal Gods— when life and thought
Sprang forth, they burst the womb of inessential Nought.

The earliest dweller of the world alone
Stood on the verge of chaos: lo! afar
O'er the wide wild abyss two meteors shone,
Sprung from the depth of its tempestuous jar:
A blood-red Comet and the Morning Star
Mingling their beams in combat— as he stood
All thoughts within his mind waged mutual war,
In dreadful sympathy— when to the flood
That fair star fell, he turned and shed his brother's blood.

Thus evil triumphed, and the Spirit of evil,
One Power of many shapes which none may know,
One Shape of many names; the Fiend did revel
In victory, reigning o'er a world of woe,
For the new race of man went to and fro,
Famished and homeless, loathed and loathing, wild,
And hating good— for his immortal foe,
He changed from starry shape, beauteous and mild,
To a dire Snake, with man and beast unreconciled.

The darkness lingering o'er the dawn of things,
Was Evil's breath and life: this made him strong
To soar aloft with overshadowing wings;
And the great Spirit of Good did creep among
The nations of mankind, and every tongue
Cursed, and blasphemed him as he past; for none
Knew good from evil, though their names were hung
In mockery o'er the fane where many a groan,
As King, and Lord, and God, the conquering Fiend did own.

His spirit is their power, and they his slaves
In air, and light, and thought, and language dwell;
And keep their state from palace to graves,
In all sequestered, — but invisible.
And when, in the house of the night of ages,
His reign and dwelling beneath nether skies,
He loosens to the dark and blasting ministries.

His name was Legion; Death, Decay,
Earthquake and Blight, and Want, and Madness
Winged and wan diseases, an array
Pain, puckers the brow, and with that fiend of blood
Renewed the doubtful war— thronesthen first,
And earth's immense and trampled multitude,
In hope on their own powers began to look,
And Fear, the demon pale, his sanguine shrine forsook.

Then Greece arose, and to its bards and sages,
In dream, the golden-pinioned Genii came,
Even where they slept amid the night of ages
Steeping their hearts in the divinest flame
Which breath kindled, Power of holiest name!
And oft in cycles since, when darkness gave
New weapons to thy foe, the sunlike fame
Upon the combat shone—a light to save,
Like Paradise spread forth beyond the shadowy

Such is this conflict— when mankind doth strive
With its oppressors in a strife of blood,
Or when free thoughts, like lightnings, are alive;
And in each bosom of the multitude
Justice and truth, with custom's hydra brood,
Wage silent war;— when priests and kings dissemble
In smiles or frownstheir fiercedisquietude;
When round pure hearts, a host of hopes assemble,
The Snake and Eagle meet— the world's foundations tremble!
Thou hast beheld that sight—when to thy home
Though thou return, sleep not its hearth in tears;
Though thou may'st hear that earth is now become
The tyrant's garbage, which to his compères,
The vile reward of their disdained years,
He will dividing give—The victor Fiend
Omnipotent of yore, now quails, and fears
His triumph dearly won, which soon will lend
An impulse swift and sure to his approaching end.

An impulse swift and sure to his approaching end.

Woe could not be mine own, since far from men
I dwelt, a free and happy orphan child,
By the sea-shore, in a deep mountain glen;
And near the waves, and through the forests wild,
I roamed, to storm and darkness reconciled,
I watched till, by the sun made pale, it sank
Under the billows of the heaving sea;

Deep slumber fell on me;—my dreams were fire,
Soft and delightful thoughts did rest and hover
Like shadows o'er my brain; and strange desire,
The temper of a passion, raging over
My tranquil soul, its depths with light did cover,
Which past; and calm, and darkness, sweeter far
Came—then I loved; but not a human lover!
For when I rose from sleep, the Morning Star
Shone through the woodland wreaths which round
my casement were.

List, stranger, list! mine is a human form,
Like that thou carest—touch me—shrink not
My heart was pierced with sympathy, for woe
Shrieked, till they caught immeasurable mirth—
Omnipotent of yore, now quails, and fears
And to the clouds and waves intameless gladness
And laughed in light and music: soon, sweet
The path of the sea-shore: that Spirit's tongue
Seemed whispering in my heart, and bore my steps
Near mine, and on my lips impressed a lingering
Kiss, when my sweet dream; and it forbade to keep
My tranquilsoul, its depths with light did cover,
Deep slumber fell on me;—my dreams were fire,
Soft and delightful thoughts did rest and hover
Like shadows o'er my brain; and strange desire,
The temper of a passion, raging over
My tranquil soul, its depths with light did cover,
Which past; and calm, and darkness, sweeter far
Came—then I loved; but not a human lover!
For when I rose from sleep, the Morning Star
Shone through the woodland wreaths which round
my casement were.

How, to that vast and peopled city led,
Which was a field of holy warfare then,
I walked among the dying and the dead,
The Spirit whom I loved in solitude
And shared in fearless deeds with evil men,
And spurned at peace, and power, and fame; and
Those hopes had lost the glory of their youth,
How sadly I returned—might move the hearer's
Ruth:

Thus the dark tale which history doth unfold,
I knew, but not, methinks, as others know,
For they weep not; and Wisdom had unrolled
The clouds which hide the gulf of mortal woe:
To few can she that warning vision show,
For I loved all things with intense devotion;
So that when Hope's deep source in fullest flow,
Like earthquake did uplift the stagnant ocean
Of human thoughts—mine shook beneath the wide
emotion.

Deep slumber fell on me;—my dreams were fire,
Soft and delightful thoughts did rest and hover
Like shadows o'er my brain; and strange desire,
The temper of a passion, raging over
My tranquil soul, its depths with light did cover,
Which past; and calm, and darkness, sweeter far
Came—then I loved; but not a human lover!
For when I rose from sleep, the Morning Star
Shone through the woodland wreaths which round
my casement were.

The day past thus: at night, methought in dream
A shape of speechless beauty did appear;
It stood like light on a careering stream
Of golden clouds which shook the atmosphere;
A winged youth, his radiant brow did wear
The Morning Star: a wild dissolving bliss
Over my frame he breathed, approaching near,
And sent his eyes of kindling tenderness
Near mine, and on my lips impressed a lingering
Kiss,

How to that vast and peopled city led,
Which was a field of holy warfare then,
I walked among the dying and the dead,
The Spirit whom I loved in solitude
And shared in fearless deeds with evil men,
Calming as an angel in the dragon's den—
How I braved death for liberty and truth, when
And when I rose from sleep, the Morning Star
Shone through the woodland wreaths which round
my casement were.

When first the living blood through all these veins
I saw, and started from my cottage hearth;
And to the clouds and waves in tameness gladness
Smirched, till they caught immeasurable mirth—
And laughed in light and music: soon, sweet
Madness
Was poured upon my heart, a soft and thrilling

The Revolt of Islam.
In lonely glens, amid the roar of rivers,
When the dim nights were moonless, have I known
Joys which no tongue can tell; my pale lip quivers
When thought revisitsthem:—know thou alone,
That after many wondrous years were flown,
I was awakened by a shriek of woe;
And over me a mystic robe was thrown,
By viewless hands, and a bright star did glow
Before my steps—the Snake then met his mortal foe.

Thou fear'st not then the Serpent on thy heart I
Fear it! she said with brief and passionate cry,
And spake no more: that silence made me start—
I looked, and we were sailing pleasantly,
Swift as a cloud between the sea and sky,
Beneath the rising moon seen far away;
Mountains of ice, like sapphire, piled on high
Hemming the horizon round, in silence lay
On the still waters,—these we did approach alway.

And swift and swifter grew the vessel's motion,
So that a dizzy trance fell on my brain—
Wild music woke me: we had past the ocean
Which girds the pole, Nature's remotest reign—
And we glode fast o'era pellucid plain
Of waters, azure with the noon-tideday.
Ethereal mountains shone around—a Fane
Stood in the midst, girt by green isles which lay
On the blue sunny deep, resplendent far away.

It was a Temple, such as mortal hand
Has never built, nor ecstacy, or dream,
Reared in the cities of enchanted land:
'Twas likest Heaven, ere yet day's purple streak
Ebbs o'er the western forest, while the gleam
Of the unrisen moon among the clouds
Is gathering— when with many a golden beam
The thronging constellations rush in crowds,
Paving with fire the sky and the marmoreal floods.

Like what may be conceived of this vast dome,
When from the depths which thought can seldom
gain Genius beholds it rise, his native home, [pierce
Girt by the deserts of the Universe,
Yet, nor in painting's light, or mightier verse,
Or sculpture's marble language, can invest
That shape to mortal sense—such glooms immerse
That incommunicable sight, and rest
Upon the labouring brain and over-burthened breast.

Winding among the lawny islands fair,
Whose bloomy forests starred the shadowy deep,
The wingless boat paused where an ivory stair
Its fretwork in the crystal sea did steep,
Encircling that vast Fane's aerial heap:
We disembarked, and through a portal wide
We passed—whose roof of moonstone carved, did
A glimmering o'er the forms on every side, [keep
Scultures like life and thought; immovable,
deep-eyed.
CANTO II.

I.

The land in which I lived, by a fell bane
Was withered up. Tyrants dwelt side by side,
And stabled in our homes,—until the chain
Stiffed the captive’s cry, and to abide
That blasting curse men had no shame—all vied
In evil, slave and despot; fear with lust
Strange fellowship through mutual hate had tied,
Like two dark serpents tangled in the dust,
Which on the paths of men their mingling poison thrust.

II.

Earth, our bright home, its mountains and its waters,
And the ethereal shapes which are suspended
Over its green expanse, and those fair daughters,
The clouds, of Sun and Ocean, who have blended
The colours of the air since first extended
It cradled the young world, none wandered forth
To see or feel: a darkness had descended
On every heart: the light which shows its worth,
Must among gentle thoughts and fearless take its birth.

III.

Out of that Ocean’s wrecks had Guilt and Woe
Framed a dark dwelling for their homeless thought,
And, starting at the ghosts which to and fro
Glide o’er its dim and gloomy strand, had brought
The worship thence which they each other taught.
Well might men loathe their life, well might they turn
Even to the ills again from which they sought
Such refuge after death—well might they learn
To gaze on this fair world with hopeless unconcern!

IV.

For they all pined in bondage; body and soul,
Tyrant and slave, victim and torturer, bent
Before one Power, to which supreme control
Over their will by their own weakness lent,
Made all its many names omnipotent;
All symbols of things evil, all divine;
And hymns of blood or mockery, which rent
The air from all its faces, did intertwine
Imposture’s impious toils round each discordant shrine.

V.

I heard, as all have heard, life’s various story,
And in no careless heart transcribed the tale:
But, from the sneers of men who had grown hoary
In shame and scorn, from groans of crowds made
By famine, from a mother’s desolate wail [pale
O’er her polluted child, from innocent blood
Poured on the earth, and brows anxious and pale
With the heart’s warfare; did I gather food
To feed my many thoughts:—a tameless multitude.
THE REVOLT OF ISLAM.

X.
I wandered through the wrecks of days departed
Far by the desolate shore, when even
O'er the still seas and jagged islets darted
The light of moonrise; in the northern Heaven,
Among the clouds near the horizon driven,
The mountains lay beneath one planet pale;
Around me broken tombs and columns riven
Looked vast in twilight, and the sorrowing gale
Waked in those ruins grey its everlasting wail!

I knew not who had framed these wonders then,
Nor had I heard the story of their deeds;
But dwellingsofa race of mightier men,
And monuments of less gentle creeds
Tell theirown tale to him who wisely hea
The languagewhich they speak; and now, to me
The moonlight making pale the blooming weeds,
The bright starsshining in the breathless sea,
Interpreted those scrollsofmortalmystery.

Such man has been, and such may yet become!
Aye, wiser, greater, gentler, even than they
Who on the fragmentsofyon shattered dome
Have stamped the sign of power— I felt the sway
Of the vast stream of ages bear away
My floating thoughts— my heartbeat loud and
Even as a stormletloose beneath the ray—
Of the still moon, my spirit on ward past
Beneath truth's steady beams upon its tumult cast.

XI.
It shall be thus no more! too long, too long,
Sons of the glorious dead! I have ye lain bound
In darkness and in ruin.— Hope is strong,
Justice and Truth their winged child have found—
Awake! arise! until the mighty sound
Of your career shall scatter in its gust
The thrones of the oppressor, and the ground
Hide the last altar's unregarded dust,
Whose Idol has so long betrayed your impious trust.

It must be so—I will arise and waken
The multitude, and like a sulphurous hill,
Which on a sudden from its snows had shaken
The swoon of ages, it shall burst, and fill
The world with cleansing fire; it must, it will—
It may not be restrained!— and who shall stand
Amid the rocking earthquake stedfast still,
But Laon! on high Freedom's desert past
A tower whose marble walls the leagued storms withstand!

One summer night, in commune with the hope
Thus deeply fed, amid these ruins grey
I stood, beneath the dark sky's starry cope;
And ever from that hour upon me lay
The burthen of this hope, and night or day,
In vision or in dream, close to my breast:
Among mankind, or when gone far away
To the lone shores and mountains, 'twas a guest,
Which followed where I fled, and watched when I did rest.

These hopes found words through which my spirit
To weave a bondage of such sympathy
As might create some response to the thought
Which ruled me now—and as the vapours lie
Bright in the outspread morning's radiance,
So were those thoughts invested with the light
Of language; and all bosoms made reply
On which its lustre streameth, when'er it might
Thro' darkness wide and deep those tranced spirits smite.

Yes, many an eye with dizzy tears was dim,
And oft I thought to clasp my own heart's brother,
When I could feel the listener's senses swim,
And hear his breath its own swift gasping mother
Even as my words evoked them—and another,
And yet another, I did fondly deem,
Felt that we all were sons of one great mother;
And the cold truth such sad reverse did seem,
As to awake in grief from some delightful dream.

Yes, oft beside the ruined labyrinth
Which skirts the hoary caves of the green deep,
Did Laon and his friend on one grey plinth,
Bound whose worn basethewild waves his sand
Resting at eve, a lofty converse keep:
'Twas past— that he like other men could weep
Tears which are lies, and could betray and spread
Snares for that guileless heart which for his own
Had bled.

Then, had no great aim recompensed my sorrow,
I must have sought dark respite from its stress
In dreamless rest, in sleep that sees no morrow—
For to tread life's dismaying wilderness
Without one smile to cheer, one voice to bless,
Amid the snares and scoffs of human kind,
Is hard—but I betrayed it not, nor less
With love that scorned return, sought to unbind
The interwoven clouds which make its wisdom blind.

With deathless minds, which leave where they have
A path of light, my soul communion knew;
Till from that glorious intercourse, at last,
As from a mine of magic store, I drew
Words which were weapons;—round my heart
There grew
The adamantine armour of their power,
And from my fancy wings of golden hue
Sprang forth—yet not alone from wisdom's tower,
A minister of truth, these plumes young Laon bore.

XXI.
An orphan with my parentslived, whose eyes
Were load-stars of delight, which drew me home
When I might wander forth; nor did I prize
Aught human thing beneath Heaven's mighty dome
Beyond this child: so when sad hours were come,
And baffled hope like ice still clung to me,
Since kin were cold, and friends had now become
Heartless and false, I turned from all, to be,
Cythna, the only source of tears and smiles to thee.
### The Revolt of Islam

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<td>And, in the murmur of her dreams, was heard Sometimes the name of Laon:—suddenly She would arise, and, like the secret bird Whom sunset wakens, fill the shore and sky With her sweet accents—a wild melody! Hymns which my soul had woven to Freedom, strong The source of passion, whence they rose to be Triumphant strains, which, like a spirit's tongue, To the enchanted waves that child of glory sung.</td>
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<td>59</td>
<td>What wert thou then? A child most infantine, Yet wandering far beyond that innocent age In all but its sweet looks and mien divine; Even then, methought, with the world's tyrant rage A patient warfare thy young heart did wage, When those soft eyes of scarcely conscious thought, Some tale, or thine own fancies, would engage To overflow with tears, or converse fraught With passion, o'er their depths its fleeting light had wrought.</td>
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<td>39</td>
<td>She moved upon this earth a shape of brightness, A power, that from its objects scarcely drew One impulse of her being—in her lightness Most like some radiant cloud of morning dew Which wanders through the waste air's pathless To nourish some far desert; she did seem blue, Beside me, gathering beauty as she grew, Like the bright shade of some immortal dream Which walks, when tempest sleeps, the wave of life's dark stream.</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>As mine own shadow was this child to me, A second self, far dearer and more fair; Which clothed in undissolving radiance All those steep paths which languor and despair Of human things had made so dark and bare, But which I trod alone—nor, till bereft Of friends, and overcome by lonely care, Knew I what solace for that loss was left, Though by a bitter wound my trusting heart was cleft.</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>And warm and light I felt her clasping hand When twined in mine: she followed where I went, Through the lone paths of our immortal land. It had no waste, but some memorial lent Which striped me to my toil—some monument Vital with mind: then Cythna by my side, Until the bright and beaming day were spent, Would rest, with looks entreating to abide, Too earnest and too sweet ever to be denied.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>For, before Cythna loved it, had my song Peopled with thoughts the boundless universe, A mighty congregation, which were strong Where'er they trod the darkness to dispense The cloud of that unutterable curse Which clings upon mankind—all things became Slaves to my holy and heroic verse, Earth, sea, and sky, the planets, life, and fame, And fate, or what'er else binds the world's wondrous frame.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Once she was dear, now she was all I had To love in human life—this playmate sweet, This child of twelve years old—she was made My sole associate, and her willing feet Wandered with mine where earth and ocean meet, Beyond the aerial mountains whose vast cells The unrepining billows ever beat, Through forests wide and old, and lawny dells, Where boughs of incense droop over the emerald wells.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>And this beloved child thus felt the sway Of my conceptions, gathering like a cloud The very wind on which it rolls away: Hors too were all my thoughts, ere yet, endowed With manhood, and with light, their fountains flowed In poesy; and her still and earnest face, Pallid with feelings which intensely glowed Within, was turned on mine with speechless grace, Watching the hopes which there her heart had learned to trace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>In me, communion with this purest being Kindled intenser zeal, and made me wise In knowledge, which in hers mine own mind seeing, Left in the human world few mysteries: How without fear of evil or disguise Was Cythna!—what a spirit strong and mild, Which death, or pain, or peril, could despise, Yet melt into tenderness! what genius wild, Yet mighty, was inclosed within one simple child!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>New lore was this—old age with its grey hair, And wrinkled legends of unworthy things, And icy sneers, is nought: it cannot dare To burst the chains which life for ever flings On the entangled soul's aspiring wings, So is it cold and cruel, and is made The careless slave of that dark power which brings Evil, like blight on man, who, still betrayed, Laughs o'er the grave in which his living hopes are laid.</td>
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THE REVOLT OF ISLAM.

XXXIV.
Nor are the strong and the severe to keep
The empire of the world: thus Cythna taught
Even in the visions of her eloquent sleep,
Unconscious of the power through which she
The woof of such intelligible thought, wrought
As from the tranquil strength which cradled lay
In her smile-peopled rest, my spirit sought
Why the deceiver and the slave has sway
O'er heralds so divine of truth's arising day.

XXXV.
Within that fairest form, the female mind
Untainted by the poison clouds which rest
On the dark world, a sacred home did find:
But else, from the wide earth's maternal breast,
Victorious Evil, which had disposset
All native power, had those fair children torn,
And made them slaves to soothe his vile unrest,
And minister to lust its joys forlorn,
Till they had learned to breathe the atmosphere of
scorn.

XXXVI.
This misery was but coldly felt, till she
Became my only friend, who had indued
My purpose with a wider sympathy;
Thus, Cythna mourned with me the servitude
In which the halfof humankind were mewed,
'Victimstolust and hate, the slaves of slaves:
She mourned that grace and power were thrown
To the hyena lust, who, among graves, asfood
Over his loathed meal, laughing in agony, raves.

XXXVII.
And I, still gazing on that glorious child,
Even as these thoughts flushed o'er her:
"Cythna sweet,
Well with thee world art thou unreconciled;
Never will peace and human nature meet,
Till free and equal man and woman greet
Domestic peace; and erethis power can make
In human hearts its calm and holy seat,
This slavery must be broken."—as I spake,
From Cythna's eyes a light of exultation brake.

She replied earnestly:— "It shall be mine,
This task, mine, Laon!— thou hast much to gain;
Nor wilt thou at poor Cythna's pride repine,
If she should lead a happy female train
To meet thee over the rejoicing plain,
When myriads at thy call shall throng around
The Golden City."—Then the child did strain
My arm upon her tremulous heart, and wound
Her own about my neck, till some reply she found.

I smiled, and spake not.— Wherefore dost thou
At what I say? Laon, I am not weak, [smile
And, though my cheek might become pale the
With thee, if thou desirest, will I seek [while,
Through their array of banded slaves to wreak Ruin upon the tyrants. I had thought
It was more hard to turn my unpractised cheek
To scorn and shame, and this beloved spot
And thee, O dearest friend, to leave and murmur not.

XL.
"Whence came I what I am? Thou, Laon, knowest
How a young child should thus undaunted be;
Methinks, it is a power which thou bestowest,
Through which I seek, by most resembling thee,
So to become most good, and great, and free;
Yet far beyond this Ocean's utmost roar
In towers and huts are many like to me,
Who, could they see thine eyes, or feel such lore
As I have learnt from them, like me would fear
no more.

"Thinkest thou that I shall speak unskilfully,
And none will heed me? I remember now,
How once, a slave in tortures doomed to die,
Was saved, because in accents sweet and low
He sang a song his Judge loved long ago,
As he was led to death.— All shall relent [flow,
Who hear me— tears as mine have flowed, shall
Hearts beat as mine now beats, with such intent
As renovates the world; a will omnipotent!

"Yes, I will tread Pride's golden palaces,
Through Penury's roofless huts and squalid cells
Will I descend, where'er in abjectness
Woman with some vile slave her tyrant dwells,
There with the music of thine own sweet spells
Will disenchant the captives, and will pour
For the despairing, from the crystal wells
Of thy deep spirit, reason's mighty lore,
And power shall then abound, and hope arise once
more.

"Can man be free if woman be a slave? [air
Chain one who lives, and breathes this boundless
To the corruption of a closed grave! [bear
Can they whose mates are beasts, condemned to
Scorn, heavier far than toil or anguish, dare
To trample their oppressors? In their home
Among their babes, thou knowest a curse would
wear
The shape of woman— hoary crime would come
Behind, and fraud rebuild religion's tottering dome.

"I am a child:— I would not yet depart.
When I go forth alone, bearing the lamp
Aloft which thou hast kindled in my heart,
Millions of slaves from many a dungeon damp
Shall leap in joy, as the benumbing cramp
Of ages leaves their limbs— no ill may harm
Thy Cythna ever— truth its radiant stamp
Has fixed, as an invulnerable charm
Upon her children's brow, dark falseshood to disarm.

"Wait yet awhile for the appointed day—
Thou wilt depart, and I with tears shall stand
Watching thy dim sail skirt the ocean grey;
Amid the dwellers of this lonely land
I shall remain alone—and thy command
Shall then dissolve the world's unquiet trance,
And, multitudinous as the desert sand
Borne on the storm, its millions shall advance,
Thronging round thee, the light of their deliverance
"Then, like the forests of some pathless mountain, Which from remotest glens two warring winds Involve in fire, which not the loosened fountain Of broadest floods might quench, shall all the kinds Of evil catch from our uniting minds [then The spark which must consume them — Cythna Will have cast off the impotence that binds Her childhood now, and through the paths of men Will pass, as the charmed bird that haunts the serpent's den."

"We part! — O Laon, I must dare, nor tremble, To meet those looks no more! — Oh, heavy stroke! Sweet brother of my soul; can I dissemble The agony of this thought? — As thus she spoke The gathered sob her quivering accents broke, And in my arms she hid her beating breast. I remained still for tears — and then she woke As one awakes from sleep, and wildly prest My bosom, her whole frame impetuously possest."

"We parted again — but on blue waste, You desert wide and deep, holds no recess Within whose happy silence, thus embraced We might survive all ills in one caress: Nor doth the grave — I fear 'tis passionless — Nor yon cold vacant Heaven: — we meet again Within the minds of men, whose lips shall bless Our memory, and whose hopes its light retain When these dissevered bones are trodden in the plain."

I could not speak, though she had ceased, now The fountainsof her feeling, swift and deep, Seemed to suspend the tumult of their flow; So we arose, and by the star-light steep Went homeward — neither did we speak nor weep, But pale, were calm. — With passion subdued, Like eveningshadethato'erthemountainscreep, Wemoved towardsourhome; where, in this mood, Each from the othersought refuge in solitude.

"What thoughts had sway o'er Cythna's lonely That night, I know not; but my own did seem As if they might ten thousand years outnumber Of waking life, the visions of a dream, Which hid in one dim gulf the troubled stream Of chaos, in a boundless chaos wild and vast, Whose limits yet were never memory's theme: And I lay struggling as its whirlwinds past, Sometimes for rapturesick, sometimes for pain agast."

Two hours, whose mighty circle did embrace More time than might make grey the infant world, Rolled thus, a weary and tumultuous space: When the third came, like mist on breezes curling, From my dim sleep a shadow was unfurled: Methought, upon the threshold of a cave I sate with Cythna; drooping briony, pearled With dew from the wild streamlet's shattered wave, Hung, where we sate, to taste the joys which Nature gave.

"III."

"... We lived a day as we were wont to live, But nature had a robe of glory on, And the bright air o'er every shape did weave Intenser hues, so that the herbage stone, The leafless bough among the leaves alone, Had being clearer than its own could be, And Cythna's pure and radiant self was shown In this strange vision, so divine to me, That if I loved before, now love was agony."

"IV."

"... Morned, noon came, evening then night descended, And we prolonged calm talk beneath the sphere Of the calm moon— when, suddenly was blended With our reposes a nameless sense of fear; And from the cave behind I seemed to hear Sounds gathering upwards! — accents incomplete, And stifled shrieks, — and now, more near and A tumult and a rush of thronging feet near, The cavern's secret depths beneath the earth did beat."

"V."

"... The scene was changed, and away, away! Through the air and over the sea we sped, And Cythna in my sheltering bosom lay, And the winds bore me; — through the darkness spread Around, the gaping earth then vomited Legions of foul and ghastly shapes, which hung Upon my flight; and ever as we fled, They plucked at Cythna— soon to me then clung A sense of actual things those monstrous dreams among."

"VI."

"... And I lay struggling in the impotence Of sleep, while outward life had burst its bound, Though, still deluded, strove the tortured sense To its dire wanderings to adapt the sound Which in the light of morn was poured around Our dwelling— breathless, pale, and unaware I rose, and all the cottage crowded found With armed men, whose glittering swords were bare, And whose degraded limbs the tyrant's garb did wear."

"VII."

"... And ere with rapid lips and gathered brow I could demand the cause—a feeble shriek— It was a feeble shriek, faint, far, and low, Arrested me— my men grew calm and meek, And, grasping a small knife, I went to seek That voice among the crowd— 'twas Cythna's cry! Beneath most calm resolve did agony wreak Its whirlwind rage: — so I past quietly Till I beheld, where bound, that dearest child did lie."

"VIII."

"... I started to behold her, for delight And exultation, and a joyance free, Solemn, serene, and lofty, filled the light Of the calm smile with which she looked on me: So that I feared some brainless ecstatic, Wrought from that bitter woe, had wildered her— "Farewell! farewell!" she said, as I drew nigh. "At first my peace was marred by this strangestir, Now I am calm as truth— its chosen minister.
"Look not so, Laon—say farewell in hope:
These bloody men are but the Blares who bear
Their mistress to her task— it was my scope
The slavery where they drag me now, to share,
And among captives willing chains to wear
Awhile—the rest thou knowest—return, dear
Let our first triumph trample the despair [friend!]
Which would ensnare us now, for in the end,
In victory or in death our hopes and fears must blend."

These words had fallen on my unheeding ear,
Whilst I had watched the motions of the crew
With seeming careless glance; not many were
Around her, for their comrades just withdrew
To guard some other victim—so I drew
My knife, and with one impulse, suddenly
All unaware three of their number slew, [cry
And grasped a fourth by the throat, and with loud
My countrymen invoked to death or liberty!

What followed then, I know not—for a stroke
On my raised arm and naked head came down,
Filling my eyes with blood— when I awoke,
I felt that they had bound me in my swoon,
And up a rock which overhangs the town,
By the steep path were bearing me : below
The plain was filled with slaughter,— overthrown
The vineyards and the harvests, and the glow
Of blazing roofs alone far o'er the white Ocean's flow.

Upon that rock a mighty column stood,
Whose capital seemed sculptured in the sky,
Which to the wanderers o'er the solitude
Of distant seas, from ages long gone by,
Had many a landmark; o'er its height to fly
Scarcely the cloud, the vulture, or the blast,
Has power—and when the shades of evening lie
On Earth and Ocean, its carved summits cast
The sunken day-light far through the aerial waste.

They bore me to a cavern in the hill
Beneath that column, and unbound me there :
And one did strip me stark; and one did fill
A vessel from the putrid pool; one bare
A lighted torch, and four with friendless care
Guided my steps the cavern-paths along,
Then up a steep and dark and narrow stair
We wound, until the torches' fiery tongue
Amid the gushing day beamless and pallid hung.

They raised me to the platform of the pile,
That column's dizzy height—the grate of brass
Through which they thrust me, open stood the
As to its ponderous and suspended mass, while
With chains which eat into the flesh, alas !
With brazen links, my naked limbs they bound : the grate, as they departed to repass,
With horrid clangour fell, and the far sound
Of their retiring steps in the dense gloom was drowned.

The noon was calm and bright:—around that
The overhanging sky and circling sea [column
Spread forth in silence profound and solemn
The darkness of brief frenzy cast on me,
So that I knew not my own misery:
The islands and the mountains in the day
Like clouds repose afar; and I could see
The town among the woods below that lay,
And the dark rocks which bound the bright and glassy bay.

It was so calm, that scarce the featherly weed
Sown by some eagle on the topmost stone
Swayed in the air:—so bright, that noon did breede
No shadow in the sky beside mine own—
Mine, and the shadow of my chain alone.
Below the smoke of roofs involved in flame
Rested like night, all else was clearly shown
In the broad glare, yet sound to me none came,
But of the living blood that ran within my frame.

The peace of madness fled, and ah, too soon !
A ship was lying on the sunny main;
Its sails were flagging in the breathless noon—
Its shadow lay beyond—that night again
Waked, with its presence, in my tranced brain
The stings of a known sorrow, keen and cold:
I knew that ship bore Cythna o'er the plain
Of waters, to her blighting slavery sold,
And watched it with such thoughts as must remain
untold.

I watched, until the shades of evening wrappt
Earth like an exhalation— then the bark
Moved, for that calm was by the Bunsetsnapt.
It moved a speck upon the Ocean dark:
Soon the wan stars came forth, and I could mark
It's path no more ! I sought to close mine eyes,
But, like the balls, their lids were stiff and stark;
I would have risen, but, ere that I could rise,
My parched skin was split with piercing agonies.

I gnawed my brazen chain, and sought to sever
Its adamantine links, that I might die:
O Liberty! forgive the base endeavour,
Forgive me, if, reserved for victory,
The Champion of thy faith o'er sought to fly.—
That starry night, with its clear silence, sent
Tameless resolve which laughed at misery
Into my soul—linked remembrance lent
To that such power, to me such a severe content.

To breathe, to be, to hope, or to despair
And die, I questioned not; nor, though the Sun
Its shafts of agony kindling through the air
Moved over me, nor though in evening dun,
Or when the stars their visible courses run,
Or morning, the wide universe was spread
In dreary calmness round me, did I shun
Its presence, nor seek refuge with the dead
From one faint hope whose flower a dropping poison shed.
THE REVOLT OF ISLAM.

XXI.

Two days thus past— I neither raved nor died—
Thirst raged within me, like a scorpion's nest
Built in mine entrails; I had spurned aside
The water-vessel, while despair possessed 
[uprest
My thoughts, and now no drop remained 1 The
Of the third sun brought hunger—but the crust,
Which had been left, was to my craving breast
Fuel, not food. I chewed the bitter dust,
And bit my bloodless arm, and licked the brazen
rust.

My brain began to fail when the fourth morn
Burst o'er the golden isles—a fearful sleep,
Which through the caverns dreary and forlorn
Of the riven soul, sent its foul dreams to sweep
With whirlwind swiftness—a fall far and deep,—
A gulf, a void, a sense of senselessness—
These things dwelt in me, even as shadows keep
Their watch in some dim charnel's loneliness,
A shoreless sea, a sky sunless and planetless!

The forms which peopled this terrific trance
I well remember— like a quire of devils,
Around me they involved a giddy dance;
Legions seemed gathering from the misty levels
Of ocean, to supply those ceaseless revels,
Foul, ceaseless shadows:— thought could not divide
The actual world from these entangling evils,
Which so bemocked themselves, that I descried
All shapes like mine own self, hideously multiplied.

The sense of day and night, of false and true,
Was dead within me. Yet two visions burst
That darkness— one, as since that hour I knew,
Was not a phantom of the realms accursed,
Where then my spirit dwelt— but of the first
I know not yet, was it a dream or no.
But both, though not distincter, were immersed
In hues which, when through memory's waste they
flow,
Make their divided streams more bright and rapid
now.

Methought that gate was lifted, and the seven
Who brought me thither, four stiff corpses bare,
And from the frieze to the four winds of Heaven
Hung them on high by the entangled hair:
Swarthv were three—the fourth was very fair:
As, lifting me, it fell!— What next I heard,
Were billows leaping on the harbour bar,
And the shrill sea-wind, whose breath idly stirred
My hair:— I looked abroad, and saw a star
Shining beside a sail, and distant far
That mountain and its column, the known mark
Of those who in the wide deep wandering are,
So that I feared some Spirit, fell and dark,
In trance had lain me thus within a fiendish
bark.

The dwelling of the many-coloured worm,
Hung there, the white and hollow cheek I drew
To my dry lips— what radiance did inform
Of him who ruled the helm, although the pillow
For my light head was hollowed in his lap,
And my bare limbs his mantle did enwrap,
Fearing it was a fiend: at last, he bent
O'er me his aged face; as if to snap
Those dreadful thoughts the gentle grandsire bent,
And to my inmost soul his soothing looks he sent.

A soft and healing potion to my lips
At intervals he raised— now looked on high,
To mark if yet the starry giant dips
Of him who ruled the helm, although the pillow
For my light head was hollowed in his lap,
And my bare limbs his mantle did enwrap,
Fearing it was a fiend: at last, he bent
O'er me his aged face; as if to snap
Those dreadful thoughts the gentle grandsire bent,
And to my inmost soul his soothing looks he sent.

Poor victim, thou art now at liberty!" I
joyed as those a human tone to hear,
Who in cells deep and lone have languished many
a year.
THE REVOLT OF ISLAM.

XXXIII.

A dim and feeble joy, whose glimpses oft
Were quenched in a relapse of wildering dreams,
Yet still methought we sailed, until aloft
The stars of night grew pallid, and the beams
Of morn descended on the ocean-streams,
And still that aged man, so grand and mild,
Tended me, even as some sick mother seems
To hang in hope over a dying child,
Till in the azure East darkness again was piled.

And then the night-wind, steaming from the shore,
Sent odours dying sweet across the sea,
And the swiftboat the little waves which bore,
Were cut by its keen keel, though slantingly;
Soon I could hear the leaves sigh, and could see
The myrtle-blossoms starring the dim grove,
As past the pebbly beach the boat did flee
On sidelong wing into a silent cove,
Where oken pine a shade under the starlight wove.

CANTO IV.

I.

The old man took the oars, and soon the bark
Smote on the beach beside a tower of stone;
It was a crumbling heap whose portal dark
With blooming ivy trails was overgrown;
Upon whose floor the spangle-sands were strown,
And rarest sea-shells, which the eternal flood,
Slave to the mother of the months, had thrown
Within the walls of that great tower, which stood
A changeling of man's art, nursed amid Nature's brood.

II.

When the old man his boat had anchored,
He wound me in his arms with tender care,
And very few but kindly words he said,
And bore me through the tower adown a stair,
Whose smooth descent some ceaseless step to wear
For many a year had fallen.— We came at last
To a small chamber, which with mosses rare
Was tapestried, where me his soft hands placed
Upon a couch of grass and oak-leaves interlaced.

The moon was darting through the lattices
Itsyellow light, warm as the beams of day—
So warm, that to admit the dewy breeze,
The old man opened them; the moonlight lay
Upon a lake whose waters wove their play
Even to the threshold of that lonely home:
Within was seen in the dim wavering ray,
The antique sculptured roof, and many a tome
Whose lore had made that sage all that he had become.

The rock-built barrier of the sea was past,—
And I was on the margin of a lake,
A lonely lake, amid the forests vast
And snowy mountains:— did my spirit wake
From sleep, as many-coloured as the snake
That girds eternity in life and truth,
Might not my heart its cravings ever slake?
Was Cythna then a dream, and all its joy and
And all its hope and fears, and all its joy and

Thus madness came again,— a milder madness,
Which darkened nought but time's unquiet flow
With supernatural shades of clinging sadness;
That gentle Hermit, in my helpless wo,
By my sick couch was busy to and fro,
Like a strong spirit ministrant of good:
When I was healed, he led me forth to show
The wonders of his sylvan solitude,
And we together saw by that isle-dotted flood.

VI.

He knew his soothing words to weave with skill
From all my madness told:— like mine own heart,
Of Cythna would he question me, until
That thrilling name had ceased to make me start,
From his familiar lips,— it was not art,
Of wisdom and of justice when he spoke—
When 'mid soft looks of pity, there would dart
A glance as keen as is the lightning's stroke
When it doth rive the knots of some ancestral oak.

VII.

That hoary man had spent his livelong age
In converse with the dead, who leave the stamp
Of ever-burning thoughts on many a page,
When they are gone into the senseless damp
Of graves!— his spirit thus became a lamp
Of splendour, like to those on which it fed.
Through peopled haunts, the City and the Camp,
Deep thirst for knowledge had his footsteps led,
And all the ways of men among mankind he read.

But custom maketh blind and obdurate
The loftiest hearts:— he had beheld the woe
In which mankind was bound, but deemed that truth
Which made them abject would preserve them so;
And in such faith, some stedfast joy to know,
He sought this cell: but, when fame went abroad
That one in Argolis did undergo
Torture for liberty, and that the crowd
High truths from gifted lips had heard and understood,

And that the multitude was gathering wide,
His spirit leaped within his aged frame;
In lonely peace he could no more abide,
But to the land on which the victor's flame
Had fed, my native land, the Hermit came;
Each heart was there a shield, and every tongue
Rallied their secret hopes, though tyrants sung
Hymns of triumphant joy our scattered tribes among.
He came to the lone column on the rock,  
And with his sweet and mighty eloquence  
The hearts of those who watched it did unlock,  
And made them melt in tears of penitence.  
They gave him entrance free to bear me thence.  
"Since this," the old man said, "seven years are  
While slowly troth on thy benighted sense  
Has crept; the hope which wildered it has lent,  
Meanwhile, to me the power of a sublime intent."

"Yes, from the records of my youthful state,  
And from the lore of bards and sages old,  
From whatso'er my wakened thoughts create  
Oat of the hopes of thine aspiring bold,  
Hare I collected language to unfold  
Truth to my countrymen; from shore to shore  
Doctrines of human power my words have told;  
They have been heard, and men aspire to more  
Than they have ever gained or ever lost of yore."

"In secret chambers parents read, and weep,  
My writings to their babes, no longer blind;  
And young men gather when their tyrants sleep,  
And vows of faith each to the other bind;  
And marriageable maidens, who have pined  
With love, till life seemed melting through their  
A warmer zeal, a nobler hope, now find;  
And every bosom thus is wrapt and shook,  
Like autumn's myriad leaves in one swoln mountain brook."

"The tyrants of the Golden City tremble  
At voices which are heard about the streets;  
The ministers of fraud can scarce disguise  
The lies of their own heart; but when one meets  
Another at the shrine, he inly weeps,  
Though he says nothing, that the truth is known;  
Murderers are pale upon the judgment-seats,  
And gold grows vile even to the wealthy crown,  
And laughter fills the Temple, and curses shake the  
Throne."

"Kind thoughts, and mighty hopes, and gentle  
A bound, for fearless love, and the pure law  
Of mild equality and peace succeeds  
To faiths which long have held the world in awe,  
Bloody, and false, and cold:—as whirlpools draw  
All wrecks of Ocean to their chasm, the sway  
Of thy strong genius, Laon, which foresaw  
This hope, compels all spirits to obey,  
Which round thy secret strength now throng in wide array."

"For I have been thy passive instrument"—  
(As thus the old man spake, his countenance  
Gleamed on me like a spirit's)—"thou hast lent  
To me, to all, the power to advance  
Towards this unforeseen deliverance  
From our ancestral chains—ay, thou didst rear  
That lamp of hope on high, which time, nor chance,  
Nor change may not extinguish, and my share  
Of good was o'er the world its gathered beams to bear."

"But I, alas! am both unknown and old,  
And though the woe of wisdom I know well  
To dye in hues of language, I am cold  
In seeming, and the hopes which inly dwell  
My manners note that I did long repel;  
But Laon's name to the tumultuous throng  
Were like the star whose beams the waves compel  
And tempests, and his soul-subduing tongue  
Were as a lance to quell the mailed crest of wrong."

"Perchance blood need not flow, if thou at length  
Wouldst rise; perchance the very slaves would spare  
Their brethren and themselves; great is the  
Of words—for lately did a maiden fair,  
[strength Who from her childhood has been taught to bear  
The tyrant's heavy yoke, arise, and make  
Her sex the law of truth and freedom hear;  
And with these quiet words—for thine own sake  
I prithee spare me,'—did with ruth so take  

"All hearts, that even the torturer, who had bound  
Her meek calm frame, ere it was yet impaled,  
Loosed her weeping then; nor could be found  
One human hand to harm her—unsaddled  
Therefore she walks through the great City, veiled  
In virtue's adamantine eloquence,  
'Gainst scorn, and death, and pain, thus trebly  
And blending in the smiles of that defence,  
The Serpent and the Dove, Wisdom and Innocence."

"Thus she doth equal laws and justice teach  
To woman, outraged and polluted long;  
Gathering the sweetest fruit in human reach  
For those fair hands now free, while armed wrong  
Trembles before her look, though it be strong;  
Thousandsthus dwell beside her, virgins bright,  
And matrons with their babes, a stately throng!  
Lovers renew the vows which they did plight  
In early faith, and hearts long parted now unite."

"And homeless orphans find a home near her,  
And those poor victims of the proud, no less,  
Fair wrecks, on whom the smiling world with stir,  
Thrust the redemption of its wickedness:—  
In squalid huts, and in its palaces  
Sits Lust alone, while o'er the land is borne  
Her voice, whose awful sweetness doth repress  
All evil, and her foes relenting turn,  
And cast the vote of love in hope's abandoned  
urn.

XXXI.  
"And homeless orphans find a home near her,  
And those poor victims of the proud, no less,  
Fair wrecks, on whom the smiling world with stir,  
Thrusts the redemption of its wickedness:—  
In squalid huts, and in its palaces  
Sits Lust alone, while o'er the land is borne  
Her voice, whose awful sweetness doth repress  
All evil, and her foes relenting turn,  
And cast the vote of love in hope's abandoned  
urn.
"So in the populous City, a young maiden
Has baffled Havoc of the prey which he
Marks as his own, wheresoever chains o'erladen
Men make them arms to hurl down tyranny,
False arbiter between the bound and free;
And o'er the land, in hamlets and in towns
The multitudes collect tumultuously,
And throng in arms; but tyranny disowns
Their claim, and gathers strength around its trembling thrones.

"Blood soon, although unwillingly, to shed
The free cannot forbear—the Queen of Slaves,
The hood-winked Angel of the blind and dead,
Custom, with iron mace points to the graves
Where her own standard desolately waves
Over the dust of Prophets and of Kings.
Many yet stand in her array—she paves
Her path with human hearts,' and o'er it flings
The wildering gloom of her immeasurable wings.

"There is a plain beneath the City's wall,
Bounded by misty mountains, wide and vast;
Millions there lift at Freedom's thrilling call
Ten thousand standards wide; they load the blast
Which bears one sound of many voices past,
And startles on his throne their sceptred foe:
He sits amid his idle pomp aghast,
And that his power hath past away, doth know—
Why pause the victors' swords to seal his overthrow!

"The tyrant's guards resistance yet maintain:
Fearless, and fierce, and hard as beasts of blood;
They stand a speck amid the peopled plain;
Carnage and ruin have been made their food
From infancy—ill has become their good,
And for its hateful sake their will have wove
The chains which eat their hearts—the multitude
Surrounding them, with words of human love,
Seek from their own decay their stubborn minds to move.

"Over the land is felt a sudden pause,
As night and day those ruthless bands around
The watch of love is kept—a trance which awes
The thoughts of men with hope—as when the sound
Of whirlwind, whose fierce blasts the waves and clouds confound,
Dies suddenly, the mariner in fear
Feels silence sink upon his heart—thus bound,
The conqueror's pause, and oh! may freemen ne'er
Clasp the relentless knees of Dread, the murderer!

"If blood be shed, 'tis but a change and choice
Of bonds,—from slavery to cowardice
A wretched fall!—uplift thy charmed voice,
Pour on those evil men the love that lies
Hovering within those spirit-soothing eyes—
Arise, my friend, farewell!"—As thus he spake,
From the green earth lightly I did arise,
As one out of dim dreams that doth awake,
And looked upon the depth of that reposing lake.

"I saw my countenance reflected there;—
And then my youth fell on me like a wind
Descending on still waters—my thin hair
Was prematurely grey, my face was lined
With channels, such as suffering leaves behind,
Not age; my brow was pale, but in my cheek
And lips a flush of growing fire did find [speak
Their food and dwelling; though mine eyes might
A subtle mind and strong within a frame thus weak.

"And though their lustre now was spent and faded,
Yet in my hollow looks and withered mien
The likeness of a shape for which was braided
The brightest woof of genius, still was seen—
One who, methought, had gone from the world's
And left it vacant—twas her lover's face—
It might resemble her—it once had been
The mirror of her thoughts, and still the grace
Which her mind's shadow cast, left there a lingering trace.

"What then was I? She slumbered with the dead.
Glory and joy and peace, had come and gone.
Doth the cloud perish, when the beams are fled
Which steeped its skirts in gold? or dark, and lone,
Doth it not through the paths of night unknown,
On outspread wings of its own wind upborne
Pour rain upon the earth? the stars are shown,
When the cold moon sharpens her silver horn
Under the sea, and make the wide night not forlorn.

"Strengthened in heart, yet sad, that aged man
I left, with interchange of looks and tears,
And lingering speech, and to the Camp began
My way. O'er many a mountain chain which rears
Its hundred crests aloft, my spirit bears
My frame; o'er many a dale and many a moor,
And gaily now me seems serene earth wears
The bloomy spring's star-bright investiture,
A vision which aught sad from sadness might allure.

"My powers revived within me, and I went
As one whom winds waft o'er the bending grass,
Through many a vale of that broad continent.
At night when I reposed, fair dreams did pass
Before my pillow:—my own Cythna was
Not like a child of death, among them ever;
When I arose from rest, a woeful mass
That gentlest sleep seemed from my life to sever,
As if the light of youth were not withdrawn for ever.

"Aye, as I went, that maiden, who had reared
The torch of Truth afar, of whose high deeds
The Hermit in his pilgrimage had heard,
Haunted my thoughts.—Ah, Hope its sickness feeds
With whatsoe'er it finds, or flowers or weeds!
Could she be Cythna!—Was that corpse a shade
Such as self-torturing thought from madness breeds?
Why was this hope not torture! yet it made
A light around my steps which would not ever fade.
CANTO V.

I.

Over the utmost hill at length I sped,
A snowy steep:— the moon was hanging low
Over the Asian mountains, and outspread
The plain, the City, and the Camp, below,
Skirted the midnight Ocean's glimmering flow,
The City's moon-lit spires and myriad lamps,
Like stars in a sublunary sky did glow,
And fires blazed far amid the scattered camps,
Like springs of flame, which burst where'er swift
Earthquake stamps.

II.

All slept but those in watchful arms who stood,
And those who sat attending the beacon's light,
And the few sounds from that vast multitude
Made silence more profound— Oh, what a might
Of human thought was cradled in that night!
How many heart simpenetrably veiled
Beat underneath its shade, what secret fight
Evil and good, in worn passions mailed,
Waged through that silent throng, a war that
never failed!

III.

And now the Power of Good held victory,
So, through the labyrinth of many a tent,
Among the silent millions who did lie
In innocentsleep, exultingly I went;
The moon had left Heaven desert now, but lent
From eastern morn the first faint lustre showed
An armed youth— over his spear he bent
His downward face.— "A friend!" I cried aloud,
And quickly common hopes made freemen understood.

IV.

I sate beside him while the morning beam
Crest slow over Heaven, and talked with him
Of those immortal hopes, a glorioustheme!
Which led us forth, until the stars grew dim:
And all the while, methought, his voice did swim,
As if it drowned in remembrance were
Of thoughts which make them moisteyes overbrim:
At last, when daylight gant to fill the air,
He looked on me, and cried in wonder, "Thou art here!"

V.

Then, suddenly, I knew it was the youth
In whom itsearliest hopes my spirit found;
But envious tongues had stained his spotless truth,
And thoughtless pride his love in silence bound,
And shame and sorrow mine intoil had wound,
Whilst he was innocent, and I deluded.
The truth now came upon me, on the ground
Tears of repenting joy, which fast intruded,
Fell fast, and o'er its peace our minglingspirits brooded.

VI.

Thus, while with rapid lips and earnest eyes
We talked, a sound of sweeping conflict spread,
As from the earth did suddenly arise;
From every tent, roused by that clamour dread,
Our bands outsprung and seized their arms; we sped
Towards the sound: our tribes were gathering far,
Those sanguine slaves amid ten thousand dead
Stabbed in their sleep, trampled in treacherous war,
The gentle hearts whose power their lives had
sought to spare.

VII.

Like rabid snakes, that sting some gentle child
Who brings them food, when winter false and fair
Allures them forth with its cold smiles, so wild
They rage among the camp;— they overbear
The patriot hosts— confusion, then despair
Descends like night— when "LAON!" one did cry:
Like a bright ghost from Heaven that shout did scare
The slaves, and, widening through the vaulted sky,
Seemed sent from Earth to Heaven in sign of victory.

VIII.

In sudden panic those false murderers fled,
Like insect tribes before the northern gale:
But, swifter still, our hosts encompassed
Their shattered ranks, and in a craggy vale,
Where even their fierce despair might nought avail,
Hemmed them around— and then revenge and
Made the high virtue of the patriots fail: [fear
One pointed on his foe the mortal spear—
I rushed before its point, and cried, "Forbear, forbear!"

IX.

The spear transfixed my arm that was uplifted
In swift expostulation, and the blood gushed round its point: I smiled, and— "Oh! thou
With eloquence which shall not be withstood, Flow thus!"— I cried in joy, "thou vital flood,
Until my heart be dry, ere thus the cause
For which thou wert aught worthy to be subdued—
Ah, ye are pale,— ye weep,— your passions pause,—
'Tis well! ye feel the truth of love's benignant laws.

X.

"Soldiers, our brethren and our friends are slain.
Ye murdered them, I think, as they did sleep!
Alas, what have ye done! The slightest pain
Which ye might suffer, there were eyes to weep;
But ye have quenched them— there were smiles to steep
Your hearts in balm, but they are lost in woe;
And those whom love did set his watch to keep
Around your tents truth's freedom to bestow,
Ye stabbed as they did sleep— but they forgive ye now.

XI.

"O wherefore should ill ever flow from ill,
And pain still keener pain for ever breed!
We all are brethren— even the slaves who kill
For hire, are men; and to avenge misdeed
On the misdoer, doth but Misery feed
With her own broken heart! O Earth, O Heaven!
And thou, dread Nature, which to every deed
And all that lives, or is to be, hath given,
Even as to thee have these done ill, and are forgiven.

XII.

"Join then your hands and hearts, and let the past
Be as a grave which gives not up its dead
To evil thoughts."— A film then overcast
My sense with dimness, for the wound, which bled
Freshly, swift shadows o'er mine eyes had shed.
When I awoke, I lay 'mid friends and foes,
And earnest countenances on me shed
The light of questioning looks, whilst one did close
My wound with balmiest herbs, and soothed me
to repose;
THE REVOLT OF ISLAM.

XIII.
And one, whose spear had pierced me, leaned beside
With quivering lips and humid eyes;— and all
Seemed like some brothers on a journey wide
Gone forth, whom now strange meeting did befall
In a strange land, round one whom they might call
Their friend, their chief, their father, for assay
Of peril, which had saved them from the thrall
Of death, now suffering. Thus the vast array
Of those fraternal bands were reconciled that day.

XIV.
Lifting the thunder of their acclamation
Towards the City, then the multitude,
And I among them, went in joy—a nation
Made free by love;— a mighty brotherhood
Linked by a jealous interchange of good;
A glorious pageant, more magnificent
Than kingly slaves, arrayed in gold and blood;
When they return from carnage, and are sent
In triumph bright beneath the populous battlement.

XV.
Afar, the City walls were thronged on high,
And myriads on each giddy turret clung;
And to each spire far lessening in the sky,
Bright pennons on the idle winds were hung;
As we approached, a shout of joyance sprung
At once from all the crowd, as if the vast
And peopled Earth its boundless skies among
The sudden clamor of delight had cast,
When from before its face some general wreck
had past.

XVI.
Our armies through the City's hundred gates
Were poured, like brooks which to the rockylair
Of some deep lake, whose silence them awaits,
Throng from the mountains when the storms are
there;
And, as we passed through the calm sunny air,
A thousand flower-inwovencrowns were shed,
The token flowers of truth and freedom fair,
And fairest hands bound them on many a head,
Those angels of love's heaven, that overall was
spread.

XVII.
I trod as one tranced in some rapturous vision:
Those bloody bands so lately reconciled,
Were, ever as they went, by the contrition
Of anger turned to love from ill beguiled,
And everyone on them more gently smiled,
Because they had done evil:— the sweet awe
Of such mild looks made their own hearts grow mild,
And did with soft attraction ever draw
Their spirits to the love of freedom's equal law.

XVIII.
And they, and all, in one loud symphony
My name with Liberty comringling, lifted,
"The friend and the preserver of the free!"
The parent of this joy!” and fair eyes, gifted
With feelings caught from one who had uplifted
The light of a great spirit, round me shone;
And all the shapes of this grand scene shifted
Like restless clouds before the steadfast sun,—
Where was that Maid I asked, but it was known
of none.

XX.
Yet need was none for rest or food to care,
Even though that multitude was passing great,
Since each one for the other did prepare
All kindly succour— Therefore to the gate
Of the Imperial House, now desolate,
I passed, and there was found aghast, alone,
The fallen Tyrant!— Silently he sat
Upon the footstool of his golden throne,
Which, starrred with sunny gems, in its own lustre
shone.

XXI.
A lone child, who led before him
A graceful dance: the only living thing
Of all the crowd, which thither to adore him
Flockedyesterday, who solacesought to bring
In his abandonment!— She knew the King
Had praised her dance of yore, and now she wove
Its circles, aye weepingand murmuring
'Mid her sad task of unregarded love,
That to no smiles it might his speechless sadness
move.

XXII.
She fled to him, and wildly clasped his feet
When human steps were heard:— he moved nor
spoke,
Nor changed his hue, nor raised his looksto meet
The gaze of strangers.— Our loud entrance woke
The echoes of the hall, which circling broke
The calm of its recesses,— like a tomb
Its sculptured walls vacantly to the stroke
Of footfalls answered, and the twilight's gloom
Lay like a charnel's mist within the radiant dome.

XXIII.
The little child stood up when we came nigh;
Her lips and cheeks seemed very pale and wan,
But on her forehead and within her eye
Lay beauty, which makes hearts that feed thereon
Sick with excess of sweetness;— on the throne
She leaned. The King, with gathered brow and lips
Wreathed by long scorn, did inly sneer and frown
With hate like that when some great painter dips
His pencil in the gloom of earthquake and eclipses.

XXIV.
She stood beside him like a rainbow braided
Within some storm, when scarce its shadows vast
From the blue paths of the swift sun have faded.
A sweet and solemn smile, like Cythna's, cast
One moment's light, which made my heart beat fast
O'er that child's parted lips—a gleam of bliss,
A shade of vanished days,— as the tears past
Which wrapt it, even as with a father's kiss
I pressed those softest eyes in trembling tenderness.
The sceptred wretch then from that solitude
I drew, and of his change compassionate,
With words of sadness soothed his rugged mood.
But he, while pride and fear held deep debate,
With sullen guile of ill-dissembled hate
Glared on me as a toothless snake might glare:
Pity, not scorn, I felt, though desolate
The desolator now, and unaware
The curses which he mocked had caught him by
the hair.

I led him forth from that which now might seem
A gorgeous grave: through portals sculptured deep
With imagery beautiful as dream
We went, and left the shades which tend on sleep
Over its unregarded gold to keep
Their silent watch.— The child trod faintingly,
And, as she went, the tears which she did weep
Glanced in the star-light; wildered seemed she,
And when I spake, for sob she could not answer
me.

At last the tyrant cried, "She hunger, slave!
Stab her, or give her bread!"— It was a tone
Such as sick fancies in a new-made grave
Might hear. I trembled, for the truth was known,
He with this child had thus been left alone,
And neither had gone forth for food,— but he
In mingled pride and awe cowered near his throne,
And she, a nursling of captivity,
Knew nought beyond those walls, nor what such
change might be.

Thus suddenly; that sceptre ruled no more—
That even from gold the dreadful strength was gone
Which once made all things subject to its power—
Such wonder seized him, as if hour by hour
The past had come again; and the swift fall
Of one so great and terrible of yore
To desolation, in the hearts of all
Like wonder stirred, who saw such awful change
befal.

A mighty crowd, such as the wide land pours
Once in a thousand years, now gathered round
The fallen tyrant;— like the rush of showers
Of hail in spring, pattering along the ground,
Their many footsteps fell, else came no sound
From the wide multitude: that lonely man
Then knew the burden of his change, and found,
Concealing in the dust his visage was,
Refuge from the keen looks which thro' his bosom ran.

And he was faint withal. I sate beside him
Upon the earth, and took that child so fair
From his weak arms, that ill might none betide him
Or her;— when food was brought to them, her share
To his averted lips the child did bear;
But when she saw he had enough, she ate
And wept the while;— the lonely man's despair
Hunger then overcame, and of his state
Forgetful, on the dust as in a trance he sate.

Slowly the silence of the multitudes
Fast, as when far is heard in some lone dell
The gathering of a wind among the woods—
And he is fallen! they cry; he who did dwell
Like famine or the plague, or aught more fell,
Among our homes, is fallen! the murderer
Who slaked his thirsting soul as from a well
Of blood and tears with ruin! He is here!
Sunk in a gulf of scorn from which none may him
rear!

Then was heard— He who judged let him be brought
To judgment! Blood for blood cries from the soil
On which his crimes have deep pollution wrought!
Shall Othman only unavenged despoil?
Shall they, who by the stress of grinding toil
Wrest from the unwilling earth his luxuries,
Perish for crime, while his foul blood may boil,
Or creep within his veins at will?— Arise!
And to high justice make her chosen sacrifice.

"What do ye seek! what fear ye!" then I cried,
Suddenly starting forth, "that ye should shed
The blood of Othman— if your hearts are tried
In the true love of freedom, cease to dread
This one poor lonely man— beneath Heaven shed
In purest light above us all, through earth,
Maternal earth, who doth her sweet smiles spread
For all, let him go free; until the worth
Of human nature win from these a second birth.

"What call ye justice? Is there one who ne'er
In secret thought has wished another's ill—
Are ye all pure? Let those stand forth who hear,
And tremble not. Shall they insult and kill,
If such they be! their mild eyes can they fill
With the false anger of the hypocrite!
Alas, such were not pure,— the chastened will
Of virtue sees that justice is the light
Of love, and not revenge, and terror and despite."

The murmur of the people, slowly dying,
Paused as I spake; then those who near me were,
Cast gentle looks where the lonely man was lying
Shrouding his head, which now that infant fair
Clasped on her lap in silence;— through the air
Sobs were then heard, and many kissed my feet
In pity's madness, and, to the despair
Of him whom late they cursed, a solace sweet
His very victims brought— soft looks and speeches meet.

And he was faint withal. I sate beside him
Upon the earth, and took that child so fair
From his weak arms, that ill might none betide him
Or her;— when food was brought to them, her share
To his averted lips the child did bear;
But when she saw he had enough, she ate
And wept the while;— the lonely man's despair
Hunger then overcame, and of his state
Forgetful, on the dust as in a trance he sate.
"Twas midnight now, the eve of that great day, Whereon the many nations at whose call The chains of earth like mist melted away, Decreed to hold a sacred Festival, A rite to attest the equality of all Who live. So to their homes, to dream or wake All they at Samothrace, drest in gold, To the great Pyramid I came: its stair With female quires was thronged: the loveliest Among the free, grouped with its sculptures rare. As I approached, the morning's golden mist, Which now the wonder-stricken breezes kist With their cold lips, fled, and the summit shone Like a burning watch-tower, by the light Of those divinest lineaments—alone With thoughts which none could share, from that fair sight I turned in sickness, for a veil shrouded her countenance bright.

To hear, to see, to live, was on that morn Lethean joy! so that all those assembled Cast off their memories of the past outworn: Two only bosoms with their own life trembled, And mine was one,—and we had both dissembled; So with a beating heart I went, and one, Who having much, covets yet more, resembled; A lost and dear possession, which not won, He walks in lonely gloom beneath the noonday sun.

To the great Pyramid I came: its stair With female quires was thronged: the loveliest Among the free, grouped with its sculptures rare. As I approached, the morning's golden mist, Which now the wonder-stricken breezes kist With their cold lips, fled, and the summit shone Like a burning watch-tower, by the light Of those divinest lineaments—alone With thoughts which none could share, from that fair sight I turned in sickness, for a veil shrouded her countenance bright.

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"If our own will as others' law we bind,  
If the foul worship trampled here we fear;  
If as ourselves we cease to love our kind!" —
She paused, and pointed upwards—sculptured there
Three shapes around her ivory throne appear;
One was a Giant, like a child asleep
On a loose rock, whose grasp crushed, as it were
In dream, sceptres and crowns; and one did keep
In watchful eyes in doubt whether to smile or weep;
A Woman sitting on the sculptured disk
Of the broad earth, and feeding from one breast
A human babe and a young basilisk;
Her looks were sweet as Heaven's when loveliest
In Autumn eves.— The third Image was drest
In white wings swift as clouds in winter skies.
Beneath his feet, 'mongst ghastliest forms, recumbent
Lay Faith, an obscene worm, who sought to rise,
While calmly on the Sun he turned his diamond eyes.

Beside that Image then I sate, while she
Stood, 'mid the throngs which ever ebbed and flowed
Cast from one cloudless star, and on the crowd
Thattouch, which none who feels forgets, bestowed;
And whilst the sun returned the steadfast gaze
Of the great Image as o'er Heaven it glode,
That rite had place; it ceased when sunset's blaze
Burned o'er the isles; all stood in joy and deep amaze;
When in the silence of all spirits there
Lone's voice was felt, and through the air
Her thrilling gestures spoke, most eloquently fair.

"Calm art thou as the sunset! swift and strong
As new-fledged Eagles, beautiful and young,
That float among the blinding beams of morning;
And underneath thy feet writhe Faith, and Folly,
To the pure skies in affection turning;
Avenging poisons shall have ceased
To feed disease and fear and madness,
The dwellers of the earth and air
Shall throng around our steps in gladness,
Seeking their food or refuge there.
Our toil from thought all glorious forms shall cull,
To make this earth, our home, more beautiful,
And Science, and her sister Poesy,
Shall clothe in light the fields and cities of the free!

"Victory, Victory to the prostrate nations!
Bear witness, Night, and ye, mute Constellations,
Who gaze on us from your crystalline cars!
Thoughts have gone forth whose powers can sleep no
Victory! Victory! Earth's remotest shore, [more!]
Regions which groan beneath the Antarctic stars,
The green lands cradled in the roar
Of western waves, and wildernesses
Peopled and vast, which skirt the oceans
Where morning dyes her golden tresses,
Shall soon partake our high emotions:
Kings shall turn pale! Almighty Fear,
The Fiend-God, when our charmed name he hear,
Shall fade like shadow from his thousand fanses,
While Truth with Joy enthroned o'er his lost empire reigns!"
THE REVOLT OF ISLAM.

ERE she had ceased, the mists of night entwining

Their dim woof, floated o'er the infinite throng:

She like a spirit through the darkness shining,

In tones whose sweetness silence did prolong,

As if to lingering winds they did belong,

Poured forth her inmost soul: a passionate speech

With wild and thrilling pauses woven among,

Which whose heard, was mute, for it could

Teach to rapture like her own all listening hearts to reach.

Her voice was as a mountain stream which sweeps

The withered leaves of Autumn to the lake,

And in some deep and narrow bay they sleeps

In the shadow of the shores; as dead leaves

Wake under the wave, in flowers and herbs which make

Those green depths beautiful when skies are blue,

The multitude so moveless did partake

Such living change, and kindling murmurs flew

As o'er that speechless calm delight and wonder

Grew.

Over the plain the throngs were scattered then

In groups around the fires, which from thesea

Even to the gorge of the first mountain glen

Blazed wide and far: the banquet of the free

Was spread beneath many a dark cypress tree,

Beneath whose spires, which swayed in the red

Light

Reclining as they ate, of Liberty,

And Hope, and Justice, and Laone's name,

Earth's children did a woof of happy converse

Frame.

Their feast was such as Earth, the general mother,

Pours from her fairest bosom, when she smiles

In the embrace of Autumn;— to each other

As when some parent fondly reconciles

Her warring children, she their wrath beguiles

With her own sustenance; they relenting weep:

Such was this Festival, which from their isles,

And continents, and winds, and oceans deep,

All shapes might throng to share, that fly, or walk,

Or creep.

Might share in peace and innocence, for gore

Or poison none this festival did pollute,

But piled on high, an overflowing store

Of pomegranates, and citrons, fairest fruit,

Melons and dates, and figs, and many a root

Sweet and sustaining, and bright grapes ere yet

Accursed fire their mild juice could transmute

Into a mortal bane, and brown corn set

In baskets; with pure streams their thirsting lips

They wet.

Laone had descended from the shrine,

And joyous was our feast; pathetic talk,

And wit, and harmony of choral strains,

While far Orion o'er the waves did walk

That flow among the isles, held us in chains

Of sweet captivity, which none disclaims

Who feels: but, when his zone grew dim in mist

Which clothes the Ocean's bosom, o'er the plains

The multitudes went homeward, to their rest,

Which that delightful day with its own shadow blest.

CANTO VI.

I.

Beside the dimness of the glimmering sea,

Weaving swift language from impassioned themes,

With that dear friend I lingered, who to me

So late had been restored, beneath the gleams

Of the silver stars; and ever in soft dreams

Of future love and peace sweet converse lapt

Our willing fancies, till the pallid beams

Of the last watch-fire fell, and darkness wrap't

The waves, and each bright chain of floating fire

Was spent.

II.

And till we came even to the City's wall

And the great gate, then, none knew whence or

Disquiet on the multitudes did fall:

Why, and first, one pale and breathless past us by,

And stared and spoke not; then with piercing cry

A troop of wild-eyed women, by the shrieks

Of their own terror driven,— tumultuously

Hither and thither hurrying with pale cheeks,

Each one from fear unknown a sudden refuge

Seeks—

Then, rallying cries of treason and of danger

Resounded: and— "They come! to arms! to

The Tyrant is among us, and the stranger [arms!]

Comes to enslave us in his name! to arms!"

In vain: for Panic, the pale fiend who charms

Strength to forswear her right, those millions swept

Like waves before the tempest— these alarms

Came to me, as to know their cause I leapt

On the gate's turret, and in rage and grief and scorn

I wept!

IV.

For to the North I saw the town on fire,

And its red light made morning pallid now,

Which burst over wide Asia.— Louder, higher,

The yells of victory and the screams of woe

I heard approach, and saw the throng below

Stream through the gates like foam-wrought water—

Fed from a thousand storms— the fearful glow

Of bombs flares overhead— at intervals

The red artillery's bolt mangling among them falls.

V.

And now the horsemen come— and all was done

Swifter than I have spoken— I beheld

Their red swords flash in the unrisen sun.

I rushed among the rout to have repelled

That miserable flight,— one moment quelled

By voice, and looks, and eloquent despair,

As if reproach from their own hearts withheld

Their steps, they stood— I bare my sword, and bear

New multitudes, and did those rallied bands o'er—
THE REVOLT OF ISLAM.

VI.
I strove, as drifted on some cataract
By irresistible streams, some wretch might strive
Who hears its fatal roar: the files compact
Whelmed me, and from the gate avail'd to drive
With quickening impulse, as each bolt did rive
Their ranks with bloodier chasm: into the plain
Descorgerd at length the dead and the alive,
In one dread mass, were parted, and the stain
Of blood from mortal steel fell o'er the fields like rain.

VII.
For now the despot's blood-hounds with their prey
Unarmed and unaware, were gorging deep
Their glutiny of death; the loose array
Of horsemen o'er the wide fields murdering sweep,
And with loud laughter for their tyrant reap
A harvest grown with other hopes; the while,
Forth we sped, ships from Propontis keep
A killing rain of fire:— when the waves smile
As sudden earthquakes light many a volcanoisle.

VIII.
Thus sudden, unexpected feast was spread
For the carrion fowlsof Heaven— I saw the sight
I moved— I lived— as o'er the heapsof dead,
Whose stony eyes glared in the morning light,
It trod; to me there came no thought of flight,
But with loud cries of scorn, which whoso heard
That dreaded death, felt in his veins the might
Of virtuous shame return, the crowd stirred,
And desperation's hope in many hearts recur'd.

IX.
A band of brothers gathering round me, made,
Although unarmed, a steadfast front, and still
Retreating, with stern looks beneath the shade
Of gathered eyebrows, did the victors fill
With doubt even in success; deliberate will
Inspired our growing troop; not overthrown
It gained the shelter of a grassy hill,
And ever still our comrades were hewn down,
And their defenceless limbs beneath our footsteps strown.

X.
Immoveably we stood— in joy I found,
Beside me then, firm as a giant pine
Among the mountain vapours driven around,
The old man whom I loved— his eyes divine
With a mild look of courage answered mine,
And my young friend was near, and ardently
His hand grasped mine a moment— now the line
Of war extended, to our rallying cry,
As myriads flocked in love and brotherhood to die.

XI.
For ever while the sun was climbing Heaven
The horsemen hewed our unarmed myriads down
Safe ly, though when by thirst of carnage driven
Too near, those slaves were swiftly overthrown
By hundreds leaping on them: flesh and bone
Soon made our ghastly ramparts; then the shaft
Of the artillery from the sea was thrown
More fast and fiery, and the conquerors laughed
In pride to hear the wind our screams of torment waft.

XII.
For on one side alone the hill gave shelter,
So vast that phalanx of unconquered men,
And there the living in their blood did melt
Of the dead and dying, which, in that green glen,
Like stifled torrents, made a plashy fen
Under the feet— thus was the butchery waged
While the sun clomb Heaven's eastern steep— but
It 'gan to sink, a fiercer combat raged, when
For in more doubtful strife the armies were engaged.

XIII.
Within a cave upon the hill were found
A bundle of rude pikes, the instrument
Of those who war but on their native ground
For natural rights: a shout of joyance sent
Even from our hearts the wide air pierced and
As those few arms the bravest and the best [rent,
Seized; and each sixth, thus armed, did now present
A line which covered and sustained the rest,
A confident phalanx, which the foes on every side invest.

XIV.
That onset turned the foes to flight almost;
But soon they saw their present strength, and knew
That coming night would to our resolute host
Bring victory; so dismounting close they drew
Their glittering files, and then the combat grew
Unequal but most horrible;— and ever
Our myriads, whom the swift bolt overthrew, or
The red sword, failed like a mountain river
Which rushes forth in foam to sink in sands for ever.

XV.
Sorrow and shame, to see with their own kind
Our human brethren mix, like beasts of blood
To mutual ruin armed by one behind, [good
Who sits and scoffs!— That friend so mild and
Who like its shadow near my youth had stood,
Was stabbed— my old preserver's hoary hair,
With the flesh clinging to its roots, was strewed
Under my feet! I lost all sense or care,
And like the rest I grew desperate and unaware.

XVI.
The battle became ghastlier, in the midst
I paused, and saw, how ugly and how fell,
O Hate! thou art, even when thy life thou sheddest
For love. The ground in many a little dell
Was broken up and torn whose slopes befall
Alternate victory and defeat, and there
The combatants with rage most horrible
Strove, and their eyes started with cracking stars,
And impotent their tongues they loll'd into the air,

XVII.
Flaccid and foamy, like a mad dog's hanging wall,
Want, and Moon-madness, and the Pest's swift bane
When its shafts smite— while yet its bow is twanging—
Have each their mark and sign— some ghastly stain;
And this was thine, O War! of hate and pain
Thou loathed slave. I saw all shapes of death, and
Minister'd to many, o'er the plain
While carnage in the sunbeam's warmth did seethe,
Till twilight o'er the east wove her serenest wreath.
THE REVOLT OF ISLAM.

The few who yet survived, resolute and firm, Around me fought. At the decline of day, Winding above the mountain's snowy term, New banners shone: they quivered in the ray Of the sun's unseen orb—ere night the array Offresh troops hemmed us in—of those brave bands I soon survived alone—and now I lay Vanquished and faint, the grasp of bloody hands I felt, and saw on high the glare of falling brands; When on my foes a sudden terror came, And they fled, scattering.—Lo! with reinless speed A black Tartarian horse of giant frame Comes trampling o'er the dead; the living bleed Beneath the hoofs of that tremendous steed, On which, like to an angel, robed in white, Sate one waving a sword; the hosts recoile And fly, as through their ranks, with awful might, Sweeps in the shadow of eve that Phantom swift and bright;

And its path made a solitude.—I rose And marked its coming; it relaxed its course As it approached me, and the wind that flows Through night, bore accents to mine ear whose Might creates smiles in death.—The Tartar horse Paused, and I saw the shape its might which swayed, And heard her musical pants, like the sweet source Of waters in the desert, as she said, "Mount with me, Laon, now"—I rapidly obeyed.

Then "Away! away!" she cried, and stretched her As'twere a scourge over the courser's head; sword And lightly shook the reins.—We spake no word, But like the vapour of the tempest fled Over the plain; her dark hair was disheveled, Like the pine's locks upon the lingering blast; Over mine eyes its shadowy strings it spread Fitfully, and the hills and streams fled fast, As o'er their glimmering forms the steed's broad shadow past;

And his hoofs ground the rocks to fire and dust, His strong sides made the torrents rise in spray, And turbulence, as if a whirlwind's gust Surrounded us;—and still away! away! Through the desert night we sped, while she alway Gazed on a mountain which we neared, whose crest Crowned with a marble ruin, in the ray Of the obscure stars gleamed;—its rugged breast The steed strained up, and then his impulse did arrest.

A rocky hill which overhung the Ocean:— From that lone ruin, when the steed that panted Paused, might be heard the murmur of the motion Of waters, in spots for ever haunted By the choicest winds of Heaven, which are en- To music by the wand of Solitude, [chanted That wizard wild, and the far tents implanted Upon the plain, be seen by those who stood Thence marking the dark shore of Ocean's curved flood.

One moment these were heard and seen—another Past; and the twain who stood beneath that might, Each only heard, or saw, or felt, the other; As from the lofty steed she did alight, Cythna (for, from the eyes whose deepest light Of love and sadness made my lips feel pale, With influence strange of mournfuldest delight, My own sweet Cythna looked) with joy did quail, And felt her strength in tears of human weakness fail.

And for a space in my embrace she rested, Her head on my unquiet heart reposeing, While my faint arms her languid frame invested: At length she looked on me, and half unceasing Her tremulous lips, said: "Friend, thy bands were The battle, as I stood before the King [losing In bonds.—I burst them then, and swiftly choosing The time, did seize a Tartar's sword, and spring Upon his horse, and swift as on the whirlwind's wing,

"Have thou and I been borne beyond pursuer, And we are here."—Then, turning to the steed, She pressed the white moon on his front with pure And rose-like lips, and many a fragrant weed From the green ruin plucked, that he might feed; But I to a stony seat that Maiden led, And kissing her fair eyes, said, "Thou hast need Of rest," and I heaped up the courser's bed In a green mossy nook, with mountain flowers dispread.

Within that ruin, where a shattered portal Looks to the eastern stars, abandoned now By man, to be the home of things immortal, Memories, like awful ghosts which come and go, And must inherit all he builds below, When he is gone, a hall stood; o'er whose roof Fair clinging weeds with ivy pale did grow, Clasping its grey rent with a verdurous woof, A hanging dome of leaves, a canopy moon-proof.

The autumnal winds, as if spell-bound, had made A natural couch of leaves in that recess, Which seasons none disturbed, but in the shade Of flowering parasites, did spring love to dress With their sweet blooms the wintry loneliness Of those dead leaves, shedding their stars, whose 'er The wandering wind her nurseries might careass; Whose intertwining fingers ever there, Made music wild and soft that filled the listening air.

We know not where we go, or what sweet dream May pilot us through caverns strange and fair Of far and pathless passion, while the stream Of life our bark doth on its whirlpools bear, Spreading swift wings as sails to the dim air; Nor should we seek to know, so the devotion Of love and gentle thoughts be heard still there Louder and louder from the utmost Ocean Of universal life, attuning its commotion.
THE REVOLT OF ISLAM.

I know not. What are kisses whose fire clasps
The failing heart in languishment, or limb
Twined within limb! or the quick dying gasps
Of the life meeting, when the faint eyes swim
Through tears of a wide mist, boundless and dim,
In one cares? What is the strong control
Which leads the heart that dizzy steep to climb,
Where far over the world those vapours roll,
Which blend two restless frames in one reposing
soul?

It is the shadow which doth float unseen,
But not unseen, o'er blind mortality,
Whose divine darkness fled not from that green
And lone recess, where lapt in peace did lie
Our linked frames, till, from the changing sky,
That night and still another day had fled;
And then I saw and felt. The moon was high,
And clouds, as of a coming storm, were spread
Under its orb,—loud winds were gathering over
head.

Cynthia's sweet lips seemed lurid in the moon,
Her fairest limbs with the night wind were chill,
And her dark tresses were all looselystrewn
O'er her pale bosom:— all within was still,
And the sweet peace of joy did almost fill
The depth of her unfathomable look:—
And we sate calmly, though that rocky hill,
The waves contending in its caverns stook,
For they foreknew the storm, and the grey ruin
shook.

And such is Nature's law divine, that those
Who grow together cannot choose but love,
If faith or custom do not interpose,
Or common slavery mar what else might move
All gentlest thoughts; as in the sacred grove
Which shades the springs of Ethiopian Nile,
That living tree, which, if the arrowy dove
Strikewith her shadow, shrinks in fear awhile,
But its own kindred leaves claspe when the sun
beams smile;

And clings to them, when darkness may disperse
The close caresses of all duller plants
Which bloom on the wide earth—thus we for ever
Were linked, for love had nust us in the haunte
Where knowledge from its secret source enchant
Younghearts with the fresh music of its singing,
Ere yet its gathered flood feeds human wants,
As the great Nile feeds Egypt; ever flinging
Light on the woven boughs which o'er its waves
are swinging.
The tones of Cythna's voice like echoes were
Of those far murmuring streams; they rose and fell,
Mixed with mine own in the tempestuous air,—
And so we sat, until our talk befell
Of the late ruin, swift and horrible,
And how those seeds of hope might yet be sown,
Whose fruit is evil's mortal poison: well
For us, this ruin made a watch-tower lone,
But Cythna's eyes looked faint, and now two days were gone.

Since she had food:— therefore I did awaken
The Tartar steed, who, from his ebon mane,
Soon as the clinging slumbers he had shaken,
Bent his thin head to seek the brazen rein,
Following me obediently; with pain
Of heart, so deep and dread, that one caress,
When lips and heart refuse to part again,
Till they have told their fill, could scarce express
The anguish of her mute and fearful tenderness,

Cythna beheld me part, as I bestrode
That willing steed— the tempest and the night,
Which gave my path its safety as I rode
Down the ravine of rocks, did soon unite
The darkness and the tumult of their might
Borne on all winds.— Far through the streaming
Floating at intervals the garments white
Of Cythna gleamed, and her voice once again
Came to me on the gust, and soon I reached the plain.

I dreaded not the tempest, nor did he
Who bore me, but his eyeballs wide and red
Turned on the lightning's cleft exultingly;
And when the earth beneath his tameless tread,
Shook with the sullen thunder, he would spread
His nostrils to the blast, and joyously
Mock the fierce peal with neighings;— thus we sped
O'er the lit plain, and soon I could descry
Where Death and Fire had gorged the spoil of victory.

There was a desolate village in a wood,
Whose bloom in wove leaves now scattering fed
The hungry storm; it was a place of blood,
A heap of hearthless walls;— the flames were dead
Within those dwellings now,— the life had fled
From all those corpses now,— but the wide sky
Flooded with lightning was ribbed overhead
By the black rafters, and round did lie
Women, and babes, and men, slaughtered confusely.

Besides the fountain in the market-place
Dismounting, I beside those corpses stare
With horne eyes upon each other's face,
And on the earth and on the vacant air,
And upon me, close to the waters where
I stooped to make my thirst;— I shrank to taste,
For the salt bitterness of blood was there!
But tied the steed beside, and sought in haste
If any yet survived amid that ghastly waste.

No living thing was there beside one woman,
Whom I found wandering in the streets, and she
Was withered from a likeness of aught human
Into a fiend, by some strange misery:
Soon as she heard my steps she leaped on me,
And glued her burning lips to mine, and laughed
With a loud, long, and frantic laugh of glee,
And cried, "Now, Mortal, thou hast deeply quaffed
The Plague's blue kisses— soon millions shall
Pledge the draught!

"My name is Pestilence— this bosom dry
Once fed two babes,— a sister and a brother—
When I came home, one in the blood did lie
Of three death-wounds,— the flames had ate the
Since then I have no longer been a mother, [other!
But I am Pestilence;— hither and thither
I flit about, that I may slay and smother;
All lips which I have kissed must surely wither,
But Death's— if thou art he, we'll go to work together!

"What seekest thou here! the moonlight comes in
The dew is rising dankly from the dell; [flashes,—
'Twill moisten her! and thou shalt see the
First what thou seek'st."— "I seek for food."
"'Tis well,
Thou shalt have food; Famine, my paramour,
Waits for us at the feast— cruel and fell
Is Famine, but he drives not from his door
Those whom these lips have kissed, alone. No
more, no more!"

As thus she spake, she grasped me with the strength
Of madness, and by many a ruined hearth
She led, and over many a corpse:— at length
We came to a lone hut, where on the earth
Which made its floor, she in her ghastly mirth
Gathering from all those homes now desolate,
Had piled three heaps of loaves, making a dearth
Among the dead— round which she set in state
A ring of cold, stiff babes; silent and stark they sate.
And joy was ours to meet: she was most pale,
Famished, and wet and weary, so I cast
My arms around her, lest her steps should fail
As to our home we went, and thus embraced,
Her full heart seemed a deeper joy to taste
Than e'er the prosperous knew; the steed behind
Trod peacefully along the mountain waste:
We reached our home ere morning could unbind
Night's latest veil, and on our bridal couch reclined.

Her chilled heart having cherished in my bosom,
And sweetest kisses past, we two did share
Our peaceful meal:— as an autumnal blossom,
Which spreads its shrunken leaves in the sunny air,
After cold showers, like rainbows woven there,
Thus in her lips and cheeks the vital spirit
Mantled, and in her eyes, an atmosphere
Of health, and hope; and sorrow languished near
And fear, and all that dark despondence doth inherit.

So we sate joyous as the morning ray
Which fed upon the wrecks of night and storm
Now lingering on the winds; light airs did play
Among the dewy weeds, the sun was warm,
And we sat linked in the inwoven charm
Of converse and caresses sweet and deep,
Speechless caresses, talk that might disarm
Time, though he wield the darts of death and sleep,
And those thricemortal barbs in his own poison
steep.

I told her of my sufferings and my madness,
And how, awakened from that dreamy mood
By Liberty's uprise, the strength of gladness
Came to my spirit in my solitude;
And all that now I was, while tears pursued
Each other down her fair and listening cheek
Fast as the thoughts which fed them, like a flood
From sunbright dales; and when I ceased to speak,
Her accents soft and sweet the pausing air did wake.

She told me a strange tale of strange endurance,
Like broken memories of many a heart
Woven into one; to which no firm assurance,
So wild were they, could her own faith impart.
She said that not a tear did dare to start [firm
From the swollen brain, and that her thoughts were
When from all mortal hope she did depart,
Borne by those slaves across the Ocean's term,
And that she reached the port without one fear
infirm.

One was she among many there, the thralls
Of the cold tyrant's cruel lust: and they
Laughed merrily at those politely walls;
But she was calm and sad, musing always
On loftiest enterprises, till on a day
The tyrant heard her singing to her lute
A wild and sad, and spirit-thrilling lay,
Like winds that die in wastes—one moment mute
The evil thoughts it made, which did his breast
pollute.

Even when he saw her wondrous loveliness,
One moment to great Nature's almighty power
He bent and was no longer passionless;
But when he bade her to his secret bower
Be borne a loveless victim, and she tore
Her locks in agony, and her words of flame
And mightier looks availed not; then he bore
Again his load of slavery, and became
A king, a heartless beast, a pageant and a name.

She told me what a loathsome agony
Is that when selfishness mocks love's delight,
Foul as in dreams most fearful imagery
To daily with the mowing dead—that night
All torture, fear, or horror, made seem light
Which the soul dreams or knows, and when the
Shone on her awful frenzy, from the sight
[day
Where like a Spirit in fleshly chains she lay
Struggling, aghast and pale the tyrant fled away.

Her madness was a beam of light, a power
Which dawned through the rent soul; and words
it gave,
Gesture and looks, such as in whirlwinds bore
Which might not be withstood, whence none could save
All who approached their sphere, like some calm
wave
Vexed into whirlpools by the chasms beneath;
And sympathy made each attendant slave
Fearless and free, and they began to breathe
Deep curses, like the voice of flames far underneath.

The King felt pale upon his noon-day throne;
At night two slaves he to her chamber sent,
One was a green and wrinkled eunuch, grown
From human shape into an instrument
Of all things ill—distorted, bowed and bent.
The other was a wretch from infancy
Made dumb by poison; who nought knew or meant
But to obey: from the fire-Isles came he,
A diver lean and strong, of Oman's coral sea.

They bore her to a bark, and the swift stroke
Of silent rowers clove the blue moonlight seas,
Until upon their path the morning broke;
They anchored then, where, be there calm or
The gloomiest of the drear Symplegades [breeze,
Shakes with the sleepless surge;— the Ethiopian
Wound his long arms around her, and with knees
Like iron clasped her feet, and plunged with her
Among the closing waves out of the boundless air.
"A stunning clang of massive bolts redoubling Beneath the deep—a burst of waters driven As from the roots of the sea, raging and bubbling: And in that roof of crags a space was riven Thro' which there shone the emerald beams of heaven. Shot through the lines of many waves invoven, Like sunlight through acacia woods at even, Through which, his way the diver having cloven, Fast like a spark sent up out of a burning oven.

"And then," she said, "he laid me in a cave Above the waters, by that chasm of sea, A fountain round and vast, in which the wave Imprisoned, boiled and leaped perpetually, Down which, one moment resting, he did flee, Winning the adverse depth; that spacious cell Like an upaithrict temple wide and high, Whose airy dome is inaccessible, Was pierced with one round cleft through which the sun-beams fell.

"Below, the fountain's brink was richly paven With the deep's wealth, coral, and pearl, and sand Like spangling gold, and purpleshells engraven With mystic legends by no mortal hand, Left there, when, thronging to the moon's coming The gathering waves rent the Hesperiangate Of mountains, and on such bright floordid stand Columns, and shapes like statues, and the state Of kingless thrones, which Earth did in her heart create.

"The fiend of madness which had made its prey Of my poor heart, was lulled to sleep awhile: There was an interval of many a day, And a sea-eagle brought me food the while, Whose nest was built in that untrdden isle, And who, to be the jailer, had been taught, Of that strange dungeon; as a friend whose smile Like light and rest at morn and even is sought, That wild bird was to me, till madness misery brought.

"The misery of a madness slow and creeping, Which made the earth seem fire, thesea seem air, And the white clouds of noon which oft were sleep In the blue heaven so beautiful and fair, 
[ing Like hosts of ghastly shadows hovering there; And the sea-eagle looked a fiend who bore Thy mangled limbs for food!—Thus all things were transformed into the agony which I wore, Even as a poisoned robe around my bosom's core.

"Again I knew the day and night fast fleeing, The eagle and the fountain and the air; Another frenzy came—there seemed a being Within me—a strange load my heart did bear, As if some living thing had made its lair Even in the fountains of my life—a long And wondrous vision wrought from my despair, Then grew, like sweet reality among Dim visionary woes, an unreposing throng.
"It seemed that in the dreary night, the diver
Who brought me thither, came again, and bore
My child away. I saw the waters quiver,
When he so swiftly sunk, as once before:
Then morning came—it shone even as of yore,
But I was changed—the very life was gone
Out of my heart—I wasted more and more,
Day after day, and sitting there alone,
Vexed the inconstant waves with my perpetual moan.

"I was no longer mad, and yet methought
My breasts were swoln and changed:— in every
Vein [thought
The blood stood still one moment, while that
Was passing—with a gush of sickening pain
It ebbed even to its withered springs again:
When my wan eyes instem rcsolvo I turned
From that most strange delusion, which would fain
Have waked the dream for which my spirit yearned
With more than human love,— then left it unre-
turned.

"So now my reason was restored to me,
I struggled with that dream, which, like a beast
Most fierce and beauteous, in my memory
Had made its lair, and on my heart did feast;
But all that cave and all its shapes possest [one
By thoughts which could not fade, renewed each
Some smile, some look, some gesture which had
Me heretofore: I, sitting there alone, [blest
Vexed the inconstant waves with my perpetual
moan.

"Time past, I know not whether months or years;
For day, nor night, nor change of seasons made
Itself, but thoughts and unavailing tears:
And I became at last even as a shade,
A smoke, a cloud on which the wind have preyed,
Till it be thin as air; until, one even,
A Nautilus upon the fountain played,
Spreading his azuresail where breath of Heaven
descended not, among the waves and whirlpools
Driven.

"And when the Eagle came, that lovely thing,
Oaring with rosy feet its silver boat,
Fled near me as for shelter; on slow wing,
The Eagle, hovering o'er his prey, did float;
But when he saw that I with fear did note
His purpose, proffering my own food to him,
The eager plumes subsided on his throat—
He came where that bright child of sea did swim,
And o'er it cast in peace his shadow broad and dim.

"This wakened me, it gave me human strength;
And hope, I know not whence or wherefore, rose,
But I resumed my ancient powers at length;
My spirit felt again like one of those,
Like thine, whose fate it is to make the woes
Of humankind their prey—what was this cave?
Its deep foundation no firm purpose knows
Immutable, resistless, strong to save,
Like earth, while yet it mocks the all-devouring grave.

"And where was Laon! might my heart be dead,
While that far dearer heart could move and be!
Or whilst over the earth the pall was spread,
Which I had sworn to rend! I might be free,
Could I but win that friendly bird to me,
To bring me ropes; and long in vain I sought
By intercourse of mutual imagery
Of objects, if such aid he could be taught;
But fruit, and flowers, and boughs, yet never ropes
he brought.

"We live in our own world, and mine was made
From glorious phantasmes of hope departed:
Aye, we are darkened with their floating shade,
Or cast a lustre on them—time imparted
Such power to me, I became fearless-hearted;
My eye and voice grew firm, calm was my
Mind, And piercing, like the morn, now it has darted
Its lustre on all hidden things, behind
Yon dim and fading clouds which load the weary wind.

"My mind became the book through which I grew
Wise in all human wisdom, and its cave,
Which like a mine I rifled through and through,
To me the keeping of its secrets gave—
One mind, the type of all, the moveless wave
Whose calm reflects all moving things that are,
Necessity, and love, and life, the grave,
And sympathy, fountains of hope and fear;
Justice, and truth, and time, and the world's natural
Sphere.

"And on the sand would I make signs to range
These woofs, as they were woven, of my thought;
Clear elemental shapes, whose smallest change
A subtler language within language wrought:
The key of truths which once were dimly taught
In old Crotona;— and sweet melodies
Of love, in that lone solitude I caught [eyes
From mine own voice in dream, when thy dear
Shone through my sleep, and did that utterance
Harmonize.

"Thy songs were winds whereon I fled at will,
As in a winged chariot, o'er the plain
Of crystal youth; and thou went there to fill
My heart with joy, and there we sate again
On the grey margin of the glimmering main.
Happy as then but wiser far, for we
Smiled on the flowery grave in which were lain
Fear, Faith, and Slavery; and mankind was free,
Equal, and pure, and wise, in wisdom's prophecy.

"For to my will my fancies were as slaves
To do their sweet and subtle ministries;
And oft from that bright fountain's shadowy waves
They would make human thronges gather and rise
To combat with my overflowing eyes,
And voice made deep with passion—thus I grew
Familiar with the shock and the surprise
Of earthly minds, from which I drew
The power which had been mine to frame their
thoughts anew.
"And thus my prison was the populous earth—
Where I saw—even as misery dreams of morn
Before the east has given its glory birth—
Religion’s pomp made desolate by the scorn
Of Wisdom’s faintest smile, and thrones upthrown,
And dwellings of mild people interspersed
With undivided fields of ripening corn,
And love made free,—a hope which we have nursed
Even with our blood and tears,—until its glory burst.

XXXVI.

"All is not lost! There is some recompense
For hope whose fountain can be thus profound,
Even throned Evil’s splendid impotence,
Girt by its hollow of power, the secret sound
Of hymns to truth and freedom,—the dread
bound
Of life and death passed fearlessly and well,
Dungeons wherein the high resolve is found,
Racks which degraded woman’s greatness tell,
And what may else be good and irresistible.

Such are the thoughts which, like the firesthat
flare
In storm-encompassed isles, we cherish yet
In this dark ruin—such were mine even there;
As in its sleep some odorous violet,
While yet its leaves with nightly dews are wet,
Breathes in prophetic dreams of day’s uprise,
Or, as ere Scythian frost in fear has met
Spring’s messengers descending from the skies,
The buds foreknow their life—this hope must ever rise.

XXXVII.

"So years had past, when sudden earthquake rent
The depth of ocean, and the cavern crackt
With sound, as if the world’s wide continent
Had fallen in universal ruin wrackt;
And through the cleft streamed in one catacyst
The stifling waters:—when I woke, the flood,
Whose banded waves that crystal cave had sacked,
Was ebbing round me, and my bright abode
Before me yawned—a chasm desert, and bare, and broad.

XXXVIII.

"Above me was the sky, beneath thesea:
I stood upon a point of shattered stone,
And heard loose rocks rushing tumultuously
With splash and shock into the deep— anon
All ceased, and there was silence wide and lone.
I felt that I was free! The Ocean-spray
Quivered beneath my feet, the broad Heaven shone
Around, and in my hair the winds did play,
Lingerling as they pursued their unimpeded way.

XXXIX.

"My spirit moved upon the sea like wind
Which round some thorny cape will lag and hover,
Though it can wake the still cloud, and unbind
The strength of tempest: day was almost over,
When through the fading light I could discover
A ship approaching—its white sails were fed
With the north wind—its moving shade did cover
The bright deep— the mariners in dread
Cast anchor when they saw new rocks around them spread.

CANTO VIII.

"I saw beside the steersman then, and, gazing
Upon the west, cried, ‘Spread the sails! behold!
The sinking moon is like a watch-tower blazing
Over the mountains yet;—the City of Gold
Yon Cape alone does from the sight withold;
The stream is fleet—the north breathes steadily
Beneath the stars; they tremble with the cold!
Ye cannot rest upon the dreary sea;—
Haste, haste to the warm home of happier destiny!’

I.

"The Mariners obeyed—the Captain stood
Aloof, and, whispering to the Pilot, said,
‘Alas, alas! I fear we are pursued
By wicked ghosts: a Phantom of the Dead,
The night before we sailed, came to my bed
In dream, like that!’ The Pilot then replied,
‘It cannot be—she is a human Maid—
Her low voice makes you weep—she is some bride,
Or daughter of high birth—she can be nought beside.’

IV.

"What dream ye! Your own hands have built a
Even for yourselves on a beloved shore: [home,
For some, fond eyes are pining till they come,
How they will greet him when his toils are o’er,
And laughing babes rush from the well-known door!
Is this your care? ye toil for your own good—
Ye feel and think—has some immortal power
Such purposes? or in a human mood,
Dream ye some Power thus builds for man in soli-
tude?

V.

"What is that Power! Ye mock yourselves, and
A human heart to what ye cannot know: [give
As if the cause of life could think and live!
’Twere as if man’s own works should feel, and show
The hopes, and fears, and thoughts, from which they
And he be like them. Lo! Plague is free (flow,
To waste, Blight, Poison, Earthquake, Hail, and Disease, and Want, and worse Necessity (Snow,
Of hate and ill, and Pride, and Fear, and Tyranny.
"What is that Power? Some moon-struck sophist stood
Watching the shade from his own soul upthrown
Fill Heaven and darken Earth, and in such mood
The Form he saw and worshipped was his own,
His likeness in the world's vast mirror shown;
And 'twere an innocent dream, but that a faith
Nursed by fear's dew of poison, grows thereon,
And that men say, that Power has chosen Death
On all who scorn its laws, to wreak immortal wrath.

"Men say that they themselves have heard and seen,
Or known from others who have known such things,
A Shade, a Form, which Earth and Heaven between
Wields an invisible rod—that Priests and Kings,
Custom, domestic sway, aye, all that brings
Man's free-born soul beneath the oppressor's heel,
Are his strong ministers, and that the stings
Of death will make the wise his vengeance feel,
Though truth and virtue arm their hearts with
tenfold steel.

"And it is said, this Power will punish wrong;
Yes, add despair to crime, and pain to pain!
And deepest hell, and deathless snakes among,
Will bind the wretch on whom is fixed a stain,
Which, like a plague, a burthen, and a bane,
Clung to him while he lived;— for love and hate,
Virtue and vice, the say are difference vain—
The will of strength is right— this human state
Tyrants, that they may rule, with lies thus desolate.

"Alas, what strength! Opinion is more frail
Than yon dim cloud now fading on the moon
Even while we gaze, though it awhile avail
To hide the orb of truth—and every throne
Of Earth or Heaven, though shadow rests thereon,
One shape of many names:— for this ye plough
The barren waves of ocean; hence each one
Is slave or tyrant; all betray and bow,
Command, or kill, or fear, or wreak, or suffer woe.

"Its names are each a sign which maketh holy
All power— aye, the ghost, the dream, the shade,
Of power— lust, falsehood, hate, and pride, and folly;
The pattern whence all fraud and wrong is made,
A law to which mankind has been betrayed;
And human love, is as the name well known
Of a dear mother, whom the murderer laid
In bloody grave, and, into darkness thrown,
Gathered her wildered babes around him as his own.

"O love! who to the hearts of wandering men
Art as the calm to Ocean's weary waves!
Justice, or truth, or joy! thou only can
From slavery and religion's labyrinth caves
Guide us, as one clear star the seaman saves.
To give to all an equal share of good,
To track the steps of freedom, though through
She pass, to suffer all in patient mood, [graves
To weep for crime, though stained with thy friend's
Dearest blood.

"To feel the peace of self-contentment's lot,
To own all sympathies, and outrage none,
And, in the most bowed of sense and thought,
Until life's sunny day is quite gone down,
To sit and smile with Joy, or, not alone,
To kiss salt tears from the worn cheek of Woe;
To live, as if to love and live were one,—
This is not faith or law, nor those who bow
To thrones on Heaven or Earth, such destiny may know.

"But children near their parents tremble now,
Because they must obey—one rules another,
And as one Power rules both high and low,
So man is made the captive of his brother,
And Hate is thrown on high with Fear her mother,
Above the Highest—and those fountain-cells,
Whence love yet flowed when faith had choked all other,
Are darkened—Woman, as the bond-slave, dwells
Of man, a slave; and life is poisoned in its wells.

"Man seeks for gold in mines, that he may weave
A lasting chain for his own slavery;—
In fear and restless care that he may live
He toils for others, who must ever be
The joyless thralls of life captivity;
He mortgages, for his chief delight in ruin;
He builds the altar, that its idol's fee
May be his very blood; he is pursuing
O, blind and willing wretch! his own obscure un-
doing.

"This need not be; ye might arise, and will
That gold should lose its power, and thrones their glory;
That love, which none may bind, be free to fill
The world, like light; and evil faith, grown hoary
With crime, be quenched and die.— Yon promon-
Even now eclipsest the descending moon!— [tory
Dungeons and palaces are transitory—
High temples fade like vapour—Man alone
Remains, whose will has power when all beside is
gone.

"Let all be free and equal!— From your hearts
I feel an echo; through my inmost frame
Like sweetest sound, seeking its mate, it darts—
Whence come ye, friends! Alas, I cannot name
All that I read of sorrow, toil, and shame,
On your worn faces; as in legends old
Which make immortal the disastrous fame
Of conquerors and impostors false and bold,
The discord of your hearts I in your looks behold.
"Whence come ye, friends! from pouring human blood as misery! Forth on the earth! or bring ye steel and gold, That Kings may dupe and slay the multitude! Or from the famished poor, pale, weak, and cold, Bear ye the earnings of their toil! unfold! Speak! are your hands in slaughter's sanguine hue Stain'd fresh! have your hearts in guile grown old! Know yourselves thus! ye shall be pure as dew, And I will be a friend and brother unto you."

"Disguise it not— we have one human heart— All mortal thoughts confess a common home: Blush not for what may to thyself impart Shame! all are mirrors of the same; But to find a friend who with his iron pen, Dipped in scorn's fiery poison, makes his fame Enduring there, would o'er the heads of men Pass harmless, if they scorned to make their hearts his den."

"Yes, it is Hate, that shapeless fiendly thing Of many names, all evil, some divine, Whom Belf-contempt arms with a mortal sting; Which, when the heart its snaky folds contrive, It wastes quite; and when it doth repine To gorge such bitter prey, on all beside It turns with ninefold rage, as with its wine When Amphitrite some fair bird has tied, Soon o'er the putrid mass he threatson everyside."

"Reproach not thine own soul, but know thyself, Nor hate another's crime, nor loathethine own. It is the dark idolatry of self, When our thoughts and actions once are Demands that man should weep, and bleed, And vacant exist as a brand in the fire, And love and joy can make the foulest breast A paradise of flowers, where peace might buildher nest."

"Speak thou! whence come ye!"— A Youth made Wearily o'er the boundless deep reply, We sail!— thou readest well the miseries Unto which there the poor heart loves to keep, Or dare not write on the dishonoured brow! Even from our childhood have we learned to steep The bread of slavery in the tears of woe, And never dreamed of hope or refuge until now."

"Yes— I must speak— my secret would have perished, Even with the heart it wasted, as a brand Fades in the dying flame whose life it cherished. But that no human bosom can withstand Thee, wondrous Lady, and the mild command Of thy keen eyes:— yes, we are wretched slaves, Who from their wonted loves and native land Are rent, and bear o'er the dividing waves The unregarded prey of calm and happy graves."

"We drag afar from pastoral vales the fairest Among the daughters of those mountains lone, We drag them there, where all things beast and Are stained and trampled:— years have come and Since, like the ship which bears me, I have known No thought;— but now the eyes of one dear Maid On mine with light of mutual love have shone— She is my life;— I am but as the shade Of her,— a smoke sent up from ashes, soon to fade."

"Recede not! pause not now! thou art grown old, But Hope will make the young, for Hope and Youth Are children of one mother, even Love— behold! The eternal stars gaze on us!— is the truth Within your bow! care for your own, or ruth For other's sufferings! do ye thirst to bear A heart which not the serpent custom's tooth May violate!— Be free! and even here, Sware to be firm till death! 'They cried, 'We swear! we swear!'"

"The very darkness shook, as with a blast Of subterranean thunder at the cry; The hollow shore its thousand echoes cast Into the night, as if the sea, and sky, And earth, rejoiced with new-born liberty, For in that name they swore! Bolts were undrawn, And on the deck, with unaccustomed eye The captives gazing stood, and every one Shrank as the inconstant torch upon her countenance shone."

"They were earth's purest children, young and fair, With eyes the shrines of unwakened thought, And breasts as bright as spring or morning, ere Dark time had there its evil legend wrought In characters of cloud which wittner not. The change was like a dream to them; but soon They knew the glory of their altered lot, In the bright wisdom of youth's breathless noon, Sweet talk, and smiles, and sighs, all bosoms did ayeune."
"But one was mute, her cheeks and lips most fair, Changing their hue like lilies newly blown, Beneath a bright acacia's shadowy hair, Waved by the wind amid the sunny noon, Showed that her soul was quivering; and full soon That Youth arose, and breathlessly did look On her and me, as for some speechless boon: I smiled, and both their hands in mine I took, And felt as soft delight from what their spirits shook.

CANTO IX.

I.
"That night we anchored in a woody bay, And sleep no more around us dared to hover Than, when all doubt and fear has past away, It shades the couch of some unresting lover, Whose heart is now at rest: thus night past over In mutual joy:— around, a forest grew Of poplars and dark oaks, whose shade did cover The waning stars, prank'd in the waters blue, And trembled in the wind which from the morning flew.

II.
"The joyous mariners, and each free maiden, Now brought from the deep forest many a bough, With woodland spoil most innocently laden; Soon wreaths of budding foliage seemed to flow Over the mast and sails, the stern and prow Were canopied with blooming boughs,— the while On the slant sun's path o'er the waves we go Rejoicing, like the dwellers of an isle Doomed to pursue those waves that cannot cease to smile.

III.
"The many ships spotting the dark blue deep With snowy sails, fled fast as ours came nigh, In fear and wonder; and on every steep Thousands did gaze, they heard the starting cry, Like earth's own voice lifted unconquerably To all her children, the unbounded mirth, The glorious joy of thy name— Liberty! They heard!— As o'er the mountains of the earth From peak to peak leapt o'er the waves we go Rejoicing, like the dwellers of an isle Doomed to pursue those waves that cannot cease to smile.

IV.
"So from that cry over the boundless hills, Sudden was caught one universal sound, Like a volcano's voice, whose thunder fills Remoteest skies,—such glorious madness found A path through human hearts with stream which drowned Its struggling fears and cares, dark custom's brood; They knew not whence it came, but felt around A wide contagion poured—they called aloud On Liberty—that name lived on the sunny flood.

V.
"We reached the port—allas! from many spirits The wisdom which had waked that cry, was fled, Like the brief glory which dark Heaven inherits From the false dawn, which fades ere it is spread, Upon the night's devouring darkness shed; Yet soon bright day will burst—even like a chasm Of fire, to burn the shrouds outworn and dead, Which wrap the world; a wide enthusiasm, To cleanse the fevered world as with an earth quake's spasm!
"Like clouds inwoven in the silent sky,  
By winds from distant regions meeting there,  
In the high name of truth and liberty,  
Around the City millions gathered were,  
By hopes which sprung from many a hidden lair;  
Words, which the lore of truth in hues of grace  
Arrayed, thee own wild songs which in the air  
Like homeless odours floated, and the name  
Of thee, and many a tongue which thou hadst dipped  
in flame.

"The Tyrant knew his power was gone, but Fear,  
The nurse of Vengeance, bade him wait the event—  
That perfidy and custom, gold and prayer,  
And whatso'er, when force is impotent,  
To fraud the sceptre of the world has lent,  
Might, as he judged, confirm his failing sway.  
Therefore throughout the streets, the Priests he  
To curse the rebels. — To their gods did they send  
For Earthquake, Plague, and Want, kneeling in the  
public way.

"And grave and hoary men were bribed to tell  
From seats where law is made the slave of wrong,  
How glorious Athens in her splendour fell,  
Because her sons were free,— and that among  
Mankind, the many to the few belong,  
By Heaven, and Nature, and Necessity.  
They said, that age was truth, and that the young  
Marred with wild hopes the peace of slavery,  
With which old times and men had quelled the vain  
and free.

"And with the falsehood of their poisonous lips  
They breathed on the enduring memory  
Of sages and of bards a brief eclipse;  
There was one teacher, whom necessity  
Had armed with strength and wrong against man—  
His slave and his avenger aye to be;  
(kind,  
That we were weak and sinful, frail and blind,  
And that the will of one was peace, and we  
Should seek a nourishment on earth but toil and misery.

"For thus we might avoid the hell hereafter.  
So spake the hypocrites, who cursed and lied;  
Alas, their way was past, and tears and laughter  
Clung to their hoary hair, withering the pride  
Which in their hollow hearts dared still abide;  
And yet obscene slaves with smoother brow,  
And sneers on their strait lips, thin, blue, and wide,  
Said, that the rule of men was over now,  
And hence, the subject world to woman's will must bow;

"And gold was scattered through the streets, and  
Flowed at a hundred feasts within the wall. [wine  
In vain! The steady towers in Heaven did shine  
As they were wont, nor at the priestly call  
Left Plague her banquet in the Ethiop's hall,  
Nor Famine from the rich man's portal came,  
Where at her ease she ever prays on all  
Who throng to kneel for food; nor fear, nor shame,  
Nor faith, nor discord, dimmed hope's newly-kindled  
flame.

"For gold was as a god whose faith began  
To fade, so that its worshippers were few,  
And Faith itself, which in the heart of man  
Gives shape, voice, name, to spectral Terror, knew  
Its downfall, as the altars lonelier grew,  
Till the Priests stood alone within the fane;  
The shafts of falsehood unpolluting flew,  
And the cold sneers of calumny were vain  
The union of the free with discord's brand to stain.

"The rest thou knowest. — Lo! we two are here—  
We have survived a ruin wide and deep—  
Strange thoughts are mine. — I cannot grieve nor  
Sitting with thee upon this lonely steep [fear,  
I smile, though human love should make me weep.  
We have survived a joy that knows no sorrow,  
And I do feel a mighty calmness creep  
Over my heart, which can no longer borrow  
Its hue from chance or change, dark children of  
to-morrow.

"We know not what will come—yet, Laon, dearest,  
Cythna shall be the prophetess of love,  
Her lipsshall rob thee of the grace thou wearest,  
To hidethy heart, and clothe the shapes which rose  
Within the homeless future's wintry grove;  
For I now, sitting thus beside thee, seem  
Even with thy breath and blood to live and move,  
And violate and wrong are as a dream  
Which rolls from steadfast truth, an unreturning stream.

"O Spring! of hope, and love, and youth, and gladness,  
Wind-winged emblem! brightest, best, and fairest!  
Whence comest thou, when, with dark winter's  
sadness  
The tears that fade in sunny smiles thou sharest!  
Sister of joy! thou art the child who wearest  
Thy mother Autumn, for whose grave thou bear'st  
Flowers, and beams like flowers, with gentle  
feet.  
Disturbing not the leaves which are her winding-
THE REVOLT OF ISLAM.

*The seeds are sleeping in the soil: meanwhile
The tyrant peoples dungeonswith his prey;
Pale victors on the guarded scaffold smile
Because they cannot speak; and, day by day,
The moon of wasting Science wanes away
Among her stars, and in that darkness vast
The sons of earth to their foul idols pray,
And grey Prieststriped, and like blight or blast
A shade of selfish care o'er human looks is cast.

*This is the Winter of the world;— and here
We die, even as the winds of Autumn fade,
Expiring in the frore and foggy air. [made
Behold! Spring comes, though we must pass, who
The promise of its birth,— even as the shade
Which from our death, as from a mountain, flings
The future, a broad sunrise; thus arrayed
As with the plumes of overshadowing wings,
From its dark gulfof chains, Earth like an eagle
springs.

"Our many thoughts and deeds, our life and love,
Our happiness, and all that we have been,
Immortally must live, and burn, and move,
When we shall be no more; the world has seen
A type of peace; and as some most serene
And lovely spot to a peevish maniac's eye,
After long years, some sweet and moving scene
Of youthful hope returning suddenly,
Quells his long madness— thus man shall remem-
ber thee.

"And calumny meanwhile shall feed on us,
As worms devour the dead, and near the throne
And at the altar, most accepted thus
Shall sneers and curses be;— what we have done
None shall dare vouch, though it be truly known;
That record shall remain, when they must pass
Who built their pride on its oblivion;
And fame, in human hope which sculptured was,
Survive the perished scrolls of unenduring brass.

These are blind fancies. Reason cannot know
What sense can neither feel, nor thought conceive;
There is delusion in the world—and woe,
And fear, and pain— we know not whence we live,
Or why, or how, or what mute Power may give
Their being to each plant, and star, and beast,
Or even these thoughts. — Come near me! I do
A chain I cannot break— I am possest [weave
With thoughtsto too swift and strong for one lone
human breast.

"Yes, yes— thy kiss is sweet, thy lips are warm—
O! willingly, beloved, would these eyes,
Might they no more drink being from thy form,
Even as to sleep whence we again arise,
Close their faint orbs in death. I fear nor prize
Aught that can now betide, unshared by thee—
Yes, Love, when wisdom fails, makes Cythna wise;
Darkness and death, if death be true, must be
Dearer than life and hope, if unenjoyed with thee.

* The good and mighty of departed ages
Are in their graves, the innocent and free,
Heroes, and Poets, and prevailing Sages,
Who leave the vesture of their majesty
To adorn and clothe this naked world;— and we
Are like to them— such perish, but they leave
All hope, or love, or truth, or liberty,
Whose forms their mighty spirits could conceive
To be a rule and law to ages that survive.

"So be the turf heaped over our remains
Even in our happy youth, and that strange lot
Whate'er it be, when in those mingling veins
The blood is still, be ours; let sense and thought
Pass from our being, or be numbered not
Among the things that are;— let those who come
Beneath, for whom our meditations will have bought
A calm inheritance, a glorious doom,
Insult with careless tread our undivided tomb.

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Are like to them— such perish, but they leave
All hope, or love, or truth, or liberty,
Whose forms their mighty spirits could conceive
To be a rule and law to ages that survive.

"So be the turf heaped over our remains
Even in our happy youth, and that strange lot
Whate'er it be, when in those mingling veins
The blood is still, be ours; let sense and thought
Pass from our being, or be numbered not
Among the things that are;— let those who come
Beneath, for whom our meditations will have bought
A calm inheritance, a glorious doom,
Insult with careless tread our undivided tomb.
THE REVOLT OF ISLAM.

Though she had ceased, her countenance, uplifted To heaven, still spake, with solemn glory bright; Her dark deep eyes, her lips, whose motions gifted The air they breathed with love, her locks undight; "Fair star of life and love," I cried, "my soul's de-

"Why lookest thou on the crystalline skies! [light,

She turned to me and smiled— that smile was

Paradise!

CANTO X.

Was there a human spirit in the steed, That thus with his proud voice, ere night was gone, He broke our linked rest? or do indeed All living things a common nature own,

And thought erect a universal throne, Where many shapes one tribute ever bear!

And Earth, their mutual mother, doesshe groan To see her sons contend I and makes she bare

Her breast, that all in peace its drainless stores may share?

I have heard friendly sounds from many a tongue Which was not human— the lone Nightingale Has answered me with her most soothingsong,

Out of her ivybower, when I sate pale With grief, and sighed beneath; from many a dale

The Antelopes who flocked for food have spoken With happy sounds, and motions, that avail

Likem an's own speech; and such was now the token Of waning night, whose calm by that proud neigh

was broken.

Each night, that mighty steed bore me abroad, And I returned with food to our retreat,

And dark intelligence; the blood which flowed Over the fields, had stained the courser's feet;—

Soonthedustdrinksthatbitterdew,— then meet The vulture, and the wild-dog, and the snake,

The wolf, and the hyenas grey, and eat

The dead in horrid truce: their throngs did make

Behind the steed, a chasm like waves in a ship's wake.

For, from the utmost realms of earth, came pouring The banded slaves whom every despotsent

At that throned traitor's summons; like the roaring Of fire, whose floods the wild deer circumvent

In the scorched pastures of the South; so bent The armies of the leagued kings around

Their filesof steel and flame;— the continent Trembled, as with a zone of ruin bound ;

Beneath their feet, thesea shook with their navies' sound.

From every nation of the earth they came, The multitude of moving heartless things,

Whom slaves call men: obediently they came, Like sheep whom from the fold the shepherd brings

To the stall, red with blood; their many kings Led them, thus erring, from their native home ;

Tartar and Frank, and millions whom the wings Of Indian breezes lift, and many a band

The Arctic Anarch sent, and ldumea's sand,

Fertile in prodigies and lies— so there Strange natures made a brotherhood of ill.

The desert savage ceased to grasp in fear

His Asian shield and bow, when, at the will Of Europe's subtler son, the bolt would kill

Some shepherd sitting on a rock secure ;

But smiles of wondering joy his face would fill,

And savage sympathy: those slaves improve, Each one the other thus from ill to ill did fare.

For traitorously did that foul Tyrant robe

His countenance in lies;— even at the hour When he was snatched from death, then o'er the globe,

With secret signs from many a mountain tower,

With smoke by day, and fire by night, the power Of kings and priests, those dark conspirators He called:— they knew his cause their own, and swore

Like wolves and serpents to their mutual wars
Strange truce, with many a rite which Earth and

Heaven abhors.

Myriads had come—millions were on their way;

The Tyrant passed, surrounded by the steel Of hired assassins, through the public way,

Choked with his country's dead;— his footsteps reel On the fresh blood— he smiles. "Aye, now I feel

I am a King in truth!" he said, and took

His royal seat, and bade the torturing wheel Be brought, and fire, and pincers, and the hook,

And scorpions! that his soul on its revenge might look.

"But first, go slay there rebels.— Why return The victor bands!" he said: "millions yet live,

Of whom the weakest with one word might turn

The scales of victory yet;— let none survive But those within the walls— each fifth shall give

The expiation for his brethren here.

Go forth, and waste and kill."— "O king, forgive My speech," a soldier answered;— "but we fear

The spirits of the night, and morn is drawing near;"

"For we were slaying still without remorse,

And now that dreadful chief beneath my hand Defenceless lay, when on a hell-black horse, An Angel bright as day, waving a brand

Which flashed among the stars, passed."— "Dost thou stand

Parleying with me, thou wretch!" the king replied; "Slaves, bind him to the wheel; and of this band,

Whose will drag that woman to his aide

That scared him thus, may burn his dearest foe beside;

And gold and glory shall be his.—Go forth!"

They rushed into the plain.— Loud was the roar Of their career: the horsemen shook the earth;

The wheeled artillery's speed the pavement tore;

The infantry, file after file, did pour [slew Their clouds on the utmost hills. Five days they

Among the wasted fields: the sixth saw gore Stream through the city; on the seventh, the dew

Of slaughter became still; and there was peace anew:
THE REVOLT OF ISLAM.

XII.

Peace in the desert fields and villages,
Between the glutted beasts and mangled dead!
Peace in the silent streets! save when the cries
Of victims, to their fiery judgment led,
Made pale their voiceless lips, who seemed to
dread
Even in their dearest kindred, lest some tongue
Be faithless to the fear yet unbetrayed;
Peace in the Tyrant's palace, where the throng
Waste the triumphal hours in festival and song!

XIII.

Day after day the burning Sun rolled on
Over the death-polluted land;— it came
Out of the east like fire, and fiercely shone
A lamp of Autumn, ripening with its flame
The few lone ears of corn;— the sky became
Stagnate with heat, so that each cloud and blast
Languished and died; the thirsting air did claim
All moisture, and a rotting vapour past
From the unburied dead, invisible and fast.

First Want, then Plague, came on the beasts; their
Failed, and they drew the breath of its decay,
Millions on millions, whom the scent of blood
Had lured, or who, from regions far away,
Had tracked the hosts in festival array,
From their dark deserts; gaunt and wasting now,
Stalked like fell shades among their perished prey;
In their green eyes a strange disease did glow,
They sank in hideous spasm, or pains severe and
slow.

The fish were poisoned in the streams; the birds
In the green woods perished; the insect race
Was withered up; the scattered flocks and herds
Who had survived the wild beasts' hungry chase
Died moaning, each upon the other's face
In helpless agony gaz'ing; round the City
All night, the lean hyenas their sad case
Like starving infants wailed— a woeful ditty!
And many a mother wept, pierced with unnatural

XIV.

Amid the aerial minarets on high,
The Æthiopian vultures fluttering fell
From their long line of brethren in the sky,
Startling the concourse of mankind.— Too well
These signs the coming mischief did foretell:
Strange panic first, a deep and sickening dread
Within each heart, like ice, did sink and dwell,
A voiceless thought of evil, which did spread
With the quick glance of eyes, like withering
lightnings shed.

Day after day, when the year wanes, the frosts
Strip its green crown of leaves, till all is bare;
So on those strange and congregated hosts
Came Famine, a swift shadow, and the air
Groaned with the burden of a new despair;
Famine, than whom Misrule no deadlier daughter
Feeds from her thousand breasts, though sleeping
There was no food; the corn was trampled down,
The flocks and herds had perished; on the shore
The dead and putrid fish were ever thrown;
The deeps were foodless, and the winds no more
Creaked with the weight of birds, but, as before
Those winged things sprang forth, were void of
shade;
The vines and orchards, Autumn's golden store,
Were burned; so that the meanest food was weighed
With gold, and Avarice died before the god it made.

XV.

There was no corn— in the wide market-place
All loathliest things, even human flesh, was sold;
They weighed it in small scales—and many a face
Was fixed in eager horror then: his gold
The miser brought; the tender maid, grown bold
Through hunger, bared her scarred charm in vain;
The mother brought her eldest-born, controlled
By instinct blind as love, but turned again
And bade her infant suck, and died in silent pain.

XVI.

Then fell blue Plague upon the race of man.
" O, for the sheathed steel, so late which gave
Oblivion to the dead, when the streets ran [grave
With brothers' blood! O, that the earthquake's
Would gape, or Ocean lift its stifling wave!"

Vain cries— throughout the streets, thousands
Each by his fiery torture, howland rave,
Or sit, in frenzied's unimagined mood,
Upon fresh heaps of dead— a ghastly multitude.

XVII.

It was not hunger now, but thirst. Each well
Was choked with rotting corpses, and became
A cauldron of green mist made invisible
At sunrise. The fishyards came, Seeking to quench the agony of the flame [veins;
Which raged like poison through their bursting
Naked they were from torture, without shame,
Spotted with nameless scars and lurid blains,
Childhood, and youth, and age, writhing in savage
pains.

XVIII.

It was not thirst but madness! Many saw
Their own lean image everywhere; it went
A ghastlier self beside them, till the awe
Of that dreadsight to self-destruction sent
Those shrieking victims; some, ere life was spent,
Sought, with a horrid sympathy, to shed
Contagion on the sound; and others rent
Their matted hair, and cried aloud, " We tread
On fire! the avenging Power his hell on earth has
spread."

XX.

Sometimes the living by the dead were hid.
Near the great fountain in the public square,
Where corpses made a crumbling pyramid
Under the sun, was heard one stifled prayer
For life, in the hot silence of the air;
And strange 'twas, amid that hideous heap to see
Some shrouded in their long and golden hair,
As if not dead, but slumbering quietly,
Like forms which sculptors carve, then love to
agony.
THE REVOLT OF ISLAM.

Famine had spared the palace of the king:—
He rioted in festival they while,
He bind his guards and priests; but Plague did fling
One shadow upon all. Famine can smile
On him who brings it food, and pass, with guile
Of thankful falsehood, like a courtier grey,
The house-dog of the throne; but many a mile
Comes Plague, a winged wolf, who loathes alway
The garbage and the scum that strangers make
her prey.

So, near the throne, amid the gorgeous feast,
Sheathed in resplendent arms, or loosely light
To luxury, erethemockery yethad ceased
That lingered on his lips, the warrior's might
Was loosened, and a new and ghastliernight
In dreams of frenzy lapped his eyes; he fell
Headlong, or with stiff eye-ball sat upright
Among the guests, or raving mad, did tell
Strange truths; a dying seer of dark oppression's hell.

The Princes and the Priestswere pale with terror;
That monstrous faith wherewith they ruled man-
Fell, like a shaft loosed by the bowman's error,
On theirown hearts: they sought and they could
No refuge— 'twastheblind who ledtheblind!
So, through the desolate streets to the high fane,
The many-tongued and endless armies wind
In sad procession: each among the train
To his own Idol lifts his supplications vain.

" O God!" they cried, "we know our secret pride
Has scorned thee, and thy worship, and thy name;
Secure in human power, we have defied
Thy fearful might; we bend in fear and shame
Before thy presence; with the dust we claim
Kindred. Be merciful, O King of Heaven!
Most justly have we suffered for thy name
Made dim, but be at lengthour sins forgiven,
Ere to despair and death thy worshippers be driven.

" O King of Glory! Thou alone hast power!
Who can resist thy will? who can restrain
Thy wrath, when on the guilty thou dost shower
The shafts of thy revenge,—a blistering rain!
Greatest and best, be merciful again!
Have we not stabbed thine enemies, and made
The Earth an altar, and the Heavens a fane, [laid
Where thouwertworshipped with their blood, and
Those hearts in dust which would thy searchless
works have weighed

" Well didst thou loosen on this impious City
Thine angels of revenge: recall them now;
Thy worshippers abased, here kneel for pity,
And bind their souls by an immortal vow:—
We swear by thee! And to our oath do thou
Give sanction, from thine hell of fiends and flame,
That we will kill with fire and torments slow,
The last of those who mocked thy holy name,
And scorched the sacred laws thy prophets did
proclaim."

Thus they with trembling limbs and pallid lips
When bowed to their own hearts' image, dim and vast,
Scared by the shade wheresoe'er they would eclipse
The light of other minds;—troubled they past
From the great Temple. Fiercely still and fast
The arrows of the plague among them fell,
And they on one another gazed aghast,
And through the hosts contention wild befell,
As much of his own god the wondrous works did
tell.

And Oromaze, Joshua, and Mahomet, [Fob,
Moses, and Buddha, Zerdusht, and Brahm, and
A tumult of strange names, which never met
Before, as watch-words of a single woe,
Arose. Each raging votary 'gan to throw
Aofthisarmed hands, and each did howl
" Our God alone is God! " and slaughter now
Would have gone forth, when, from beneath a cowl
A voice came forth, which pierced like ice through
every soul.

"Twas an Iberian Priest from whom it came,
A zealoussoul, who led the legions west
With words which faith and pride had steepedin
to quell the unbelievers; a dire guest
Even to his friends was he, for in his breast
Did hate and guile lie watchful, intertwined,
Twin serpents in one deep and winding nest;
He loathed all faith beside his own, and pined
To wreak his fear of Heaven in vengeance on
mankind.

But more he loathed and hated the clear light
Of wisdom and free thought, and more did fear,
Lest, kindled once, its beamsmight piercethenight,
Even where his Idol stood; for, far and near
Did many a heart in Europe leap to hear
That faith and tyranny were trampleddown;
Many a pale victim, doomed for truth to share
The murderer's cell, or see, with helpless groan,
The priests his children drag for slaves to serve
their own.

He dared not kill the infidels with fire
Or steel, in Europe: the slow agonies
Of legal torture mocked his keen desire:
So he made truce with those who did despise
The expiation, and the sacrifice,
That, though detested, Islam's kindred creed
Might crush for him those deadlier enemies;
For fear of God did in his bosom breed
A jealous hate of man, an unrepenting need.

"Peace! Peace!" he cried. "When we are dead,
the Day
Of Judgment comes, and all shall surely know
Which God is God, each fearful shall pay
The errors of his faith in endless woe!
But there is sent a mortal vengeance now
On earth, because an impious race had spurned
Him whom we all adore,—a subtle foe,
By whom for ye this dread reward was earned,
And kingly thrones, which rest on faith, nigh over-
turned.
"Thin ye, because we weep, and kneel, and pray, That God will lull the pestilence! It rose Even from beneath his throne, where, many a day His mercy soothed it to a dark repose: It walks upon the earth to judge his foes, And what art thou and I, that he should deign To curb his ghastly minister, or close The gates of death, ere they receive the twin Whose book with mortal spells his undefended reign!

"Aye, there is famine in the gulf of hell, Its giant worms of fire for ever yawn,— Their lurid eyes are on us! Those who fell By the swift shafts of pestilence ere dawn, Are in their jaws! They hunger for the spawn Of Satan, their own brethren, who were sent To make our souls their spoil. See! see! they fawn Like dogs, and they will sleep with luxury spent, When those detested hearts their iron fans have rent!

"Our God may then lull Pestilence to sleep: Pile high the pyre of expiation now! A forest's spoil of boughs, and on the heap Poor Tenomous gums, which sullenly and slow, When touched by flame, shall burn, and melt, and flow, A stream of clinging fire,— and fix on high A net of iron, and spread forth below A couch of snakes, and scorpions, and the fry Of centipedes and worms, earth's hellish progeny!

"Let Laon and Laon on that pyre, Linked tight with burning brass, perish!— then That, with this sacrifice, the withering ire Of Heaven may be appeased." He ceased, and they A space stood silent, as far, far away The echoes of his voice among them died; And he knelt down upon the dust, alway Muttering the curses of his speechless pride, Whilst shame, and fear, and awe, the armies did divide.

XLI.

"Tis said, a mother dragged three children then, To those fierce flames which roast the eyes in the And laughed and died; and that unholy men, [head, Feasting like fiends upon the infidel dead, Looked from their meal, and saw an Angel tread The visible floor of Heaven, and it was she! And, on that night, one without doubt or dread Came to the fire, and said, "Stop, I am he! Kill me!"—They burned them both with hellish mockery.
THE REVOLT OF ISLAM.

And, one by one, that night, young maidens came, 
Beauteous and calm, like shapes of living stone 
Clothed in the light of dreams, and by the flame 
Which shrunk as with her hand, they laid them down, 
And sung a low sweet song, of which alone 
One word was heard, and that was Liberty; 
And that some kissed their marble feet, with moan 
Like love, and died, and then that they did die 
With happy smiles, which sunk in white tranquillity.

CANTO XI.

i.
She would have clasped me to her glowing frame; 
Those warm and odorous lips might soon have fed 
On mine the fragrance and the invisible flame 
Which now the cold winds stole;—she would have laid 
Upon my languid heart her dearest head; 
I might have heard her voice, tender and sweet; 
Her eyes mingling with mine, might soon have fed 
My soul with their own joy.—One moment yet 
I gazed—we parted then, never again to meet!

ii.

CANTO XI.

ii.

Woe! woe! that moonless midnight.—Want and 
Were horrible, but one more fell doth rear,(Pest 
As in a hydra's swarming lair, its crest 
Eminent among those victims—even the Fear 
Of Hell: each girt by the hot atmosphere 
Of his blind agony, like a scorpion stung 
By his own rage upon his burning bier 
Of circling coals of fire; but still there elung 
One hope, like a keen sword on starting threads 
Uphung:

Not death—death was no more refuge or rest; 
Not life—it was despair to be!—not sleep, 
For fiends and chasms of fire had dispossessed 
All natural dreams; to wake was not to weep, 
But to gaze mad and pallid, at the leap 
To which the Future, like a snaky scourge, 
Or like some tyrant's eye, which aye doth keep 
Its withering beam upon his slaves, did urge 
Their steps:—they heard the roar of Hell's sulphurous surge.

Each of that multitude alone, and lost 
To sense of outward things, one hope yet knew; 
As on a foam-girt erg some seaman tost, 
Starts at the rising tide, or like the crew(though; 
Whilst now the ship is splitting through and 
Each, if the tramp of a far steed was heard, 
Started from sick despair, or if there flew 
One murmur on the wind, or if some word 
Which none can gather yet, the distant crowd has 
stirred.

Why became cheeks, wan with the kiss of death, 
Paler from hope they had sustained despair. 
Why watched those myriads with suspended breath 
Sleepless a second night! they are not here 
The victims, and hour by hour, a vision dream, 
Warm corpses fall upon the clay-cold dead; 
And even in death their lips are writhed with fear. 
The crowd is mute and moveless—overhead 
Silent Arcturus shines—Ha! hear'st thou not the tread
THE REVOLT OF ISLAM.

Of rushing feet! laughter! the shout, the scream,
Of triumph not to be contained! See! hark!
They come, they come! give way! Alas, ye deem
Falsely 'tis but a crowd of maniacs stark
Driven, like a troop of spectres, through the dark
From the choked well, whence a bright death-fire sprung,
A lurid earth-star, which dropped many a spark
From its blue train, and spreading widely, clung
To their wild hair, like mist the topmost pines among.

And many, from the crowd collected there,
Joined that strange dance in fearful sympathies;
There was the silence of a long despair,
When the last echo of those terrible cries
Came from a distant street, like agonies
Stifled afar.— Before the Tyrant's throne
All night his aged Senate sate, their eyes
In stony expectation fixed; when one
Sudden before them stood, a Stranger and alone.

Dark Priests and haughty Warriors gazed on him
With baffled wonder, for a hermit's vest
Concealed his face; but when he spake, his tone,
Ere yet the matter did their thoughts arrest,
Earnest, benignant, calm, as from a breast
Void of all hate or terror, made them start;
For as with gentle accents he addressed
His speech to them, on each unwilling heart
Unusual awe did fall—a spirit-quelling dart.

"Ye Princes of the Earth, ye sit aghast
Amid the ruin which yourselves have made;
Yes, Desolation heard your trumpet's blast,
And sprang from sleep!—dark Terror has obeyed
Your bidding—Oh that I, whom ye have made
Your foe, could set my dearest enemy free
From pain and fear! but evil casts a shade
Which cannot pass so soon, and Hate must be
The nurse and parent still of an ill progeny.

"Ye seek for happiness—alas the day!
Ye find it not in luxury nor in gold,
Nor in the fame, nor in the envied sway
For which, 0 willing slave to Custom old,
Severe task-mistresses ye your hearts have sold.
Ye seek for peace, and when ye die, to dream
No evil dreams; all mortal things are cold
And senseless then. If aught survive, I deem
It must be love and joy, for they immortal seem.

"Fear not the future, weep not for the past.
Oh, could I win your ears to dare be now
Glorious, and great, and calm! that ye would cast
Into the dust those symbols of your woe,
Purple, and gold, and steel! that ye would go
Proclaiming to the nations whence ye came,
That Want, and Plague, and Fear, from slavery flow;
And that mankind is free, and that the shame
Of royalty and faith is lost in freedom's fame.

"If thus 'tis well—if not, I come to say
That Laon—" While the Stranger spoke, among
The Council sudden tumult and affray
Arose, for many of those warriors young
Had on his eloquent accents fed and hung
Like bees on mountain-flowers; they knew the truth.
And from their thrones in vindications sprung;
The men of faith and law then without ruth
Drew forth their secret steel, and stabbed each ardent youth.

They stabbed them in the back and sneered. A slave
Who stood behind the throne, those corpses drew
Each to its bloody, dark, and secret grave;
And one more daring raised his steel anew
To pierce the Stranger: "What hast thou to do
With me, poor wretch!"— Calmly solemn, and severe,
That voice unstrung his sinews, and he threw
His dagger on the ground, and pale with fear,
Sate silently—his voice then did the Stranger rear.

"There is a People mighty in its youth,
A land beyond the Oceans of the West, [Truth
Where, though with rudest rites, Freedom and
Are worshipped; from a glorious mother's breast
Who, since high Athens fell, among the rest
Sate like the Queen of Nations, but in woe,
By inbred monsters outraged and oppressed,
Turns to her chainless child for succour now,
And draws the milk of power in Wisdom's fullest flow.

"This land is like an Eagle, whose young gaze
Feeds on the noontide beam, whose golden plume
Floats moveless on the storm, and in the blaze
Of sun-rise gleams when earth is wrapt in gloom;
An epitaph of glory for the tomb
Of murdered Europe may thy fame be made,
Great People! As the sands shalt thou become;
Thy growth is swift as morn, when night must fade;
The multitudinous Earth shall sleep beneath thy shade.

xxv.
THE REVOLT OF ISLAM.

XIV.
"Yes, in the desert then is built a home
For Freedom. Genius is made strong to rear
The monuments of man beneath the dome
Of a new heaven; myriads assemble there,
Whom the proud lords of man, in rage or fear,
Drive from their wasted homes. The boon I pray
Is this,— that Cythna shall be conveyed there,—
Nay, start not at the name,— America!
And then to you this night Laon will I betray.

XXV.
"With me do what ye will. I am your foe!"
The light of such a joy as makes the stare
Of hungry snakes like living emeralds glow,
Shone in a hundred human eyes.— "Where, where
Is Laon! haste! fly! drag him swiftly here!
We grant thy boon."— "I put no trust in ye,
Swear by the Power ye dread."— "We swear, we
The Stranger threw his vest backsuddenly, and smiled
In gentle pride, and said, "Lo! I am he!"

CANTO XII.

I.
The transport of a fierce and monstrous gladness
Spread through the multitudinous streets, fast flying
Upon the winds of fear; from his dull madness
The starveling waked, and died in joy; the dying,
Among the corpses in stark agony lying,
Just heard the happy tidings, and in hope closing
Closed their faint eyes; from house to house reply—
With loud acclaim, the livings shook Heaven's scope,
And filled the startled Earth with echoes: morn did ope

II.
Its pale eyes then; and lo! the long array
Of guards in golden arms, and priests beside,
Singing their bloody hymns, whose garbs betray
The blackness of the faith it seems to hide;
And see, the Tyrant's gem-wrought chariot glide
Among the gloomy cowls and glittering spears—
A shape of light is sitting by his side,
A child most beautiful. In the midst appears
Laon— exempt alone from mortal hopes and fears.

III.
His head and feet are bare, his hands are bound
Behind with heavy chains; yet none do wreak
Their scoffs on him, though myriads throng around;
There are no sneers upon his lip which speak
That scorn or hate has made him bold; his cheek
Resolve has not turned pale,— his eyes are mild
And calm, and like the morn about to break,
Smile on mankind— his heart seems reconciled
To all things and itself, like a reposing child.

IV.
Tumult was in the soul of all beside,
Ill joy, or doubt, or fear; but those who saw
Their tranquil victim pass, felt wonder glide
Into their brain, and became calm with awe.—
See, the slow pageant near the pile doth draw.
A thousand torches in the spacious square,
Borne by the ready slaves of ruthless law,
Await the signal round: the morning fair
Is changed to a dim night by that unnatural glare.

V.
And see! beneath a sun-bright canopy,
Upon a platform level with the pile,
The anxious Tyrant sat, enthroned on high,
Girt by the chiefstains of the host. All smile
In expectation, but one child: the while
I, Laon, led by mutes, ascend my bier
Of fire, and look around. Each distant tale
Is dark in the bright dawn; towers far and near
Pierce like reposing flames the tumultuous atmos-phere.

VI.
There was such silence through the host, as when
An earthquake, trampling on some populous
Has crushed ten thousand with one tread, and men
Expect the second; all were mute but one,
That fairest child, who, bold with love, alone
Stood up before the king, without avail,
Pleading for Laon's life— her stifled groan
Was heard— she trembled like an aspen pale
Among the gloomy pines of a Norwegian vale.

VII.
What were his thoughts linked in the morning sun,
Among those reptiles, stingless with delay,
Even like a tyrant's wrath!— The signal-gun
Roared— hark, again! In that dread pause he lay
As in a quiet dream— the slaves obey—
A thousand torches drop,— and hark, the last
Bursts on that awful silence. Far away
Millions, with hearts that beat both loud and fast,
Watch for the springing flame expectant and aghast.

VIII.
They fly— the torches fall— a cry of fear
Has startled the triumphant!— they recede!
For ere the cannon's roar has died, they hear
The tramp of hoofs like earthquake, and a steed
Dark and gigantic, with the tempest's speed,
Bursts through their ranks: a woman sitsthereon,
Fairer it seems than aught that earth can breed,
Calm, radiant, like the phantom of the dawn,
A spirit from the caves of day-light wandering gone.

IX.
All thought it was God's Angel come to sweep
The lingering guilty to their fiery grave;
The tyrant from his throne did darre asleep,—
Her innocence his child from fear did save.
Scared by the faith they feigned, each priestly slave
Knew for his mercy whom they served with blood,
And, like the influence of a mighty wave
Sucked into the loud sea, the multitude
With crushing panic, fled in terror's altered mood.

X.
They pause, they blush, they gaze; a gathering shout
Bursts like one sound from the ten thousand streams
Of a tempestuous sea:— that sudden rout
One checked, who never in his mildest dreams
Felt awe from grace or loveliness, the seams
Of his heart so hard and cold a creed
Had seared with blistering ice— but he misdeems
That he is wise, whose wounds do only bleed
Inly for self; thus thought the Iberian Priest
indeed;
THE REVOLT OF ISLAM. 93

And others, too, thought he was wise to see,
In pain, and fear, and hate, something divine;
In love and beauty—no divinity.
Now with a bitter smile, whose light did shine
Like a fiend's hope upon his lips and eyne,
He said, and the persuasion of that sneer
Rallied his trembling comrades—Is it mine
To stand alone, when kings and soldiers fear
A woman! Heaven has sent its other victim here."

XII.

"Were it not impious," said the King, "to break
Our holy oath!—" "Impious to keep it, say!
Shrieked the exulting Priest:—Slaves, to the
Bind her, and on my head the burthen lay [stake
Of her just torments:—at the Judgment Day
Will I stand up before the golden throne
Of Heaven, and cry, to thee I did betray
An infidel! but for me she would have known
Another moment's joy!—the glory be thine own."

They trembled, but replied not, nor obeyed,
Pausing in breathless silence. Cythna sprung
From her gigantic steed, who, like a shade
Chased by the winds, those vacant streets among
Fled tameless, as the brazen reins she flung
Upon his neck, and kissed his mooned brow.
A piteous sight, that one so fair and young,
The clasp of such a fearful death should woo
With smiles of tender joy as beamed from Cythna
now.

XIII.

They trembled, but replied not, nor obeyed,
Passing in breathless silence. Cythna sprung
From her gigantic steed, who, like a shade
Chased by the winds, those vacant streets among
Fled tameless, as the brazen reins she flung
Upon his neck, and kissed his mooned brow.
A piteous sight, that one so fair and young,
The clasp of such a fearful death should woo
With smiles of tender joy as beamed from Cythna
now.

XIV.

The warm tears burst in spite of fear and faith,
From many a tremulous eye, but, like soft dews
Which feed spring's earliest buds, hung gathered
there,
Frozen by doubt,—also! they could not choose
But weep; for when her faint limbs did refuse
To climb the pyre, upon the mutes she smiled;
And with her eloquent gestures, and the hues
Of her quick lips, even as a weary child
Wins sleep from some fond nurse with its caresses
mild,

XV.

She won them, though unwilling, her to bind
Near me, among the stakes. When then had fled
One soft reproach that was most thrilling kind,
She smiled on me, and nothing then we said,
But each upon the other's countenance fed
Looksof insatiatelove; the mighty veil
Which doth dividetheliving and the dead
Was almost rent, the world grew dim and pale,—
All light in Heaven or Earth beside our love did fail.—

XX.

Yet,—yet—one brief respite, like the last beam
Of dying flames, the stainless air around
Hung silent and serene.—A blood-red gleam
Burst upwards, burning fiercely from the ground
The globed smoke—I heard the mighty sound
Of its uprise, like a tempestuous ocean;
And, through its chasms I saw, as in a swoond,
The Tyrant's child fall without life or motion
Before his throne, subdued by some unseen emotion.

XVI.

And is this death! The pyre has disappeared,
The Pestilence, the Tyrant, and the throng;
The flames grow silent—slowly there is heard
The music of a breath-suspending song.
Which, like the kiss of love when life is young,
Steeps the faint eyes in darkness sweet and deep;
With ever-changing notes it floats along,
Till on my passive soul there seemed to creep
A melody, like waves on wrinkled sands that leap.
And then she wept aloud, and in her arms Clasped that bright Shape, less marvellously fair Than her own human hues and living charms; Which, as she leaned in passion’s silence there, Breathed warmth on the cold bosom of the air, Which seemed to blush and tremble with delight; The glossy darkness of her streaming hair Fell o’er that snowy child, and wrapt from sight The fond and long embrace which did their hearts unite.

Then the bright child, the plumed Seraph, came, And fixed its blue and beaming eyes on mine, And said, “I was disturbed by tremulous shame When once we met, yet knew that I was thine From the same hour in which thy lips divine Kindled a clinging dream within my brain, Which everwaked when I might sleep, to twine Thine image with her memory dear— again We meet; exempted now from mortals fear or pain.

When the consuming flames had wraptye round, The hope which I had cherished went away; I fell in agony on the senseless ground, And hid mine eyes indist, and far astray My mind was gone, when bright, liked awaking day, The Spectre of the Plague before me flew, And breathed upon my lips, and seemed to say, ‘They wait for thee, beloved!’ then I knew The death-mark on my breast, and became calm anew.

It was the calm of love—for I was dying. I saw the black and half-extinguished pyre In its own grey and shrunken ashes lying; The pitchy smoke of the departed fire Still hung in many a hollow dome and spire Above the towers, like night; beneath whose shade, Awed by the ending of their own desire, The armis stood; a vacancy was made In expectation’s depth, and so they stood dismayed.

The frightful silence of that altered mood, The tortures of the dying soul alone, Till one uprose among the multitude, And said—‘The flood of time is rolling on, We stand on its brink, whilst they are gone To glide in peace down death’s mysterious stream.’

Have ye done well? They moulded flesh and bone, Whom might have made this life’s envenomed dream A sweeter draught than ye will ever taste, I deem.

These perish as the good and great of yore Have perished, and their murderers will repent. Yes, vain and barren tears shall flow before Yun smoke has faded from the firmament Even for this cause, that ye, who must lament The death of those that made this world so fair, Cannot recall them now; but then is lent To man the wisdom of a high despair, When such can die, and he live on and linger here.
Morn, noon, and even, that boat of pearl outran
The streams which bore it, like the arrowy cloud
Of tempest, or the speedier thought of man,
Which fleeth forth and cannot make abode;
Sometimes through forests, deep like night, we
Glode,
Between the walls of mighty mountains crowned
With Cyclopean piles, whose turrets proud
The homes of the departed, dimly frowned
O'er the bright waves which girt their dark foundations round.

Sometimes between the wide and flowering meadows,
Mile after mile we sailed, and 'twas delight
to see far off the sunbeams chase the shadows
Over the grass; sometimes beneath the night
Of wide and vaulted caves, whose roofs were bright
With starry gems, we fled, whilst from their deep
And dark green chasms, shades beautiful and white,
Amid sweet sounds across our path would sweep
Like swift and lovely dreams that walk the waves of sleep.

And ever as we sailed, our minds were full
Of love and wisdom, which would overflow
In converse wild, and sweet, and wonderful;
And in quick smiles whose light would come and
Like music o'er wide waves, and in the flow
Of sudden tears, and in the mute caress—
For a deep shade was cleft, and we did know,
That virtue, though obscured on Earth, not less
Survives all mortal change in lasting loveliness.

Three days and nights we sailed, as thought and
Feeling
Number delightful hours—for through the sky
The spherical lamps of day and night, revealing
New changes and new glories, rolled on high,

Sun, Moon, and moonlike lamps, the progeny
Of a diviner Heaven, serene and fair:
On the fourth day, wild as a wind-wrought sea,
The stream became, and fast and faster bare
The spirit-winged boat, steadily speeding there.

Steadily and swift, where the waves rolled like
Mountains
Within the vast ravine, whose rifts did pour
Tumultuous floods from their ten thousand foun-
The thunder of whose earth-uplifting roar (tains,
Made the air sweep in whirlwinds from the shore,
Calm as a shade, the boat of that fair child
Securely fled, that rapid stress before,
Amid the topmost spray, and sunbows wild,
Wreathed in the silver mist: in joy and pride we
Smiled.

The torrent of that wide and raging river
Is passed, and our aerial speed suspended.
We look behind; a golden mist did quiver
When its wild surges with the lake were blended:
Our bark hung there, as one line suspended
Between two heavens, that windless waveless lake;
Which four great cataracts from four vales, attended
By mists, eye feed, from rocks and clouds they
And of that azure sea a silent refuge make. (break,

Motionless resting on the lake awhile,
I saw its marge of snow-bright mountains rear
Their peaks aloft, I saw each radiant isle,
And in the midst, afar, even like a sphere
Hung in one hollow sky, did there appear
The Temple of the Spirit; on the sound
Which issued thence, drawn nearer and more near,
Like the swift moon this glorious earth around,
The charmed boat approached, and there its haven found.
NOTE ON THE REVOLT OF ISLAM.

BY THE EDITOR.

Shelley possessed two remarkable qualities of intellect—a brilliant imagination and a logical exactness of reason. His inclinations led him (he fancied) almost alike to poetry and metaphysical discussions. I say "he fancied," because I believe the former to have been paramount, and that it would have gained the mastery even had he struggled against it. However, he said that he deliberated at one time whether he should dedicate himself to poetry or metaphysics, and resolving on the former, he educated himself for it, discarding in a great measure his philosophical pursuits, and engaging himself in the study of the poets of Greece, Italy, and England. To these may be added a constant perusal of portions of the Old Testament—the Psalms, the book of Job, the Prophet Isaiah, and others, the sublime poetry of which filled him with delight.

As a poet, his intellect and compositions were powerfully influenced by exterior circumstances, and especially by his place of abode. He was very fond of travelling, and ill health increased this restlessness. The sufferings occasioned by a cold English winter, made him pine, especially when our colder spring arrived, for a more genial climate. In 1816 he again visited Switzerland, and rented a house on the banks of the lake of Geneva; and many a day, in cloud or sunshine, was passed alone in his boat—sailing as the wind listed, or wetering on the calm waters. The majestic aspect of nature ministered such thoughts as he afterwards enwove in verse. His lines on the Bridge of the Arve, and his Hymn to Intellectual Beauty, were written at this time. Perhaps during this summer his genius was checked by association with another poet whose nature was utterly dissimilar to his own, yet who, in the poem he wrote at that time, gave tokens that he shared for a period the more abstract and etherealised inspiration of Shelley. The saddest events awaited his return to England; but such was his fear to wound the feelings of others, that he never expressed the anguish he felt, and seldom gave vent to the indignation roused by the persecutions he underwent; while the course of deep unexpressed passion, and the sense of injury, engendered the desire to embody themselves in forms defecated of all the weakness and evil which clung to real life.

He chose therefore for his hero a youth nourished in dreams of liberty, some of whose actions are in direct opposition to the opinions of the world; but who is animated throughout by an ardent love of virtue, and a resolution to confer the boons of political and intellectual freedom on his fellow-creatures. He created for this youth a woman such as he delighted to imagine—full of enthusiasm for the same objects; and they both, with will unvanquished and the deepest sense of the justice of their cause, met adversity and death. There exists in this poem a memorial of a friend of his youth. The character of the old man who liberates Lasca from his tower-prison, and tends on him in sickness, is founded on that of Doctor Lind, who, when Shelley was at Eton, had often stood by to befried and support him, and whose name he never mentioned without love and veneration.

During the year 1817, we were established at Marlow, in Buckinghamshire. Shelley's choice of abode was fixed chiefly by this town being at so great distance from London, and its neighbourhood to the Thames. The poem was written in his boat, as it floated under the beech groves of Bisham, or during wanderings in the neighbouring country, which is distinguished for peculiar beauty. The chalk hills break into cliffs that overhang the Thames, or form valleys clothed with beech; the wilder portion of the country is rendered beautiful by exuberant vegetation; and the cultivated part is peculiarly fertile. With all this wealth of nature which, either in the form of gentlemen's parks or soil dedicated to agriculture, flourishes around, Marlow was inhabited (I hope it is altered now) by a very poor population. The women are lace-makers, and lose their health by sedentary labour, for which they were very ill paid. The poor-laws ground to the dust not only the paupers, but those who had risen just above that state, and were obliged to pay poor-rates. The changes produced by peace following a long war, and a bad harvest, brought with them the most heart-rending evils to the poor. Shelley afforded what alleviation he could. In the winter, while bringing out his poem, he had a severe attack of ophthalmia, caught while visiting the poor cottages. I mention these things, for this minute and active sympathy with his fellow-creatures gives a thousand-fold interest to
his speculations, and stamps with reality his pleadings for the human race.

The poem, bold in its opinions and uncompromising in their expression, met with many censurers, not only among those who allow of no virtue but such as supports the cause they espouse, but even among those whose opinions were similar to his own. I extract a portion of a letter written in answer to one of these friends; it best details the impulses of Shelley's mind and his motives: it was written with entire unreserve; and is therefore a precious monument of his own opinion of his powers, of the purity of his designs, and the ardour with which he clung, in adversity and through the valley of the shadow of death, to views from which he believed the permanent happiness of mankind must eventually spring.

“Marlow, Dec. 11, 1817.

"I have read and considered all that you say about my general powers, and the particular instance of the Poem in which I have attempted to develop them. Nothing can be more satisfactory to me than the interest which your admonitions express. But I think you are mistaken in some points with regard to the peculiar nature of my powers, whatever be their amount. I listened with deference and self-suspicion to your censures of 'the Revolt of Islam,' but the productions of mine which you commend hold a very low place in my own esteem; and this reassured me, in some degree at least. The poem was produced by a series of thoughts which filled my mind with unbounded and sustained enthusiasm. I felt the precariousness of my life, and I engaged in this task, resolved to leave some record of myself. Much of what the volume contains was written with the same feeling, as real, though not so prophetic, as the communications of a dying man. I never presumed indeed to consider it anything approaching to faultless; but when I consider contemporary productions of the same apparent pretensions, I own I was filled with confidence. I felt that it was in many respects a genuine picture of my own mind. I felt that the sentiments were true, not assumed. And in this have I long believed that my power consists; in sympathy and that part of the imagination which relates to sentiment and contemplation. I am formed, if for anything not in common with the herd of mankind, to apprehend minute and remote distinctions of feeling, whether relative to external nature or the living beings which surround us, and to communicate the conceptions which result from considering either the moral or the material universe as a whole. Of course, I believe these faculties, which perhaps comprehend all that is sublime in man, to exist very imperfectly in my own mind. But when you advert to my chancery paper, a cold, forced, unimpassioned, insignificant piece of cramped and cautious argument; and to the little scrap about Mandeville, which expressed my feelings indeed, but cost scarcely two minutes' thought to express, as specimens of my powers, more favourable than that which grew as it were from 'the agony and bloody sweat' of intellectual travail; surely I must feel that in some manner, either I am mistaken in believing that I have any talent at all, or you in the selection of the specimens of it.

"Yet after all, I cannot but be conscious in much of what I write, of an absence of that tranquillity which is the attribute and accompaniment of power. This feeling alone would make your kind and wise admonitions, on the subject of the economy of intellectual force, valuable to me. And if I live, or if I see any trust in coming years, doubt not but that I shall do something, whatever it may be, which a serious and earnest estimate of my powers will suggest to me, and which will be in every respect accommodated to their utmost limits.”

END OF THE REVOLT OF ISLAM.
PREFAE.

The Greek tragic writers, in selecting as their subject any portion of their national history or mythology, employed in their treatment of it a certain arbitrary discretion. They by no means conceived themselves bound to adhere to the common interpretation, or to imitate in story, as in title, their rivals and predecessors. Such a system would have amounted to a resignation of those claims to preference over their competitors which incited the composition. The Agamemnonian story was exhibited on the Athenian theatre with as many variations as dramas.

I have presumed to employ a similar license. The "Prometheus Unbound" of Eschylus supposed the reconciliation of Jupiter with his victims as the price of the disclosure of the danger threatened to his empire by the consummation of his marriage with Thetis. Thetis, according to this view of the subject, was given in marriage to Peleus, and Prometheus, by the permission of Jupiter, delivered from his captivity by Hercules. Had I framed my story on this model, I should have done no more than have attempted to restore the lost drama of Eschylus; an ambition, which, if my preference to this mode of treating the subject had incited me to cherish, the recollection of the high comparison such an attempt would challenge me might well abate.

But, in truth, I was averse from a catastrophe so feeble as that of reconciling the Champion with the Oppressor of mankind. The moral interest of the fable, which, is so powerfully sustained by the sufferings and endurance of Prometheus, would be annihilated if we could conceive of him as unsaying his high language and quailing before his successful and perfidious adversary. The only imaginary being resembling in any degree Prometheus, is Satan: and Prometheus is, in my judgment, a more poetical character than Satan, because, in addition to courage, and majesty, and firm and patient opposition to omnipotent force, he is susceptible of being described as exempt from the taints of ambition, envy, revenge, and a desire for personal aggrandizement, which, in the Hero of Paradise Lost, interfere with the interest. The character of Satan engenders in the mind a pernicious casuistry which leads us to weigh his faults with his wrongs, and to excuse the former because the latter exceed all measure. In the minds of those who consider that magnificent fiction with a religious feeling, it engenders something worse. But Prometheus is, as it were, the type of the highest perfection of moral and intellectual nature, impelled by the purest and the truest motives to the best and noblest ends.

This Poem was chiefly written upon the mountainous ruins of the Baths of Caracalla, among the flowery glades, and thickets of odoriferous blossoming trees, which are extended in ever-winding labyrinthins upon its immense platforms and dizzy arches suspended in the air. The bright blue sky of Rome, and the effect of the vigorous awakening of spring in that divinest climate, and the new life with which it drenches the spirits even to intoxication, were the inspiration of this drama.

The imagery which I have employed will be found, in many instances, to have been drawn from the operations of the human mind, or from those external actions by which they are expressed. This is unusual in modern poetry, although Dante and Shakspeare are full of instances of the same kind: Dante indeed more than any other poet, and with greater success. But the Greek poets, as writers to whom no resource of awakening the sympathy of their contemporaries was unknown, were in the habitual use of this power; and it is the study of their works (since a higher merit would probably be denied me), to which I am willing that my readers should impute this singularity.

One word is due in candour to the degree in which the study of contemporary writings may have tinged my composition, for such has been a topic of censure with regard to poems far more popular, and, indeed, more deservedly popular, than mine. It is impossible that any one who inhabitsthe same age with such writers as those who stand in the foremost ranks of our own, can conscientiously assure himself that his language and tone of thought may not have been modified by the study of the productions of those extraordinary intellects. It is true, that, not the spirit of their genius, but the forms in which it has manifesteditself, are due less to the peculiarities of their own minds than to the peculiarity of the moral and intellectual condition of the minds among which they have been produced. Thus a number of writers possesses the form, whilst they want the spirit of those whom, it is alleged, they imitate; because the former is the immediate endowment of the age in which they live, and the latter must be the uncommunicated lightning of their own minds.

The peculiar style of intense and comprehensive imagery which distinguishes the modern literature of England, has not been, as a general power, the product of the imitation of any particular writer. The mass of
dost the oldest and most oppressive form of the Christian 
cloud of mind is discharging its collected lightning, and 
and forerunners of some unimagined change in our 
ever be remembered, a republican, and a bold inquirer 
ment of the same spirit: the sacred Milton was, lot it 
religion. We owe Milton to the progress and develop 
our own age are, we have reason to suppose, the compani 
sthe greatest writers of the golden age of our literature to that 
fervid awakening of the public mind which shook to 
the equilibrium between institutions and opinions is 
now restoring, or is about to be restored.

As to imitation, poetry is a mimetic art. It creates, 
but it creates by combination and representation. 
Poetical abstractions are beautiful and new, not 
be the portions of which they are composed had 
exist in the mind of man, or in nature, 
became the whole produced by their combination 
has some intelligible and beautiful analogy with those 
ures of emotion and thought, and with the contemp 
yr condition of them: one great poet is a master 
iece of nature, which another not only ought to study 
but must study. He might as wisely and as easily 
den which another mind should no longer be the mirror 
of all that is lovely in the visible universe, as exclude 
from his contemplation the beautiful which exists in 
the writings of a great contemporary. The pretence 
of doing it would be a presumption in any but the 
greatest; the effect, even in him, would be strained, 
unnatural, and ineffectual. A poet is the combined 
product of such internal powers as modify the nature 
of others; and of such external influences as excite 
and sustain these powers; he is not anc, but both. 
Every man's mind is, in this respect, modified by all 
objects of nature and art; by every word and every 
suggestion which he ever admitted to act upon his con 
sciousness; it is the mirror upon which all forms are 
lected, and in which they compose one form. Poets, 
other than philosophers, painters, sculptors, 
musicians, are, in one sense, the creators, and, in 
another, the creators, of their age. From this sub 
ject the loftiest do not escape. There is a similarity 
between Homer and Hesiod, between Eschylus and Euripides, between Virgil and Horace, between Dante 
and Petrarch, between Shakspeare and Fletcher, 
between Dryden and Pope; each has a generic resem 
blance under which their specific distinctions are 
arranged. If this similarity be the result of imitation, I am willing to confess that I have imitated.

Let this opportunity be conceded to me of acknow 
ledging that I have, what a Scotch philosopher charac 
teristically terms, "a passion for reforming the world: " 
what passion incited him to write and publish his book, 
e to explain. For my part, I had rather be 
dammed with Plato and Lord Bacon, than go to heaven 
with Paley and Malthus. But it is a mistake to sup 
pose that I dedicate my poetical compositions solely to 
the direct enforcement of reform, or that I consider 
them in any degree as containing a reasoned system on 
the theory of human life. Didactic poetry is my abor 
rence; nothing can be equally well expressed in prose 
that is not tedious and supererogatory in verse. My 
purpose has hitherto been simply to familiarise the 
highly refined imagination of the more select classes 
of poetical readers with beautiful idealisms of moral 
excellence; aware that until the mind can love, and 
admire, and trust, and hope, and endure, reasoned 
principles of moral conduct are seeds cast upon the 
highway of life, which the unconscious passenger tramp 
es into dust, although they would bear the harvest 
of his happiness. Should I live to accomplish what I 
purpose, that is, produce a systematical history of what 
appear to me to be the genuine elements of human 
society, let not the advocates of injustice and supersti 
tion flatter themselves that I should take Eschylus 
rather than Plato as my model.

The having spoken of myself with unaffected free 
don will need little apology with the candid; and let 
the uncandid consider that they injure me less than 
their own hearts and minds by misrepresentation. 
Whatever talents a person may possess to amuse and 
instruct others, be they ever so inconsiderable, he is 
yet bound to exert them: if his attempt be ineffectual, 
et the punishment of an unaccomplished purpose have 
been sufficient; let none trouble themselves to hest 
the dust of oblivion upon his efforts; the pile they 
rise will betray his grave, which might otherwise have 
been unknown.

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**DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.**

**PROMETHEUS.**

**DEMIGODGON.**

**JUPITER.**

**VAPEX.**

**APOLLO.**

**MERCURY.**

**HERCULES.**
ACT I.

SCENE, a Ravine of Icy Rocks in the Indian Caucasus. Prometheus is discovered bound to the Precipice. Pan- theans and Lovers are seated at his feet. Time, Night. During the Scene, Morning slowly breaks.

PROMETHEUS.

MONARCH of Gods and Demons, and all Spirits
But One, who throng those bright and rolling worlds
Which Thou and I alone of living things
Behold with sleepless eyes! regard this Earth
Made multitudinous with thy slaves, whom thou
Requiest for knee-worship, prayer, and praise,
And toil, and hecatombs of broken hearts,
With fear and self-contempt and barren hope.

Whilst me, who am thy foe, eyeless in hate,
Hast thou made reign and triumph, to thy scorn,
O'er mine own misery and thy vain revenge.

Three thousand years of sleep-unsheltered hours,
And moments aye divided by keen pangs
Till they seemed years, torture and solitude,
Scorn and despair,— these are mine empire.

More glorious far than that which thou surveyest
From thine unenvied throne, O, Mighty God!

Almighty, had I deigned to share the shame
Of thine illtyranny, and hung not here
Nailed to this wall of eagle-baffling mountain,
Black, wintry, dead, unmeasured; without herb,
Insect, or beast, or shape or sound of life.

Ah me, alas! pain, pain ever, for ever!
No change, no pause, no hope! Yet I endure.

I ask the Earth, have not the mountains felt?
I ask yon Heaven, the all-beholding Sun,
Has it not seen I The Sea, in storm or calm,
Heaven's ever-changing Shadow, spread below,
Have its deaf waves not heard my agony!

Ah me! alas, pain, pain ever, for ever!
The crawling glaciers pierce me with the spears
Of their moon-freezing crystals; the bright chains
Eat with their burning cold into my bones.

Heaven's winged hound, polluting from thy lips
His beak in poison not his own, tears up
My heart; and shapeless sights come wandering by,
The ghastly people of the realm of dream,
Mocking me: and the Earthquake-fiends are charged
To wrench the rivets from my quivering wounds
When the rocks split and close again behind:—
While from their loud abysses howling throng
The geniuses of the storm, urging the rage
Of whirlwind, and afflict me with keen hail.

And yet to me welcome is day and night,
Whether one breaks the hoar frost of the morn,
Or starry, dim, and slow, the other climbs
The leaden-coloured east; for then they lead
The wingless, crawling hours, one among whom
—As some dark Priest hails the reluctant victim—
Shall drag thee, cruel King, to kiss the blood
From these pale feet, which then might trample thee
If they disdained not such a prostrate slave.

Disdain! Ah no! I pity thee. What ruin
Will hunt thee undefended through the wide
Heaven?

How will thy soul, cloven to its depth with terror,
Gape like a hell within! I speak in grief,

Not exultation, for I hate no more,
As then ere misery made me wise. The curse
Once breathed on thee I would recall. Ye
Mountains,
Whose many-voiced Echoes, through the mist
Of cataracts, flung the thunder of that spell!
Ye icy Springs, stagnant with wrinkling frost,
Which vibrated to hear me, and then crept
Shuddering through India! Thou serenest Air,
Through which the Sun walks burning without
beams!

And ye swift Whirlwinds, who on poised wings
Hung mute and moveless o'er yon hushed abyss,
As thunder, louder than your own, made rock
The orbed world! If then my words had power,
Though I am changed so that aught evil wish
Is dead within; although no memory be
Of what is hate, let them not lose it now!

What was that curse! for yo all heard me speake.

FIRST VOICE: (from the mountains.)
Thrice three hundred thousand years
O'er the Earthquake's couch we stood:
Oft, as men convulsed with fears,
We trembled in our multitude.

SECOND VOICE: (from the springs.)
Thunderbolts had parched our water,
We had been stained with bitter blood,
And had run mute, 'mid shrieks of slaughter,
Through a city and a solitude.

THIRD VOICE: (from the air.)
I had clothed, since Earth uprose,
Its wastes in colours not their own;
And oft had my serene repose
Been cloven by many a rending groan.

FOURTH VOICE: (from the whirlwinds.)
We had soared beneath these mountains
Unresting ages; nor had thunder,
Nor yon volcano's flaming fountains,
Nor any power above or under
Ever made us mute with wonder.

FIRST VOICE.
But never bowed our snowy crest
As at the voice of thine unrest.

SECOND VOICE.
Never such a sound before
To the Indian waves we bore.
A pilot asleep on the howling sea
Leaped up from the deck in agony,
And heard, and cried, "Ah, woe is me!"
And died as mad as the wild waves be.

THIRD VOICE.
By such dread words from Earth to Heaven
My still realm was never riven:
When its wound was closed, there stood
Darkness o'er the day like blood.
FOURTH VOICE.
And we shrank back: for dreams of ruin
To frozen caves our flight pursuing
Made us keep silence—thus—and thus—
Though silence is as hell to us.

THE EARTH.
The tongueless Caverns of the craggy hills
Cried, "Misery!" then; the hollow Heaven replied,
"Misery!" And the Ocean's purple waves,
Climbing the land, howled to the lashing winds,
And the pale nations heard it, "Misery!"

PROMETHEUS.
I hear a sound of voices: not the voice
Which I gave forth. Mother, thy sons and thou
Scorn him, without whose all-enduring will
Beneath the fierce omnipotence of Jove,
Both they and thou had vanished, like thin mist
Unrolled on the morning wind. Know ye not me,
The Titan! He who made thy agony
The barrier to your else all-conquering foe!
Oh, rock-embosomed lawns, and snow-fed streams,
Now seen athwart foggy vapours, deep below,
Through whose o’ershadowing woods I wandered
With Asia, drinking life from her loved eyes;
Why scornsthe spirit which informs ye, now
To commune with me? me alone, who checked,
As one who checksa fiend-drawn charioteer,
The falsehood and the force of him who reigns
Supreme, and with the groans of pinning slaves
Fills your dim glens and liquid wildnesses:
Why answer ye not, still! Brethren!

THE EARTH.
They dare not.
PROMETHEUS.
Who dares? for I would hear that curse again.
Ha! what an awful whisper rises up!
Tis scarce like sound: it tinges through the frame
As lightning tingles, hovering ere it strike.
Speak, Spirit! from thine inorganic voice
I only know that thou art moving near
And love. How cursed I him!

THE EARTH.
I am the Earth,
Thy mother: she within whose stony veins,
To the last fibre of the loftiest tree
Whose thin leaves trembled in the frozen air,
Joy ran, as blood within a living frame,
When thou didst from her bosom, like a cloud
Of glory, arise, a spirit of keen joy!
And at thy voice her pining sons uplifted
Their prostrate brows from the polluting dust,
And our almighty Tyrant with fierce dread
Grew pale, until his thunder chained thee here.
Then, see those million worlds which burn and roll
Grew perishing, their inhabitants beheld
My sphered light wave in wide Heaven; the sea
Was lifted by strange tempest, and new fire
From earthquake-ripped mountains of bright snow
Shook its portentous hair beneath Heaven’s frown;
Lightning and inundation vexed the plains;
Blue thistles bloomed in cities; foodless toads
Within voluptuous chambers panting crawled;
When Plague had fallen on man, and beast, and worm,
And Famine; and black light on herb and tree;
And in the corn, and vines, and meadow-grass,
Teemed ineradicable poisonous weeds
Draining their growth, from my wan breast was dry
With grief; and the thin air, my breath, was stained
With the contagion of a mother’s hate
Breathed on her child’s destroyer; aye, I heard
Thy curse, the which, if thou rememberest not,
Yet my innumerable seas and streams,
Mountains, and caves, and winds, and yon wide air,
And the inarticulate people of the dead,
Preserve, a treasured spell. We meditate
In secret joy and hope those dreadful words
But dare not speak them.

PROMETHEUS.
Venerable mother!
All else who live and suffer take from thee
Some comfort; flowers, and fruits, and happy sounds,
And love, though fleeting; these may not be mine.
But mine own words, I pray, deny me not.

THE EARTH.
They shall be told. Ere Babylon was dust,
The Magus Zoroaster, my dead child,
Met his own image walking in the garden.
That apparition, sole of men, he saw.
For know there are two worlds of life and death:
One that which thou beholdest; but the other
Is underneath the grave, where do inhabit
The shadows of all forms that think and live
Till death unite them and they part no more;
Dreams and the light imaginings of men,
And love, though fleeting; these may not be mine.
But mine own words, I pray, deny me not.

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The shadows of all forms that think and live
Till death unite them and they part no more;
Dreams and the light imaginings of men,
And love, though fleeting; these may not be mine.
But mine own words, I pray, deny me not.
The curse which all remember. Call at will
Thine own ghost, or the ghost of Jupiter,
Hades or Typhon, or what mightier Gods
From all-prolific Evil, since thy ruin
Have sprung, and trampled on my prostrate sons.

Ask, and they must reply: so the revenge
Of the Supreme may sweep through vacant shades,
As rainy wind through the abandoned gate
Of a fallen palace.

PROMETHEUS.

Mother, let not aught
Of that which may be evil, pass again
My lips, or those of aught resembling me.
Phantasm of Jupiter, arise, appear!

IONE.

My wings are folded o'er mine ears:
My wings are crossed o'er mine eyes:
Yet through their silver shade appears,
And through their lulling plumes arise,
A Shape, a throng of sounds;
May it be no ill to thee
O thou of many wounds!
Near whom, for our sweet sister's sake,
Ever thus we watch and wake.

PANTHEA.

The sound is of whirlwind underground,
Earthquake, and fire, and mountains cloven;
The shape is awful like the sound,
Clothed in dark purple, star-inwoven.
A sceptre of pale gold
To stay steps proud, over the slow cloud
His veined hand doth hold.
Cruel he looks, but calm and strong,
Like one who does, not suffers wrong.

PHANTASM OF JUPITER.

Why have the secret powers of this strange world
Driven me, a frail and empty phantom, hither
On direst storms! What unaccustomed sounds
Are hovering on my lips, unlike the voice
With which our pallid race hold ghastly talk
In darkness! And, proud sufferer, who art thou

PROMETHEUS.

Tremendous Image! as thou art must be
He whom thou shadowest forth. I am his foe,
The Titan. Speak the words which I would hear,
Although no thought inform thine empty voice.

THE EARTH.

Listen! And though your echoes must be mute,
Grey mountains, and old woods, and haunted springs,
Prophectic caves, and isle-surrounding streams,
Rejoice to hear what yet ye cannot speak.

PHANTASM.

A spirit seizes me and speaks within:
It tears me as fire tears a thunder-cloud.

PANTHEA.

See, how he lifts his mighty looks, the Heaven
Darkens above.

IONE.

He speaks! O shelter me!

PROMETHEUS.

I see the curse on gestures proud and cold,
And looks of firm defiance, and calm hate,
And such despair as mocks itself with smiles,
Written as on a scroll: yet speak: Oh, speak!

PHANTASM.

Fiend, I defy thee! with a calm, fixed mind,
All that thou canst inflict I bid thee do;
Foul Tyrant both of Gods and Human-kind,
One only being shalt thou not subdue.

Rain then thy plagues upon me here,
Ghastly disease and frenzizing fear;
And let alternate frost and fire
Eat into me, and be thine ire
Lightnings, and cutting hail, and legioned forms
Of furies, driving by upon therowning storms.

Ay, do thy worst. Thou art omnipotent.
O'er all things but thyself I gave thee power,
And my own will. Be thy swift mischiefs sent
To blast mankind, from onothereal tower.
Let thy malignant spirit move
In darkness over those I love:
On me and mine I implicate
The utmost torture of thy hate;
And thus devote to sleepless agony,
This undying head while thou must reign on high.

But thou, who art the God and Lord: O, thou
Who fillest with thy soul this world of woe,
To whom all things of Earth and Heaven do bow
In fear and worship: all-prevailing foe!

I curse thee! let a sufferer's curse
Clasp thee, his torturer, like remorse!
Thy Infinity shall be
A robe of envenomed agony;
And thine Omnipotence a crown of pain,
To cling like burning gold round thy dissolving brain.

Heap on thy soul, by virtue of this curse,
Ill deeds, then be thou damned, beholding good;
Both infinite as is the universe,
And thou, and thy self-torturing solitude.
An awful image of calm power
Though now thou sittest, let the hour
Come, when thou must appear to be
That which thou art internally.
And after many a false and fruitless crime,
Scorn track thy lagging fall through boundless space
And time.

PROMETHEUS.

Were these my words, O Parent!

THE EARTH.

They were thine.

PROMETHEUS.

Itdoth repent me: words are quick and vain;
Grief for awhile is blind, and so was mine.
I wish no living thing to suffer pain.

THE EARTH.

Misery, Oh misery to me,
That Jove at length should vanquish thee.
Wail, howl aloud, Land and Sea,
The Earth's rent heart shall answer ye.
Howl, Spirits of the living and the dead,
Your refuge, your defence lies fallen and vanquished.

FIRST ECHO.

Lies fallen and vanquished!

SECOND ECHO.

Fallen and vanquished!
Fear not: 'tis but some passing spasm,
The Titan is unvanquished still.
But see, where through the azure chasm
Of yon forked and snowy hill
Trampling the slant winds on high
With golden-sandalled feet, that glow
Under plumes of purpled dye,
Like rose-ensanguined ivory,
A Shape comes now,
Stretching on high from his right hand
A serpent-cinctured wand.

Tis Jove's world-wandering herald, Mercury.
And who are those with hydra trees
And iron wings that climb the wind,
Whom the frowning God represses
Like vapours steaming up behind,
Clanging loud, an endless crowd—
These are Jove's tempest-walking hounds,
Whom he gluts with groans and blood,
When charioted on sulphurous cloud
He bursts Heaven's bounds.

Are they now led, from the thin dead
On new pangs to be fed?
The Titan looks as ever, firm, not proud.
Ha! I scent life!
Let me but look into his eyes!
The hope of torturing him smells like a heap
Of corpses, to a death-bird after battle.
Darest thou delay, O Herald! take cheer, Hounds
Of Hell: what if the Son of Maia soon
Should make us food and sport— who can please long
The Omnipotent

Back to your towers of iron,
And gnash beside the streams of fire, and wait
Your foodless teeth. Geryon, arise! and Gorgon,
Chimera, and thou Sphinx, subtlest of fiends,
Who ministered to Thebes Heaven's poisoned wine,
Unnatural love, and more unnatural hate:
These shall perform your task.

Oh, mercy! mercy! We die with our desire: drive us not back!
Crouch then in silence.
To thee unwilling, most unwillingly
I come, by the Great Father's will driven down,
To execute a doom of new revenge.
Alas! I pity thee, and hate myself
That I can do no more; aye from thy sight
Returning, for a season, heaven seems hell,
PROMETHEUS UNBOUND.

MERCURY.
Yet pause, and plunge
Into Eternity, where recorded time,
Even all that we imagine, age on age,
Seems but a point, and the reluctant mind
Flags, wearily in its unending flight
Till it sink, dizzy, blind, lost, shelterless;
Perchance it has not numbered the slow years
Which thou must spend in torture, unreprieved!

PROMETHEUS.
Perchance no thought can count them, yet they pass.

MERCURY.
If thou might'st dwell among the Gods the while,
Lapped in voluptuous joy!

PROMETHEUS.
I would not quit
This bleak ravine, these unrepentant pains.

MERCURY.
Alas! I wonder at, yet pity thee.

PROMETHEUS.
Pity the self-despising slaves of Heaven,
Not me, within whose mind sits peace serene,
As light in the sun, throne'd: how vain is talk!
Call up the fiends.

IONE.
O, sister, look! White fire
Has cloven to the roots you huge snow-loaded cedar;
How fearfully God's thunder now echoes behind!

MERCURY.
I must obey his words and thine: alas!
Most heavily remorse hang at my heart!

PANTHEA.
See where the child of Heaven, with winged feet,
Runs down the slanted sunlight of the dawn.

IONE.
Dear sister, close thy plumes over thine eyes
Lest thou behold and die: they come: they come
Blackening the birth of day with countless wings,
And hollow under their feet, like death.

Immortal Titan!
FIRST FURY. Prometheus!
SECOND FURY. Champion of Heaven's slaves!
THIRD FURY. We are the ministers of pain and fear,
And disappointment, and mistrust, and hate,
And clinging crime; and as lean dogs pursue (fawn
Through wood and lake some struck and sobbing
We track all things that weep, and bleed, and live,
When the great King betrays them to our will.

Oh! many fearful natures in one name,
I know ye; and these lakes and echoes know
The darkness and the clangour of your wings.
But why more hideous than your loathed selves
Gather ye up in legions from the deep!

SECOND FURY.
We knew not that: Sisters, rejoice, rejoice!

PROMETHEUS.
Can aught exult in its deformity?

SECOND FURY.
The beauty of delight makes lovers glad,
Gazing on one another: so are we.
As from the rose which the pale priestess kneels
To gather for her festal crown of flowers
The aerial crimson falls, flushing her cheek,
So from our victim's destined agony
The shade which is our form invests us round,
Else we are shapeless as our mother Night.

PROMETHEUS.
I laugh your power, and his who sent you here,
To lowest scorn. Pour forth the cup of pain.

FIRST FURY.
Thou thinkest we will rend thee bone from bone,
And nerve from nerve, working like fire within!

PROMETHEUS.
Can aught exult in its deformity!

SECOND FURY.
The beauty of delight makes lovers glad,
Gazing on one another: so are we.

CHORUS OF FURIES.
From the ends of the earth, from the ends of the earth,
Where the night has its grave and the morning its birth,
Come, come, come!
Come, come, come!
Leavethe bed, low, cold, and red,
Strewed beneath a nation dead;
Leavethe hatred, as in ashes
Fire is left for future burning:
When ye stir it, soon returning:
Leave the self-contempt implanted
In young spirits, sense enchanted,
Misery's yet unkindled fuel:
Leave Hell's secrets half enchanted
To the maniac dreamer: cruel
More than ye can be with hate
Is he with fear.

Come, come, come!
We are steaming up from Hell's wide gate,
And we burthen the blasts of the atmosphere,
But vainly we toil till ye come here.

Sister, I hear the thunder of new wings.

PANTHEA.
These solid mountains quiver with the sound
Even as the tremulous air: their shadows make
The space within my plumes more black than night.

SECOND FURY.
From wide cities, famine-wasted;
GRoans half heard, and blood untasted;

THIRD FURY.
Kingly conclaves, stern and cold,
Where blood with gold is bought and sold;

FOURTH FURY.
Kingly conclaves, stern and cold,
Where blood with gold is bought and sold;

FIFTH FURY.

A FURY.
Speak not; whisper not: I know all that ye would tell,
But to speak might break the spell
Which must bend the Invincible,
The stem of thought;
He yet defies the deepest power of Hell.

Tear the veil!

ANOTHER FURY.
It is torn.

CHORUS.
The pale stars of the morn
Shine on a misery, dire to be borne.
Dost thou faint, mighty Titan! We laugh thee to scorn.
Dost thou boast the clear knowledge thou wak'nest for man!
Then was kindled within him a thirst which outran
Those perishing waters; a thirst of fierce fever,
Hope, love, doubt, desire, which consume him for ever.
One came forth of gentle worth,
Smiling on the sanguine earth:

His words outlived him, like swift poison
Withering up truth, peace, and pity.
Look! where round the wide horizon
Many a million-peopled city
Vomits smoke in the bright air.
Mark that outcry of despair!
'Tis his mild and gentle ghost
Wailing for the faith he kindled:
Look again! the flames almost
To a glow-worm's lamp have dwindled:
The survivors round the embers
Gather in dread.

Joy, joy, joy!
Past ages crowd on thee, but each one remembers;
And the future is dark, and the present is spread
Like a pillow of thorns for thy slumberless head.

SEMICHORUS I.
Drops of bloody agony flow
From his white and quivering brow.
Grant a little respite now:
See a disenchanted nation
Springs like day from desolation;
To truth its state is dedicate,
And Freedom leads it forth, her mate;
A legion band of linked brothers,
Whom Love calls children—

SEMICHORUS II.
'Tis another's.
See how kindred murder kin!
'Tis the vintage-time for death and sin.
Blood, like new wine, bubbles within:
Till Despair smothereth
The struggling world, which slaves and tyrants win.

IONS.
Hark, sister! what a low yet dreadful groan
Quite unsuppressed is tearing up the heart
Of the good Titan, as storms tear the deep,
And beasts hear the sea moan in inland caves.
Darest thou observe how the fiends torture him?

PANTHEA.
Alas! I looked forth twice, but will no more.
IONS.
What didst thou see?

PANTHEA.
A woful sight: a youth
With patient looks nailed to a crucifix.
IONS.
What next?

PANTHEA.
The heaven around, the earth below
Was peopled with thick shapes of human death,
All horrible, and wrought by human hands,
And some appeared the work of human hearts,
For men were slowly killed by frowns and smiles:
And other sights too foul to speak and live
Were wandering by. Let us not tempt worse fear
By looking forth: those groans are grief enough.

FURY.
Behold an emblem: those who do endure
Deep wrongs for man, and scorn, and chains, but heap
Thousandfold torment on themselves and him.
PROMETHEUS.

Rometheus.

Remit the anguish of that lighted stare;  
Close those wan lips: let that thorn-wounded brow  
Stream not with blood; it mingles with thy tears!  
Fix, fix those tortured orbs in peace and death,  
So thy sick throes shake not that crucifix,  
So those pale fingers play not with thy gore.  

Oh, horrible! Thy name I will not speak,  
The wise, the mild, the lofty, and the just,  
Whom thy slaves hate for being like to thee,  
Some hunted by fouls lies from their heart's home,  
Some linked to corpses in unwholesome cells:  
Some — Hear I not the multitude laugh loud?—  
Impaled in lingering fire: and mighty realms  
Float by my feet, like sea-uprooted isles,  
Whose sons are kneaded down in common blood  
By the red light of their own burning homes.

Fury.

Blood thou canst see, and fire; and canst hear groans:  
Worse things unheard, unseen, remain behind.  

Fury.

In each human heart terror survives  
The ravin it has gorged: the loftiest fear  
Hypocrisy and custom make their minds  
The fans of many a worship, now outworn.  
They dare not devise good form an's estate,  
The good want power, but to weep barren tears.  
The powerful good want: worse need for them.  
The wise want love; and those who love want  
And all best things are thus confused to ill.  

Fury.

Thou pitiest them. I speak no more!  

PROMETHEUS.

Ah woe! Ah woe!  
I close my tearless eyes, but seemore clear  
Thy works within my woe-illumined mind,  
Thou subtle tyrant! Peace is in the grave.  
The grave hides all things beautiful and good:  
I am a God and cannot find it there,  
Nor would I seek it: for, though dread revenge,  
This is defeat, fierce king! not victory.  
The sights with which thou torturest gird my soul  
With new endurance, till the hour arrives  
When they shall be no types of things which are.  

PANTHEA.

Ah woe! Alas! pain, pain ever, for ever!  
I close my tearless eyes, but see more clear  
Thy words are like a cloud of winged snakes;  
And yet I pity those they torture not.

PANTHEA.

Look, sister, where a troop of spirits gather,  
Like flocks of clouds in spring's delightful weather,  
Thrashing in the blue air!  

IONE.

And see! more come,  
Like fourain-vapours when the winds are dumb,  
That climb up the ravine in scattered lines.  
And hark! is it the music of the pines?  
Is it the lake? Is it the waterfall?

CHORUS OF SPIRITS.

From unremembered ages we  
Gentle guides and guardians be  
Of heaven-oppressed mortality!  
And we breathe, and sicken not,  
The atmosphere of human thought:  
Be it dim, and dank, and gray,  
Travelled o'er by dying gleams:  
Be it bright as all between  
Cloudless skies and windless streams,  
Silent, liquid, and serene;  
As the birds within the wind,  
As the fish within the wave,  
As the thoughts of man's own mind  
Float through all above the grave:  
We make there our liquid lair,  
Voyaging cloudlike and unspent  
Through the boundless element:  
Thence we bear the prophecy  
Which begins and ends in thee!
SECOND SPIRIT.
A rainbow's arch stood on the sea,
Which rocked beneath, immovably;
And the triumphant storm did flee,
Like a conqueror, swift and proud,
Between with many a captive cloud,
A shapeless, dark and rapid crew,
Each by lightning riven in half:
I heard the thunder hoarsely laugh:
Mighty fleets were strewn like chaff
And spread beneath a hell of death
O'er the white waters. I alit
On a great ship lightning-split,
And speeded hither on the sigh
Of one who gave an enemy
His plank, then plunged aside to die.

THIRD SPIRIT.
I sat beside a sage's bed,
And the lamp was burning red
Near the book where he had fed,
When a Dream with plumes of flame,
To his pillow hovering came,
And I knew it was the same
Which had kindled long ago
Pity, eloquence, and woe;
And the world awhile below
Wore the shade its lustre made.
It has borne me here as fleet
As Desire's lightning feet:
Imo stride it back ere morrow,
Or the sage will wake in sorrow.

FOURTH SPIRIT.
On a poet's lips I slept
Dreaming like a love-adept
In the sound his breathing kept;
Nor seek nor finds he mortal blisses,
But feeds on the aerial kisses
Of shapes that haunt thought's wildernesses.
He will watch from dawn to gloom
The lake-reflected sun illumine
The yellow bees in the ivy-bloom,
Nor heed nor see, what things they be;
But from these create he can
Forms more real than living man,
Nurseries of immortality
One of these awakened me,
And I sped to succour thee.

IONE.
Behold'st thou not two shapes from the east and west
Come, as two doves to one beloved nest,
Two natures of the all-sustaining air,
On swift wings glide down the atmosphere
And, hark! their sweet and voices! 'tis despair
Mingled with love and then dissolved in sound.

PANTHEA.
Canst thou speak, sister? All my words are drowned.

IONE.
Their beauty gives me voice. See how they float
On their sustaining wings of skiey grain,
Orange and azure deepening into gold:
Their soft smiles light the air like a star's fire.

CHORUS OF SPIRITS.
Hast thou beheld the form of Love?

FIFTH SPIRIT.
As over wide dominions
I sped, like some swift cloud that wings the wide
Air's wildernesses,
That planet-crested shape swept by on lightning-braided pinions,
Scattering the liquid joy of life from his ambrosial tresses:
His footsteps paved the world with light; but as I
Past 'twas fading,
And hollow Ruin yawned behind: great sages bound
In madness,
And headless patriots, and pale youths who perished, unprading,
Gleamed in the night. I wandered o'er, till thou,
O King of sadness,
Turned by thy smile the worst I saw to recollected gladness.

SIXTH SPIRIT.
An, sister! Desolation is a delicate thing;
It walks not on the earth, it floats not on the air,
But treads with silent footstep, and fans with silent wing
The tender hopes which in their hearts the best
And gentlest bear;
Who, soothed to false repose by the fanning plumes above,
And the music-stirring motion of its soft and busy feet,
Dream visions of aerial joy, and call the monster,
Love,
And wake, and find the shadow Pain, as he whom
Now we greet.

CHORUS.
Though Ruin now Love's shadow be,
Following him, destroyingly,
On Death's white and winged steed,
Which the fleetest cannot flee,
Trampling down both flower and weed,
Man and beast, and foul and fair,
Like a tempest through the air;
Thou shalt quell this horsemann grim,
Woundless though in heart or limb.

PROMETHEUS.
Spirits! how know ye this shall be?

CHORUS.
In the atmosphere we breathe,
As buds grow red when the snow-storms flee,
From spring gathering up beneath,
Whose wild winds shake the elder-brake,
And the wandering herdsmen know
That the white-thorn soon will blow:
Wisdom, Justice, Love, and Peace,
When they struggle to increase,
Are to us as soft winds be
To shepherd boys, the prophecy
Which begins and ends in thee.

IONE.
Where are the Spirits fled!

PANTHEA.
Only a sense
Remains of them, like the omnipotence
Of music, when the inspired voice and lute
Languish, ere yet the responses are mute,
Which through the deep and labyrinthine soul,
Like echoes through long caverns, wind and roll.
PROMETHEUS UNBOUND.

PROMETHEUS.

How fair these air-born shapes! and yet I feel Most vain all hope but love; and thou art far, Asia! who, when my being overflowed, Wert like a golden chalice to bright wine Which else had sunk into the thirsty dust. All things are still: alas! how heavily This quiet morning weighs upon my heart; Though I should dream I could even sleep with grief, If slumber were denied not. I would fain Be what it is my destiny to be, The saviour and the strength of suffering man, Or sink into the original gulf of things: There is no agony, and no solace left; Earth can console, Heaven can torment no more.

PANTHEA.

Hast thou forgotten one who watchest thee The colddark night, and neversleeps but when The shadow of thy spirit falls on her!

PROMETHEUS.

I said all hope was vain but love: thou lovest.

PANTHEA.

Deeply in truth; but the eastern star looks white. And Asia waits in that far Indian vale The scene of her sad exile; rugged once And desolate and frozen, like this ravine; But now invested with fair flowers and herbs, And haunted by sweet airs and sounds, which flow Among the woods and waters, from the ether

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE I.


ASIA.

From all the blastsof heaven thou hast descended: Yes, like a spirit, like a thought, which makes Unwonted tearsthrong to the hornyeys, And beatings haunt the desolated heart, ascended Which should have learnt repose: thou hast de-

Craddled in tempests; thou dost wake, 0 Spring! O childofmany winds! As suddenly Thou ccmest as thememory ofa dream, Which now is sad because it hath been sweet; Like genius, or like joy which risethup As from the earth, clothingwith goldenclouds The desertofour life.

This is the season, this the day, the hour; At sunrise thou shouldst come, sweet sister mine, Too long desired, too long delaying, come! How likedeath-worms the winglessmoments crawl! The point of one whitestar is quiveringstill Deep inthe orangelight of wideningmorn Beyond the purple mountains: through a chasm Of wind-divided mist the darker lake Reflects it; now it wanes; it gleams again As the waves fade, and as the burning threads Of woven cloud unravel inpale air: 'Tis lost! and throughyon peaksof cloud-likesnow The roseatesun-light quivers: hear I not The Eolian music ofher sea-green plumes Winnowing the crimsondawn?

PANTHEA enters.

I feel, I see Those eyes which burn through smiles that fade in tears, Like stars half-quenched in mists of silver dew. Beloved and most beautiful, who wearest The shadow of that soul by which I live, How late thou art! the sphere of sun had climbed The sea; my heart was sick with hope, before The priceless air felt thy belated plumes.

PANTHEA.

Pardon, great Sister! but my wings were faint With the delight of a remembered dream,
AVraps ere it drinks some cloud of wandering dew
I saw not, heard not, moved not, only felt
His presence flow and mingle through my blood
Till it became his life, and his grew mine,
And I was thus absorbed, and as the rays
Of thought were slowly gathered, I could hear
His voice, whose accents lingered ere they died
Like footsteps of weak melody: thy name
Among the many sounds alone I heard
Of what might be articulate; though still
I listened through the night when sound was none.
Ione wakened then, and said to me:
"Canst thou divine what troubles me to-night?
I always knew what I desired before,
Nor ever found delight to wish in vain.
But now I cannot tell thee what I seek;
I know not; something sweet, since it is sweet
Even to desire; it is thy sport, false sister;
Thou hast discovered some enchantment old,
Whose spells have stolen my spirit as I slept
And mingled it with thine: for when just now
We kissed, I felt within thy parted lips
The sweet air that sustained me, and the warmth
Of the life-blood for loss of which I faint,
Quivered between our intertwining arms."
I answered not, for the Eastern stars grew pale,
But fled to thee.

ASIA.
Thou speakest, but thy words
Are as the air: I feel them not: Oh, lift
Thine eyes, that I may read his written soul!

PANTHEA.
I lift them, though they droop beneath the load
Of that they would express: what canst thou see
But thine own fairest shadow imaged there!

ASIA.
Thine eyes are like the deep, blue, boundless heaven
Contracted to two circles underneath
Their long, fine lashes: dark, far, measureless,
Orb within orb, and line through line inwoven.

PANTHEA.
Why lookest thou as if a spirit passed!

ASIA.
There is a change; beyond their inmost depth
I see a shade, a shape: 'tis He, arrayed
In the soft light of his own smiles, which spread
Like radiance from the cloud-surrounded morn.
Prometheus, it is thine! depart not yet:
Say not those smiles that we shall meet again
Within that bright pavilion which their beams
Shall build on the waste world! The dream is told.
What shape is that between us? its rude hair
Roughens the wind that lifts it, its regard
Is wild and quick, yet 'tis a thing of air,
For through its grey robe gleams the golden dew
Whose stars the moon has quenched not.

DREAM.
Follow! Follow!

PANTHEA.
It is mine other dream.

ASIA.
It disappears.

PANTHEA.
It passes now into my mind. Methought
As we sat here, the flower-infolding buds
Burst on you lightning-blasted almond tree,
We like swift from the white Scythian wilderness
A wind swept forth drinking the Earth with frost:
I looked, and all the blossoms were blown down;
But on each leaf was stamped, as the blue bells
Of Hyacinth tell Apollo's written grief,
O, follow, follow!

ASIA.
As you speak, your words
Fill, pause by pause, my own forgotten sleep
With shapes. Methought among the lawns together
We wandered, under the young grey dawn,
And multitudes of dense white fleecy clouds
Were wandering in thick flocks along the mountains
Shepherded by the slow, unwilling wind;
And the white dew on the new-bladed grass,
Just piercing the dark earth, hung silently;
And there was more which I remember not:
But on the shadows of the morning clouds,
Athwart the purple mountain slope, was written
Follow, O, follow! As they vanished by,
And on each herb, from which Heaven's dew had fallen,
The like was stamped, as with a withering fire,
A wind arose among the pines: it shook
The clinging music from their boughs, and then
Low, sweet, faint sounds, like the farewell of ghosts,
Were heard: Oh, follow, follow, follow me!
And then I said, "Panthæa, look on me."
But in the depth of those beloved eyes
I still saw, follow, follow!

ECHO.
Follow, follow!

PANTHEA.
The crags, this clear spring morning, mock our
As they were spirit-tongued.

ASIA.
It is some being
Around the crags. What fine clear sounds! O, list!

ECHOES (unseen).
Echoes we: listen we.
We cannot stay:
As dew-stars glisten
Then fade away—
Child of Ocean!

ASIA.
Hark! Spirits, speak. The liquid responses
Of their aerial tongues yet sound.

PANTHEA.
I hear.

ECHOES.
O, follow, follow!
As our voice receth
Through the caverns hollow,
Where the forest spreadeth;

O, follow, follow!
Through the caverns hollow,
As the song floats thout pursue,
Where the wild bee never flew,
PROMETHEUS UNBOUND.

Through the noon-tide darkness deep,
By the odour-breathing sleep
Of faint night-flowers, and the waves
At the fountain-lighted caves,
While our music, wild and sweet,
Mocks thy gently falling feet,
Child of Ocean!

Shall we pursue the sound? It grows more faint
And distant.

PANTHEA.

List! the strain floats nearer now.

ECHOES.

In the world unknown
Sleeps a voice unspoken;
By thystepalone
Can its rest be broken;
Child of Ocean!

How the notes sink upon the ebbing wind!

ECHOES.

O, follow, follow!
Through the caverns hollow,
As the song floats thou pursue,
By the woodland noon-tide dew;
By the forest, lakes, and fountains,
Through the many-folded mountains;
To the rents, and gulfs, and chasms,
Where the Earth reposed from spasms,
On the day when He and thou
Parted, to coming now;
Child of Ocean!

SCENE II.

A Forest, intermingled with Rocks and Caverns. Asia and Panthea pass into it. Two young Fauns are sitting on a Rock, listening.

SEMICHORDS I. OF SPIRITS.

The path through which that lovely twain
Have past, by cedar, pine, and yew,
And each dark tree that ever grew,
Is curtained out from Heaven's wide blue;
Nor sun, nor moon, nor wind, nor rain,
Can pierce its interwoven bowers,
Nor aught, save where some cloud of dew,
Drifted along the earth-creeping breeze,
Between the trunks of the hoar trees,
Hangs each a pearl in the pale flowers
Of the green laurel, blown anew;
And bends, and then fades silently,
One frail and fair anemone:
Or when some star of many a one
That climbs and wandersthrough steep night,
Has found the cleft through which alone
Beams fall from high those depths upon
Ere it is borne away, away,
By the swift Heavens that cannot stay,
It scatters drops of golden light,
Like lines of rain that ne'er unite:
And the gloom divine is all around;
And underneath is the moosy ground.

SEMICHORDS II.

There the voluptuous nightingales,
Are awake through all the broad noon-day,
When one with bliss or sadness fails,
And through the windless ivy-boughs,
Sick with sweet love, drops dying away
On its mate's music-panting bosom;
Another from the swinging blossom,
Watching to catch the languid close
Of the last strain, then lifts on high
The wings of the weak melody,
Till some new strain of feeling bear
The song, and all the woods are mute;
When there is heard through the dim air
The rush of wings, and rising there
Like many a lake-surrounded flute,
Sounds overflow the listener's brain
So sweet, that joy is almost pain.

SEMICHORDS I.

There those enchanted eddies play
Of echoes, music-tongued, which draw,
By Demogorgon's mighty law,
With melting rapture, or sweet awe,
All spirits on that secret way;
As inland boats are driven to Ocean
Down streams made strong with mountain-thaw;
And first there comes a gentle sound
To those in talk or slumber bound,
And waves the destined, soft emotion
Attracts, impels them; those who saw
Say from the breathing earth behind
There streams a plume-uplifting wind
Which drives them on their path, whilethey
Believe their own swift wings and feet
The sweet desires within obey:
And so they float upon their way,
Until, still sweet, but loud and strong,
The storm of sound is driven along,
Sucked up and hurrying: as they fleet
Behind, its gathering billows meet
And to the fatal mountain bear
Like clouds amid the yielding air.

FIRST FAUN.

Canst thou imagine where those spirits live
Which make such delicate music in the woods?
We haunt within the least frequented caves
And closest coverts, and we know these wilds,
Yet never meet them, though we hear them oft:
Where may they hide themselves?

SECOND FAUN.

'Tis hard to tell:
I have heard those more skilled in spirits say,
The bubbles, which enchantment of the sun
Sucks from the pale faint water-flowers that pave
The oozy bottom of clear lakes and pools,
Are the pavilions where such dwell and float
Under the green and golden atmosphere
Which noon-tide kindles through the woven leaves;
And when these burst, and the thin fiery air,
The which they breathed within those lucent domes,
Ascends to flow like meteors through the night,
They ride on them, and rein their headlong speed,
And bow their burning crests, and glide in fire
Under the waters of the earth again.

FIRST FAUN.

If such live thus, have others other lives,
Under pink blossoms or within the bells
PROMETHEUS UNBOUND.

Of meadow flowers, or folded violets deep,
Or on their dying odours, when they die,
Or on the sunlight of the sphere of dew!

SECOND FAUN.

Ay, many more which we may well divine.
But should we stay to speak, noontide would come,
And shiver Silenus find his goats undrawn,
And grudge to sing those wise and lovely songs
Of Fate, and Chance, and God, and Chaos old,
And Love, and the chained Titan's woful doom.
And how he shall be loosed, and make the earth
One brotherhood: delightful strains which cheer
Our solitary twilights, and which charm
To silence the unenvying nightingales.

SCENE III.

A Pinnacle of Rock among Mountains. Asia and PANTHEA.

PANTHEA.

Hither the sound has borne us— to the realm
Of Demogorgon, and the mighty portal,
Like a volcano's meteor-breathing chasm,
Whence the oracular vapour is hurled up
Which lonely men drink wandering in their youth,
And call truth, virtue, love, genius, or joy,
That maddening wine of life, whose dregs they drain
To deep intoxication; and uplift,
Like Maenads who cry loud, Evoe! Evoe!
The voice which is contagion to the world.

ASIA.

Fit throne for such a Power! Magnificent!
How glorious art thou, Earth! And if thou be
The shadow of some spirit lovelier still,
Though evil stain its work, and it should be
Like its creation, weak yet beautiful,
I could fall down and worship that and thee.
Even now my heart adoreth: Wonderful!
Look, sister, ere the vapour dim thy brain:
Beneath is a wide plain of billowy mist,
As a bake, paving in the morning sky,
With azure waves which burst in silver light,
Some Indian vale. Behold it, rolling on
llDder the curdling winds, and islanding
The peak whereon we stand, midway, around,
Encircled by the dark and blooming forests,
Dim twilight-lawns and stream-illumined caves,
And wind-enchanted shapes of wandering mist;
And far on high the keen sky-cleaving mountains,
From icy spires of sun-like radiance fling
The dawn, as lifted Ocean's dazzlingspray,
From some Atlantic islet scattered up,
Spangles the wind with lamp-like water-drops.
The vale is girdled with their walls, a howl
Of Cataracts from their thaw-cloven ravines
Satiate the listening wind, continuous, vast,
Aspeed as silence. Hawk! the rushing snow!
The sun-awakened avalanche! whose mass
Thrice sifted by the storm, had gathered there
Flake after flake, in heaven-defying minds
As thought by thought is piled, till some great truth
Is loosened, and the nations echo round,
Shaken to their roots, as do the mountains now.

PANTHEA.

Look how the gusty sea of mist is breaking
In crimson foam, even at our feet! it rises
As Ocean at the enchantment of the moon
Round foodless men wrecked on some oozy isle.

ASIA.

The fragments of the cloud are scattered up;
The wind that lifts them disentwines my hair;
Its billows now sweep o'er my eyes; my brain
Grows dizzy; I see shapes within the mist.

PANTHEA.

A countenance with beckoning smiles: there burns
An azure fire within its golden locks!
Another and another: hark! they speak!

SONG OF SPIRITS.

To the deep, to the deep,
Down, down!
Through the shade of sleep,
Through the cloudy strife
Of Death and of Life;
Through the veil and the bar
Of things which seem and are,
Even to the steps of the remotest throne,
Down, down!

While the sound whirls around,
Down, down!
As the fawn draws the hound,
As the lightning the vapour,
As a weak moth the taper;
Death, deepair; love, sorrow;
Time both; to-day, to-morrow;
As steel obeys the spirit of the stone,
Down, down!

Through the grey, void abyss,
Down, down!
Where the air is no prism,
And the moon and stars are not,
And the cavern-crags wear not
The radiance of Heaven,
Nor the gloom to Earth given,
Where there is one pervading, one alone,
Down, down!

In the depth of the deep
Down, down!
Like veiled lightning asleep,
Like the spark nursed in embers,
The last look Love remembers,
Like a diamond, which shines
On the dark wealth of mines.
A spell is treasured but for thee alone.
Down, down!

We have bound thee, we guide thee;
Down, down!
With the bright form beside thee;
Resist not the weakness;
Such strength is in meekness
That the Eternal, the Immortal,
Must unloose through life's portal
The snake-like Doom coiled underneath his
By that alone. [throne
SCENE IV.
The Cave of Demogorgon. Asia and Panthea.

PANTHEA.
What veiled form sits on that ebon throne?

ASIA.
The veil has fallen.

PANTHEA. I see a mighty darkness
Filling the seat of power, and rays of gloom
Dart round, as light from the meridian sun,
Ungazed upon and shapeless; neither limb,
Nor form, nor outline; yet we feel it is
A living spirit.

DEMOGORGON.
Ask what thou wouldst know.

ASIA. What canst thou tell!

DEMOGORGON. All things thou dar’st demand.

ASIA. Who made the living world?

DEMOGORGON. God.

ASIA. Who made all
That it contains! thought, passion, reason, will,
Imagination?

DEMOGORGON. God : Almighty God.

ASIA. Who made that sense which, when the winds of
In rarest visitation, or the voice
Of one beloved heard in youth alone,
Fills the faint eyes with falling tears which dim
The radiant looks of unbewailing flowers,
And leaves this peopled earth a solitude
When it returns no more!

DEMOGORGON. Merciful God.

ASIA. And who made terror, madness, crime, remorse,
Which from the links of the great chain of things,
To every thought within the mind of man
Sway and drag heavily, and each one reels
Under the load towards the pit of death;
Abandoned hope, and love that turns to hate;
And self-contempt, bitterer to drink than blood;
Pain, whose unheeded and familiar speech
Is howling, and keen shrieks, day after day;
And Hell, or the sharp fear of Hell!

DEMOGORGON. He reigns.

ASIA. Utter his name: a world pining in pain
Asks but his name: curses shall drag him down.

DEMOGORGON. He reigns.

ASIA. I feel, I know it: who?

DEMOGORGON. He reigns.

ASIA. Who reigns! There was the Heaven and Earth at
first,
And Light and Love; then Saturn, from whose throne
Time fell, an ominous shadow: such the state
Of the earth’s primal spirits beneath his sway.
As the calm joy of flowers and living leaves
Before the wind or sun has withered them
And semi-vital worms; but he refused
The birthright of these living, knowledge, power,
The skill which wields the elements, the thought
Which pierces this dim universe like light,
Self-empire, and the majesty of love;
For thirst of which they faintened. Then Prometheus
Gave wisdom, which is strength, to Jupiter,
And with this law alone, “Let man be free,”
Clothed him with the dominion of wide Heaven.
To know nor faith, nor love, nor law; to be
Omnipotent but friendless is to reign;
And Jove now reigned; for on the race of man
First famine, and then toil, and then disease,
Strife, wounds, and ghastly death unseen before,
Fell, and the unseasonable seasons drove,
With alternating shafts of frost and fire,
Their shelterless, pale tribes to mountain caves:
And in their desert hearts fierce wants he sent,
And mad disquietudes, and shadows idle
Of unreal good, which levied mutual war,
So ruinning the lair wherein they raged.
Prometheus saw, and waked the legioned hopes
Which sleep within folded Elysian flowers,
Nepenthe, Moly, Amaranth, fadeless blooms,
That they might hide with thin and rainbow wings
The shape of Death; and Love he sent to bind
The disunited tendrils of that vine
Who bears the wine of life, the human heart;
And he tamed fire which, like some beast of prey,
Most terrible, but lovely, played beneath
The frown of man; and tortured to his will
Iron and gold, the slaves and signs of power,
And gems and poisons, and all subtlest forms
Hidden beneath the mountains and the waves.
He gave man speech, and speech created thought,
Which is the measure of the universe;
And Science struck the thrones of earth and heaven,
Which shook, but fell not; and the harmonious mind
Poured itself forth in all-prophetic song;
And music lifted up the listening spirit
Until it walked, exempt from mortal care,
Godlike, over the clear billows of sweet sound;
And human hands first mimicked and then mocked
With moulded limbs more lovely than its own
The human form, till marble grew divine,
And mothers, gazing, drank the love men see
Reflected in their race, behold, and perish.
He told the hidden power of herbs and springs,
And Disease drank and slept. Death grew like sleep;
He taught the implicated orbits woven
Of the wide-wandering stars; and how the sun
Changes his lair, and by what secret spell
The pale moon is transformed, when her broad eye
Cases not on the interlunar sea:
He taught to rule, as life directs the limbs,
The tempest-winged chariots of the Ocean,
And the Celt knew the Indian. Cities then
Were built, and through their snow-like columns
The warm winds, and the azure ethereal, flowed
And the blue sea and shadowy hills were seen.
Such, the alleviations of his state,
Prometheus gave to man, for which he hangs
Withering in destined pain: but who rains down
Evil, the immedicable plague, which, while
Man looks on his creation like a God,
And sees that it is glorious, drives him on
The wreck of his own will, the scorn of earth,
The outcast, the abandoned, the alone!
Not Jove: while yet his frown shook heaven, aye,
His adversary from adamantine chains
When cursed him, he trembled like a slave. Declare
Who is his master! Is he too a slave!

All spirits are enslaved which serve things evil:
Thou knowest if Jupiter be such or no.

Whom called'st thou God?

I spoke but as ye speak,
For Jove is the supreme of living things.

Who is the master of the slave?

If the abysm
Could vomit forth its secrets. But a voice
Is wanting, the deep truth is imageless;
For what would it avail to bid thee gaze
On the revolving world? What to bid speak
Fate, Time, Occasion, Chance and Change! To these
All things are subject but eternal Love.

So much I asked before, and my heart gave
The response thou hast given; and of such truths
Each to itself must be the oracle.

One more demand; and do thou answer me
As my own soul would answer, did it know
That which I ask. Prometheus shall arise
Henceforth the sun of this rejoicing world:
When shall the destined hour arrive!

These are the immortal Hours,
Of whom thou didst demand. One waits for thee.

The rocks are cloven, and through the purple night
I see cars drawn by rainbow-winged steeds
Which trample the dim winds: in each there stands
A wild-eyed charioteer urging their flight.
Some look behind, as fiends pursued them there,
And yet I see no shapes but the keen stars:
Others, with burning eyes, lean forth, and drink
With eager lips the wind of their own speed,
As if the thing they loved fled on before,
And now, even now, they clasped it. Their bright
Stream like a comet's flashing hair: they all
Sweep onward.

These are the immortal Hours,
Of whom thou didst demand. One waits for thee.

A spirit with a dreadful countenance
Checks its dark chariot by the craggy gulf.
Unlike thy brethren, ghastly charioteer, I spoke but as ye speak,
Who art thou! Whither wouldst thou bear me?

I am the shadow of a destiny
More dread than is my aspect; ere you planet
Has set, the darkness which descends with me
Shall wrap in lastignight heaven's kingless throne.

What meanest thou!

That terrible shadow floats
Up from its throne, as may the lurid smoke
Of earthquake-ruined cities o'er the sea.
Lo! it ascends the car; the coursers fly
Terrorised: watch its path among the stars
Blackening the night!

Thus I am answered: strange!

See, near the verge, another chariot stays;
An ivory shell inlaid with crimson fire,
Which comes and goes within its sculptured rim
Of delicate strange traceries; the young spirit
That guides it has the dove-like eyes of hope;
How its soft smiles attract the soul! as light
Lures winged insects through the lampless air.

My coursers are fed with the lightning,
They drink of the whirlwind's stream,
And when the red morning is brightning
They bathe in the fresh sunbeam;
They have strength for their swiftness I deem,
Then ascend with me, daughter of Ocean.

I desire: and their speed makes night kindle;
I fear: they outstrip the Typhoon;
Ere the cloud piled on Atlas can dwindle
We encircle the earth and the moon:
We shall rest from long labours at noon:
Then ascend with me, daughter of Ocean.

The Car pauses within a Cloud on the Top of a snowy
Mountain.

On the brink of the night and the morning
My coursers are wont to respire;
But the Earth has just whispered a warning
That their flight must be swifter than fire:
They shall drink the hot speed of desire!

Alas! it could not.

Oh Spirit! pause, and tell whence is the light
Which fills the cloud! the sun is yet unseen.

The sun will rise not until noon. Apollo
Is held in heaven by wonder; and the light
Which fills this vapour, as the aerial hue
Of fountain-gazing roses fills the water,
Flows from thy mighty sister.

Yes, I feel—
PROMETHEUS UNBOUND.

ASIA.
What is it with thee, sister! Thou art pale.

PANTHEA.
How thou art changed! I dare not look on thee; I feel but see thee not. I scarce endure The radiance of thy beauty. Some good change Is working in the elements, which suffer Thy presence thus unveiled. The Nereids tell That on the day when the clear hyaline Was cloven at thy uprise, and thou didst stand Within a veined shell, which floated on Over the calm floor of the crystal sea, Among the Egean isles, and by the shores Which bear thy name; love, like the atmosphere Of the sun’s fire filling the living world, Burst from thee, and illumined earth and heaven And the deep ocean and the sunless caves And all that dwells within them; till grief cast Eclipse upon the soul from which it came: Such art thou now; nor is it I alone, Thy sister, thy companion, thine own chosen one, But the whole world which seeksthy sympathy. Hearest thou not sounds i’the air which speak the love Of all articulate beings? Fcelest thou not The inanimate winds enamoured of thee! List! [Music.

ASIA.
Thy words are sweeter than aught else but his Whose echoes they are: yet all love is sweet, Given or returned. Common as light is love, And its familiar voice wearsies not ever. Like the wide heaven, the all-sustaining air, It makes the reptile equal to the God: They who inspire it most are fortunate, As I am now; but those who feel it most Are happier still, after long sufferings, As I shall soon become.

PANTHEA.
List! Spirits, speak.

voice (in the air, singing).
Life of Life! thy lips enkindle With their love the breath between them; And thy smiles before they dwindle Make the cold air fire; then screen them In those looks, where whose eyes Faints, entangled in their masques.

Child of Light! thy limbs are burning Through the vest which seems to hide them; As the radiant lines of morning Through the clouds, ere they divide them; And this atmosphere divinest Shrouds thee wheresoe’er thou shininest.

Fair are others; none beholds thee, But thy voice sounds low and tender Like the fairest, for it folds thee From the sight, that liquid splendour, And all feel, yet see thee never, As I feel now, lost for ever!

Lamp of Earth! where'er thou movest Its dim shapes are clad with brightness, And the souls of whom thou lovest Walk upon the winds with lightness, Till they fail, as I am failing, Dizzy, lost, yet unbewailing!

ASIA.
My soul is an enchanted boat, Which, like a sleeping swan, doth float Upon the silver waves of thy sweet singing; And thine doth like an angel sit Beside the helm conducting it, Whilst all the winds with melody are ringing. It seems to float ever, for ever, Upon that many-winding river, Between mountains, woods, abysses, A paradise of wildernesses! Till, like one in slumber bound, Borne to the ocean, I float down, around, Into a sea profound, of ever-spreadling sound.

Meanwhile thy spirit lifts its pinions In music’s most serene dominions; Catching the winds that fan that happy heaven. And we sail on, away, afar, Without a course, without a star, But, by the instinct of sweet music driven; Till through Elysian garden islets By thee, most beautiful of pilots, Where never mortal pinnaces glided, The boat of my desire is guided: Realms where the air we breathe is love, Which in the winds on the waves doth move, Harmonising this earth with what we feel above.

We have passed Age’s icy caves, And Manhood’s dark and tossling waves, And Youth’s smooth ocean, smiling to betray: Beyond the glassy gulfs we flee Of shadow-peopled Infancy, Through Death and Birth, to a diviner day; A paradise of vaulted bowers Lit by downward-gazing flowers, And watery paths that wind between Wildernesses calm and green, Peopled by shapes too bright to see, And rest, having beheld; somewhat like thee; Which walk upon the sea, and chant melodiously!

END OF THE SECOND ACT.
ACT III.

SCENE I.

PROMETHEUS UNBOUND.

Hymn. JUPITER on his Throne; THETIS and the other Deities assembled.

JUPITER.
Ye congregated powers of heaven, who share
The glory and the strength of him ye serve,
Rejoice! henceforth I am omnipotent.
All else had been subdued to me; alone
The soul of man, like unextinguished fire,
Yet burns towards heaven with fierce reproach,
And lamentation, and reluctant prayer,
Hurling up insurrection, which might make
Our antique empire insecure, though built
On eldest faith, and hell's coeval, fear;
And though my curses through the pendulous air,
Like snow on herbage peaks, fall flake by flake,
And cling to it; though under my wrath's night
It climb the crags of life, step after step,
Which wound it, as ice wounds unsandalled feet,
I yet remains supreme o'er misery,
Aspiring, unrepressed, yet soon to fall:
Even now have I begotten a strange wonder,
That fatal child, the terror of the earth,
Who waits but till the destined hour arrive,
Bearing from Demogorgon's vacant throne
The dreadful might of ever-living limbs
Which clothed that awful spirit unbeheld,
To redeem and trample out the spark.
Pour forth heaven's wine, Idtean Ganymede,
And let it fill the Decadal cups like fire,
And from the flower-inwoven soil divine,
Ye all-triumphant harmonies arise,
As dew from earth under the twilight stars:
Drink! be the nectar circling through your veins
The soul of joy, ye ever-living Gods,
Till exultation burst in one wide voice
Likemusic from Elysian winds.

And thou
Ascend beside me, veiled in the light
Of the desire which makes thee one with me,
Thetis, bright image of eternity!
When thou didst cry, "Insuberable might!
God! Spare me! I sustain not the quick flames,
The penetrating presence; all my being,
Like him whom the Numidian seps did thaw
Into a dew with poison, is dissolved,
Sinking through its foundations:" even then
Two mighty spirits, mingling made a third
Mightier than either, which, unbodied now,
Between us floats, felt, although unbeheld,
Waiting the incarnation, which ascends,
(Hear ye the thunder of the fiery wheels
Griding the winds!) from Demogorgon's throne.
Victory! victory! Fielest thou not, O world!
The earthquake of his chariot thundering up
Olympus!

The Car of the Hour arrives. DEMOGORGON descends and moves towards the Throne of JUPITER.

A whole shape, what art thou! Speak!

SCENE II.

The Mouth of a great River in the Island Atlantis. OCEAN is discovered reclining near the Shore; APOLLO stands beside him.

OCEAN.
He fell, thou sayest, beneath his conqueror's frown!

APOLLO.
Ay, when the strife was ended which made dim
The orb I rule, and shook the solid stars,
The terrors of his eye illumined heaven
With sanguine light, through the thick ragged skirts
Of the victorious darkness, as he fell:
Like the last glare of day's red agony,
Which, from a rent among the fiery clouds,
Burns far along the tempest-wrinkled deep.

OCEAN.
He sunk to the abyss! To the dark void!
Fortunate isles; and from their glassy thrones
Beats on his struggling form, which sinks at length
Round many peopled continents, and round
Beneath the uplifting winds, like plains of corn
Swayed by the summer air; my streams will flow
Prone, and the aerial ice clings over it.

By the white lightning, while the ponderous hail
Tracking their path no more by blood and groans,
Borne down the rapid sunset's ebbing sea;
With garlands pied and starry sea-flowers or ovens,
Their wavering limbs borne on the wind-like stream,
With that white star, its sightless pilot's crest,
Henceforth the fields of Heaven-reflecting sea
The small, clear, silver lute of the young Spirit
The floating bark of the light-laden moon
The shadow of fair ships, as mortals see
Which are my realm, will heave, unstained with blood,
Of slavery and command; but by the light
Of wave-reflected flowers, and floating odours,
It is the unpastured sea hungering for calm.

Peace, monster; I come now. Farewell.

SCENE III.

Most glorious among spirits! thus doth strength
To wisdom, courage, and long-suffering love,
And thee, who art the form they animate,
Minister like a slave.

Thy gentle words
Are sweeter even than freedom long desired
And long delayed.
Asia, thou light of life,
Shadow of beauty unbeheld; and ye,
Fair sister nymphs, who made long years of pain
Sweet to remember, through your love and care;
Henceforth we will not part. There is a cave,
All overgrown with trailing odorous plants,
Which curtail out the day with leaves and flowers,
And paved with veined emerald, and a fountain,
Leaps in the midst with an awakening sound.

From its curved roof the mountain's frozen tears,
Like snow, or silver, or long diamond spires,
Hang downward, raining forth a doubtful light:
And there is heard the ever-moving air,
Whispering without from tree to tree, and birds,
And bees; and all around are mossy seats,
And the rough walls are clothed with long soft grass;
A simple dwelling, which shall be our own;
Where we will sit and talk of time and change,
As the world ebbs and flows, ourselves unchanged.
What can hide man from mutability?
And if ye sigh, then will I smile; and thou,
Ione, shall chant fragments of sea-music,
Until I weep, when ye shall smile away
The teardrops brought, which yet were sweet to shed.
We will entangle buds and flowers and beams
Where the bright moon feeds, and fountain's foam,
And music soft, and mild, free, gentle voices,
That sweetest music, such as spirits love.

And I shall gaze not on the deeds which make
My mind obscure with sorrow, as eclipse
Darkens the sphere I guide; but list, I hear
The small, clear, silver lute of the young Spirit
That sits in the morning star.

Thou must away;
Thy steeds will pause at even, till when farewell:
The loud deep calls me home even now to feed it
With azure calm out of the emerald urns
Which stand for ever full beside my throne.
Behold the Nereids under the green sea,
Their waving limbs borne on the wind-like stream,
Their white arms lifted over their streaming hair
With garlands tied and starry sea-flowers crowns,
Fastening to grace their mighty sister's joy.

It is the unpastured sea hungering for calm.
Peace, monster; I come now. Farewell.

SCENE III.

PHORAEUS, HERCULES, IONE, the EARTH,
SPRINTS, ASIA, and PANTHEA, born in the Car with the
SPRINTS of the HOUR.

Hercules unbinds Prometheus, who descends.

Hercules.

Most glorious among spirits! thus doth strength
To wisdom, courage, and long-suffering love,
And thee, who art the form they animate,
Minister like a slave.

Prometheus.

Thy gentle words
Are sweeter even than freedom long desired
And long delayed.
Asia, thou light of life,

APOLLO.

An eagle so caught in some bursting cloud
On Caucasus, his thunder-baffled wings
Entangled in the whirlwind, and his eyes
Which gazed on the undazzling sun, now blinded
By the white lightning, while the ponderous hail
Beats on his struggling form, which sinks at length.

Hereafter the fields of Heaven-reflecting sea
Which are my realm, will heave, unstained with blood,
Of slavery and command; but by the light
Of wave-reflected flowers, and floating odours,
And music soft, and mild, free, gentle voices,
That sweetest music, such as spirits love.

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Prometheus.

Thy gentle words
Are sweeter even than freedom long desired
And long delayed.
Asia, thou light of life,
SPIRIT.
It seems in truth the fairest shell of Ocean:
Its sound must be at once both sweet and strange.

PROMETHEUS.
Go, borne over the cities of mankind
Thou shalldwell beside our cave.
And as thy chariot cleavesthe kindling air,
Thou art immortal, and this tongue is known
Who lethis lamp out in old time with gazing
Of fruit, suspended in their own green heaven,
As thou hast borne it most triumphantly
And faithless faith, such as Jove kept with thee;
With a serener light and crimson air
Intense, yet soft, the rocks and woods around;
Which star the winds with points of coloured light,
Into the grave, across the night of life,
With feet unwet, unwearied, undelaying,
That guides the earth through heaven. From afar
Of Bacchic Nysa, Maenad-haunted mountain,
Made my heart mad, and those that did inhale it
Not earthly: how it glides
Who takes the lifeshe gave, even as a mother,
Who makes itschariot of a foggy cloud,
Or makes itschariot of a foggy cloud,
With love, which is as fire, sweet daughter mine,
The crag-builtdeserts of the barren deep,
Or walks through fieldsor cities while men sleep,
Of the calm moonbeams, a softinfluencemild,
Was panted forth in anguish whilst thy pain
As thou haspanted it anew
Bat to the uncommunicatuig dead.
For such isthat within thine own. Run, wayward,
Are twined with itsfairhair! how, as it moves,
Or o'er the mountain tops, or down the rivers,
A violet'sexhalation, and it fills
A light, likea green star, whose emerald beams
A violet's exhalation, and it fills
Like the soft waving wings of noonday dreams,
A light, likea green star, whose emerald beams
And speaking, and were oracular, and lured
Who die I speak,
A light, likea green star, whose emerald beams
And speaking, and were oracular, and lured
That guides the earth through heaven. From afar
And speaking, and were oracular, and lured
The lamp which was thine emblem; even as those
At this far goal of Time. Depart, farewell.
Who die I speak,
As thou hast borne it most triumphantly
With a serener light and crimson air
Have thou art immortal, and this tongue is known
With a serener light and crimson air
As thou hast borne it most triumphantly

THE EARTH.
I hear, I feel;
Wondering at all it sees. Before Jove reigned
It loved our sister Asia, and it came
Each leisure hour to drink the liquid light
Out of her eyes, for which it said it thirsted
As one hit by a dipper, and with her
It made its childish confidence, and told her
All it had known or seen, for it saw much,
Yet idly reasoned what it saw; and called her,
For whence it sprung it knew not, nor do I,
Mother, dear mother.

THE SPIRIT OF THE EARTH (running to Asia).
Mother, dearest mother;
May I then talk with thee as I was wont?
May I then hide my eyes in thy soft arms,
After thy looks have made them tired of joy!
May I then play beside thee the long noons,
When work is none in the bright silent air!

ASIA.
I love thee, gentlest being! and henceforth
Can cherish thee unenvied. Speak, I pray:
Thy simple talk once solaced, now delights.

SPIRIT OF THE EARTH.
Mother, I am grown wiser, though a child
Cannot be wise like thee, within this day;
And happier too; happier and wise both. [Worms,
Thou knowest that toads, and snakes, and loathly
And venomous and malicious beasts, and boughs
That bore ill berries in the woods, were ever
A hindrance to my walks o'er the green world;
And that, among the haunts of humankind,
Hard-featured men, or with proud, angry looks,
Or cold, staid gait, or false and hollow smiles,
Or the dull sneer of self-loved ignorance,
Or other such foul masks, with which ill thoughts
And venomous and malicious beasts, and boughs' the abysses of the sky and the wide earth,
Such mighty change, as I had felt within,
Expressed in outward things; but soon I looked,
And first was disappointed not to see
As one bit by a dipper, and with her
Out of her eyes, for which it said it thirsted
Each leisure hour to drink the liquid light
Into the mysteries of the universe:
Dizzy as with delight I floated down,
Winston the lightsome air with languid plumes,
My couriers sought their birth-place in the sun,
Where they henceforth will live exempt from toil,
Pasturing flowers of vegetable fire.
And where my moonlike car will stand within
A temple, gazed upon by Phidian forms
And where my moonlike car will stand within
Pasturing flowers of vegetable fire.

PROMETHEUS.
I cannot tell my joy, when o'er a lake
Upon a drooping bough with nightshade twined,
I saw two azure halcyons clinging downward
And thinning one bright bunch of amber berries,
With quick long beaks, and in the deep there lay
Those lovely forms imaged as in a sky;
So with my thoughts full of these happy changes,
We meet again, the happiest change of all.

ASIA.
And never will we part, till thy chaste sister,
Who guides the frozen and inconstant moon,
Will look on thy more warm and equal light
Till her heart thaw like flakes of April snow,
And love thee.

SPIRIT OF THE EARTH.
What! as Asia loves Prometheus!

ASIA.
Peace, wanton! thou art yet not old enough.
Think ye by gazing on each other's eyes
To multiply your lovely selves, and fill
With spherical fires the interlunar air?

SPIRIT OF THE EARTH.
Nay, mother, while my sister trims her lamp
'Tis hard I should go darkling.

ASIA.
Listen; look:
The Spirit of the Hour enters.

PROMETHEUS.
We feel what thou hast heard and seen: yet speak.

SPIRIT OF THE HOUR.
Soon as the sound had ceased whose thunder filled
The abysses of the sky and the wide earth,
There was a change: the impalpable thin air
Out of their rest, and gathered in the streets,
Looking in wonder up to Heaven, while yet
The music pealed along. I hid myself
Within a fountain in the public square,
Where I lay like the reflex of the moon
Seen in a wave under green leaves; and soon
Those ugly human shapes and visages
Of which I spoke as having wrought me pain,
Past floating through the air, and fading still
Into the winds that scattered them; and those
From whom they past seem mild and lovely forms
After some foul disguise had fallen, and all
Were somewhat changed, and after brief surprise
And vanity of dreams and dwelling, all
Went to their sleep again: and when the dawn
Came, wouldst thou think that toads, and snakes,
Could e'er be beautiful! yet so they were, [and efs,
And that with little change of shape or hue:
All things had put their evil nature off:
None fawned, none trampled; hate, disdain, or fear,
Self-love or self-contempt, on human brows
No more inscribed, as o'er the gate of hell,
"All hope abandon ye who enter here;"
None frown'd, none trembled, none with eager fear
Gazed on another's eye of cold command,
Until the subject of a tyrant's will
Became, worse fate, the abject of his own,
Which spurred him, like an outspent horse, to death.
None wrought his lips in truth-entangling lines
Which smiled the lie his tongue disdained to speak;
None, with firm sneer, trod out in his own heart
The sparks of love and hope till there remained
Those bitter ashes, a soul self-consumed,
And the wretch crept a vampire among men,
Infesting all with his own hideous ill;
None talked that common, false, cold, hollow talk
Which makes the heart deny the yes it breathes,
Yet question that unmeant hypocrisy
With such a self-mistrust as has no name.
And women, too, frank, beautiful, and kind
As the free heaven which rains fresh light and dew
On the wide earth, past; gentler radiant forms,
From custom's evil taint exempt and pure;
Speaking the wisdom once they could not think,
Looking emotions once they feared to feel,
And changed to all which once they dared not be,
Yet being now, made earth like heaven; nor pride,
Nor jealousy, nor envy, nor ill-shame,
The bitterest of those drops of treasured gall,
Spoilt the sweet taste of the nepenthe, love.

Thrones, altars, judgment seats, and prisons;
And beside which, by wretched men were borne
Sceptres, tiaras, swords, and chains, and tomes
Of reasoned wrong, glossed on by ignorance,
Were like those monstrous and barbaric shapes,
The ghosts of a no more remembered fame,
Which, from their unworn obelisks, look forth
In triumph o'er the palaces and tombs [round
Of those who were their conquerors: mouldering
Those imaged to the pride of kings and priests,
A dark yet mighty faith, a power as wide
As is the world it wasted, and are now
But an astonishment; even so the tools
And emblems of its last captivity,
Amid the dwellings of the peopled earth,
Stand, not o'erthrown, but unregarded now.
And those foul shapes, abhorred by god and man,
Which, under many a name and many a form,
Strange, savage, ghastly, dark, and execrable,
Were Jupiter, the tyrant of the world;
And which the nations, panic-stricken, served
With blood, and hearts broken by long hope, and
Dragged to his altars soiled and garlandless, [love
And slain among men's unreclaiming tears, [hate,
Flattering the thing they feared, which fear was
Frown, mouldering fast, o'er their abandoned
shrines:
The painted veil, by those who were, called life,
Which mimicked, as with colours idly spread,
All men believed and hoped, is torn aside;
The loathsome mask has fallen, the man remains
Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, but man
Equal, unclassed, tribeless, and nationless,
Exempt from awe, worship, degree, the king
Over himself; just, gentle, wise: but man
Passionless; no, yet free from guilt or pain,
Which were, for his will made or suffered them,
Nor yet exempt, though ruling them like slaves,
From chance, and death, and mutability,
The clogs of that which else might overshoot
The loftiest star of unascended heaven,
Pinnacled dim in the intense inane.

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT IV.

BEER.—A part of the Forest near the Cave of PROMETHEUS.
PANTHEA and IONE are sleeping: they waken gradually
During the first Song.

VOICE OF UNSEEN SPIRITS.
The pale stars are gone!
For the sun, their swift shepherd
To their foldsthem compelling,
In the depths of the dawn,
Hastes, in meteor-eclipsing array, and they flee
Beyond his blue dwelling,
As fawns flee the leopard,
But where are ye?

A Train of dark Forms and Shadows passes by confusedly
singing.
Here, oh! here:
We bear the bier
Of the Father of many a cancelled year!
Spectres we
Of the dead Hours be,
We bear Time to his tomb in eternity.
Strew, oh! strew
Hair, not yew!

IONE.
What dark forms were they!
PANTHEA.
The past Hours weak and grey,
With the spoil which their toil
Raked together
From the conquest but One could foil.

IONE.
Have they past!
They have past; 
While 'tis said, they are fled:

They outspeeded the blast,
While 'tis said, they are fled:

To the dark, to the past, to the dead.

Whither, oh! whither!

To the dark, to the past, to the dead.

Bright clouds float in heaven,
Dew-stars gleam on earth,
Waves assemble on ocean,
They are gathered and driven
By the storm of delight, by the panic of glee!
They shake with emotion,
They dance in their mirth.

The pine boughs are singing
Old songs with new gladness,
The billows and fountains
Fresh music are flinging,
Like the notes of a spirit from land and from sea;
The stormsmock themountains
With the thunder of gladness,
But where are ye?

What charioteers are these!
Where are their chariots?

The voice of the Spirits of Air and of Earth
Have drawn back the figured curtain of sleep,
Which covered our being and darkened our birth
In the deep.

Oh! below the deep.

A hundred ages we had been kept
Cradled in visions of hate and care,
And each one who waked as his brother slept,
Found the truth—

Worse than his visions were!

We have heard the lute of Hope in sleep;
We have known the voice of Love in dreams,
We have felt the wand of Power, and leap—

As the billows leap in the morning beams!

Weave the dance on the floor of the breeze,
Pierce with song heaven's silent light,
Enchant the day that too swiftly flies,
To check its flight ere the cave of night

Once the hungry Hours were hounds
Which chased the day like a bleeding deer,
And it limped and stumbled with many wounds
Through the nightly dells of the desert year.

But now, oh! weave the mystic measure
Of music, and dance, and shapes of light,
Let the Hours, and the spirits of might and pleasure,
Like the clouds and sunbeams, unite.

See, where the Spirits of the human mind
Wreathe in sweet sounds, in bright veils, approach.

We join the throng
Of the dance and the song,
By the whirlwind of gladness borne along;
As the flying-fish leap
From the Indian deep,
And mix with the sea-birds half-asleep.

Whence come ye, so wild and so fleet,
For sandal of lightning are on your feet,
And your wings are soft and swift as thought,
And your eyes are as love which is veiled not!

We come from the mind
Of human kind,
Which was late so dull, and obscene, and blind;
Now 'tis an ocean
Of clear emotion,
A heaven of serene and mighty motion.

From that deep abyss
Of wonder and bliss,
Whose caverns are crystal palaces;
From those skiey towers
Where Thought's crowned powers
Sit watching your dance, ye happy Hours!

From the dim recesses
Of woven cares and cares,
Where lovers catch ye by your loose tresses;
From the azure isles,
Where sweet Wisdom smiles,
Delaying your ships with her syren wiles.

From the temples high
Of Man's ear and eye,
Roofed over Sculpture and Poesy;
From the murmurings
Of the unsealed springs
Where Science bedews his Dædal wings.

Years after years,
Through blood, and tears,
And a thick hell of hatreds, and hopes, and fears;
We waded and flew,
And the islets were few
Where the bud-blighted flowers of happiness grew.

Our feet now, every palm,
Are sandalled with calm,
And the dew of our wings is a rain of balm;
And, beyond our eyes,
The human love lies,
Which makes all it gaseons Paradise.
CHORUS OF SPIRITS AND HOURS.
Then weave the web of the mystic measure;
From the depths of the sky and the ends of the earth,
Come, swift Spirits of might and of pleasure,
Fill the dance and the music of mirth,
As the waves of a thousand streams rush by
To an ocean of splendour and harmony!

CHORUS OF SPIRITS.
Our spoil is won,
Our task is done,
We are free to dive, or soar, or run;
Beyond and around,
Or within the bound
Which clips the world with darkness round.

And Earth, Air, and Light,
And the Spirit of Might,
Which drives round the stars in their fiery flight;
And Love, Thought, and Breath,
The powers that quell Death,
Wherever we soar shall assemble beneath.

And our singing shall build
In the void’s loose field
A world for the Spirit of Wisdom to wield;
And our work shall be called the Promethean.

CHORUS OF HOURS.
Break the dance, and scatter the song;
Let some depart, and some remain.

SEMICHORUS I.
We, beyond heaven, are driven along:
Us the enchantments of earth retain:

SEMICHORUS II.
Ceaseless, and rapid, and fierce, and free,
With the Spirits which build a new earth and sea,
And a heaven where yet heaven could never be.

SEMICHORUS II.
Solemn, and slow, and serene, and bright,
Leading the Day, and outspeeding the Night,
With the powers of a world of perfect light.

SEMICHORUS I.
We whirl, singing loud, round the gathering sphere,
Till the trees, and the beasts, and the clouds appear
From its chaos made calm by love, not fear.

SEMICHORUS II.
We encircle the ocean and mountains of earth,
And the happy forms of its death and birth
Change to the music of our sweet mirth.

CHORUS OF HOURS AND SPIRITS.
Break the dance, and scatter the song;
Let some depart, and some remain,
Wherever we fly we lead along
In leashes, like star-beams, soft yet strong,
The clouds that are heavy with love’s sweet rain.

PANTHEA.
Ha! they are gone!
IONE.
Yet feel you no delight
From the past sweetness!

PANTHEA.
As the bare green hill
When some soft cloud vanishes into rain,
Laughs with a thousand drops of sunny water
To the unpavilioned sky!

IONE.
Even whilst we speak
New notes arise. What is that awful sound?

PANTHEA.
’Tis the deep music of the rolling world,
Kindling within the strings of the waved air
Aolian modulations.

IONE.
Listen too,
How every pause is filled with under-notes,
Clear, silver, icy, keen awakening tones,
Which pierce the sense, and live within the soul,
As the sharp stars pierce winter’s crystal air
And gaze upon themselves within the sea.

PANTHEA.
But see where, through two openings in the forest
Which hanging branches overcanopy,
And where two runnels of a rivulet,
Between the close moss, violet inwoven,
Have made their path of melody, like sisters
Who part with sighs that they may meet in smiles,
Turning their dear disunion to an isle
Of lovely grief, a wood of sweet sad thoughts;
Two visions of strange radiance float upon
The ocean-like enchantment of strong sound,
Which flows intenser, keener, deeper yet
Under the ground and through the windless air.

IONE.
I see a chariot like that thinnest boat
In which the mother of the months is borne
By ebbing night into her western cave,
When she upsprings from interlunar dreams,
O’er which is curbed an orblike canopy
Of gentle darkness, and the hills and woods
Distinctly seen through that dusky air veil,
Regard like shapes in an enchanter’s glass;
Its wheels are solid clouds, azure and gold,
Such as the genie of the thunder-storm
Pile on the floor of the illumined sea
When the sun rushes under it; they roll
And move and grow as with an inward wind;
Within it sits a winged infant, white
Its countenance, like the whiteness of bright snow,
Its plumes are as feathers of sunny frost,
Its limbs gleam white, through the wind-flowing folds
Of its white robe, woof of setherial pearl.
Its hair is white, the brightness of white light
Scattered in strings; yet its two eyes are heavens
Of liquid darkness, which the Deity
Within seems pouring, as a storm is poured
From jagged clouds, out of their arrowy lashes,
Tempering the cold and radiant air around,
With fire that is not brightness; in its hand
It sways a quivering moon-beam, from whose point
A guiding power directs the chariot's prow
Over its wheeled clouds, which as they roll
Over the grass, and flowers, and waves, wake sounds,
Sweet as a singing rain of silver dew.

PANTHEA.

And from the other opening in the wood
Rushes, with loud and whirlwind harmony,
A sphere, which is as many thousand spheres,
Solid as crystal, yet through all its mass
Flow, as through empty space, music and light:
Ten thousand orbs involving and involved,
Purple and azure, white, green and golden,
Sphere within sphere; and every space between
Peopled with unimaginable shapes,
Such as ghosts dream dwell in the lampless deep,
Yet each inter-transpicuous, and they whirl
Over each other with a thousand motions,
Upon a thousand sightless axles spinning,
And with the force of self-destroying swiftness,
Intensely, slowly, solemnly, roll on,
Kindling with mingled sounds, and many tones,
Loud as the words and music wild.
With mighty whirl the multitudinous orb
Grinds the bright brook into an azure mist
Of elemental subtlety, like light;
The wild odour of the forest flowers,
The music of the living grass and air,
And the wild odor of the forest flowers,
Like one who talks of what he loves in dream.
Amid the changing light of their own smiles,
On its own folded wings, and wavy hair,
Like to a child o'er wearied with sweet toil,
Pillowed upon its alabaster arms,
Round its intense yet self-conflicting speed,
The emerald light of leaf-entangled beams
The music of the living grass and air,
And the wild odor of the forest flowers,
With mighty whirl the multitudinous orb
Kindling with mingled sounds, and many tones,
Upon a thousandsightless axles spinning,
Rushes, with loud and whirlwind harmony,
A sphere, which is as many thousand spheres,
Solid as crystal, yet through all its mass
Flow, as through empty space, music and light:
Ten thousand orbs involving and involved,
Purple and azure, white, green and golden,
Sphere within sphere; and every space between
Peopled with unimaginable shapes,
Such as ghosts dream dwell in the lampless deep,
Yet each inter-transpicuous, and they whirl
Over each other with a thousand motions,
Upon a thousand sightless axles spinning,
And with the force of self-destroying swiftness,
Intensely, slowly, solemnly, roll on,
Kindling with mingled sounds, and many tones,
Loud as the words and music wild.
With mighty whirl the multitudinous orb
Grinds the bright brook into an azure mist
Of elemental subtlety, like light;
The wild odour of the forest flowers,
The music of the living grass and air,
And the wild odor of the forest flowers,
Like one who talks of what he loves in dream.
Amid the changing light of their own smiles,
On its own folded wings, and wavy hair,
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Pillowed upon its alabaster arms,
Round its intense yet self-conflicting speed,
The emerald light of leaf-entangled beams
The music of the living grass and air,
And the wild odor of the forest flowers,
THE MOON.
The snow upon my lifeless mountains
Is loosened into living fountains,
And living shapes upon my bosom move:
Music is in the sea and air,
Winged clouds soar here and there,
And like a storm bursting its cloudy prison
With thunder, and with whirlwind, has arisen
Out of the lampless caves of unimagined being:
With earthquake shock and swiftness making
his hver
Thought's stagnant chaos, unremoved for ever,
Till hate, and fear, and pain, light-vanquished shadows, fleeting,
Leave Man, who was a many-sided mirror,
Who follows a sick beast to some warm cleft
Of rocks, through which the might of healing springs is poured;
Then when it wanders home with rosy smile,
Unconscious, and its mother fears awhile
It is a spirit, then, weeps on her child restored.
Leave Man, even as a leprous child is left,
Who walks a spirit ill to guide, but mighty to obey,
As the sun rules, even with a tyrant's gaze,
Murmuring victorious joy in my enchanted sleep;
As a youth lulled in love-dreams faintly sighing,
Under the shadow of his beauty laying,
Which round his rest a watch of light and warmth doth keep.

THE EARTH.
It interpenetrates my granite mass,
Through tangled roots and trodden clay doth pass,
Into the utmost leaves and delicatest flowers;
Upon the winds, among the clouds 'tis spread,
It wakes a life in the forgotten dead, bowers.
They breathe a spirit up from their obscurest
And like a storm bursting its cloudy prison
With thunder, and with whirlwind, has arisen
Out of the lampless caves of unimagined being:
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Under the shadow of his beauty laying,
Which round his rest a watch of light and warmth doth keep.
PROMETHEUS UNBOUND.

1. a most enamoured maiden,
   Whose weak brain is overladen
   With the pleasure of her love,
   Maniac-like around thee move
   Gazing, an insatiate bride,
   On thy form from every side,
   Like a Maenad, round the cup
   Which Agave lifted up
   In the weird Cadmean forest.
Brother, wheresoe'er thouarest
I must hurry, whirl and follow
Through the heavens wide and hollow,
Sheltered by the warm embrace
Of thy soul from hungry space,
Drinking from thy sense and sight
Beauty, majesty, and might,
As a lover or cameleon
Grows like what it look upon,
As a violet's gentle eye
Gazes on the azure sky
Until its hue grows like what it beholds,
As a grey and watery mist
Glows like solid amethyst
Athough the western mountain it enfolds
When the sun sets sleep
Upon its snow.

THE EARTH.

And the weak day weeps
That it should be so.
O gentle Moon, the voice of thy delight
Falls on me like thy clear and tender light
Soothing the seaman, born the summer night
Through isles for ever calm;
O gentle Moon, thy crystal accents pierce
The caverns of my pride's deep universe,
Charming the tiger joy, whose tramplings fierce
Made wounds which need thy balm.

PANTHEA.

I rise as from a bath of sparkling water,
A bath of azure light, among dark rocks,
. Out of the stream of sound.

IONE.

Ah me! sweet sister,
The stream of sound has ebbed away from us,
And you pretend to rise out of its wave,
Because your words fall like the clear soft dew
Shaken from a bathing wood-nymph's limbs and hair

PANTHEA.

Peace, peace! a mighty Power, which is darkness,
Is rising out of Earth, and from the sky
Is showered like night, and from within the air
Bursts, like eclipse which had been gathered up
Into the pores of sunlight: the bright visions,
Wherein the singing spirits rode and shone,
Gleam like pale meteors through a watery night.

IONE.

There is a sense of words upon mine ear.

PANTHEA.

A universal sound like words: Oh, list!

DEMOGORGON.

Thou, Earth, calm empire of a happy soul,
Sphere of divinest shapes and harmonies,
Beautiful orb! gathering as thou dost roll
The love which paves thy path along the skies:

THE EARTH.

I hear: I am as a drop of dew that dies.

DEMOGORGON.

Thou Moon, which gazest on the nightly Earth
With wonder, as it gazes upon thee;
Whilst each to men, and beasts, and the swift birth
Of birds, is beauty, love, calm, harmony:

THE MOON.

I hear: I am a leaf shaken by thee!

DEMOGORGON.

Ye kings of suns and stars! Demons and Gods,
Ethereal Dominations! who possess
Elysian, windless, fortunate abodes
Beyond Heaven's constellated wilderness:

A VOICE FROM ABOVE.

Our great Republic hear; we are blest, and bless.

DEMOGORGON.

Ye happy dead! whom beams of brightest verse
Are clouds to hide, not colours to portray,
Whether your nature is that universe
Which once ye saw and suffered—

A VOICE FROM BENEATH.

Or as they
Whom we have left, we change and pass away.

DEMOGORGON.

Ye elemental Genii, who have homes
From man's high mind even to the central stone
Of sullen lead; from Heaven's star-fretted domes
To the dull weed some sea-worm battens on:

A CONFUSED VOICE.

We hear: thy words waken Oblivion.

DEMOGORGON.

Spirits! whose homes are flesh: ye beasts and birds,
Ye worms and fish; ye living leaves and buds;
Lightning and wind; and ye untameable herds,
Meteors and mists, which throng air's solitudes.

A VOICE.

Thy voice to us is wind among still woods.

DEMOGORGON.

Man, who wert once a despot and a slave;
A dupe and a deceiver; a decay;
A traveller from the cradle to the grave
Through the dim night of this immortal day:

ALL.

Speak! thy strong words may never pass away.

DEMOGORGON.

This the day, which down the void abyss
At the Earth-born's spell yawns for Heaven's despotism,
And Conquest is dragged captive through the deep;
Love, from its awful throne of patient power
In the wise heart, from the last giddy hour
Of dread endurance, from the slippery, steep,
And narrow verge of crag-like agony, springs
And folds over the world its healing wings.
EDITOR’S NOTE ON PROMETHEUS UNBOUND.

Gentleness, Virtue, Wisdom, and Endurance,
These are the seals of that most firm assurance,
Which bars the pit over Destruction's strength;
And if, with infirm hand, Eternity,
Mother of many acts and hours, should free
The serpent that would clasp her with his length,
These are the spells by which to re-assume
An empire o'er the disentangled doom.

NOTE ON THE PROMETHEUS UNBOUND.
BY THE EDITOR.

On the 12th of March, 1818, Shelley quitted England, never to return. His principal motive was the hope that his health would be improved by a milder climate; he suffered very much during the winter previous to his emigration, and this decided his vacillating purpose. In December, 1817, he had written from Marlow to a friend, saying:

“My health has been materially worse. My feelings at intervals are of a deadly and torpid kind, or awakened to such a state of unnatural and keen excitement, that only to instance the organ of sight, I find the very blades of grass and the boughs of distant trees present themselves to me with microscopic distinctness. Towards evening I sink into a state of lethargy and inanimation, and often remain for hours on the sofa between sleep and waking, a prey to the most painful irritability of thought. Such, with little intermission, is my condition. The hours devoted to study are selected with vigilant caution from among these periods of endurance. It is not for this that I think of travelling to Italy, even if I knew that Italy would relieve me. But I have experienced a decisive pulmonary attack, and although at present it has passed away without any considerable vestige of its existence, yet this symptom sufficiently shows the true nature of my disease to be consumptive. It is to my advantage that this malady is in its nature slow, and, if one is sufficiently alive to its advances, is susceptible of cure from a warm climate. In the event of its assuming any decided shape, it would be my duty to go to Italy without delay. It is not mere health, but life, that I should seek, and that not for my own sake; I feel I am capable of trampling on all such weakness—but for the sake of those to whom my life may be a source of happiness, utility, security, and honour—and to some of whom my death might be all that is the reverse.”

In almost every respect his journey to Italy was advantageous. He left behind friends to whom he was attached, but cares of a thousand kinds, many springing from his lavish generosity, crowded round him in his native country: and, except the society of one or two friends, he had no compensation. The climate caused him to consume half his existence in helpless suffering. His dearest pleasure, the free enjoyment of the scenes of nature, was marred by the same circumstance.

He went direct to Italy, avoiding even Paris, and did not make any pause till he arrived at Milan. The first aspect of Italy enchanted Shelley; it seemed a garden of delight placed beneath a clearer and brighter heaven than any he had lived under before. He wrote long descriptive letters during the first year of his residence in Italy, which, as compositions, are the most beautiful in the world, and show how truly he appreciated and studied the wonders of nature and art in that divine land.

The poetical spirit within him speedily revived with all the power and with more than all the beauty of his first attempts. He meditated three subjects as the groundwork for lyrical Dramas. One was the story of Tasso; of this a slight fragment of a song of Tasso remains. The other was one founded on the book of Job, which he never abandoned in ideas, but of which no trace remains among his papers. The third was the “Prometheus
Unbound.” The Greek tragedians were now his most familiar companions in his wanderings, and the sublime majesty of Eschylus filled him with wonder and delight. The father of Greek tragedy does not possess the pathos of Sophocles, nor the variety and tenderness of Euripides; the interest on which he founds his dramas is often elevated above human vicissitudes into the mighty passions and throes of gods and demigods—such fascinated the abstract imagination of Shelley.

We spent a month at Milan, visiting the Lake of Como during that interval. Thence we passed in succession to Pisa, Leghorn, the Baths of Lucca, Venice, Este, Rome, Naples, and back again to Rome, whither we returned early in March 1819. During all this time Shelley meditated the subject of his drama, and wrote portions of it. Other poems were composed during this interval, and while at the Bagno di Luca he translated Plato's Symposium. But though he diversified his studies, his thoughts centred in the “Prometheus.” At last, when at Rome, during a bright and beautiful spring, he gave up his whole time to the composition. The spot selected for his study was, as he mentions in his preface, the mountainous ruins of the Baths of Caracalla. These are little known to the ordinary visitor at Rome. He describes them in a letter, with that poetry, and delicacy, and truth of description, which render his narrated impressions of scenery of unequalled beauty and interest.

At first he completed the drama in three acts. It was not till several months after, when at Florence, that he conceived that a fourth act, a sort of hymn of rejoicing in the fulfilment of the prophecies with regard to Prometheus, ought to be added to complete the composition.

The prominent feature of Shelley’s theory of the destiny of the human species was, that evil is not inherent in the system of the creation, but an accident that might be expelled. This also forms a portion of Christianity; God made earth and man perfect, till he, by his fall,

“Brought death into the world and all our woe.”

Shelley believed that mankind had only to will that there should be no evil, and there would be none. It is not my part in these notes to notice the arguments that have been urged against this opinion, but to mention the fact that he entertained it, and was indeed attached to it with fervent enthusiasm. That man could be so perfectionized as to be able to expel evil from his own nature, and from the greater part of the creation, was the cardinal point of his system. And the subject he loved best to dwell on, was the image of warring with the Evil Principle, opposite not only by it, but by all, even the good, who were deluded into considering evil a necessary portion of humanity. A victim full of fortitude and hope, and the spirit of triumph emanating from a reliance in the ultimate omnipotence of good. Such he had depicted in his last poem, when he made Iason the enemy and the victim of tyrants. He now took a more idealized image of the same subject. He followed certain classical authorities in figuring Saturn as the good principle, Jupiter the surpassing evil one, and Prometheus as the regenerator, who, unable to bring mankind back to primitive innocence, used knowledge as a weapon to defy evil, by leading mankind beyond the state where they are sinless through ignorance, to that in which they are virtuous through wisdom. Jupiter punished the temerity of the Titan by chaining him to a rock of Caucasus, and causing a vulture to devour his still renewed heart. There was a prophecy afloat in heaven portending the fall of Jove, the secret of averting which was known only to Prometheus; and the god offered freedom from torture on condition of its being communicated to him. According to the mythological story, this referred to the offspring of Thetis, who was destined to be greater than his father. Prometheus at last bought pardon for his crime of enriching mankind with his gifts, by revealing the prophecy. Hercules killed the vulture and set him free, and Thetis was married to Peleus, the father of Achilles.

Shelley adapted the catastrophe of this story to his peculiar views. The son, greater than his father, born of the nuptials of Jupiter and Thetis, was to dethrone Evil, and bring back a happier reign than that of Saturn. Prometheus defies the power of his enemy, and endures centuries of torture, till the hour arrives when Jove, blind to the real event, but darkly guessing that some great good to himself will flow, espouses Thetis. At the moment, the Primal Power of the world drives him from his usurped throne, and Strength, in the person of Hercules, liberates Humanity, typified in Prometheus, from the tortures generated by evil done or suffered. Asia, one of the Oceanides, is the wife of Prometheus—she was, according to other mythological interpretations, the same as Venus and Nature. When the Benefactor of Mankind is liberated, Nature resumes the beauty of her prime, and is united to her husband, the emblem of the human race, in perfect and happy union. In the Fourth Act, the Poet gives further scope to his imagination, and idealizes the forms
of creation, such as we know them, instead of such as they appeared to the Greeks. Maternal Earth, the mighty Parent, is superseded by the Spirit of the Earth—the guide of our Planet through the realms of sky—while his fair and weaker companion and attendant, the Spirit of the Moon, receives bliss from the annihilation of Evil in the superior sphere.

Shelley develops, more particularly in the lyrics of this drama, his abstract and imaginative theories with regard to the Creation. It requires a mind as subtle and penetrating as his own to understand the mystic meanings scattered throughout the poem. They elude the ordinary reader by their abstraction and delicacy of distinction, but they are far from vague. It was his design to write prose metaphysical essays on the nature of Man, which would have served to explain much of what is obscure in his poetry; a few scattered fragments of observations and remarks alone remain. He considered these philosophical views of mind and nature to be instinct with the intensest spirit of poetry.

More popular poets clothe the ideal with familiar and sensible imagery. Shelley loved to idealize the real—to gift the mechanism of the material universe with a soul and a voice, and to bestow such also on the most delicate and abstract emotions and thoughts of the mind. Sophocles was his great master in this species of imagery.

I find in one of his manuscript books some remarks on a line in the CEdipus Tyrannus, which shows at once the critical subtlety of Shelley's mind, and explains his apprehension of those "minute and remote distinctions of feeling, whether relative to external nature or the living beings which surround us," which he pronounces, in the letter quoted in the note to the Revolt of Islam, to comprehend all that is sublime in man.

"In the Greek Shakspeare, Sophocles, we find the image,

Πάλαι δ' ὁδοί ηλείωνα φρεμνεὶς πλάνων.

A line of almost unfathomable depth of poetry, yet how simple are the images in which it is arrayed,

Coming to many ways in the wanderings of careful thought.

If the words ὁδοί and πλάνων had not been used, the line might have been explained in a metaphorical, instead of an absolute sense, as we say 'ways and means,' and wanderings, for error and confusion; but they meant literally paths or roads, such as we tread with our feet; and wanderings, such as a man makes when he loses himself in a desert, or roams from city to city, as Œdipus, the speaker of this verse, was destined to wander, blind and asking charity. What a picture does this line suggest of the mind as a wilderness of intricate paths, wide as the universe, which is here made its symbol, a world within a world, which he, who seeks some knowledge with respect to what he ought to do, searches throughout, as he would search the external universe for some valued thing which was hidden from him upon its surface."

In reading Shelley's poetry, we often find similar verses, resembling, but not imitating, the Greek in this species of imagery; for though he adopted the style, he gifted it with that originality of form and colouring which sprung from his own genius.

In the Prometheus Unbound, Shelley fulfils the promise quoted from a letter in the Note on the Revolt of Islam *

The tone of the composition is calmer and more majestic, the poetry more perfect as a whole, and the imagination displayed at once more pleasingly beautiful and more varied and daring. The description of the Hours, as they are seen in the cave of Demogorgon, is an instance of this—it fills the mind as the most charming picture—we long to see an artist at work to bring to our view the
cars drawn by rainbow-winged steeds,
Which trample the dim winds: in each there stands
A wild-eyed charioteer, urging their flight.
Some look behind, as fiends pursued them there,
And yet I see no shapes but the keen stars:
Others, with burning eyes, lean forth, and drink
With eager lip the wind of their own speed,
As if the thing they loved fled on before,
And now, even now, they clasped it. Their bright locks
Stream like a comet's flashing hair: they all
Sweep onward.

Through the whole Poem there reigns a sort of calm and holy spirit of love; it soothes the tortured, and is hope to the expectant, till the

* While correcting the proof-sheets of that Poem, it struck me that the Poet had indulged in an exaggerated view of the evils of restored despotism, which, however injurious and degrading, were less openly sanguinary than the triumph of anarchy, such as it appeared in France at the close of the last century. But at this time a book, "Scenes of Spanish Life," translated by Lieutenant Crawford from the German of Dr. Huber, of Rostock, fell into my hands. The account of the triumph of the priests and the serviles, after the French invasion of Spain in 1823, bears a strong and frightful resemblance to some of the descriptions of the massacre of the patriots in the Revolt of Islam.
prophecy is fulfilled, and Love, untainted by any evil, becomes the law of the world.

England had been rendered a painful residence to Shelley, as much by the sort of persecution with which in those days all men of liberal opinions were visited, and by the injustice he had lately endured in the Court of Chancery, as by the symptoms of disease which made him regard a visit to Italy as necessary to prolong his life. An exile, and strongly impressed with the feeling that the majority of his countrymen regarded him with sentiments of aversion, such as his own heart could experience towards none, he sheltered himself from such disgusting and painful thoughts in the calm retreats of poetry, and built up a world of his own, with the more pleasure, since he hoped to induce some one or two to believe that the earth might become such, did mankind themselves consent. The charm of the Roman climate helped to clothe his thoughts in greater beauty than they had ever worn before. And as he wandered among the ruins, made one with nature in their decay, or gazed on the Praxitelean shapes that throng the Vatican, the Capitol, and the palaces of Rome, his soul imbibed forms of loveliness which became a portion of itself. There are many passages in the “Prometheus” which show the intense delight he received from such studies, and give back the impression with a beauty of poetical description peculiarly his own. He felt this, as a poet must feel when he satisfies himself by the result of his labours, and he wrote from Rome, “My Prometheus Unbound is just finished, and in a month or two I shall send it. It is a drama, with characters and mechanism of a kind yet unattempted, and I think the execution is better than any of my former attempts.”

I may mention, for the information of the more critical reader, that the verbal alterations in this edition of Prometheus are made from a list of errata, written by Shelley himself.

END OF PROMETHEUS UNBOUND.
THE CENCI;
A Tragedy.
IN FIVE ACTS.

DEDICATION.

TO LEIGH HUNT, ESQ.

My dear Friend,

I inscribe with your name, from a distant country,
and after an absence whose months have seemed years,
this the latest of my literary efforts.

Those writings which I have hitherto published,
have been little else than visions which impersonate
my own apprehensions of the beautiful and the just.
I can almost perceive in them the literary defects incident
to youth and impatience; they are dreams of
what ought to be, or may be. The drama which I
now present to you is a sad reality. I lay aside
the presumptuous attitude of an instructor, and am content
with such colours as my own heart furnishes,
that which has been.

Had I known a person more highly endowed than
yourself with all that it becomes a man to possess,
I had solicited for this work the ornament of his name.
One more gentle, honourable, innocent and brave;
one of more exalted tolerance for all who do and think
evil, and yet himself more free from evil; one who
knows better how to receive, and how to confer a
benefit, though he must ever confer far more than he
can receive; one of simpler, and, in the highest
sense of the word, of purer life and manners, I never
knew; and I had already been fortunate in friendships
when your name was added to the list.

In that patient and irreconcilable enmity with
domestic and political tyranny and imposture which
the tenor of your life has illustrated, and which, had I
health and talents, should illustrate mine, let us, com-
forting each other in our task, live and die.

All happiness attend you!

Your affectionate friend,

Percy B. Shelley.

Rome, May 29, 1819.

PREFACE.

A manuscript was communicated to me during my travels in Italy, which was copied from the archives of the Cenci Palace at Rome, and contains a detailed account of the horrors which ended in the extinction of one of the noblest and richest families of that city, during the pontificate of Clement VIII., in the year 1599. The story is, that an old man, having spent his life in debauchery and wickedness, conceived at length an implacable hatred towards his children; which showed itself towards one daughter under the form of an incestuous passion, aggravated by every circumstance of cruelty and violence. This daughter, after long and vain attempts to escape from what she considered a perpetual contamination both of body and mind, at length plotted with her mother-in-law and brother to murder their common tyrant. The young maiden, who was urged to this tremendous deed by an impulse which overpowered its horror, was evidently a most gentle and amiable being; a creature formed to adorn and be admired, and thus violently thwarted from her nature by the necessity of circum-
stances and opinion. The deed was quickly discovered,
and in spite of the most earnest prayers made to tho
Pope by the highest persons in Rome, the criminals
were put to death. The old man had, during his life,
repeatedly bought his pardon from the Pope for capital
crimes of the most enormous and unspeakable kind,
the death therefore of his victim can scarcely be accounted for
by the love of justice. The Pope, among other
motives for severity, probably felt that whoever killed
the Count Cenci deprived his treasury of a certain
and copious source of revenue. Such a story, if told
so as to present to the reader all the feelings of those
who once acted it, their hopes and fears, their confi-
dences and misgivings, their various interests, passions,
and opinions, acting upon and with each other, yet all
conspiring to one tremendous end, would be as a light
to make apparent some of the most dark and secret
caverns of the human heart.

On my arrival at Rome, I found that the story of
the Cenci was a subject not to be mentioned in Italian
society without awakening a deep and breathless interest;
The Papal Government formerly took the most ex tra-
ordinary precautions against the publicity of facts which
offer so tragical a demonstration of its own wickedness
and weakness; so that the communication of the MS. had
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and that the feelings of the company never failed to incline to a romantic pity for the wrongs, and a passionate exaltation of the horrible deed to which they urged her, who has been mingled two centuries with the common dust. All ranks of people knew the outlines of this history, and participated in the overwhelming interest which it seems to have the magic of exciting in the human heart. I had a copy of Guido's picture of Beatrice, which is preserved in the Colonna Palace, and my servant instantly recognized it as the portrait of La Cenci.

This national and universal interest which the story produces and has produced for two centuries, and among all ranks of people in a great city, where the imagination is kept for ever active and awake, first suggested to me the conception of its fitness for a dramatic purpose. In fact, it is a tragedy which has already received, from its capacity of awakening and sustaining the sympathy of men, approbation and success. Nothing remained, as I imagined, but to clothe it to the apprehensions of my countrymen in such language and action as would bring it home to their hearts. The deepest and the sublimest tragic consequences of King Lear, and the two plays in which the tale of Oedipus is told, were stories which already existed in tradition, as matters of popular belief and interest, before Shakespeare and Sophocles made them familiar to the sympathy of all succeeding generations of mankind.

This story of the Cenci is indeed eminently fearful and monstrous: anything like a dry exhibition of it on the stage would be insupportable. The person who would treat such a subject must increase the and monstrous: anything like a dry exhibition of it may mitigate the pain of the contemplation of the moral deformity from which they spring. There must also be nothing attempted to make the exhibition subservient to what is vulgarly termed a moral purpose. The highest moral purpose aimed at in the highest species of the drama, is the teaching of the human heart, through its sympathies and antipathies, the knowledge of itself; in proportion to the possession of which knowledge every human being is wise, just, sincere, tolerant, and kind. If dogmas can do more, it is well: but a drama is no fit place for the enforcement of them. Undoubtedly no person can be truly dishonoured by the act of another; and the fit return to make to the most enormous injuries is kindness and forbearance, and a resolution to convert the injuries from his dark passions by peace and love. Revenge, retaliation, atonement, are pernicious mistakes. If Beatrice had thought in this manner, she would have been wiser and better; but she would never have been a tragic character: the few whom such an exhibition would have interested, could never have been sufficiently interested for a dramatic purpose, from the want of finding sympathy in their interest among the mass who surround them. It is in the restless and anatomising casuistry with which men seek the justification of Beatrice, yet feel that she has done what was unjustifiable; it is in the superstitious horror with which they contemplate alike her wrongs and their revenge, that the dramatic character of what she did and suffered consists.

I have endeavoured as nearly as possible to represent the characters as they probably were, and have sought to avoid the error of making them actuated by my own conceptions of right or wrong, false or true: thus under a thin veil converting names and actions of the sixteenth century into cold impersonations of my own mind. They are represented as Catholics, and as Catholics deeply tinged with religion. To a Protestant, religion co-exists, as it were, in the mind of an Italian Catholic with a faith in that of which all men have the most certain knowledge. It is interwoven with the whole frame of life. It is adoration, faith, submission, penitence, blind adoration; not a rule for moral conduct. It has no necessary connection with any one virtue. The atrocity of the villain may be rigidly devout, and, without any shock to established faith, confess himself to be so. Religion pervades intensely the whole frame of society, and it is, according to the temper of the mind which it inhabits, a passion, a persuasion, an excuse, a refuge; never a check. Cenci himself built a chapel in the court of his palace, and dedicated it to St. Thomas the Apostle, and established masses for the peace of his soul. Thus in the first scene of the fourth act, Lucretia's design in exposing herself to the consequences of an expostulation with Cenci after having administered the oplate, was to induce him by a feigned tale to confess himself before death; this being esteemed by Catholics as essential to salvation; and she only relinquishes her purpose when she perceives that her perseverance would expose Beatrice to new outrages.

I have avoided with great care in writing this play the introduction of what is commonly called mere poetry, and I imagine there will scarcely be found a detached simile or a single isolated description, unless Beatrice's description of the chasm appointed for her father's murder should be judged to be of that nature.*

In a dramatic composition the imagery and the passion should interpenetrate one another, the former being reserved simply for the full development and illustration of the latter. Imagination is as the immortal God which should assume flesh for the redemption of mortal passion. It is thus that the most remote and the most familiar imagery may alike be fit for dramatic purposes when employed in the illustration of strong feeling, which raises what is low, and levels to the apprehension that which is lofty, casting over all the shadow of its own greatness. In other respects I have written more carelessly; that is, without an overfastidious and learned choice of words. In this respect, I entirely agree with those modern critics who assert, that in order to move men to true sympathy we must use the familiar language of men; and that our great ancestors, the ancient English poets, are the writers, a study of whom might incite us to do that

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* An idea in this speech was suggested by a most sublime passage in "El Purgatorio de San Patricio," of Calderon: the only plagiarism which I have intentionally committed in the whole piece.
for our own age which they have done for theirs. But it must be the real language of men in general, and not that of any particular class, to whose society the writer happens to belong. So much for what I have attempted: I need not be assured that success is a very different matter; particularly for one whose attention has but newly been awakened to the study of dramatic literature.

I endeavoured whilst at Rome to observe such monuments of this story as might be accessible to a Granger. The portrait of Beatrice at the Colonna Palace is most admirable as a work of art: it was taken by Guido during her confinement in prison. But it is most interesting as a just representation of one of the loveliest specimens of the workmanship of Nature. There is a fixed and pale composure upon the features: she seems sad and striken down in spirit, yet the despair thus expressed is lightened by the patience of gentleness. Her head is bound with folds of white drapery, from which the yellow strings of her golden hair escape and fall about her neck. The moulding of her face is exquisitely delicate; the eye-brows are distinct and arched; the lips have that permanent meaning of imagination and sensibility which suffering has not repressed, and which it seems as if death scarcely could extinguish. Her forehead is large and clear; her eyes, which we are told were remarkable for their vivacity, are swollen with weeping and lustreless, but beautifully tender and serene. In the whole mien there is a simplicity and dignity which, united with her exquisite loveliness and deep sorrow, are incomparably pathetic. Beatrice Cenci appears to have been one of those rare persons in whom energy and gentleness dwell together without destroying one another: her nature was simple and profound. The crimes and miseries in which she was an actor and a sufferer, are as the mask and the mantle in which circumstances clothed her for her impersonation on the scene of the world.

The Cenci Palace is of great extent; and, though in part modernised, there yet remains a vast and gloomy pile of feudal architecture in the same state as during the dreadful scenes which are the subject of this tragedy. The palace is situated in an obscure corner of Rome, near the quarter of the Jews, and from the upper windows you see the immense ruins of Mount Palatine half hidden under their profuse overgrowth of trees. There is a court in one part of the palace (perhaps that in which Cenci built the chapel to St. Thomas), supported by granite columns and adorned with antique friezes of fine workmanship, and built up, according to the ancient Italian fashion, with balcony over balcony of open work. One of the gates of the palace, formed of immense stones, and leading through a passage dark and lofty, and opening into gloomy subterranean chambers, struck me particularly. Of the Castle of Petrella, I could obtain no further information than that which is to be found in the manuscript.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COUNT FRANCESCO CENCI.
GIACOMO, | his Sons.
BERNARDO.
CARDINAL CAMILLO.

ANDREA, Servant to CENCI.
Nobles, Judges, Guards, Servants.

LUcretia, Wife of CENCI, and step-mother of his children.
BEatrice, his Daughter.

The scene lies principally in Rome, but changes during the Fourth Act to Petrella, a Castle among the Apulian Apennines.

TIME.—During the Pontificate of Clement VIII.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in the CENCI Palace.

Enter COUNT CENCI and CARDINAL CAMILLO.

CAMILLO.

That matter of the murder is hushed up If you consent to yield his Holiness Your fief that lies beyond the Pincian gate.— It needed all my interest in the conclave To bend him to this point: he said that you Bought perilous impunity with your gold; That crimes like yours if once or twice compounded Enraged the Church, and repented from hell An erring soul which might repent and live:

But that the glory and the interest Of the high throne he fills, little consist With making it a daily mart of guilt So manifold and hideous as the deeds Which you scarce hide from men's revolted eyes.

CENCI.

The third of my possessions—let it go! Ay, I once heard the nephew of the Pope Had sent his architect to view the ground, Meaning to build a villa on my vines The next time I compounded with his uncle: I little thought he should outwit me so! Henceforth no witness—not the lamp—shall see
CAMILLO.
Oh, Count Cenci!
So much that thou might'st honourably live,
And reconcile thyself with thine own heart
And with thy God, and with the offended world.
How hideously look deeds of lust and blood
Through those snow-white and venerable hairs!
Your children should be sitting round you now,
But that you fear to read upon their looks
The shame and misery you have written there.
Where is your wife! Where is your gentle daughter?
Methinks her sweet looks, which make all things else
Beauteous and glad, might kill the fiend within you.
Why is she barred from all society
But her own strange and uncomplaining wrongs?
Talk with me, Count, you know I mean you well.
I stood beside your dark and fiery youth,
And heard your groans, and heard your children's
Tears bitterer than the bloody sweat of Christ
Which now delights me little. I the rather
Watch meteors, but it vanished not—I marked
Your desperate and remorseless manhood; now
Do I behold you, in dishonoured age,
Duller than mine—I'd do,—I know not what.
But pleasure; and I fed on honey sweets:
When I was young I thought of nothing else
But that you fear to read upon their looks
For hourly pain.
The dry, fixed eye-ball; the pale, quivering lip,
Which tell me that the spirit weeps within
Which now delights me little. I the rather
Look on such pangs as terror ill conceals;
The dry, fixed eye-ball; the pale, quivering lip,
Which tell me that the spirit weeps within
Whose horror might make sharp an appetite
Of their revenue.— But much yet remains
That which the vassal threatened to divulge,
Whose throat is choked with dust for his reward.
The deed he saw could not have rated higher
Than his most worthless life,—it angers me!
Respite from Hell!—So may the Devil
Respite their souls from Heaven. No doubt Pope
And his most charitable nephews, pray [Clement,
That the Apostle Peter and the saints
Will grant for their sake that I long enjoy
Strength, wealth, and pride, and lust, and length of days
Wherein to act the deeds which are the stewards
Of their revenue.— But much yet remains
To which they show no title.

CENCI.
For which Aldobrandino owes you now
My fief beyond the Pincian—Cardinal,
This mood has grown upon me, until now
I stand beside your dark and fiery youth,
And I was accustomed to frequent your house;
And I fed on honey sweets:
Whose horror might make sharp an appetite
Of their revenue.— But much yet remains
That which the vassal threatened to divulge,
Whose throat is choked with dust for his reward.
The deed he saw could not have rated higher
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Strength, wealth, and pride, and lust, and length of days
Wherein to act the deeds which are the stewards
Of their revenue.— But much yet remains
To which they show no title.

CAMILLO.
Thou execrable man, beware!—

CENCI.
Of thee!
Nay, this is idle:— We should know each other.
As to my character for what men call crime,
I stand beside your dark and fiery youth,
And I was accustomed to frequent your house;
And I fed on honey sweets:
Whose horror might make sharp an appetite
Of their revenue.— But much yet remains
That which the vassal threatened to divulge,
Whose throat is choked with dust for his reward.
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That the Apostle Peter and the saints
Will grant for their sake that I long enjoy
Strength, wealth, and pride, and lust, and length of days
Wherein to act the deeds which are the stewards
Of their revenue.— But much yet remains
To which they show no title.

CENCI.
The sight of agony, and the sense of joy,
When this shall be another's, and that mine.
And I have no remorse, and little fear,
Which are, I think, the checks of other men.
This mood has grown upon me, until now
Any design my captious fancy makes
The picture of its wish, and it forms none
But such as men like you would start to know,
Is as my natural food and rest debared
Until it be accomplished.

CAMILLO.
Art thou not
Most miserable!

CENCI.
Why miserable!—
No. I am what your theologians call
Hardened; which they must be in impudence,
So to revile a man's peculiar taste.
True, I was happier than I am, while yet
Manhood remained to act the thing I thought;
While lust was sweeter than revenge; and now
Invention palls; ay, we must all grow old:
But that there yet remains a deed to act
Whose horror might make sharp an appetite
Duller than mine— I'd do,— I know not what.
When I was young I thought of nothing else
But pleasure; and I fed on honey sweets:
Men, by St. Thomas! cannot live like bees,
And I grew tired: yet, till I killed a foe, I groans,
And heard his groans, and heard his children's
Knew I not what delight was else on earth,
Which now delights me little. I the rather
Look on such pangs as terror ill conceals;
The dry, fixed eye-ball; the pale, quivering lip,
Which tell me that the spirit weeps within
Tears bitterer than the bloody sweat of Christ.
I rarely kill the body, which preserves,
Like a strong prison, the soul within my power,
And wherein I feed it with the breath of fear
For hourly pain.

CAMILLO.
Heil's most abandoned fiend
Did never, in the drunkenness of guilt,
Speak to his heart as now you speak to me;
I thank my God that I believe you not.

Enter ANDREA.

ANDREA.

My Lord, a gentleman from Salamanca
Would speak with you.

CENCI.
Bid him attend me in the grand saloon.

[Exit ANDREA.

CAMILLO.
Farewell; and I will pray
Almighty God that thy false, impious words
Tempt not his spirit to abandon thee.

CAMILLO.
The third of my possessions! I must use
Close husbandry, or gold, the old man's sword,
Falls from my withered hand. But yesterday
There came an order from the Pope to make
Foursfold provision for my cursed sons;
Whom I have sent from Rome to Salamanca,
Hoping some accident might cut them off;
And meaning, if I could, to starve them there.
I pray thee, God, send some quick death upon them!
Bernardo and my wife could not be worse
If dead and damned:—then, to Beatrice—
[Looking around him suspiciously.
I think they cannot hear me at that door;
What if they should? And yet I need not speak,
Though the heart triumphs with itself in words.
0, thou most silent air, that shall not hear
What now I think! Thou, pavement, which I tread
Towards her chamber,—let your echoes talk
Of my imperious step, scorning surprise,
But not of my intent!—Andrea!

Enter Andrea.

ANDREA. My lord!

CENCI. Bid Beatrice attend me in her chamber
This evening:—no, at midnight, and alone.
[Exeunt.

SCENE II.
A Garden of the Cenci Palace.

Enter Beatrice and Orsino, as in conversation.

BEATRICE. Pervert not truth,
Orsino. You remember where we held
That conversation;—nay, we see the spot
Even from this cypress;—two long years are past
Since, on an April midnight, underneath
The moon-light ruins of Mount Palatine,
I did confess to you my secret mind.

ORSINO. You said you loved me then.

BEATRICE. As I have said, speak to me not of love;
Had you a dispensation, I have not;
Nor will I leave this home of misery
Whilst my poor Bernard, and that gentle lady
To whom I owe life, and these virtuous thoughts,
Must suffer what I still have strength to share.
Alas, Orsino! All the love that once
I felt for you, is turned to bitter pain.
Ours was a youthful contract, which you first
Broke, by assuming vows no Pope will loose.
And thus I love you still, but holyly,
Even as a sister or a spirit might;
And so I swear a cold fidelity.
And it is well perhaps we shall not marry.
You have a sly, equivocating vein
That suits me not.—Ah, wretched that I am!
Where shall I turn? Even now you look on me
As you were not my friend, and as if you
Discovered that I thought so, with false smiles
Making my true suspicion seem your wrong.
Ah! No, forgive me! Sorrow makes me seem
Sterner than else my nature might have been;
I have a weight of melancholy thoughts,
And they forebode,—but what can they forebode
Worse than I now endure?

ORSINO. All will be well.
Is the petition yet prepared? You know
My zeal for all you wish, sweet Beatrice;
Doubt not but I will use my utmost skill
So that the Pope attend to your complaint.

BEATRICE. Your zeal for all I wish!—Ah me, you are cold!
Your utmost skill—speak but one word—
(Aside.) Alas! Weak and deserted creature that I am,
Here I stand bickering with my only friend!

(To Orsino.)
This night my father gives a sumptuous feast,
Orsino; he has heard some happy news
From Salamanca, from my brothers there,
And with this outward show of love he mocks
His inward hate. 'Tis bold hypocrisy,
For he would gladlier celebrate their deaths,
Which I have heard him pray for on his knees:
Great God! that such a father should be mine!—
But there is mighty preparation made,
And all our kin, the Cenci, will be there,
And all the chief nobility of Rome.
And he has hidden me and my pale mother
Attire ourselves in festival array.
Poor lady! She expects some happy change
In his dark spirit from this act; I none.
At supper I will give you the petition:
Till when—farewell.

ORSINO. Farewell.

BEATRICE. I know the Pope
Will ne'er absolve me from my priestly vow
But by absolving me from the revenue
Of many a wealthy see; and, Beatrice,
I think to win thee at an easier rate.
Nor shall he read her eloquent petition:
He might bestow her on some peerage
Of his sixth-cousin, as he did her sister,
And I should be debarred from all access.
Then as to what she suffers from her father,
In all this there is much exaggeration:
Old men are testy, and will have their way;
A man may stab his enemy, or his vassal,
And live a free life as to wine or women,
And with a peevish temper may return
To a dull home, and rate his wife and children;
Daughters and wives call this foul tyranny.
I shall be well content, if on my conscience
There rest no heavier sins than what they suffer
From the devices of my love. A net
From which she shall escape not. Yet I fear
Her subtle mind, her awe-inspiring gaze,
Whose beams anatomise me, nerve by nerve,
And lay me bare, and make me blush to see
My hidden thoughts. — Ah, no! a friendless girl
Who clings to me, as to her only hope:
I were a fool, not less than if a panther
Were panic-stricken by the antelope's eye,
If she escape me.

[Exit
SCENE III.
A magnificent Hall in the Cenci Palace.
A Banquet. Enter CENCI, Lucretia, Beatrice, Orofino, Camillo, Nobles.

CENCI.
Welcome, my friends and kinsmen; welcome ye, Princes and Cardinals, Pillars of the church, Whose presence honours our festivity. I have too long lived like an anchorite, And, in my absence from your merry meetings, An evil word is gone abroad of me; But I do hope that you, my noble friends, When you have shared the entertainment here, And heard the pious cause for which 'tis given, And we have pledged a health or two together, Will think me flesh and blood as well as you; Sinful indeed, for Adam made all so, But tender-hearted, meek and pitiful.

FIRST GUEST.
In truth, my lord, you seem too light of heart, Too sprightly and companionable a man, To act the deeds that rumour pins on you. [To his companion.
I never saw such blithe and open cheer In any eye.

SECOND GUEST.
Some most desired event, In which we all demand a common joy, Has brought us hither; let us hear it, Count.

CENCI.
It is indeed a most desired event. If, when a parent, from a parent's heart, Lifts from this earth to the great Father of all A prayer, both when he lays him down to sleep, And when he rises up from dreaming it; One supplication, one desire, one hope, That he would grant a wish for his two sons, Even all that he demands in their regard— And suddenly, beyond his dearest hope, It is accomplished, he should then rejoice, And call his friends and kinsmen to a feast, And task their love to grace his merriment, Then honour me thus far—for I am he.

BEATRICE (to Lucretia).
Great God! How horrible! Some dreadful ill Must have befallen my brothers.

Lucretia.
He speaks too frankly.

BEATRICE.
Ah! My blood runs cold. I fear that wicked laughter round his eye, Which wrinkles up the skin even to the hair.

CENCI.
Here are the letters brought from Salamanca; Beatrice, read them to your mother. God, I thank thee! In one night didst thou perform, By ways inscrutable, the thing I sought. My disobedient and rebellious sons Are dead!—Why dead!—What means this change of cheer? You help me not, I tell you they are dead; And they will need no food or raiment more:

The tapers that did light them the dark way Are their last cost. The Pope, I think, will not Expect I should maintain them in their coffins. Rejoice with me—my heart is wondrous glad.

BEATRICE. (Lucretia sinks, half fainting; Beatrice supports her.)
It is not true!—Dear lady, pray look up. Had it been true, there is a God in Heaven, He would not live to boast of such a boon. Unnatural man, thou knowest that it is false.

CENCI.
Ay, as the word of God; whom here I call To witness that I speak the sober truth; And whose most favouring providence was shown Even in the manner of their deaths. For Rosco Was kneeling at the mass, with sixteen others, When the church fell and crushed him to a mummy; The rest escaped unhurt. Cristofano Was stabbed in error by a jealous man, Whilst she he loved was sleeping with his rival; All in the self-same hour of the same night; Which shows that Heaven has special care of me. I beg those friends who love me, that they mark The day a feast upon their calendars. It was the twenty-seventh of December: Ay, read the letters if you doubt my oath. [The assembly appears confused; several of the guests rise.

FIRST GUEST.
Oh, horrible! I will depart—.

SECOND GUEST.
And I—

THIRD GUEST.
No, stay!

CENCI (filling a bowl of wine, and lifting it up).
Oh, thou bright wine, whose purple splendour leaps And bubbles gaily in this golden bowl Under the lamp-light, as my spirits do. To hear the death of my accursed sons! Could I believe thou wert their mingled blood, Then would I taste thee like a sacrament, And pledge with thee the mighty Devil in Hell; Who, if a father's curses, as men say, Climb with swift wings after their children's souls, And drag them from the very throne of Heaven, Now triumphs in my triumph!—But thou art Superfluous; I have drunken deep of joy, And I will taste no other wine to-night. Here, Andrea! Bear the bowl around.

A GUEST (rising).
Thou wretch!

Will none among this noble company Check the abandoned villain?

CAMILLO. For God's sake,
Let me dismiss the guests! You are insane, Some ill will come of this.

SECOND GUEST.
Seize, silence him!
FIRST GUEST.
I will!

THIRD GUEST.

And I!

CENCI (addressing those who rise with a threatening gesture).
Who moves? Who speaks?

[Turning to the Company.
"Tis nothing,
Enjoy yourselves.—Beware! for my revenge
Is as the sealed commission of a king,
That kills, and none dare name the murderer.

The Banquet is broken up; several of the Guests are departing.

BEATRICE.
I do entreat you, go not, noble guests;
What although tyranny and impious hate
Stand sheltered by a father's hoary hair?
What if 'tis he who clothed us in these limbs
Who tortures them, and triumphs? What, if we,
The desolate and the dead, were his own flesh,
His children and his wife, whom he is bound
To love and shelter! Shall we therefore find
No refuge in this merciless wide world?
Oh, think what deep wrongs must have blotted out
First love, then reverence in a child's prone mind,
Till it thus vanquish shame and fear! Oh, think!
I have borne much, and kissed the sacred hand
Which crushed us to the earth, and thought its stroke
Was perhaps some paternal chastisement!
Have excused much, doubted; and when no doubt
Remained, have sought by patience, love and tears,
To soften him; and when this could not be,
I have knelt down through the long sleepless nights,
And lifted up to God, the father of all,
Passionate prayers; and when these were not heard,
I have still borne;—until I meet you here,
Princes and kinsmen, at this hideous feast
Given at my brothers' deaths. Two yet remain,
His wife remains and I, whom if ye save not,
Ye may soon share such merriment again
As fathers make over their children's graves.
Oh! Prince Colonna, thou art our near kinsman;
Cardinal, thou art the Pope's chamberlain;
Caxnillo, thou art chief justiciary;
Take us away!

CAMILLO. (/* has been conversing with Camillo
during the first part of Beatrice's speech; he
hears the conclusion, and now advances.)
I hope my good friends here
Will think of their own daughters—or perhaps
Of their own throats—before they lend an ear
To this wild girl.

BEATRICE (not noticing the words of CENCI).
Dare no one look on me?
None answer! Can one tyrant overbear
The sense of many best and wisest men?
Or is it that I sue not in some form
Of scrupulous law, that ye deny my suit?
Oh, God! that I were buried with my brothers!
And that the flowers of this departed spring
Were fading on my grave! And that my father
Were celebrating now one feast for all!

CENCI.
A bitter wish for one so young and gentle;
Can we do nothing!

COLONNA.
Nothing that I see.
Count Cenci were a dangerous enemy:
Yet I would second any one.

A CARDINAL.
And I.

CENCI.
Retire to your chamber, insolent girl!

BEATRICE.
Retire thou, impious man! Ay, hide thyself
Where never eye can look upon thee more!
Wouldst thou have honoured obedience,
Who art a torturer! Father, never dream,
Though thou mayst overbear this company,
But ill must come of ill.—Frown not on me!
Haste, hide thyself, lest with avenging looks
My brothers' ghostsshould hunt thee from thy seat:
Cover thy face from every living eye,
And start if thou but hear a human step:
Seek out some dark and silent corner, there,
Bow thy white head before offended God,
And we will kneel around, and fervently
Pray that he pity both ourselves and thee.

CENCI.
My friends, I do lament this insane girl
Has spoilt the mirth of our festivity.
Good night, farewell; I will not make you longer
Spectators of our dull domestic quarrels.
Another time.—

[Exeunt all but Cenci and Beatrice.
My brain is swimming round;
Give me a bowl of wine!
(To Beatrice.) Thou painted viper!
Beast that thou art! Fair and yet terrible!
I know a charm shall make thee meek and tame,
Now get thee from my sight!

[Exit Beatrice.
Here, Andrea,
Fill up this goblet with Greek wine. I said
I would not drink this evening, but I must;
For, strange to say, I feel my spirits fail
With thinking what I have decreed to do.
(Drinking the wine.
Be thou the resolution of quick youth
Within my veins, and manhood's purpose stern,
And age's firm, cold, subtle villany;
As if thou wert indeed my children's blood
Which I did thrist to drink. The charm works well;
It must be done, it shall be done, I swear!

[Exit.
SCENE I.

An Apartment in the Cenci Palace.

Enter Lucretia and Bernardo.

LUcretia.

Weep not, my gentle boy; he struck but me. Who have borne deeper wrongs. In truth, if he Had killed me, he had done a kinder deed. Oh, God Almighty, do thou look upon us, We have no other friend but only thee! Yet weep not; though I love you as my own, I am not your true mother.

BERNARDO.

Oh, more, more Than ever mother was to any child, That have you been to me! Had he not been My father, do you think that I should weep?

LUcretia.

Alas! poor boy, what else couldst thou have done?

Enter Beatrice.

Beatrice (in a hurried voice).

Did he pass this way? Have you seen him, brother? Ah! no, that is his step upon the stairs; 'Tis nearer now; his hand is on the door; Mother, if I to thee have ever been A duteous child, now save me! Thou, great God, Whose image upon earth a father is, Dost thou indeed abandon me! He comes; The door is opening now; I see his face; He frowns on others, but he smiles on me, Even as he did after the feast last night.

Enter a Servant.

Almighty God, how merciful thou art! 'Tis but Orsino's servant.— Well, what news?

SERVant.

My master bids me say, the Holy Father Has sent back your petition thus unopened. [Giving a Paper. And he demands at what hour 'twere secure To visit you again! 

LUcretia.

At the Ave Mary. [Exit Servant. So, daughter, our last hope has failed; ah me, How pale you look! you tremble, and you stand Wrapped in some fixed and fearful meditation, As if one thought were over strong for you: Your eyes have a chill glare; oh, dearest child! Are you gone mad? If not, pray speak to me.

BEATRICE.

You see I am not mad; I speak to you.

LUcretia.

You talked of something that your father did After that dreadful feast! Could it be worse Than when he smiled, and cried, My sons are dead! And every one looked in his neighbour's face

To see if others were as white as he! At the first word he spoke I felt the blood Rush to my heart, and fell into a trance; And when it past I sat all weak and wild; Whilst you alone stood up, and with strong words Check'd his unnatural pride; and I could see The devil was rebuked that lives in him. Until this hour thus you have ever stood Between us and your father's moody wrath Like a protecting presence; your firm mind Has been our only refuge and defence: What can have thus subdued it? What can now Have given you that cold melancholy look, Succeeding to your unaccustomed fear!

BEATRICE.

What is it that you say! I was just thinking 'Twere better not to struggle any more. Men, like my father, have been dark and bloody, Yet never—O! before worse comes of it, 'Twere wise to die: it ends in that at last.

LUcretia.

Oh, talk not so, dear child! Tell me at once What did your father do or say to you? He stayed not after that accursed feast One moment in your chamber.— Speak to me.

BERNARDO.

Oh, sister, sister, prithee, speak to us!

BEATRICE (speaking very slowly with a forced calmness).

It was one word, mother, one little word; One look, one smile. [Wildly. Oh! he has trampled me Under his feet, and made the blood stream down My pallid cheeks. And he has given us all Ditch-water, and the fever-stricken flesh Of buffaloes, and bade us eat or starve, And we have eaten. He has made me look On my beloved Bernardo, when the rust Of heavy chains has gangrened his sweet limbs, And I have never yet despaired— but now! What would I say! [Recovering herself. Ah! no, 'tis nothing new. The sufferings we all share have made me wild: He only struck and cursed me as he passed; He said, he looked, he did—nothing at all Beyond his wont, yet it disordered me. Also! I am forgetful of my duty, I should preserve my senses for your sake.

LUcretia.

Nay, Beatrice; have courage, my sweet girl. If any one despairs it should be I, Who loved him once, and now must live with him Till God in pity call for him or me. For you may, like your sister, find some husband, And smile, years hence, with children round your knees: Whilst I, then dead, and all this hideous coil, Shall be remembered only as a dream.
BEATRICE.

Talk not to me, dear lady, of a husband.
Did you not nurse me when my mother died?
Did you not shield me and that dearest boy?
And had we any other friend but you?
Is infancy, with gentle words and looks,
To win our father not to murder us?
And shall I now deseryou! May the ghost
Of my dead mother plead against my soul,
If I abandon her who filled the place
She left, with more even than a mother's love!

BERNARDO.

And I am of my sister's mind. Indeed
I would not leave you in this wretchedness,
Eren though the Pope should make me free to live
In some blithe place, like others of my age,
With sports, and delicate food, and the fresh air.
Oh, never think that I will leave you, mother!

LUcretia.

My dear, dear children! [Enter Cenci, suddenly-
What! Beatrice here!
Come hither!
_She shrinks back, and covers her face._
Nay, hide not your face, 'tis fair;
Look up! Why, yesternight you dared to look
With disobedient insolence upon me,
Bending a stem and an inquiring brow
On what I meant; whilst I then sought to hide
That which I came to tell you—but in vain.

BEATRICE (wildly staggering towards the door).

Oh, that the earth would gape. Hide me, oh God!

CENCI.

Then it was I whose inarticulate words
Fell from my lips, who with tottering steps
Fled from your presence, as you now from mine.
Stay, I command you! From this day and hour
Never again, I think, with fearlesseye,
And brow superior, and unaltered cheek,
And that lip made for tenderness or scorn,
Shalt thou strike dumb the meanest of mankind;
Me least of all. Now get thee to thy chamber,
Thy too, loathed image of thy cursed mother,
[To Bernardo
Thy milky, meek face makes me sick with hate!
[Aside. So much has passed between us as must
Be hold, her fearful.—"Tis an awful thing [make:
To touch such mischief as I now conceive:
So men sit shivering on the dewy bank
And try the chill stream with their feet once in—
How the delighted spirit pants for joy!

LUcretia (advancing timidly towards him).
Oh, husband! Pray forgive poor Beatrice,
She meant not any ill.

CENCI.

Nor you perhaps!
Nor that young imp, whom you have taught by rote
Parricide with his alphabet! Nor Giacomo?
Nor those two most unnatural sons, who stirred
Enmity up against me with the Pope!
Whom in one night merciful God cut off?
Innocent lambs! They thought not any ill.

BEATRICE.

You were not here conspiring! you said nothing
Of how I might be dungeon as a madman;
Or be condemned to death for some offence,
And you would be the witnesses!—This failing,
How just it were to hire assassins, or
Put sudden poison in my evening drink?
Or smother me when overcome by wine?
Seeing we had no other judge but God,
And he had sentenced me, and there were none
But you to be the executioners
Of his decree enregistered in heaven?
Oh, no! You said not this!

LUcretia.

So help me God,
I never thought the things you charge me with.

CENCI.

If you dare speak that wicked lie again,
I'll kill you. What! it was not by your counsel
That Beatrice disturbed the feast last night?
You did not hope to stir some enemies
Against me, and escape, and laugh to scorn
What every nerve of you now trembles at?
You judged that men were bolder than they are;
Few dare to stand between their grave and me.

LUcretia.

Look not so dreadfully! By my salvation
I knew not aught that Beatrice designed;
Nor do I think she designed any thing
Until she heard you talk of her dead brothers.

CENCI.

Blaspheming liar! You are damned for this!
But I will take you where you may persuade
The stones you tread on to deliver you:
For men shall there be none but those who dare
All things; not question that which I command.
On Wednesday next I shall set out: you know
That savage rock, the Castle of Petrella!
'Tis safely walled, and moated round about:
Its dungeons under ground, and its thick towers
Never told tales though they have heard and seen
What might make dumb things speak. Why do
you linger?
Make speediest preparation for the journey!

LUcretia.

The all-beholding sun yet shines; I hear
A busy stir of men about the streets;
I see the bright sky through the window panes:
It is a garish, broad, and peering day;
Loud, light, suspicious, full of eyes and ears;
And every little corner, nook, and hole,
Is penetrated with the insolent light.
Come, darkness! Yet, what is the day to me?
And wherefore should I wish for night, who do
A deed which shall confound both night and day!
'Tis she shall grope through a bewildering mist
Of horror: if there be a sun in heaven,
She shall not dare to look upon its beams;
Nor feel its warmth. Let her, then, wish for
night;
The act I think shall soon extinguish all
For me: I bear a darker, deadlier gloom
Than the earth's shade, or interstellar air;
Or constellations quenched in murkiest cloud,
In which I walk secure and unbeholden
Towards my purpose.—Would that it were done!

[Exit
SCENE II.
A Chamber in the Vatican.

Enter Camillo and Giacomo, in conversation.

CAMILLO.
There is an obsolete and doubtful law,
By which you might obtain a bare provision
Of food and clothing.

GIACOMO.
Nothing more I Alas I
Bare must be the provision which strict law
Awards, and aged sullen avarice pays.
Why did my father not apprentice me
To some mechanic trade! I should have then
Been trained in no high-born necessities
Which I could meet not by my daily toil.
The eldest son of a rich nobleman
Is heir to all his incapacities;
Has wide wants, and narrow powers. If you,
Cardinal Camillo, were reduced at once
From thrice-driven beds of down, and delicate food,
An hundred servants, and six palaces,
To that which nature doth indeed require!—

CAMILLO.
Nay, there is reason in your plea; 'twere hard.

GIACOMO.
'tis hard for a firm man to bear: but I
Have a dear wife, a lady of high birth,
Whose dowry in ill hour I lent my father,
Without a bond or witness to the deed:
And children, who inherit her fine senses,
The fairest creatures in this breathing world;
And she and they reproach me not. Cardinal,
Do you not think the Pope would interpose
And stretch authority beyond the law?

CAMILLO.
Though your peculiar case is hard, I know
The Pope will not divert the course of law.
After that impious feast the other night
I spoke with him, and urged him then to check
Your father's cruel hand; he frowned, and said,
"Children are disobedient, and they sting
Their fathers' hearts to madness and despair,
Requiting years of care with contumely.
I pity the Count Cenci from my heart;
His outraged love perhaps awakened hate,
And thus he is exasperated to ill.
In the great war between the old and young,
I, who have white hairs and a tottering body,
Will keep at least blameless neutrality."

Enter Orsino.

You, my good lord Orsino, heard those words.

ORSINO.
What words? Fear not to speak your thought.
Words are but holy as the deeds they cover:
A priest who has forsworn the God he serves;
A judge who makes the truth weep at his decree;
A friend who should weave counsel, as I now,
But as the mantle of some selfish guile;
A father who is all a tyrant seems,
Were the profaner for his sacred name.

GIACOMO.
Ask me not what I think; the unwilling brain
Feigns often what it would not; and we trust
Imagination with such phantasies
As die tongue dares not fashion into words;
Which have no words, their horror makes them
To the mind's eye. My heart denies itself
To think what you demand.

ORSINO.
But a friend's bosom
Is as the inmost cave of our own mind,
Where we sit shut from the wide gaze of day,
And from the all-communicating air.
You look what I suspected—

GIACOMO.
Spare me now! I
Am as one lost in a midnight wood,
Who dares not ask some harmless passenger
The path across the wilderness, lest he,
As my thoughts are, should be—a murderer.
I know you are my friend, and all I dare
Speak to my soul that will I trust with thee.
But now my heart is heavy, and would take
Lone counsel from a night of sleepless care.
Pardon me, that I say farewell—farewell!
I would that to my own suspected self
I could address a word so full of peace.
ORSINO.
Farewell!—Be your thoughts better or more bold.

GIACOMO.
I had disposed the Cardinal Camillo
To feed his hope with cold encouragement:
It fortunately serves my closedesigns
That 'tis a trick of this same family
To analyse their own and other minds.
Such self-anatomy shall teach the will
Dangerous secrets: for it tempts our powers,
Knowing what must be thought, and may be done,
Into the depth of darkest purposes:
So Cenci fell into the pit; even I,
Since Beatrice unveiled me to myself,
And made me shrink from what I cannot shun,
Show a poor figure to my own esteem,
To which I grow half reconciled. I'll do
As little mischief as I can; that thought
Shall fee the accuser conscience.

Now what harm
If Cenci should be murdered?—Yet, if murdered,
Wherefore by me! And what if I could take
The profit, yet omit the sin and peril
In such an action! Of all earthly things
I fear a man whose blows outspeed his words;
And such is Cenci: and while Cenci lives
Mis daughter's dowry were a secret grave
If a priest wins her.—Oh, fair Beatrice!
Would that I loved thee not, or, loving thee,
Could but despise danger, and gold, and all
That frowns between my wish and its effect,
Or smiles beyond it! There is no escape:
Her bright form kneels beside me at the altar,
And follows me to the resort of men,
And fills my mind with tumultuous dreams.
So when I wake my blood seems liquid fire;
And if I strike my damp and dizzy head,
My hot palm searches it: her very name,
But spoken by a stranger, makes my heart
Sicken and pant; and thus unprofitably
I clasp the phantom of unfelt delights,
Till weak imagination half possesses
The self-created shadow. Yet much longer
Will I not nurse this life of feverous hours:
From the unravelled hopes of Giacomo
I must work out my own dear purposes.
I see, as from a tower, the end of all:
Her father dead; her brother bound to me
By a dark secret, surer than the grave;
Her mother scared and unexpostulating
From the dread manner of her wish achieved:
And she!—Once more take courage, my faint
heart:
What dares a friendless maiden matched with thee?
I have such foresight as assures success;
Some unbeheld divinity doth ever,
When dread events are near, stir up men's minds
To black suggestions; and he prospers best,
Not who becomes the instrument of ill,
But who can flatter the dark spirit, that makes
Its empire and its prey of other hearts,
Till it become his slave— as I will do.

LUCRETIA.
What ailst thee, my poor child? She answers not:
Her spirit apprehends the sense of pain,
But not its cause; suffering has dried away
The source from which it sprung.—

BEATRICE.
Like Parricide—
Misery has killed its father: yet its father
Never like mine—O, God! What thing am I?

LUCRETIA.
My dearest child, what has your father done?
BEATRICE (doubtfully).
Who art thou, questioner! I have no father.

[Aside.]

She is the madhouse nurse who tends on me,
It is a pitiful office.

[To LUCRETTIA, in a slow, subdued voice.]

Do you know,
I thought I was that wretched Beatrice
Men speak of, whom her father sometimes hales
From hall to hall by the entangled hair;
At others, pens up naked in damp cells
Where scaly reptiles crawl, and starves her there,
Till she will eat strange flesh. This woful story
So did I overact in my sick dreams,
That I imagined — no, it cannot be!
Horrible things have been in this wild world,
Prodigious mixtures, and confusions strange
Of good and ill; and worse have been conceived
Than ever there was found a heart to do.
But never fancy imagined such a deed
As —

[Pauses, suddenly recollecting herself.]

Who art thou? Swear to me, ere I die
With fearfully expectation, that indeed
Thou art not what thou seemest— Mother!

LUCRETTIA.
Oh!
My sweet child, know you —
BEATRICE.
Yet speak it not:
For then if this be truth, that other too
Must be a truth, a firm enduring truth,
Linked with each lasting circumstance of life,
Never to change, never to pass away.
Why so it is. This is the Cenci Palace;
Thou art Lucræia; I am Beatrice.
I have talked some wild words, but will no more.
Mother, come near me: from this point of time,
I am —

[Her voice dies away faintly.]

LUCRETTIA.
Alas! what has befallen thee, child!
What has thy father done?

BEATRICE.
Am I not innocent? Is it my crime
That one with white hair, and imperious brow,
Who tortured me from my forgotten years,
As parents only dare, should call himself
My father, yet should be! — Oh, what am I!
What name, what place, what memory shall be
What retrospects, outliving even despair!

LUCRETTIA.
He is a violent tyrant, surely, child:
We know that death alone can make us free;
His death or ours. But what can he have done
Of deadlier outrage or worse injury!
Thou art unlike thyself; thine eyes shoot forth
A wandering and strange spirit. Speak to me,
Unlock those pallid hands whose fingers twine
With one another.

BEATRICE.
'Tis the restless life
Tortured within them. If I try to speak
I shall go mad. Ay, something must be done;
ORSINO.
And what is he who has thus injured you?

BEATRICE.
The man they call my father: a dread name.

ORSINO.
It cannot be—

BEATRICE.
What it can be, or not, Forbear to think. It is, and it has been; Advise me how it shall not be again.

I thought to die; but a religious awe
Restrains me, and the dread lest death itself
Might be no refuge from the consciousness
Of what is yet unexpiated. Oh, speak!

ORSINO.
Accuse him of the deed, and let the law
Avenge thee.

BEATRICE.
Oh, ice-hearted counsellor! If I could find a word that might make known
The crime of my destroyer; and that done,
My tongue should like a knife tear out the secret
Which cankers my heart's core: ay, lay all bare,
So that my unpolluted fame should be
With vilest gossips a stale mouthed story;
A mock, a by-word, an astonishment:
If this were done, which never shall be done,
Think of the offender's gold, his dreaded hate,
And the strange horror of the accuser's tale,
Baffling belief, and overpowering speech;
Scarcely whispered, unimaginable, wrapt
In hideous hints— Oh, most assured redress!

ORSINO.
You will endure it then!

BEATRICE.
Endure!— Orsino, It seems your counsel is small profit.
[Turns from him, and speaks half to herself.]

ORSINO.
Ah, all must be suddenly resolved and done.
What is this undistinguishable mist
Of thoughts, which rise, like shadow after shadow,
Darkening each other?

BEATRICE (to herself).
Mighty death! Thou double-visaged shadow! Only judge!
Rightfullest arbiter! [She retires, absorbed in thought.]

BEATRICE.
If the lightning
Of God has e'er descended to avenge—

ORSINO.
Blaspheme not! His high Providence commits
Its glory on this earth, and their own wrongs
Into the hands of men; if they neglect
To punish crime—

LUCRETIA.
But if one, like this wretch,
Should mock, with gold, opinion, law, and power!
If there be no appeal to that which makes
The guiltiest tremble! If, because our wrongs,
For that they are unnatural, strange, and monstrous,
Exceed all measure of belief! Oh, God!
If, for the very reasons which should make
Redress most swift and sure, our injurer triumphs!
And we, the victims, bear worse punishment
Than that appointed for their torturer!

ORSINO.
Think not But that there is redress where there is wrong,
So we be bold enough to seize it.

LUCRETIA.
How!
If there were any way to make all sure,
I know not—but I think it might be good
To—

ORSINO.
Why, his late outrage to Beatrice;
For it is such, as I but faintly guess,
As makes remorse dishonour, and leaves her
Only one duty, how she may avenge:
You, but one refuge from ills ill endured;
Me, but one counsel—

LUCRETIA.
For we cannot hope
That aid, or retribution, or resource
Will arise thence, where every other one
Might find them with less need.

(Beatrice advances.)

ORSINO.
Then—

BEATRICE.
Peace, Orsino!
And, honoured Lady, while I speak, I pray,
That you put off, as garments overworn,
Forbearance and respect, remorse and fear,
And all the fit restraints of daily life,
Which have been borne from childhood, but which
Would be a mockery to my holier plea. [now
As I have said, I have endured a wrong,
Which, though it be expressionless, is such
As asks atonement, both for what is past,
And lest I be reserved, day after day,
To load with crimes an overburthened soul,
And be— what ye can dream not. I have prayed
To God, and I have talked with my own heart,
And have unravelled my entangled will,
And, have at length determined what is right.
Art thou my friend, Orsino! False or true!
Pledge thy salvation ere I speak.

ORSINO.
I swear
To dedicate my cunning, and my strength,
My silence, and whatever else is mine,
To thy commands.

LUCRETIA.
You think we should devise
His death!

BEATRICE.
And execute what is devised, And suddenly. We must be brief and hold.
And yet most cautious.

LUcretia.
For the jealous laws
Would punish us with death and infamy
For that which it became themselves to do.

Beatrice.
Be cautious as ye may, but prompt. Orsino,
What are the means?

Orsino.
I know two dull, fierce outlaws,
Who think man's spirit as a worm's, and they
Would trample out, for any slight caprice,
The meanest or the noblest life. This mood
Is marketable here in Rome. They sell
What we now want.

LUcretia.
To-morrow, before dawn,
Cenci will take us to that lonely rock,
Petrelia, in the Apulian Apennines.
If he arrive there—

Beatrice.
He must not arrive.

Orsino.
Before you reach that bridge make some excuse
For spurring on your mules, or loitering
Until—

Beatrice.
What sound is that?

LUcretia.
Hark! No, it cannot be a servant's step;
It must be Cenci, unexpectedly
Returned—Make some excuse for being here.
And when I knew the impression he had made, From my wife with silent scorn My ardent troth, and look averse and cold, Yet not so soon that my wife had taught My children harsh thoughts, and they all cried, "Give us clothes, father! Give us better food! What you in one night squander were enough For months?" I looked and saw that home was hell. And to that hell will I return no more, Until mine enemy has rendered up Atonement, or, as he gave life to me, I, reversing nature's law—

ORSINO.

Trust me, The compensation which thou seekest here Will be denied.

GIACOMO.

Then—Are you not my friend? Did you not hint at the alternative, Upon the brink of which you see I stand, The other day when we conversed together! My wrongs were then less. That word parricide, Although I am resolved, haunts me like fear.

ORSINO.

It must be fear itself, for the bare word Is hollow mockery. Mark, how wisest God Draws to one point the threads of a just doom, So sanctifying it; what you devise It, at it were, accomplished.

GIACOMO.

Is he dead?

ORSINO.

His grave is ready. Know that since we met Cenci has done an outrage to his daughter.

GIACOMO.

What outrage?

ORSINO.

That she speaks not, but you may Conceive such half conjectures as I do, From her fixed paleness, and the lofty grief Of her stern brow, bent on the idle air, And her severe unmodulated voice, Drowning both tenderness and dread; and last From this; that whilst her step-mother and I, Bewildered in our horror, talk together With obscure hints; both self-misunderstood, And darkly guessing, stumbling, in our talk, Over the truth, and yet to its revenge, She interrupted us, and with a look Which told, before she spoke it, he must die—

GIACOMO.

It is enough. My doubts are well appeased; Not so; some accident might interpose To rescue him from what is now most sure; And you are unprovided where to fly, How to excuse or to conceal. Nay, listen: All is contrived; success is so assured That—

Enter Beatrice.

BEATRICE.

'Tis my brother's voice! You know me not!

GIACOMO.

My sister, my lost sister!

BEATRICE.

Lost indeed!

ORSINO.

I see Orsino has talked with you, and That you conjecture things too horrible To speak, yet far less than the truth. Now, stay not, He might return: yet kiss me; I shall know That then thou hast consented to his death. Farewell, farewell! Let piety to God, Brotherly love, justice and clemency, And all things that make tender hardest hearts, Make thine hard, brother. Answer not—farewell.

[Exeunt severally.

SCENE II.

A mean Apartment in GIACOMO's House.

GIACOMO alone.

ORSINO.

'Tis midnight, and Orsino comes not yet.

[Thunder, and the sound of a storm.

What! can the everlasting elements Feel with a worm like man? If so, the shaft Of mercy-winged lightning would not fall On stones and trees. My wife and children sleep: They are now living in unmeaning dreams: But I must wake, still doubting if that deed Be just which was most necessary. O, Thou unreplenished lamp! whose narrow fire Is shaken by the wind, and on whose edge Devouring darkness hovers! Thou small flame, Which, as a dying pulse rises and falls, Still flickerest up and down, how very soon, Did I not feed thee, wouldst thou fail and be As thou hadst never been! So wastes and sinks Even now, perhaps, the life that kindled mine: But that no power can fill with vital oil That broken lamp of flesh. Ha! 'tis the blood Which fed these veins that ebbs till all is cold: It is the form that moulded mine, that sinks Into the white and yellow spasms of death: It is the soul by which mine was arrayed In God's immortal likeness which now stands Naked before Heaven's judgment-seat!

[A bell strikes.

One! Two!

The hours crawl on; and when my hairs are white My son will then perhaps be waiting thus, Tortured between just hate and vain remorse; Chiding the tardy messenger of news Like those which I expect. I almost wish He be not dead, although my wrongs are great; Yet—his Orsino's step.
Enter Orsino.

Speak!

ORSINO. I am come

To say he has escaped.

Giacomo. Escaped!

ORSINO. And safe

Within Petrella. He passed by the spot

Appointed for the deed an hour too soon.

Giacomo.

Are we the fools of such contingencies! And do we waste in blind misgivings thus The hours when we should act! Then wind and thunder,

Which seemed to howl his knell, is the loud laughter With which Heaven mocks our weakness! I henceforth Will never repent of aught designed or done,

But my repentance.

ORSINO.

See, the lamp ia out.

Giacomo.

If no remorse is ours when the dim air

Has drank this innocent flame, why should we quail

When Cenci's life, that light by which ill spirits

See the worst deeds they prompt, shall sink for ever?

No, I am hardened.

ORSINO.

Why, what need of this?

Who feared the pale intrusion of remorse

In a just deed? Although our first plan failed,

Doubt not but he will soon be laid to rest.

But light the lamp; let us not talk in the dark.

ORSINO. (lighting the lamp).

And yet, once quenched, I cannot thus relume

My father's life: do you not think his ghost

Might plead that argument with God?

ORSINO.

Once gone,

You cannot now recall your sister's peace;

Your own extinguished years of youth and hope;

Nor your wife's bitter words; nor all the taunts

Which, from the prosperous, weak misfortune

takes;

Nor your dead mother; nor—

Giacomo.

O, speak no more!

I am resolved, although this very hand

Must quench the life that animated it.

ORSINO.

There is no need of that. Listen: you know

Olimpio, the castellan of Petrella

In old Colonna's time; him whom your father

Degraded from his post! And Marzio,

That desperate wretch, whom he deprived last year

Of a reward of blood, well earned and due!

Giacomo.

I knew Olimpio; and they say he hated

Old Cenci so, that in his silent rage

His lips grew white only to see him pass.

Of Marzio I know nothing.

ORSINO. Marzio's hate

Matches Olimpio's. I have sent these men,

But in your name, and as at your request,

To talk with Beatrice and Lucretia.

ORSINO.

Only to talk!

ORSINO.

The moments which even now

Pass onward to to-morrow's midnight hour,

May memorise their flight with death: ere then

They must have talked, and may perhaps have done,

And made an end.

ORSINO.

The house-dog moans, and the beams crack: nought else.

Giacomo.

It is my wife complaining in her sleep:

I doubt not she is saying bitter things

Of me; and all my children round her dreaming

That I deny them sustenance.

ORSINO.

Whilst he

Who truly took it from them, and who fills

Their hungry rest with bitterness, now sleeps

Lapped in bad pleasures, and triumphantly

Mocks thee in visions of successful hate

Too like the truth of day.

ORSINO. (If e'er he wakes)

Again, I will not trust to hireling hands—

ORSINO.

Why, that were well. I must be gone; good night!

When next we meet may all be done!

ORSINO. (lighting the lamp).

And all

Forgotten: Oh, that I had never been! (Exit.)
ACT IV.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in the Castle of Petrella.

Enter CenCI.

CENCI.

She comes not; yet I left her even now
Vanquished and faint. She knows the penalty
Of her delay; yet what if threats are vain?
Am I not now within Petrella’s moat?
Or fear I still the eyes and ears of Rome?
Might I not drag her by the golden hair?
Stamp on her? Keep her sleepless, till her brain
Be overworn! Tame her with chains and famine!
Less would suffice. Yet so to leave undone
What I most seek! No, ’tis her stubborn will,
Which, by its own consent, shall stoop as low
As that which drags it down.

Enter Lucretia.

Thou loathed wretch!
Hide thee from my abhorrence; fly, begone!
Yet stay! Bid Beatrice come hither.

LUCRETIA.

Oh, husband! I pray, for thine own wretched sake,
Hide what thou dost. A man who walks like thee
Through crimes, and through the danger of his
each hour may stumble on a sudden grave. [crimes,
And thou art old; thy hairs are hoary grey;
As thou wouldst save thyself from death and hell,
Pity thy daughter; give her to some friend
In marriage; so that she may tempt thee not
To hatred, or worse thoughts, if worse there be.

CENCI.

What! like her sister, who has found a home
To mock my hate from with prosperity?
Stranger in shall destroy both her and thee,
And all that yet remain. My death may be
Rapid, her destiny outspeeds it. Go,
Bid her come hither, and before my mood
Be changed, lest I should drag her by the hair.

LUCRETIA.

She sent me to thee, husband. At thy presence
She fell, as thou dost know, into a trance;
And in that trance she heard a voice which said,
“CenCI must die!” let him confess himself!
Even now the accusing angel waits to hear
If God, to punish his enormous crimes,
Harden his dying heart!”

CENCI.

Why—such things are: No doubt divine revelations may be made.
To mock my hate from with prosperity?
Strange ruin shall destroy both her and thee,
And all that yet remain. My death may be
Rapid, her destiny outspeeds it. Go,
Bid her come hither, and before my mood
Be changed, lest I should drag her by the hair.

LUCRETIA.

She fell, as thou dost know, into a trance;
And in that trance she heard a voice which said,
CenCI must die! let him confess himself!
Even now the accusing angel waits to hear
If God, to punish his enormous crimes,
Harden his dying heart!”

CENCI.

No doubt divine revelations may be made.
Thus plain I have been favoured from above,
For when I cursed my sons, they died.— Ay — so—
As to the right or wrong, that’s talk— repentance—
Repentance is an easy moment’s work,
And more depends on God than me. Well—well—
I must give up the greater point, which was
To poison and corrupt her heart.

[A pause; Lucretia approaches anxiously, and then shrinks back as he speaks.

One, two;

Ay—Rocco and Cristofano my curse
Strangled: and Giacomo, I think, will find
Life a worse Hell than that beyond the grave:
Beatrice shall, if there be skill in hate,
Die in despair, blaspheming: to Bernardo,
He is so innocent, I will bequeath
The memory of these deeds, and make his youth
The sepulchre of hope, where evil thoughts
Shall grow like weeds on a neglected tomb.
When all is done, out in the wide Campagna,
I will pile up my silver and my gold;
My costly robes, paintings, and tapestries;
My parchments, and all records of my wealth;
And make a bonfire in my joy, and leave
Of my possessions nothing but my name;
Which shall be an inheritance to strip
Its wearer bare as infamy. That done,
My soul, which is a scourge, will I resign
Into the hands of him who wielded it;
Be it for its own punishment or theirs,
He will not ask it of me until the lash
Be broken in its last and deepest wound;
Until its hate be all inflicted. Yet,
Lest death outspeed my purpose, let me make
Short work and sure. [Going.

LUCRETIA (stops him).

Oh, stay! It was a feint:
She had no vision, and she heard no voice.
I said it but to awe thee.

CENCI.

That is well.
Vile palterer with the sacred truth of God,
Be thy soul choked with that blaspheming lie!
For Beatrice, worse terrors are in store,
To bend her to my will.

CENCI.

Andrea! go, call my daughter,
And if she comes not, tell her that I come.
What sufferings! I will drag her, step by step,
Through infamies unheard of among men;
She shall stand shelterless in the broad noon
Of public scorn, for acts blazoned abroad,
One among which shall be— What? Canst thou guess!

CENCI.

She shall become (for what she most abhors
Shall have a fascination to entrap
Her loathing will), to her own conscious self
All she appears to others; and when dead,
As she shall die unshrived and unforgiven,
A rebel to her father and her God;
Her corpse shall be abandoned to the hounds;
Her name shall be the terror of the earth;
Her spirit shall approach the throne of God
Plague-spotted with my curses. I will make
Body and soul a monstrous lump of ruin.
Enter Andrea.

ANDREA.
The lady Beatrice—

CENCI.
Speak, pale slave! What

ANDREA.
My Lord, 'twas what she looked; she said:
"Go tell my father that I see the gulf
Of Hell between us two, which he may pass;
I will not."

CENCI.
Go thou quick, Lucretia,
Tell her to come; yet let her understand
Her coming is consent: and say, moreover,
That if she come not I will curse her.

Enter Lucretia.

Lucetia.
Well; what! Speak, wretch!

LUcretia.
She said, "I cannot come;
Go tell my father that I see a torrent
Of his own bloodraging between us."

CENCI (kneeling).
Hear me! If this most specious mass of flesh,
Which thou hast made my daughter; this my blood,
This particle of my divided being;
Or rather, this my bane and my disease,
Whose sight infects and poisons me; this devil,
Which sprung from me as from a hell, was meant
To aughtgood use; if her brightloveliness
Was kindled to illuminethis dark world;
If nursed by thy selectestdew of love,
Such virtuesblossom in her as should make
The peace of life, I pray thee for my sake,
As thou the common God and Father art
Of her, and me, and all; reverse that doom!
Earth, in the name of God, let her food be
Poison, until she be encrusted round
With leprous stains! Heaven, rain upon her head
The blustering drops of the Marenma's dew,
Till she be speckled like a toad; parch up
Those love-enkindled lips, warp those fine limbs
To loathsome lameness! All-beholding sun,
Strike in thine envy those life-daring eyes
With thine own blinding beams!

LUcretia.
Peace! peace!
For thine own sake unsay those dreadful words.
When high God grants, he punishes such prayers.

CENCI (leaping up, and throwing his right hand
towards Heaven).
He does his will, I mine! This in addition,
That if she have a child—

Lucetia.
Horrible thought!

CENCI.
That if she ever have a child; and thou,
Quick Nature! I adjure thee by thy God,
That thou be fruitful in her, and increase
And multiply, fulfilling his command,
And my deep imprecation! May it be
A hideous likeness of herself; that as
From a distorting mirror, she may see
Her image mixed with what she most abhors,
Smiling upon her from her nursing breast.
And that the child may from its infancy
Grow, day by day, more wicked and deformed,
Turning her mother's love to misery:
And that both she and it may live, until
It shall repay her care and pain with hate,
Or what may else be more unnatural.
So he may hunt her through the clamorous scots
Of the loud world to a dishonoured grave.
Shall I revoke this curse! Go, bid her come,
Before my words are chronicled in heaven.

Enter Lucretia.

Lucetia.
Peace! peace!
For thine own sake unsay thosedreadful words.
When high God grants, he punisheth such prayers.

CENCI.
She would not come. Tis well,
I can do both: first take what I demand,
And then extort concession. To thy chamber!
Fly ere I spurn thee: and beware this night
That thou cross not my footsteps. It were safer
To come between the tiger and his prey.

Enter Lucretia.

Lucetia.
She bids thee curse;
And if thy curses, as they cannot do,
Could kill her soul—

CENCI.
She would not come. 'Tis well,
I can do both: first take what I demand,
And then extort concession. To thy chamber!
Fly ere I spurn thee: and beware this night
That thou cross not my footsteps. It were safer
To come between the tiger and his prey.

Lucetia.
It must be late; mine eyes grow weary dim
With unaccustomed heaviness of sleep.
Conscience! Oh, thou most insolent of lies!
They say that sleep, that healing dew of heaven,
Steeps not in balm the foldingsof the brain
Which thinks thee an impostor. I will go,
First to believe thee with an hour of rest,
Which will be deep and calm, I feel; and then—
0, multitudinous Hell, the fiends will shake
Thine arches with the laughter of their joy!
There shall be lamentation heard in Heaven
As o'er an angel fallen; and upon Earth
All good shall droop and sicken, and ill things
Shall, with a spirit of unnatural life,
Stir and be quickened—even as I am now.
SCENE II.

Before the Castle of Petrelia.

Enter Beatrice and Lucretia above on the ramparts.

BEATRICE.

They come not yet.

LUcretia.

’Tis scarce midnight.

BEATRICE.

How slow
Behind the course of thought, even sick with speed,
Lags leaden-footed Time !

LUcretia.

The minutes pass—
If he should wake before the deed is done !

BEATRICE.

O, Mother ! He must never wake again.

What thou hast said persuades me that our act
Will but dislodge a spirit of deep hell
Out of a human form.

LUcretia.

’Tis true he spoke
Of death and judgment with strange confidence
For one so wicked ; as a man believing
In God, yet recking not of good or ill.

And yet to die without confession !—

BEATRICE.

Believe that Heaven is merciful and just,
And will not add our dread necessity
To the amount of his offences.

Enter Olimpio and Marzio, below.

MARZIO.

As to the how this act
Be warranted, it rests with you.

BEATRICE.

Ye conscience-stricken cravens, rock to rest
Your baby hearts. It is the iron gate,
Which ye left open, swinging to the wind,
That enters whistling as in scorn. Come, follow !
And be your steps like mine, light, quick, and bold.

SCENE III.

An Apartment in the Castle.

Enter Beatrice and Lucretia.

LUcretia.

They are about it now.

BEATRICE.

Nay, it is done.

LUcretia.

I have not heard him groan.

BEATRICE.

He will not groan.

LUcretia.

What sound is that ?

BEATRICE.

List ! ’tis the tread of feet
About his bed.

LUcretia.

My God !

If he be now a cold stiff corpse—
THE CENCI.

BEATRICE. O, fear not
What may be done, but what is left undone:
The act seals all.

Enter Olimpio and Marzio.

Is it accomplished?

MARZIO. What!

OLIMPIO. Did you not call?

BEATRICE. When?

OLIMPIO. Now.

BEATRICE. I ask if all is over!

OLIMPIO. We dare not kill an old and sleeping man; His thin grey hair, his stern and reverent brow, His veined hands crossed on his heaving breast, And the calm innocent sleep in which he lay, Quelled me. Indeed, indeed, I cannot do it.

HARZIO. But I was bolder; for I chid Olimpio, And bade him bear his wrongs to his own grave, And leave me the reward. And now my knife Touched the loose wrinkled throat, when the old man Stirred in his sleep, and said, "God! hear, O hear, A father's curse! What, art thou not our father?" And then he laughed. I knew it was the ghost Of my dead father speaking through his lips, And could not kill him.

BEATRICE. Miserable slaves! Where, if ye dare not kill a sleeping man, Found ye the boldness to return to me With such a deed undone? Base palterers! Cowards and traitors! Why, the very conscience Which ye would sell for gold and for revenge Is an equivocation: its sleep over A thousand daily acts disgracing men; And when a deed, where mercy insults Heaven— Why do I talk?

[Snatching a dagger from one of them, and raising it.] Hadst thou a tongue to say, She murdered her own father, I must do it! But never dream ye shall outlive him long!

OLIMPIO. Stop, for God's sake!

MARZIO. I will go back and kill him.

OLIMPIO. Give me the weapon, we must do thy will.

BEATRICE. Take it! Depart! Return!

[Exeunt Olimpio and Marzio]

How pale thou art!

BEATRICE. Even whilst That doubt is passing through your mind, the world Is conscious of a change. Darkness and hell Have swallowed up the vapour they sent forth To blacken the sweet light of life. My breath Comes, methinks, lighter, and the jejuned blood Runs freely through my veins. Hark!

[Exeunt Olimpio and Marzio]

OLIMPIO. He is—

MARZIO. Dead!

OLIMPIO. We strangled him, that there might be no blood; And then we threw his heavy corpse i'the garden Under the balcony; 'twill seem it fell.

BEATRICE (giving them a bag of coin). Here take this gold, and hasten to your homes. And, Marzio, because thou wast only awed By that which made me tremble, wear thou this!

[Clothing him in a rich mantle.]
It was the mantle which my grandfather Wore in his high prosperity, and men Envied his state: so may they envy thine. Thou wert a weapon in the hand of God To a just use. Live long and thrive! And, mark, If thou hast crimes, repent: this deed is none.

[Exeunt.

LUCRETIA. Hark, 'tis the castle horn: my God! it sounds Like the last trump.

BEATRICE. Some tedious guest is coming.

LUCRETIA. The drawbridge is let down; there is a tramp Of horses in the court! fly, hide yourselves!

[Exeunt Olimpio and Marzio]

BEATRICE. Let us retire to counterfeit deep rest; I scarcely need to counterfeit it now; The spirit which doth reign within these limbs Seems strangely undisturbed. I could even sleep Fearless and calm: all ill is surely past.

SCENE IV.

Another Apartment in the Castle.

Enter on one side the Legate Savella, introduced by a Servant, and on the other Lucretia and Bernardo.

SAVELLA. Lady, my duty to his Holiness Be my excuse that thus unseasonably I break upon your rest. I must speak with Count Cenci; doth he sleep?

LUCRETIA (in a hurried and confused manner). I think he sleeps; Yet, wake him not, I pray, spare me awhile; He is a wicked and a wrathful man; Should he be roused out of his sleep to-night,
Which is, I know, a hell of angry dreams,
It were not well; indeed it were not well.
Wait till day-break,—
(Aside.) O, I am deadly sick!

SAVELLA.
I grieve thus to distress you; but the Count
Must answer charges of the gravest import,
And suddenly; such my commission is.

LUCRETIA (with increased agitation).
I dare not rouse him, I know none who dare;
'Twere perilous;—you might as safely waken
A serpent; or a corpse in which some fiend
Were laid to sleep.

SAVELLA.
Lady, my moments here
Are counted. I must rouse him from his sleep,
Since none else dare.

LUCRETIA (aside).
O, terror! O, despair!
(To Bernardo.) Bernardo, conduct you the Lord
Legate to
Your father's chamber.

BEATRICE.
What now?
BERNARDO.
I know not what to say—my father's dead.

BEATRICE.
How, dead! he only sleeps; you mistake, brother.
His sleep is very calm, very like death;
'Tis wonderful how well a tyrant sleeps.

BERNARDO.
Dead; murdered!

LUCRETIA (with extreme agitation).
Oh, no, no,
He is not murdered, though he may be dead;
I have alone the keys of those apartments.

SAVELLA.
Can you suspect who may have murdered him?

BERNARDO.
I know not what to think.

SAVELLA.
Can you name any
Who had an interest in his death?

BERNARDO.
Alas! I can name none who had not, and those most
Who most lament that such a deed is done;
My mother, and my sister, and myself.

SAVELLA.
'Tis strange! There were clear marks of violence.
I found the old man's body in the moonlight,
Hanging beneath the window of his chamber
Among the branches of a pine: he could not
Have fallen there, for all his limbs lay heaped
And effortless; 'tis true there was no blood.—
Favour me, sir— it much imports your house
That all should be made clear— to tell the ladies
That I request their presence.

[Exit Bernardo.

GUARD.
We have one.

OFFICER.
My lord, we found this ruffian and another
Lurking among the rocks; there is no doubt
But that they are the murderers of Count Cenci:
Each had a bag of coin; this fellow wore
A gold-in-woven robe, which, shining bright
Under the dark rocks to the glimmering moon,
Betrayed them to our notice; the other fell
Desperately fighting.
SAVELLA. What does he confess?

OFFICER. He keeps firm silence; but these lines found on him may speak.

SAVELLA. Their language is at least sincere.

“TO THE LADY BEATRICE.”

“That the atonement of what my nature sickens to conjecture may soon arrive, I send thee, at thy brother’s desire, those who will speak and do more than I dare write.

“Thy devoted servant, OBSINO.”

Enter Lucretia, Beatrice, and Bernardo.

KNOWEST THOU THIS WRITING, LADY?

BEATRICE. No.

Nor thou?

LUcretia (her conduct throughout the scene is marked by extreme agitation).

Where was it found? What is it? It should be Orsino’s hand! It speaks of that strange horror which never yet found utterance, but which made between that hapless child and her dead father A gulf of obscure hatred.

SAVELLA. Is it so?

Is it true, lady, that thy father did Such outrages as to awaken in thee Unfilial hate?

BEATRICE. Not hate, ’twas more than hate; This is most true, yet wherefore question me?

SAVELLA. There is a deed demanding question done; Thou hast a secret which will answer not.

BEATRICE. What sayest? My lord, your words are bold and rash.

SAVELLA. I do arrest all present in the name Of the Pope’s Holiness. You must to Rome.

LUcretia. O, not to Rome! Indeed we are not guilty.

BEATRICE. Why not to Rome, dear mother? There, as here, Our innocence is as an armed heel To trample accusation. God is there, As here, and with his shadow ever clothes The innocent, the injured, and the weak; And such are we. Cheer up, dear lady! Lean on me; collect your wandering thoughts. My lord, As soon as you have taken some refreshment, And had all such examinations made Upon the spot, as may be necessary To the full understanding of this matter, We shall be ready. Mother, will you come?

LUcretia. Ha! they will bind us to the rack, and wrest Self-accusation from our agony! Will Giacomo be there? Orsino! Marzio! All present; all confronted; all demanding Each from the other’s countenance the thing Which is in every heart! O, misery!
THE CENCI.

SAVELLA.
She faints; an ill appearance this.

BEATRICE.
My lord,
She knows not yet the uses of the world.
She fears that power is as a beast which grasps
And loosens not: a snake whose look transmutes
All things to guilt, which is its nutriment.

She cannot know how well the supine slaves
Of blind authority read the truth of things
When written on a brow of guilelessness:
She sees not yet triumphant Innocence
Stand at the judgment-seat of mortal man,
A judge and an accuser of the wrong
Which drags it there. Prepare yourself, my
lord;
Our suite will join yours in the court below.

[Exeunt.

ACT V.

SCENE I.
An Apartment in Orsino’s Palace.
Enter Orsino and Giacomo.

GIACOMO.
Do evil deeds thus quickly come to end!
0 that the vain remorse which must chastise
Crimes done, had but as loud a voice to warn,
As its keen sting is mortal to avenge!
0 that the hour when present had cast off
The mantle of its mystery, and shown
The ghastly form with which it now returns
When its scared game is roused, cheering the
hounds
Of conscience to their prey! Alas, alas!
It was a wicked thought, a piteous deed,
To kill an old and hoary-headed father.

ORSINO.
Ithas turned out unluckily, in truth.

GIACOMO.
To violate the sacred doors of sleep;
To cheat kind nature of the placid death
Which she prepares for overwearied age;
To drag from Heaven an unrepentant soul,
Which might have quenched in reconciling prayers
A life of burning crimes—

ORSINO.
You cannot say
I urged you to the deed.

GIACOMO.
O, had I never
Found in thy smooth and ready countenance
The mirror of my darkest thoughts; hadst thou
Never with hints and questions made me look
Upon the monster of my thought, until
It grew familiar to desire—

ORSINO.
’Tis thus
Men cast the blame of their unprosperous acts
Upon the abettors of their own resolve;
Or any thing but their weak, guilty selves.
And yet, confess the truth, it is the peril
In which you stand that gives you this pale
sickness
Of penitence; confess, ’tis fear disguised
From its own shame that takes the mantle now
Of thin remorse. What if we yet were safe!

ORSINO.
I have all prepared
For instant flight. We can escape even now,
So we take fleet occasion by the hair.

GIACOMO.
Rather expire in tortures, as I may.
What! will you cast by self-accusing flight
Assured conviction upon Beatrice?
She who alone, in this unnatural work,
Stands like God’s angel ministered upon
By fiends; avenging such a nameless wrong
As turns black parricid to piety;
While I consider all your words and looks,
Comparing them with your proposal now,
That you must be a villain. For what end
Could you engage in such a perilous crime,
Training me on with hints, and signs, and smiles,
Even to this gulf! Thou art no liar! No,
Thou art a lie! Traitor and murderer!
Coward and slave! But no— defend thyself;

ORSINO.
Put up your weapon.
Is it the desperation of your fear
Makes you thus rash and sudden with your
friend,
Now ruined for your sake? If honest anger
Have moved you, know, that what I just proposed
Was but to try you. As for me, I think
Thankless affection led me to this point,
From which, if my firm temper could repent,
I cannot now recede. Even whilst we speak,
The ministers of justice wait below:
They grant me these brief moments. Now, if you
Have any word of melancholy comfort
To speak to your pale wife, ’twere best to pass
Out at the postern, and avoid them so.

GIACOMO.
Oh, generous friend! How canst thou pardon me!
Would that my life could purchase thine!
THE CENCI.

O ESI NO.

That wish
Now comes a day too late. Haste; fare thee well!
Hear'st thou not steps along the corridori

[Exit GLACOMO.

I'm sorry for it; but the guards are waiting
At his own gate, and such was my contrivance
That I might rid me both of him and them.
I thought to act a solemn comedy
Upon the painted scene of this new world,
And to attain my own peculiar ends
By some such plot of mingled good and ill
As others weave; but there arose a Power
Which grasped and snapped the threads of my
device,
And turned it to a net of ruin— Ha!

[Exit GlACOMO.

Is that my name I hear proclaimed abroad!
But I will pass, wrapt in a viled disguise;
Rags on my back, and a false innocence
Upon my face, through the misdeeming crowd,
Which judges by what seems. 'Tis easy then,
For a new name, and for a country new,
And a new life, fashioned on old desires,
To change the honours of abandoned Rome.

And these must be the masks of that within,
Which must remain unaltered.— Oh, I fear
That what is past will never let me rest!
Why, when none else is conscious, but myself,
Of my misdeeds, should my own heart's contempt
Trouble me! Have I not the power to fly
My own reproaches! Shall I be the slave
Of—what? A word! which those of this false world
Employ against each other, not themselves;
As men wear daggers not for self-offence.
But if I am mistaken, where shall I
Find the disguise to hide me from myself,
As now I skulk from every other eye!

SCENE II.
A Hall of Justice.
Camillo, Judges, etc., are discovered seated;
MARIO is led in.

FIRST JUDGE.
Accused, do you persist in your denial?
I ask you, are you innocent, or guilty!
I demand who were the participators
In your offence? Speak truth, and the whole truth.

MARZIO.
My God! I did not kill him; I know nothing;
Olimpio sold the robe to me from which
You would infer my guilt

SECOND JUDGE.
Away with him!

FIRST JUDGE.
Dare you, with lips yet white from the rack's kiss,
Speak false? Is it so soft a questioner,
That you would bandy lovers' talk with it,
Till it wind out your life and soul? Away!

MARZIO.
Spare me! O, spare! I will confess.

FIRST JUDGE.
Then speak.

MARZIO.
I strangled him in his sleep.

FIRST JUDGE.
Who urged you to it?

MARZIO.
His own son Giacomo, and the young prelate
Orsino sent me to Petrella; there
The ladies Beatrice and Lucretia
Tempted me with a thousand crowns, and I
And my companion forthwith murdered him.
Now let me die.

FIRST JUDGE.
This sounds as bad as truth. Guards, there,
Lead forth the prisoners.

Enter LUCRETTIA, BEATRICE, AND GIACOMO, guarded.

Look upon this man;
When did you see him last?

BEATRICE.
We never saw him.

MARZIO.
You know me too well, Lady Beatrice.

BEATRICE.
I know thee! How? when? where?

MARZIO.
You know 'twas I
Whom you did urge with menaces and bribes
To kill your father. When the thing was done,
You clothed me in a robe of woven gold,
And bade me thrive: how I have thriven, you see.
You, my Lord Giacomo, Lady Lucretia,
You know that what I speak is true.

[Beatrice advances towards him; she covers his face, and shrinks back.

Oh, dart
The terrible resentment of those eyes
On the dread earth! Turn them away from me!
They wound: 'twas torture forced the truth.
My Lords,
Having said this, let me be led to death.

BEATRICE.
Poor wretch, I pity thee: yet stay awhile.

CAMILLO.
Guards, lead him not away.

BEATRICE.
Cardinal Camillo,
You have a good repute for gentleness
And wisdom: can it be that you sithere
To countenance a wicked farce like this!
When some obscure and trembling slave is dragged
From sufferings which might shake the sternest
heart,
And bade to answer, not as he believes,
But as those may suspect or do desire,
Whose questions thence suggest their own reply:
And that in peril of such hideous torments
As merciful God spares even the damned. Speak now
The thing you surely know, which is, that you,
If your fine frame were stretched upon that wheel,
And you were told, "Confess that you did poison
Your little nephew: that fair blue-eyed child
Who was the load-star of your life, " and though
All see, since his most swift and piteous death,
That day and night, and heaven and earth, and time,
And all the things hoped for or done therein,
Are changed to you, through your exceeding grief,
Yet you would say, "I confess anything"—
And beg from your tormentors, like that slave,
The refuge of dishonourable death.
I pray thee, Cardinal, that thou assert
My innocence.

CAMILLO (much moved).
What shall we think, my lords!
Shame on those tears! I thought the heart was frozen
Which is their fountain. I would pledge my soul
That she is guiltless.

JUDGE.
Yet she must be tortured.

CAMILLO.
I would as soon have tortured mine own nephew
If he now lived, he would be just her age;
"Her hair, too, was her colour, and his eyes
Like hers in shape, but blue, and not so deep:
As that most perfect image of God's love
That ever came sorrowing upon the earth.
She is as pure as speechless infancy.

JUDGE.
Well, be her purity on your head, my lord,
If you forbide the rack. His Holiness
Eojoined us to pursue this monstrous crime
By the severest forms of law; nay, even
To stretch a point against the criminals.
The prisoners stand accused of parricide,
Upon such evidence as justifies
Torture.

BEATRICE.
What evidence! This man's!

JUDGE.
Even so.

BEATRICE (to MARZIO).
Come near. And who art thou, thus chosen forth
Out of the multitude of living men,
To kill the innocent!

MARZIO.
I am Marzio,
Thy father's vassal.

BEATRICE.
Fix thine eyes on mine;
Answer to what I ask.

JUDGE.
I prithee mark
His countenance: unlike bold calumny,
Which sometimes dares not speak the thing it looks,
He dares not look the thing he speaks, but bends
His gaze on the blind earth.

(To Marzio.) What! wilt thou say
That I did murder my own father!

MARZIO.
Oh! Spare me! My brains swims round—I cannot speak—
It was that horrid torture forced the truth.
Take me away! Let her not look on me!
I am a guilty miserable wretch!
I have said all I know; now, let me die!

BEATRICE.
My lords, if by my nature I had been
So stern, as to have planned the crime alleged,
Which your suspicions dictate to this slave,
And the rack makes him utter, do you think
I should have left this two-edged instrument
Of my mischief; this man; this bloody knife,
With my own name engraved on the hilt,
Lying unheathed amid a world of foes,
For my own death! That with such horrible need
For deepest silence, I should have neglected
So trivial a precaution, as the making
His tomb the keeper of a secret written
On a thief's memory! What is his poor life!
What are a thousand lives! A parricide
Had trampled them like dust; and see, he lives!

And thou—

MARZIO.
Oh, spare me! Speak to me no more!
That stern yet piteous look, those solemn tones,
Wound worse than torture.

(To the Judges.) I have told it all;
For pity's sake lead me away to death.

CAMILLO.
Guards, lead him nearer the lady Beatrice,
He shrinks from her regard like autumn's leaf
From the keen breath of the serenest north.

BEATRICE.
Oh, thou who tremblest on the giddy verge
Of life and death, pause ere thou answerest me;
So mayst thou answer God with less dismay:
What evil have we done thee! I, alas!
Have lived but on this earth a few sad years,
And so my lot was ordered, that a father
First turned the moments of awakening life
To drops, each poisoning youth's sweet hope; and
Then
Stabbed with one blow my everlasting soul,
And my untainted fame; and even that peace
Which sleeps within the core of the heart's heart.
But the wound was not mortal; so my hate
Became the only worship I could lift
To our great Father, who in pity and love,
Armed thee, as thou dost say, to cut him off;
And thus his wrong becomes my accusation:
And art thou the accuser! If thou holpest
Mercy in heaven, show justice upon earth:
Worse than a bloody hand is a hard heart.
If thou hast done murders, made thy life's path
Over the trampled laws of God and man,
Rush not before thy Judge, and say: "My Maker,
I have done this and more; for there was one
Who was most pure and innocent on earth;
And because she endured what never any,
Guilty or innocent, endured before;
Because her wrongs could not be told, nor thought;
Because thy hand at length did rescue her;
I with my words killed her and all her kin."
Think, I adjure you, what it is to slay
The reverence living in the minds of men
Towards our ancient house, and stainless fame!
Think what it is to strangle infant pity,
Cradled in the belief of guileless looks,
Till it become a crime to suffer. Think
What 'tis to blot with infamy and blood
All that which shows like innocence, and is,—
Hear me, great God! I swear, most innocent,—
So that the world lose all discrimination
Between the sly, fierce, wild regard of guilt,
And that which now compels thee to reply
To what I ask: Am I, or am I not
A parricide!
MARZIO.
Thou art not!

JUDGE.
What is this?

MARZIO.
I here declare those whom I did accuse
Are innocent. 'Tis I alone am guilty.

JUDGE.
Drag him away to torments; let them be
Subtle and long drawn out, to tear the folds
Of the heart's inmost cell. Unbind him not
Till he confess.

MARZIO.
Torture me as ye will:
A keener pain has wrung a higher truth
From my last breath. She is most innocent!
Bloodhounds, not men, glut yourselves well with me!
I will not give you that fine piece of nature
To rend and ruin.

CAMILLO.
What say ye now, my lords!

JUDGE.
Let tortures strain the truth till it be white
As snow thrice-sifted by the frozen wind.

CAMILLO.
Yet stained with blood.

JUDGE (to BEATRICE).
Know you this paper, lady!

BEATRICE.
Enter me not with questions. Who stands here
As my accuser! Ha! wilt thou be he,
Who art my judge? Accuser, witness, judge,
What, all in one! Here is Orsino's name;
Where is Orsino? Let his eye meet mine.
What means this scrawl? Alas! ye know not what,
And therefore on the chance that it may be
Some evil, will ye kill us?

Enter an Officer.

OFFICER.
Marzio's dead.

JUDGE.
What did he say?

OFFICER.
Nothing. As soon as we
Had bound him on the wheel, he smiled on us,
As one who baffles a deep adversary;
And holding his breath, died.

JUDGE.
There remains nothing
But to apply the question to those prisoners,
Who yet remain stubborn.

CAMILLO.
I overrule
Further proceedings, and in the behalf
Of these most innocent and noble persons
Will use my interest with the Holy Father.

JUDGE.
Let the Pope's pleasure then be done. Meanwhile
Conduct these culprit(s) each to separate cells;
And be the engines ready: for this night,
If the Pope's resolution be grave,
Pious, and just as once, I'll wring the truth
Out of those nerves and sinews, groan by groan.

[Exit.]
And leave—what memory of our having been?
Infamy, blood, terror, despair! O thou,
Who wert a mother to the parentless,
Kill not thy child! Let not her wrongs kill thee!
Brother, lie down with me upon the rack,
And let us each be silent as a corpse;
It soon will be as soft as any grave;
'Tis but the falsehood it can wring from fear
Makes the rack cruel.

GIACOMO.
They will tear the truth
Even from thee at last, those cruel pains:
For pity's sake say thou art guilty now.

LUCRETIA.
O, speak the truth! I will all quickly die;
And after death, God is our judge, not they;
He will have mercy on us.

BERNARDO.
If indeed
It can be true, say so, dear sister mine;
And then the Pope will surely pardon you,
And all be well.

Confess, or I will warp
Your limbs with such keen tortures—

The rack henceforth into a spinning-wheel!
Torture your dog, that he may tell when last
He lapped the blood his master shed—got me!
My pangs are of the mind, and of the heart,
And of the soul; ay, of the inmost soul,
Which weeps within tears as of burning gall
To see, in this ill world where none are true,
My kindred false to their deserted selves.
And with considering all the wretched life
Which I have lived, and its now wretched end;
And the small justiceshown by Heaven and Earth
To me or mine; and what a tyrant thou art,
And what slaves these; and what a world we make,
The oppressor and the oppressed—such pangs
Compel
My answer. What is it thou wouldst with me!

JUDGE.
She is convicted, but has not confessed.
Be it enough. Until their final sentence
Let none have converse with them. You, young
Linger not here!

JUDGE.
Guards! do your duty.

BERNARDO (embracing BEATRICE).
Oh! would ye divide
Body from soul?

O, my child!
To what a dreadful end are we all come!
Why did I yield! Why did I not sustain
Those torments! Oh! that I were all dissolved
Into these fast and unavailing tears,
Which flow and feel not!

BEATRICE.
What 'twas weak to do,
'Tis weaker to lament, once being done;
Take cheer! The God who knew my wrong, and
Our speedy act the angel of his wrath, made
Seems, and but seems, to have abandoned us.
Let us not think that we shall die for this.
Brother, sit near me; give me your firm hand,
You had a manly heart. Bear up! bear up!
Oh! dearest lady, put your gentle head
Upon my lap, and try to sleep awhile:
Your eyes look pale, hollow, and overworn,
With heaviness of watching and slow grief.
Come, I will sing you some low, sleepy tune,
Not cheerful, nor yet sad; some dull old thing,
Such as our country gossips sing and spin,
Till they almost forget they live: liedown!
So; that will do. Have I forgot the words?

False friend, wilt thou smile or weep
When my life is laid asleep?
Little care for a smile or a tear,
The clay-cold corpse upon the bier.
Farewell! Heigh ho!
What is this whisper low?
There is a snake in thy smile, my dear;
And bitter poison within thy tear.

Sweet sleep! I was death like to thee,
Or if thou couldst mortal be,
I would close those eyes of pain;
When to wake? Never again.
O World! farewell!
Listen to the passing bell!
It says, thou and I must part,
With a light and a heavy heart.

[The scene closes.]
SCENE IV.

A Hall of the Prison.

Enter Camillo and Bernardo.

Camillo. The Pope is stern; not to be moved or bent. He looked as calm and keen as is the engine Which tortures and which kills, exempt itself From aught that it inflicts; a marble form, A rite, a law, a custom; not a man. He frowned, as if to frown had been the trick Of his machinery, on the advocates Presenting the defences, which he tore And threw behind, muttering with hoarse, harsh voice: "Which among ye defended their old father Killed in his sleep?" Then to another: "Thou Dost this in virtue of thy place; 'tis well." He turned to me then, looking deprecation, And said these three words, coldly: "They must die."

Bernardo. And yet you left him not!

Camillo. I urged him still; Pleading, as I could guess, the devilish wrong Which prompted your unnatural parent's death. And he replied, "Paolo Santa Croce Murdered his mother yester evening, And he is fled. Parricide grows so rife, That soon, for some just cause no doubt, the young Will strangle us all, dozing in our chairs. Authority, and power, and hoary hair Are grown crimes capital. You are my nephew, You come to ask then—pardon; stay a moment; Here is their sentence; never see me more Till, to the letter, it be all fulfilled."

Bernardo. Oh, God, not so! I did believe indeed That all you said was but sad preparation For happy news. O, there are words and looks To bend the sternest purpose! Once I knew them, Now I forget them at my dearest need. What think you if I seek him out, and bathe His feet and robe with hot and bitter tears? Importune him with prayers, vexing his brain Until in rage He strike me with his pastoral cross, and trample Upon my prostrate head, so that my blood May stain the senseless dust on which he treads, And remorse waken mercy! I will do it! O, wait till I return! [Rushes out.

Camillo. Alas! poor boy! A wreck-devoted seaman thus might pray To the deaf sea.

LUCRETIA (wildly). Trust in God's sweet love, The tender promises of Christ: ere night Think we shall be in Paradise.

Bertrice. 'Tis past! Whatever comes, my heart shall sink no more. And yet, I know not why, your words strike chill: How tedious, false, and cold seem all things! I Have met with much injustice in this world; No difference has been made by God or man, 'Twill be all the same! I am cut off from the only world I know, From light, and life, and love, in youth's sweet prime. You do well telling me to trust in God; I hope I do trust in him. In whom else Can any trust? And yet my heart is cold. [During the latter speeches Giacomo has retired conversing with Camillo, who now goes out; Giacomo advances.

Giacomo. Glorify, oh yes!—I know you not, mother—sister, know you not? Bernardo even now is gone to implore The Pope to grant our pardon.

LUCRETIA. Child, perhaps It will be granted. We may all then live To make these woes a tale for distant years: O, what a thought! It gushes to my heart Like the warm blood.

Bertrice. Yet both will soon be cold: O, trample out that thought! Worse than despair, Worse than the bitterness of death, is hope: It is the only ill which can find place.
Upon the giddy, sharp, and narrow hour
Trottering beneath us. Plead with the swift frost
That it should spare the eldest flower of spring:
Plead with awakening earthquake, o'er whose couch
Even now a city stands, strong, fair, and free;
Now stench and blackness yawns, like death. O,
With famine, or wind-walking pestilence,
[plead
Blind lightning, or the deaf sea, not with man!
Cruel, cold, formal man; righteous in words,
In deeds a Cain. No, mother, we must die:
Since such is the reward of innocent lives;
Such the alleviation of worst wrongs.
And whilst our murderers live, and hard, cold men,
Smiling and slow, walk through a world of tears
To death as to life's sleep; 'twere just the grave
Weresomestrangejoy for us. Come, obscure Death,
And wind me in thine all-embracing arms!
Like a fond mother hide me in thy bosom,
And rock me to the sleep from which none wake.
Live ye, who live, subject to one another
As we were once, who now—

BERNARDO rushes in.

BERNARDO.

O, horrible!
That tears, that looks, that hope poured forth in
Even till the heart is vacant and despairs, [prayer,
Should all be vain! The ministers of death
Are waiting round the doors. I thought I saw
Blood on the face of one— what if 'twere fancy!
Soon the heart's blood of all I love on earth
Will sprinkle him, and he will wipe it off
As if 'twere only rain. O, life! O, world!
Cover me! let me be no more! To see
That perfect mirror of pure innocence
Wherein I gazed, and grew happy and good,
Shivered to dust! To see thee, Beatrice,
Who made all lovely thou didst look upon—
Thee, light of life— dead, dark! While I say, sister,
To hear I have no sister; and thou, mother,
Whose love was a bond to all our loves—
Dead! The sweet bond broken!

Enter Camillo and Guards.

CAMILLO.

They come! Let me
Kiss those warm lips before their crimson leaves
Are blighted— white— cold. Say farewell, before
Death chokes that gentle voice! O let me hear
You speak!

BEATRICE.

Farewell, my tender brother. Think
Of our sad fate with gentleness, as now:
And let mild, pitying thoughts lighten for thee
Thy sorrow's load. Err not in harsh despair,
But tears and patience. One thing more, my child:
For thine own sake be constant to the love
Thou bearest us; and to the faith that I,
Though wrapt in a strange cloud of crime and
shame,
Lived ever holy and unstained. And though
Ill tongues shall wound me, and our common
name
Be as a mark stamped on thine innocent brow
For men to point at as they pass, do thou
Forbear, and never think a thought unkind
Of those who perhaps love thee in their graves.
So mayest thou die as I do; fear and pain
Being subdued. Farewell! Farewell! Farewell!

BERNARDO.

I cannot say farewell!

CAMILLO.

O, Lady Beatrice!

BEATRICE.

Give yourself no unnecessary pain,
My dear Lord Cardinal. Here, mother, tie
My girdle for me, and bind up this hair
In any simple knot: ay, that does well.
And yours I see is coming down. How often
Have we done this for one another? now
We shall not do it any more. My lord,
We are quite ready. Well, 'tis very well.
NOTE ON THE CENCI. BY THE EDITOR.

The sort of mistake that Shelley made, as to the extent of his own genius and powers, which led him deviously at first, but lastly into the direct track that enabled him fully to develop them, is a curious instance of his modesty of feeling, and of the methods which the human mind uses at once to deceive itself, and yet, in its very delusion, to make its way out of error into the path which nature has marked out as its right one. He often incited me to attempt the writing a tragedy—he conceived that I possessed some dramatic talent, and he was always most earnest and energetic in his exhortations that I should cultivate any talent I possessed, to the utmost. I entertained a truer estimate of my powers; and, above all, though at that time not exactly aware of the fact, I was far too young to have any chance of succeeding, even moderately, in a species of composition, that requires a greater scope of experience in, and sympathy with, human passion than could then have fallen to my lot, or than any perhaps, except Shelley, ever possessed, even at the age of twenty-six, at which he wrote the Cenci.

On the other hand, Shelley most erroneously conceived himself to be destitute of this talent. He believed that one of the first requisites was the capacity of forming and following up a story or plot. He fancied himself to be defective in this portion of imagination—it was that which gave him least pleasure in the writings of others—though he laid great store by it, as the proper framework to support the sublimest efforts of poetry. He asserted that he was too metaphysical and abstract—too fond of the theoretical and the ideal, to succeed as a tragedian. It perhaps is not strange that I shared this opinion with himself, for he had hitherto shown no inclination for, nor given any specimen of his powers in framing and supporting the interest of a story, either in prose or verse. Once or twice, when he attempted such, he had speedily thrown it aside, as being even disagreeable to him as an occupation.

The subject he had suggested for a tragedy was Charles I., and he had written to me, "Remember, remember Charles I. I have been already imagining how you would conduct some scenes."

The second volume of St. Leon begins with this proud and true sentiment, "There is nothing which the human mind can conceive which it may not execute." Shakspeare was only a human being." These words were written in 1818, while we were in Lombardy, when he little thought how soon a work of his own would prove a proud comment on the passage he quoted. When in Rome, in 1819, a friend put into our hands the old manuscript account of the story of the Cenci. We visited the Colonna and Doria palaces, where the portraits of Beatrice were to be found; and her beauty cast the reflection of its own grace over her appalling story. Shelley's imagination became strongly excited, and he urged the subject to me as one fitted for a tragedy. More than ever I felt my incompetence; but I entreated him to write it instead; and he began and proceeded swiftly, urged on by intense sympathy with the sufferings of the human beings whose passions, so long cold in the tomb, he revived, and gifted with poetic language. This tragedy is the only one of his works that he communicated to me during its progress. We talked over the arrangement of the scenes together. I speedily saw the great mistake we had made, and triumphed in the discovery of the new talent brought to light from that mine of wealth, never, alas! through his untimely death, worked to its depths—his richly-gifted mind.

We suffered a severe affliction in Rome by the loss of our eldest child, who was of such beauty and promise as to cause him deservedly to be the idol of our hearts. We left the capital of the world, anxious for a time to escape a spot associated too intimately with his presence and loss. Some friends of ours were residing in the neighbourhood of Leghorn, and we took a small house, Villa Valsovano, about half-way between the town and Monte Nero, where we remained during the

* Such feelings haunted him when, in the Cenci, he makes Beatrice speak to Cardinal Camillo of that fair blue-eyed child.

Who was the load-star of your life.

And say—

All see, since his most piteous death,

That day and night, and heaven and earth, and time,

And all the things hoped for, or done therein,

Are changed to you, through your exceeding grief.
EDITOR’S NOTE ON THE CENCI. 159

summer. Our villa was situated in the midst of a podere; the peasants sang as they worked beneath our windows, during the heats of a very hot season, and in the evening the water-wheel creaked as the process of irrigation went on, and the fire-flies flashed from among the myrtle hedges:—nature was bright, sunny, and cheerful, or diversified by storms of a majestic terror, such as we had never before witnessed.

At the top of the house, there was a sort of terrace. There is often such in Italy, generally roofed. This one was very small, yet not only roofed but glazed; this Shelley made his study; it looked out on a wide prospect of fertile country, and commanded a view of the near sea. The storms that sometimes varied our day showed themselves most picturequely as they were driven across the ocean; sometimes the dark lurid clouds dipped towards the waves, and became water-spouts, that churned up the waters beneath, as they were chased onward, and scattered by the tempest. At other times the dazzling sunlight and heat made it almost intolerable to every other; but Shelley basked in both, and his health and spirits revived under their influence. In this airy cell he wrote the principal part of The Cenci. He was making a study of Calderon at the time, reading his best tragedies with an accomplished lady living near us, to whom his letter from Leghorn was addressed during the following year. He admired Calderon, both for his poetry and his dramatic genius; but it shows his judgment and originality, that, though greatly struck by his first acquaintance with the Spanish poet, none of his peculiarities crept into the composition of The Cenci; and there is no trace of his new studies, except in that passage to which he himself alludes, as suggested by one in El Purgatorio de San Patricio.

Shelley wished The Cenci to be acted. He was not a play-goer, being of such fastidious taste that he was easily disgusted by the bad filling up of the inferior parts. While preparing for our departure from England, however, he saw Miss O'Neil several times; she was then in the zenith of her glory, and Shelley was deeply moved by her impersonation of several parts, and by the graceful sweetness, the intense pathos, and sublime vehemence of passion she displayed. She was often in his thoughts as he wrote, and when he had finished, he became anxious that his tragedy should be acted, and receive the advantage of having this accomplished actress to fill the part of the heroine. With this view he wrote the following letter to a friend in London:

"The object of the present letter is to ask a favour of you. I have written a tragedy on a story well known in Italy, and, in my conception, eminently dramatic. I have taken some pains to make my play fit for representation, and those who have already seen it judge favourably. It is written without any of the peculiar feelings and opinions which characterise my other compositions; I having attended simply to the impartial development of such characters as it is probable the persons represented really were, together with the greatest degree of popular effect to be produced by such a development. I send you a translation of the Italian MS. on which my play is founded; the chief circumstance of which I have touched very delicately; for my principal doubt as to whether it would succeed, as an acting play, hangs entirely on the question as to whether such a thing as incest in this shape, however treated, would be admitted on the stage. I think, however, it will form no objection, considering, first, that the facts are matter of history, and, secondly, the peculiar delicacy with which I have treated it."

"I am exceedingly interested in the question of whether this attempt of mine will succeed or not. I am strongly inclined to the affirmative at present; founding my hopes on this, that as a composition it is certainly not inferior to any of the modern plays that have been acted, with the exception of 'Remorse,' that the interest of the plot is incredibly greater and more real, and that there is nothing beyond what the multitude are contented to believe that they can understand, either in imagery, opinion, or sentiment. I wish to preserve a complete incognito, and can trust to you that, whatever else you do, you will at least favour me on this point. Indeed this is essential, deeply essential to its success. After it had been acted and successfully, (could I hope for such a thing) I would own it if I pleased, and use the celebrity it might acquire to my own purposes.

"What I want you to do, is to procure for me its presentation at Covent Garden. The principal character, Beatrice, is precisely fitted for Miss O'Neil, and it might even seem to have been written for her, (God forbid that I should see her play it—it would tear my nerves to pieces) and in all respects it is fitted only for Covent Garden. The chief male character I confess I should be very willing to have acted, and receive the advantage of having this accomplished actress to fill the part of the heroine. With this view he wrote the following letter to a friend in London:

"That if he have a child," etc.
unwilling that any one but Kean should play—
that is impossible, and I must be contented with
an inferior actor."

The play was accordingly sent to Mr. Harris.
He pronounced the subject to be so objectionable,
that he could not even submit the part to Miss
O'Neil for perusal, but expressed his desire that
the author would write a tragedy on some other
subject, which he would gladly accept. Shelley
printed a small edition at Leghorn, to insure its
correctness; as he was much annoyed by the
many mistakes that crept into his text, when
distance prevented him from correcting the press.

Universal approbation soon stamped The Cenci
as the best tragedy of modern times. Writing
concerning it, Shelley said: "I have been cautious
to avoid the introducing faults of youthful com-
position; diffuseness, a profusion of inapplicable
imagery, vagueness, generality, and, as Hamlet
says, words, words." There is nothing that is not
purely dramatic throughout; and the character of
Beatrice, proceeding from vehement struggle to
horror, to deadly resolution, and lastly, to the
elevated dignity of calm suffering joined to pas-
tionate tenderness and pathos, is touched with
hues so vivid and so beautiful, that the poet seems
to have read intimately the secrets of the noble
heart imaged in the lovely countenance of the un-
fortunate girl. The Fifth Act is a masterpiece.
It is the finest thing he ever wrote, and may claim
proud comparison not only with any contempo-
rary, but preceding poet. The varying feeling of
Beatrice are expressed with passionate, har-
reaching eloquence. Every character has a note
that echoes truth in its tones. It is curious, to
one acquainted with the written story, to mark
the success with which the poet has inwoven the
real incidents of the tragedy into his scenes, and
yet, through the power of poetry, has obliterated
all that would otherwise have shown too har-
ter too hideous in the picture. His success was a
double triumph; and often after he was earnestly
entreated to write again in a style that commended
popular favour, while it was not less instinct with
truth and genius. But the bent of his mind was
the other way; and even when employed on sub-
jects whose interest depended on character and
incident, he would start off in another direction,
and leave the delineations of human passion, which
he could depict in so able a manner, for fantastic
creations of his fancy, or the expression of those
opinions and sentiments with regard to human
nature and its destiny; a desire to diffuse which,
was the master passion of his soul.

Finding among my papers the account of the
case of the Cenci family, translated from the old
Roman MS., written at the period when the dis-
astrous events it commemorates occurred, I ap-
pend it here, as the perusal must interest every
reader.

RELATION
OF
THE DEATH OF THE FAMILY OF THE CENCI.

Tax most wicked life which the Roman nobleman,
Francesco Cenci, led while he lived in this world, not
only occasioned his own ruin and death, but also that
of many others, and brought down the entire destruc-
tion of his house. This nobleman was the son of
Monsignore Cenci, who, having been treasurer during
the pontificate of Pius V., left immense wealth to Francesco,
his only son. From this inheritance alone he enjoyed
an income of 160,000 crowns, and he increased his
fortune by marrying an exceedingly rich lady, who
died after she had given birth to seven unfortunate
children. He then contracted a second marriage with
Lucretia Petroni, a lady of a noble Roman family;
but he had no children by her. Sodomy was the least,
and atheism the greatest, of the vices of Francesco; as
is proved by the tenor of his life; for he was three
times accused of sodomy, and paid the sum of 100,000
crowns to government, in commutation of the punish-
ment rightfully awarded to this crime; and concerning
his religion, it is sufficient to state, that he never fre-
quented any church; and although he caused a small
chapel, dedicated to the apostle St. Thomas, to be
built in the court of his palace, his intention in so doing
was to bury there all his children, whom he cruelly
hated. He had driven the eldest of these, Giacomo,
Cristofero, and Rocco, from the paternal mansion,
while they were yet too young to have given him any
real cause of displeasure. He sent them to the uni-
versity of Salamanca, but, refusing to remit to them
there the money necessary for their maintenance, they
desperately returned home. They found that this
change only increased their misery, for the hatred and
contempt of their father towards them was so aggra-
vated, that he refused to dress or maintain them, so that
RELATION OF THE DEATH OF THE CENCI FAMILY.

The Palace Cenci was sometimes visited by a Monsignore Guerra—a young man of handsome person and attractive manners, and of that facile character which might easily be induced to become a partner in any action, good or evil, as it might happen. His countenance was pleasing, and his person tall and well proportioned; he was somewhat in love with Beatrice, and well acquainted with the turpitude of Francesco’s character, and was hated by him on account of the familiar intercourse which subsisted between him and the children of this unnatural father: for this reason he timed his visits with caution, and never came to the house but when he knew that Francesco was absent. He was moved to a lively compassion of the state of Lucretia and Beatrice, who often related their increasing misery to him, and his pity was for ever fed and augmented by some new tale of tyranny and cruelty. In one of these conversations Beatrice let fall some words which plainly indicated that she and her mother-in-law contemplated the murder of their tyrant, and Monsignore Guerra not only showed approbation of their design, but also promised to co-operate with them in their undertaking. Thus stimulated, Beatrice communicated the design to her eldest brother, Giacomo, without whose concurrence it was impossible that she should succeed. This latter was easily drawn into consent, since he was utterly disgusted with his father, who ill-treated them, and refused to allow him a sufficient support for his wife and children.

The apartments of Monsignore Guerra was the place in which the circumstances of the crime about to be committed were concerted and determined on. Here Giacomo, with the understanding of his sister and mother-in-law, held various consultations, and finally resolved to commit the murder of Francesco to two of his vassals, who had become his inveterate enemies; one called Marzio, and the other Olympio: the latter, by means of Francesco, had been deprived of his post as castellan of the Rock of Petrella.

It was already well known that Francesco, with the permission of Signor Marzio di Colonna, baron of that feud, had resolved to retire to Petrella, and to pass the summer there with his family. Some banditti of the kingdom of Naples were hired, and were instructed to lie in wait in the woods about Petrella, and, upon advice being given to them of the approach of Francesco, to seize upon him. This scheme was so arranged that, although the robbers were only to seize and take off Francesco, yet that his wife and children should not be suspected of being accomplices in the act. But the affair did not succeed; for, as the banditti were not informed of his approach in time enough, Francesco arrived safe and sound at Petrella. They were obliged therefore to form some new scheme to obtain the end which every day made them more impatient to effect; for Francesco still persisted in his wicked conduct. He being an old man, above seventy years of age, never quitted the castle; therefore no use could be made of the banditti, who were still secreted in the environs. It was determined, therefore, to accomplish the murder in Francesco’s own house. Marzio and Olympio were called to the castle; and Beatrice, accompanied by her mother-in-law, conversed with them from a window during the night-time, when her father slept. She ordered them to repair to Monsignore Guerra with a note, in which they were desired to murder Francesco, in consideration of a reward of a thousand crowns: a third to be given them before the act, by Monsignore Guerra, and the other two thirds, by the ladies themselves, after the deed should be ac-
relatives of the Cenci family to the torture, they were all transferred to Castello, where they remained several months in tranquillity. But, for their misfortune, one of the murderers of Olympic at Terni fell into the hands of justice; he confessed that he had been hired to this deed by Monsignor Guerra, who had already implicated him to assassinate Marzio. Fortunately for this prelate, he received prompt information of the testimony given against him, and was able to hide himself for a time, and to plan his escape, which was very difficult; for his stature, the fairness and beauty of his countenance, and his light hair, made him conspicuous for discovery. He changed his dress for that of a charcoal-man, blackening his face, and shaving his head; and thus disguised, driving two asses before him, with some bread and onions in his hands, he passed freely through Rome, under the eyes of the ministers of justice, who sought him everywhere; and, without being recognised by any one, passed out of one of the gates of the city, where, after a short time, he was met by the shrill, who were searching the country, and passed unknown by them, not without suffering great fear at his risk of being discovered and arrested: by means of this ingenious disguise he effected his escape to a safe country.

The flight of Monsignor Guerra, joined to the confession of the murderer of Olympic, aggravated the other proofs so much, that the Cenci were re-transferred from Castello to Corte Savella, and were condemned to be put to the torture. The two sons sank vilely under their torments, and became convicted; Lucretia, being of advanced age, having completed her fiftieth year, and being of a fat make, was not able to resist the torture of the cord—[The original is wea...]

—but the Signora Beatrice, being young, lively, and strong, neither with good nor ill-treatment, with menace, nor fear of torture, would allow a single word to pass her lips which might incriminate her; and even, by her lively eloquence, confused the judges who examined her. The Pope, being informed of all that passed by Signor Ulysse Moraci, the judge employed in this affair, became suspicious that the beauty of Beatrice had softened the mind of this judge, and committed the cause to another, who found out another mode of tormenting matted hair; and when she was already tied under this torture, he brought before her her mother-in-law and brothers. They began altogether to exhort her to confess; saying, that since the crime had been committed, they must suffer the punishment. Beatrice, after some resistance, said, "So you all wish to die, and to dis-
were contrasted and balanced in this course, saying, that he greatly wondered that there existed in Rome children unnatural enough to kill their father; and that there should be found advocates depraved enough to defend such a crime. These words silenced all except the advocate Farinacci; who said, "Holy Father, we have not fallen at your feet to defend the atrocity of the crime, but to save the life of this youth, because many hours were necessarily employed in preparing the scaffold over the dungeons of the Tordinona."

The Pope interrupted him angrily in the middle of his discourse, saying, that it was not decorous to appear before the judges and on the scaffold with their splendid dresses, ordered two dresses, one for herself, and the other for her mother-in-law, made in the manner of the nuns—gathered up, and with long sleeves of black cotton for Beatrice, and of common silk for herself; with a large cord girdle. When those dresses came, Beatrice rose, and, turning to Lucretia—"Mother," said she, "the hour of our departure is drawing near, let us dress therefore in these clothes, and let us mutually aid one another in showing the same indifference and pleasure as if they were dressing for a feast."

The Company of Mercy arrived soon after at the prisons of the Tordinona; and while they were waiting...
below in the street with the crucifix, until the con-
demned should descend, an accident happened, which
gave rise to such a tumult among the immense crowd
to which she exclaimed, "Fiat voluntas tua!"
when the broom of the Order of Mercy had been
used to the head of the victim. This caused a dis-
turbance in the crowd; and those who were too far
off to know the cause, took flight, and falling one over
the other, several were wounded. When the tumult
was calmed, the brothers Giacomo and Bernardo de-
scended to the door of the prison, near which oppor-
tunely happened to be some fiscal officers, who, going
up to Bernardo, told him that through the clemency
of the sovereign pontiff, his life was spared to him,
with this condition, that he should be present at the death
of his relations. A scarlet mantle trimmed with gold,
in which he had at first been conducted to prison, was
given him, to envelop him. Giacomo was already on
the scaffold, when the place of the Pope arrived, free:
from the severer portion of the punishment added to
the sentence, and ordering that it should be executed
only by the hammer and quartering.

The funeral procession passed through the Via dell'Orso, by the Apollinara, thence through the Piazza Navona, from the church of S. Pantaleon to the Piazza Pollarola, through the Campidoglio, S. Carlo a Castanov, to the Arco de' Conte Cenci; proceeding,
the brothers Giacomo and Bernardo de Pollarola, through the Campo di Fiori, S. Carlo a Castanov, to the Arco de' Conte Cenci; proceeding,
it stopped under the Palace Cenci, and then finally
rested at the Corte Savella, to take the two ladies.
When these arrived, Lucretia remained last, dressed
in black, as has been described, with a veil of the same
colour, which covered her as far as her girdle: Beat-
rice was beside her, also covered by a veil: they wore
velvet slippers, with silk roses and gold fastenings; and,
instead of manacles, their wrists were bound by a silk
cord, which was fastened to their girdles in such a
manner as to give them almost the free use of their
hands. Each had in her left hand the holy sign of
benediction, and in the right a handkerchief, with which
Lucretia wiped her tears, and Beatrice the perspira-
tion from her forehead. Being arrived at the place of
punishment, Bernardo was left on the scaffold, and the
others were conducted to the chapel. During this
dreadful separation, this unfortunate youth, reflecting
that he was about to behold the decapitation of his
nearest relatives, fell down in a deadly swoon, from
which, however, he was at last recovered, and seated
opposite the block. The first that came forth to die
was Lucretia, who, being fat, found difficulty in placing
herself to receive the blow. The executioner taking
off her handkerchief, her neck was discovered, which
was still handsome, although she was fifty years of age.
Blushing deeply, she cast her eyes down, and then,
casting them up to heaven, full of tears, she exclaimed,
"Behold, dearest Jesus, this guilty soul about to
appear before thee—to give an account of its acts,
mingled with many crimes. When it shall appear before thy Godhead, I pray thee to look on it with an
eye of mercy, and not of justice." She then began to
recite the psalm Misereatur mei Deus, and placing her
neck under the axe, the head was struck from her
body while she was repeating the second verse of
this psalm, at the words sanctus sanctissimam.

When the last penalty of justice was over, Ber-
ardo was reconducted to the prison of the Tordinon,
where he was soon attacked by a burning fever; he
was bled and received other remedies, so that in the
next day he was obliged to be present at the death of
his mother, than hast given me assurance of thy mercy towards me." Then, rising, she courageously and devoutly walked
towards the scaffold, repeating by the way several
prayers, with so much fervor of spirit, that all who
heard her shed tears of compassion. Ascending the
scaffold, while she arranged herself, she also turned her
eyes to heaven, and thus prayed:— "Most beloved
Jesus, who, relinquishing thy divinity, becamest a man;
didst through love purge my sinful soul also of its
original sin with thy precious blood; deign, I beseech
thee, to accept that which I am about to shed at thy
most merciful tribunal, as a penalty which may cancel
my many crimes, and I am bound to the penalty of that punish-
ment justly due to me." Then she placed her hand
under the axe, which at one blow was divided from
her body, as she was repeating the second verse of
the psalm De profundis, at the words fiat voluntas tua:
the blow gave a violent motion to her body, and dis-
composed her dress. The executioner raised the head
to the view of the people, and in placing it in the coffin
placed underneath, the cord by which it was sus-
pended from his hold, and the head fell to the ground,
shedding a great deal of blood, which was wiped up
with water and sponges.

On the death of his sister, Bernardo again fainted:
the most efficacious remedies were for some time use-
lessly employed upon him; and it was believed by all
that his second swoon, having found him already over-
come and without strength, had deprived him of life.
At length, after the lapse of a quarter of an hour, he
came to himself, and by slow degrees recovered the
use of his senses. Giacomo was then conducted to the
scaffold, and the executioner took from him the moun-
ing cloke which enveloped him. He fixed his eyes
on Bernardo, and then, turning, addressed the people
with a loud voice: "Now that I am about to present
myself before the Tribunal of infallible Truth, I swear
that if my Saviour, pardoning me my faults, shall
grant me assurance of thy mercy towards me, O my most gracious
Saviour, since, by the good death of my mother, thou
hast given me assurance of thy mercy towards me."
course of people, that it was impossible to cross the bridge. An hour after dark, the body of Beatrice was placed in a coffin, covered by a black velvet pall, richly adorned with gold: garlands of flowers were placed, one at her head, and another at her feet; and the body was strewed with flowers. It was accompanied to the church of S. Peter in Montorio by the Brotherhood of the Order of Mercy, and followed by many Franciscan monks, with great pomp and innumerable torches; she was there buried before the high altar, after the customary ceremony had been performed. By reason of the distance of the church from the bridge, it was four hours after dark before the ceremony was finished. Afterwards the body of Lucretia, accompanied in the same manner, was carried to the church of S. Gregorio upon the Celian Hill; where, after the ceremony, it was honourably buried.

Beatrice was rather tall, of a fair complexion; and she had a dimple on each cheek, which, especially when she smiled, added a grace to her lovely countenance that transported every one who beheld her. Her hair appeared like threads of gold; and, because they were extremely long, she used to tie it up, and, when afterwards she loosened it, the splendid ringlets dazzled the eyes of the spectator. Her eyes were of a deep blue, pleasing, and full of fire. To all these beauties she added, both in words and actions, a spirit and a majestic vivacity that captivated every one. She was twenty years of age when she died.

Lucretia was as tall as Beatrice, but her full make made her appear less: she was also fair, and so fresh complexioned, that at fifty, which was her age when she died, she did not appear above thirty. Her hair was black, and her teeth regular and white to an extraordinary degree.

Giacomo was of a middle size; fair but ruddy; and with black eyebrows: affable in his nature, of good address, and well skilled in every science, and in all knightly exercises. He was not more than twenty-eight years of age when he died.

Lastly, Bernardo so closely resembled Beatrice in complexion, features, and everything else, that if they had changed clothes the one might easily have been taken for the other. His mind also seemed formed in the same model as that of his sister; and at the time of her death he was six-and-twenty years old.

He remained in the prison of Tordinona until the month of September of the same year, after which time, at the intercession of the Most Venerable Grand Brotherhood of the Most Holy Crucifix of St. Marcellus, he obtained the favour of his liberty upon paying the sum of 25,000 crowns to the Hospital of the Most Holy Trinity of Pilgrims. Thus he, as the sole remnant of the Cenci family, became heir to all their possessions. He is now married, and has a son named Cristoforo.

The most faithful portrait of Beatrice exists in the Palace of the Villa Pamfili, without the gate of San Pancrazio: if any other is to be found in the Palazza Cenci, it is not shown to any one;—so as not to renew the memory of so horrible an event.

This was the end of this family: and until the time when this account is put together it has not been possible to find the Marquess Paolo Santa Croce; but there is a rumour that he dwells in Brescia, a city of the Venetian states.
HELLAS;

A Lyrical Drama.

MANTIS EIM E50ADN 'AONON.

(Copr. Colon.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY
PRINCE ALEXANDER MAVROCORDATO,
LATE SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO THE HOPODAR OF WALLACHIA,

THE DRAMA OF HELLAS
IS INSCRIBED,

AS AN IMPERFECT TOKEN OF THE ADMIRATION, SYMPATHY, AND FRIENDSHIP OF

THE AUTHOR.

Pisa, November 1, 1821.

PREFACE.

The Poem of "Hellas," written at the suggestion of the events of the moment, is a mere improvise, and derives its interest (should it be found to possess any) solely from the intense sympathy which the Author feels with the cause he would celebrate.

The subject, in its present state, is insusceptible of being treated otherwise than lyrically, and if I have called this poem a drama, from the circumstance of its being composed in dialogue, the licence is not greater than that which has been assumed by other poets, who have called their productions epics, only because they have been divided into twelve or twenty-four books.

The Person of Aeschylus afforded me the first model of my conception, although the decision of the glorious contest now waging in Greece being yet suspended, forbids a catastrophe parallel to the return of Xerxes and the desolation of the Persians. I have, therefore, contented myself with exhibiting a series of lyric pictures, and with having wrought upon the curtain of futurity, which falls upon the unfinished scene, such figures of indistinct and visionary delineation as suggest the final triumph of the Greek cause as a portion of the cause of civilisation and social improvement.

The drama (if drama it must be called) is, however, so inartificial that I doubt whether, if recited on the Thespian waggon to an Athenian village at the Dionysia, it would have obtained the prize of the goat. I shall bear with equanimity any punishment greater than the loss of such a reward which the Aristarchi of the hour may think fit to inflict.

The only post-song which I have yet attempted has, I confess, in spite of the unfavourable nature of the subject, received a greater and a more valuable portion of applause than I expected, or than it deserved.

Common fame is the only authority which I can allege for the details which form the basis of the poem, and I must trespass upon the forgiveness of my readers for the display of newspaper erudition to which I have been reduced. Undoubtedly, until the conclusion of the war, it will be impossible to obtain an account of it sufficiently authentic for historical materials; but poets have their privilege, and it is unquestionable that actions of the most exalted courage have been performed by the Greeks—that they have gained more than one naval victory, and that their defeat in Wallachia was signalised by circumstances of heroism more glorious even than victory.

The apathy of the rulers of the civilised world, to the astonishing circumstance of the descendants of that nation to which they owe their civilisation—rising as it were from the ashes of their ruin, is something perfectly inexplicable to a mere spectator of the shows of this mortal scene. We are all Greeks. Our laws, our literature, our religion, our arts, have their root in Greece. But for Greece—Rome the instructor, the conqueror, or the metropolis of our ancestors, would have spread no illumination with her arms, and we might still have been savages and idolaters; or, what is worse, might have arrived at such a stagnant and miserable state of social institutions as China and Japan possess.

The human form and the human mind attained to a perfection in Greece which has impressed its image on those faultless productions, whose very fragments are the despair of modern art, and has propagated impulses which cannot cease, through a thousand channels of manifest or imperceptible operation, to ennoble and delight mankind until the extinction of the race.

The modern Greek is the descendant of those glorious beings whom the imagination almost refuses to figure to itself as belonging to our kind; and he inherits much of their sensibility, their rapidity of conception, their enthusiasm, and their courage. If in many instances he is degraded by moral and political
slavery to the practice of the basest vices it engenders, and that below the level of ordinary degradation: let us reflect that the corruption of the best produces the worst, and that habits which subsist only in relation to a peculiar state of social institution may be expected to cease, as soon as that relation is dissolved. In fact, the Greeks, since the admirable novel of "Anastatius" could have been a faithful picture of their manners, have undergone most important changes; the flower of their youth, returning to their country from the universities of Italy, Germany, and France, have communicated to their fellow-citizens the latest results of that social perfection of which their ancestors were the original source. The university of Chios contained before the breaking out of the revolution, eight hundred students, and among them several Germans and Americans. The munificence and energy of many of the Greek princes and merchants, directed to the renovation of their country, with a spirit and a wisdom which has few examples, is above all praise.

The English permit their own oppressors to act according to their natural sympathy with the Turkish tyrant, and to brand upon their name the indelible blot of an alliance with the enemies of domestic happiness, of Christianity, and civilization.

Russia desires to possess, not to liberate Greece; and is content to see the Turks, its natural enemies, and the Greeks, its intended slaves, enslave each other, until one or both fall into its net. The wise and generous policy of England would have consisted in establishing the independence of Greece, and in maintaining it both against Russia and the Turks—but when was the oppressor generous or just?

The Spanish Peninsula is already free. France is tranquil in the enjoyment of a partial exemption from the abuses which its unnatural and feeble government are vainly attempting to revive. The seed of blood and misery has been sown in Italy, and a more vigorous race is arising to go forth to the harvest. The world waits only the news of a revolution of Germany, to see the tyrants who have pinnacled themselves on its supineness, precipitated into the ruin from which they shall never arise. Well do these destroyers of mankind know their enemy, when they impute the insurrection in Greece to the same spirit before which they tremble throughout the rest of Europe; and that enemy well knows the power and cunning of its opponents, and watches the moment of their approaching weakness and inevitable division, to wrest the bloody sceptres from their grasp.

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**DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAMHUD</th>
<th>DADÜD, a Jew.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HASSAN</td>
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**CHORUS OF GREEK CAPTIVE WOMEN.**

**INDIANS.**

I touch thy temples pale!
I breathe my soul on thee!
And could my prayers avail,
All my joy should be
Dead, and I would live to weep,
So thou might'st win one hour of quiet sleep.

**CHORUS.**

Breathe low, low,
The spell of the mighty mistress now!
When Conscience lulls her sated snake,
And Tyrants sleep, let Freedom wake.
Breathe low, low,
The words, which, like secret fire, shall flow
Through the veins of the frozen earth—low, low!

**SEMICHORUS I.**

Life may change, but it may fly not;
Hope may vanish, but can die not;
Truth be veiled, but still it burneth;
Love repulsed,—but it returneth!

**SEMICHORUS II.**

Yet were life a charnel, where
Hope lay cozened with Despair;
Yet were truth a sacred lie,
Love were lust—
In the great morning of the world,
The spirit of God with might unfurled
The flag of Freedom over Chaos,
And all its banded anarchs fled,
Like vultures frightened from Imaus
Before an earthquake’s tread.—
So from Time’s tempestuous dawn
Freedom’s splendour burst and shone:
Thermopyle and Marathon
Caught, like mountains beacon-lighted,
The springing Fire.— The winged glory
On Philippi half-alighted,
Its unwearied wings could fan
The quenchless ashes of Milan.
From age to age, from man to man
It lived; and lit from land to land
Florence, Albion, Switzerland.

Then night fell; and, as from night,
Re-assuming fiery flight,
From the West swift Freedom came,
Against the course of heaven and doom,
A second sun arrayed in flame,
To burn, to kindle, to illumine.

As an eagle fed with morning
Scornsthe embattled tempest’s warning,
When she seeks her aerie hanging
In the mountain-cedar’s hair,
And her brood expect the clanging
Of her wingsthrough the wild air,
Sick with famine;— Freedom, so
To what of Greece remaineth now
Returns; her hoary ruins glow
Like orient mountains lost inday;
Beneath the safety of her wings
Her renovated nurslings play,
And in the naked lightnings
Of truth they purge their dazzled eyes.

Let Freedom leave, where’ershe flies,
A Desert, or a Paradise;
Let the beautiful and the brave
Share her glory, or a grave.

And at thy resurrection
Re-appear, like thou, sublime!

If Heaven should resume thee,
To Heaven shall her spirit ascend;
If Hell should entomb thee,
To Hell shall her high hearts bend.
If Annihilation—
Dust let her glories be;
And a name and a nation
Be forgotten, Freedom, with thee!

His brow grows darker— breathe not— move not:
He starts— he shudders;— ye that love not,
With your panting loud and fast
Have awakened him at last.

Man the Seraglio-guard! make fast the gate.
What! from a cannonade of three short hours?
*Tis false! that breach towards the Daphorus
Cannot be practicable yet— Who stirs!
Stand to the match; that when the foe prevails,
One spark may mix in reconciling ruin
The conqueror and the conquered! Heave the tower
Into the gap— wrench off the roof.

Ha! what!
The truth of day lightens upon my dream,
And I am Mahmud still.

Is strangely moved.

The times do cast strange shadows
On those who watch and who must rule their course,
Lest they, being first in peril as in glory,
Be whelmed in the fierce ebb:

As thus from sleep into the troubled day;
It shakes me as the tempest shakes the sea,
Leaving no figure upon memory’s glass.

Would that— no matter. Thou didst say thou
A Jew, whose spirit is a chronicle
Of strange and secret and forgotten things.
I bade thee summon him:— ’tis said his tribe
Dream, and are wise interpreters of dreams.

The Jew of whom I spake is old,— so old
He seems to have outlived a world’s decay;
The hoary mountains and the wrinkled ocean
Seem younger still than he; his hair and beard
Are whiter than the tempest-sifted snow;
His cold pale limbs and pulseless arteries
Are like the fibres of a cloud instinct
With light, and to the soul that quickens them
Are as the atoms of the mountain-drift.

To the winter wind:— but from his eye looks forth
A life of unconsumed thought, which pierces
The present and the past, and the to-come.
Some say that this is he whom the great prophet
Jesus, the son of Joseph, for his mockery,
Mocked with the curse of immortality.
Some feign that he is Enoch; others dream
He was pre-adamite, and has survived
Cycles of generation and of ruin.
The sage, in truth, by dreadful abstinence,
And conquering penance of the mutinous flesh,
Deep contemplation, and unwearied study,
In years outstretched beyond the date of man,
May have attained to sovereignty and science
Over those strong and secret things and thoughts
Which others fear and know not.

MAHMUD. I would talk
With this old Jew.

HASSAN. Thy will is even now
Made known to him, where he dwells in a sea-cavern
Mid the Demonesi, less accessible
Than thou or God! He who would question him
Must sail alone at sun-set, where the stream
Of ocean sleeps around those foamless isles
When the young moon is westering as now,
And evening airs wander upon the wave;
And when the pines of that bee-pasturing isle,
Green Erebinthus, quench the fiery shadow
Of his girt prow within the sapphire water,
Then must the lonely helmsman cry aloud,
Ahasuerus! and the caverns round
Will answer, Ahasuerus! If his prayer
Be granted, a faint meteor will arise,
Lighting him over Marmora, and a wind
Will rush out of the sighing pine-forest,
And with the wind a storm of harmony
Unutterably sweet, and pilot him
Through the soft twilight to the Bosphorus:
Thences, at the hour and place and circumstance
Fit for the matter of their conference,
The Jew appears. Few dare, and few who dare,
Win the desired communion — but that shout
Bodes
[A shout within.

MAHMUD. Evil, doubtless; like all human sounds.
Let me converse with spirits.

HASSAN. That shout again.

MAHMUD. This Jew whom thou hast summoned—

HASSAN. Will be here—

MAHMUD. When the omnipotent hour, to which are yoked
He, I, and all things, shall compel—enough.
Silence those mutineers—that drunken crew
That crowd about the pilot in the storm.
Ay! strike the foremost shorter by a head!
They weary me, and I have need of rest.
Kings are like stars—they rise and set, they have
The worship of the world, but they repose.

CHORUS.
Worlds on worlds are rolling ever
From creation to decay,
Like the bubbles on a river,
Sparkling, bursting, borne away.
But they are still immortal
Who, through birth's orient portal,
And death's dark chasm hurrying to and fro,
Clothe their unceasing flight
In the brief dust and light
Gathered around their chariots as they go;
New shapes they still may weave,
New Gods, new laws receive,
Bright or dim are they, as the robes they last
On Death's bare ribs had cast.

A power from the unknown God;
A Prometheus conqueror came;
Like a triumphal path he trod
The thorns of death and shame.
A mortal shape to him
Was like the vapour dim
Which the orient planet animates with light;
Hell, Sin, and Slavery came,
Like blood-hounds mild and tame,
Nor preyed until their lord had taken flight.
The moon of Mahomet
Arose, and it shall set:
While blazoned as on heaven's immortal noon
The cross leads generations on.
Swift as the radiant shapes of sleep
From one whose dreams are paradise,
Fly, when the fond wretch wakes to weep,
And day peers forth with her blank eyes;
So fleet, so faint, so fair,
The Powers of earth and air
Fled from the folding star of Bethlehem:
Apollo, Pan, and Love,
And even Olympian Jove
Grew weak, for killing Truth had glared on them.
Our hills, and seas, and streams,
Dispeopled of their dreams,
Their waters turned to blood, their dew to tears,
Wailed for the golden years.

Enter MAHMUD, HASSAN, DAOOD, and others.

MAHMUD. More gold! our ancestors bought gold with victory,
And shall I sell it for defeat?

DAOOD. The Janizars
Clamour for pay.

MAHMUD. Go! bid them pay themselves
With Christian blood! Are there no Grecian virgins
Whose shrinks and spasms and tears they may enjoy?
No infidel children to impale on spears!
No hoary priests after that Patriarch
Who bent the curse against his country's heart,
Which clove his own at last! Go! bid them kill:
Blood is the seed of gold.

DAOOD. It has been sown,
And yet the harvest to the sickle-men
Is as a grain to each.
MAHMUD.

Then take this signet,
Unlock the seventh chamber, in which lie
The treasures of victorious Solyman.
An empire's spoils stored for a day of ruin.
O spirit of my sires! is it not come?
Then lead them to the rivers of fresh death.

Oh! miserable dawn, after a night
More glorious than the day which it usurped!
Faith in God! Power on earth! Word
Of the great Prophet, whose overshadowing wings
Darkened the thrones and idolsof the west,
Now bright!—For thy sake cursed be the hour,
When the orient moon of Islam rolled in triumph
From Caucasus to white Ceramia!
Ruined, and anarchy below;
Terror without, and treachery within;
The charles of destruction full, and all
Thirsting to drink; and who among us dares
To dash it from his lips! and where is Hope?

HASSAN.
The lamp of our dominion still rides high;
One God is God— Mahomet is his Prophet.
Four hundred thousand Moslems, from the limits
Of utmost Asia, irresistibly
Throng, like full clouds at the Scirocco's cry,
But not like them to weep their strength intears;
They have destroying lightning, and their step
Wakes earthquake, to consume and overwhelm,
And reign in ruin. Phrygian Olympus,
Tmolus, and Latmos, and Mycale, roughen
With horrent arms, and lofty ships, even now,
Like vapours anchored to a mountain's edge,
Freighted with fire and whirlwind, wait at Scala
The convoy of the ever-veering wind.
Samos is drunk with blood;— the Greek has paid
Brief victory with swift loss and long despair.
The false Moldavian serfs fled fast and far
When the fierce shout of Allah-ilia-Allah!
Rose like the war-cry of the northern wind,
And like a mighty lamp whose oil is spent,
Shrinks on the horizon's edge, while, from above,
One star with insolent and victorious light
Hovers above its fall, and with keen beams,
Like arrows through a fainting antelope,
Strikes its weak form to death.

MAHMUD.

Proud words, when deeds come short, are seasonable;
Look, Hassan, on yon crescent moon, emblazoned
Upon that shattered flag of fiery cloud
Which leads the rear of the departing day,
Wan emblem of an empire fading now!
See how it trembles in the blood-red air,
And like a mighty lamp whose oil is spent,
Shrinks on the horizon's edge, while, from above,
One star with insolent and victorious light
Hovers above its fall, and with keen beams,
Like arrows through a fainting antelope,
Strikes its weak form to death.

HASSAN.

Ibrahim's cimeter
Drew with its gleam swift victory from heaven,
To burn before him in the night of battle—
A light and a destruction.

MAHMUD.

Ay! the day
Was ours; but how—
The light Wallachians, The Amaut, Servian, and Albanian allies, Fleed from the glance of our artillery
Almost before the thunder-stone alit;
One half the Grecian army made a bridge
Of safe and slow retreat, with Moslem dead;
The other—

MAHMUD.
Speak— tremble not—

HASSAN.
Inlanded
By victor myriads, formed in hollow square
With rough and steadfast front, and thrice flung
The deluge of our foaming cavalry; [back
Thrice their keen wedge of battle pierced our lines.
Our baffled army trembled like one man
Before a host, and gave them space; but soon,
From the surrounding hills, the batteries blazed,
Kneading them down with fire and iron rain.
Yet none approached; till, like a field of corn
Under the hook of the swartsickleman,
The bands, intrenched in mounds of Turkish dead,
Grew weak and few. Then said the Pacha, "Slaves,
Render yourselves—they have abandonedyou—
What hope of refuge, or retreat, or aid?
We grant your lives."— "Grant that which isthine
own,"
Cried one, and fell upon his sword and died!
Another— "God, and man, and hope abandon me;
But I to them and to myself remain
Constant;" he bowed his head, and his heart burst.
A third exclaimed, "There isa refuge, tyrant,
Where thou darestnot pursue, and canst not
harm,
Shouldst thou pursue; there we shall meet again."
Then held his breath, and, after a brief spasm,
The indignant spirit cast its mortal garment
Among the slain— dead earth upon the earth!

MAHMUD.
Died—as thou shouldest ere thy lips had painted
Their ruin in the hues of our success.
A rebel's crime, gilt with a rebel's tongue!—
Your heart is Greek, Hassan.

HASSAN. It may be so:
A spirit not my own wrenched me within,
And I have spoken words I fear and hate;
Yet would I die for—

MAHMUD.
Live! 0 live! outlive
Me and this sinking empire:— but the fleet—

HASSAN.
Ah!—

MAHMUD.
The fleet which, like a flock of clouds
Chased by the wind, flies the insurgent banner.
Our winged castles from their merchant ships!
Our myriads before their weak pirate bands!
Our arms before their chains! Our yearsof empire
Before their centuries of servile fear!
Death is awake! Repulsed on the waters,
They own no more the thunder-bearing banner
Of Mahmud; but like hounds of a base breed,
Gorge from a stranger's hand, and rend their
master.

HASSAN.
Latmos, and Ampelos, and Phanae, saw
The wreck—

MAHMUD.
The caves of the Icarian isles
Hold each to the other in loud mockery,
And with the tongue as of a thousand echoes
First of the sea-convulsing fight—and then—
Thou darest to speak—senseless are the mountains,
Interpret thou their voice!
Panic were tamer.— Obedience and Mutiny, Crowning the Greek legions in the Hippodrome, Stand gazing on each other.— There is peace In Stamboul.—

Like giants in contention planet-struck, Had anchored in the port, had victory Has left the city. If the rebel fleet That Christian hound, the Muscovite ambassador, And ravening famine left his ocean-cave As cranes upon the cloudless Thracian wind. Our squadron, convoying ten thousand men, Was stretching towards Nauplia when the battle. Was kindled.—

First through the hail of our artillery The agile Hydriote barks with press of sail Dashed:— ship to ship, cannon to cannon, man To man, were grappled in the embrace of war, Inextirpable but by death or victory. The tempest of the raging fight convulsed To its crystalline depths that stainless sea, And shook heaven's roof of golden morning clouds Poised on an hundred azure mountain-Isles. In the brief trances of the artillery, One cry from the destroyed and the destroyer Rose, and a cloud of desolation wrapt The unforeseen event, till the north wind Sprung from the sea, lifting the heavy veil Of battle-smoke—then victory—victory! For, as we thought, three frigates from Algiers Bore down from Naxos to our aid, but soon The abhorred cross glimmered behind, before, Among, around us; and that fatal sign Dried with its beams the strength of Moslem hearts, As the sun drinks the dew.— What more? We fled! Our noonday path over the sanguine foam Was beaconed, and the glare struck the sun pale, To dwell with war, with us, and with despair. We met night three hours to the west of Patmos, And if you buy him not, your treasury Is empty even of promises—his own coin. The freeman of a western poet chief Holds Attica with seven thousand rebels, And has beat back the Pacha of Negropont; The aged Ali sits in Yanina, A crowns metaphor of empire; His name, that shadow of his withered might, In deeds which make the Christian cause look pale In its own light. The garrison of Patras Has store but for ten days, nor is there hope But from the Briton; at once slave and tyrant, His wishes still are weaker than his fears; Or he would sell what faith may yet remain Childless and sceptreless. The Greek has reaped The ruins of the city where he reigned As multitudinous on the ocean line Was stretching towards Nauplia when the battle. Was kindled.—

Enter a Third Messenger.

THIRD MESSENGER. What more! The Christian tribes Of Lebanon and the Syrian wilderness. Are in revolt;—Damascus, Hems, Aleppo, Tremble;—the Arab menaces Medina; The Ethiop has intrenched himself in Sennaar, And keeps the Egyptian rebel well employed, Who denies homage, claims investiture As price of tardy aid. Persia demands The cities on the Tigris, and the Georgians Refuse their living tribute. Crete and Cyprus, Like mountain-twins that from each other's veins
Catch the volcano-fire and earthquake spasm,
Shake in the general fever. Through the city,
Like birds before a storm, the Santons shriek,
And prophesying horrors and new
Are heard among the crowd; that sea of men
Sleeps on the wrecks it made, breathless and still.
A Dervise, learned in the Koran, preaches
That it is written how the sins of Islam
Must raise up a destroyer even now.
The Greeks expect a Saviour from the west;
Who shall not come, men say, in clouds and glory,
But in the omnipresence of that spirit
In which all, live and are. Ominous signs
Are blazoned broadly on the noon-day sky;
One saw a red cross stamped upon the sun;
It has rained blood; and monstrous births declare
The secret wrath of Nature and her Lord.
The army encamped upon the Cydaris
Was roused last night by the alarm of battle,
And saw two hosts conflicting in the air,—
The shadows doubtless of the unborn time,
Cast on the mirror of the night. While yet
The fight hung balanced, there arose a storm
Which swept the phantoms from among the stars.
At the third watch the spirit of the plague
Was heard abroad napping among the tents:
Those who relieved watch found the sentinels
dead.
The last news from the camp is, that a thousand
Have sickened, and—

Enter a Fourth Messenger.

MAMMUD
And thou, pale ghost, dim shadow
Of some untimely rumour, speak!

FOURTH MESSENGER.
One comes
Fainting with toil, covered with foam and blood;
He stood, he says, upon Clelonit’s
Promontory, which o’erlooks the isles that groan
Under the Briton’s frown, and all their waters
Then trembling in the splendour of the moon;
When, as the wandering clouds unveiled or hid
Her boundless light, he saw two adverse fleets
Stalk through the night in the horizon’s glimmer,
Mingling fierce thunders and sulphureous gleams,
And smoke which strangled every infant wind
That soothed the silver clouds through the deep air.
At length the battleslept, but the Scirocco
Awoke, and drove his flock of thunder-clouds
Over the sea-horizon, blotting out
All objects—save that in the faint moon-glimpse
He saw, or dreamed he saw the Turkish admiral
And two, the loftiest, of our ships of war,
With the bright image of that Queen of Heaven,
Who hid, perhaps, her face for grief, reversed;
And the abhorred cross—

Enter an Attendant.

ATTENDANT.
Your Sublime Highness,
The Jew, who—

MAMMUD.
Could not come more seasonably:
Bid him attend. I’ll hear no more! too long
We gaze on danger through the mist of fear,
And multiply upon our shattered hopes
The images of ruin. Come what will!

To-morrow and to-morrow are as lamps
Set in our path to light us to the edge,
Through rough and smooth; nor can we suffer
Aught which he inflicts not in whose hand we are.

SEMICHRUS I.
Would I were the winged cloud
Of a tempest swift and loud!
I would scorn
The smile of morn,
And the wave where the moon-rise is born!
I would leave
The spirits of eve
A shroud for the corpse of the day to weave
From other threads than mine!
Bask in the blue noon divine
Who would, not I.

SEMICHRUS II.
Whither to fly!

SEMICHRUS I.
Where the rocks that gird th’ Ægean
Echo to the battle pean
Of the free—
I would flee
A tempestuous herald of victory!
My golden rain
For the Grecian slain
Should mingle in tears with the bloody main;
And my solemn thunder-knell
Should ring to the world the passing-bell
Of tyranny!

SEMICHRUS II.
Ah king! wilt thou chain
The rack and the rain?
Wilt thou fetter the lightning and hurricane!
The storms are free,
But we—

CHORUS.
O Slavery! thou frost of the world’s prime,
Killing its flowers and leaving itsthorns bare!
Thy touch has stamped these limbs with crime,
These brows thy branding garland bear;
But the free heart, the impassive soul,
Scorn thy control!

SEMICHRUS I.
Let there be light! said Liberty;
And likesunrise from the sea,
Athens arose!—Around her born,
Shone like mountains in the morn,
Glorious states;—and are they now
Ashes, wrecks, oblivion?

SEMICHRUS II.
Go
Where Thermic and Asopus swallowed
Persia, as the sand does foam.
Deluge upon deluge followed,
Discord, Macedon, and Rome:
And, lastly, thou!

SEMICHRUS I.
Temples and towers,
Citadels and marts, and they
Who live and die there, have been ours,
And may be thine, and must decay;
But Greece and her foundations are
Built below the tide of war,
Based on the crystalline sea
Of thought and its eternity;
Her citizens, imperial spirits,
Rule the present from the past,
On all this world of men inherits
Their seal is set.

SEMICHORUS II.
Hear ye the blast,
Whose Orphic thunder thrilling calls
From ruin her Titanian walls
Whose spirit shakes the sapless bones
Of Slavery! Argos, Corinth, Crete,
Hear, and from their mountain thrones
The daemons and the nympha repeat
The harmony.

SEMICHORUS I.
I hear! I hear!

SEMICHORUS II.
The world's eyeless charioteer,
Destiny, is hurrying by!
What faith is crushed, what empire bleeds
Beneath her earthquake-footed steeds!
What eagle-winged victory sits
At her right hand! what shadow flits
Before! what splendour rolls behind!
Ruin and Renovation cry,
Who but we?

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Before! what splendour rolls behind!
Ruin and Renovation cry,
Who but we?
To do with time, or place, or circumstance! Wouldst thou behold the future!—ask and have! Knock and it shall be opened—look, and lo! The coming age is shadowed on the past, 
As on a glass.

MAHNUM.
Wild, wilder thoughts convulse 
Hi spirit—Did not Mahomet the Second 
Win Stamboul?

AHASUERUS.
Thou wouldst ask that giant spirit 
The written fortunes of thy house and faith. 
Thou wouldst cite one out of the grave to tell 
How what was born in blood must die.

MAHNUM.
Thy words
Have power on me! I see—

AHASUERUS.
What hearest thou?

MAHNUM.
A far whisper—
terrible silence.

AHASUERUS.
What succeeds?

MAHNUM.
The sound
As of the assault of an imperial city, 
The hiss of inextinguishable fire, 
The roar of giant cannon—the earthquaking 
Fall of vast bastions and precipitous towers, 
The shock of crags shot from strange engin'ry, 
The clash of wheels, and clang of armed hoofs, 
And crash of brazen mail, as of the wreck 
Of adamantine mountains—the mad blast 
Of trumpets, and the neigh of raging steeds, 
And shrieks of women whose thrill jars the blood, 
And one sweet laugh, most horrible to hear, 
As of a joyous infant waked, and playing 
With its dead mother's breast; and now more loud 
The mingled battle-cry—ha! hear I not—

AHASUERUS.
The sulphureous mist is raised thou seest—

MAHNUM.
A chasm, 
As of two mountains, in the wall of Stamboul; 
And in that ghastly breach the Islamites, 
Like giants on the ruins of a world, 
Stand in the light of sunrise. In the dust 
Glitter a kingless diadem, and one 
Of regal port has cast himself beneath 
The stream of war. Another, proudly clad 
In golden arms, spurs a Tartarian barb 
Into the gap, and with his iron mace 
Directs the torrent of that tide of men, 
And seems—he is—Mahomet!

AHASUERUS.
What thou seest
Is but the ghost of thy forgotten dream; 
A dream itself, yet less, perhaps, than that 
Thou call'st reality. Thou mayst behold 
How cities, on which empire sleeps enthroned, 
Bore their towered crests to mutability. 
Poised by the flood, e'en on the height thou holdest,

MAHNUM.
Approach!

PHANTOM.
I come 
Thence whither thou must go! The grave is fitter 
To take the living, than give up the dead; 
Yet has thy faith prevailed, and I am here. 
The heavy fragments of the power which fell 
When I arose, like shapeless crags and clouds, 
Hang round my throne on the abyss, and voices 
Of strange lament soothe my supreme repose, 
Wailing for glory never to return. —
A later Empire nods in its decay; 
The autumn of a greener faith is come, 
And wolfish change, like winter, howls to strip 
The foliage in which Fame, the eagle, built 
Her aerie, while Dominion whelped below. 
The storm is in its branches, and the frost 
Is on its leaves, and the blank deep expects 
Oblivion on oblivion, spoil on spoil, 
Ruin on ruin: thou art slow, my son; 
The Anarchs of the world of darkness keep 
A throne for thee, round which thine empire lies 
Boundless and mute; and for thy subjects thou, 
Like us, shall rule the ghosts of murdered life, 
The phantoms of the powers who rule thee now. — 
Muteous passions and conflicting fears, 
And hopes that fade themselves on dust and die! 
Strip of their mortal strength, as thou of thine. 
Islam must fall, but we will reign together 
Over its ruins in the world of death:—
And if the trunk be dry, yet shall the seed 
Unfold itself even in the shape of that 
Which gathers birth in its decay. Woe! woe! 
To the weak people tangled in the grasp 
Of its last spasms.

PHANTOM.
Ask the cold pale Hour, 
Rich in reversion of impending death, 
When he shall fall upon whose ripe grey hairs 
Sit care, and sorrow, and infirmity—

PHANTOM.
Ask the cold pale Hour, 
Rich in reversion of impending death, 
When he shall fall upon whose ripe grey hairs 
Sit care, and sorrow, and infirmity—
HELLAS.

"The weight which Crime, whose wings are plumed with years, Leaves in his flight from ravaged heart to heart Over the heads of men, under which burthen They bow themselves unto the grave: fond wretch! He leans upon his crutch, and talks of years To come, and how in hours of youth renewed He will renew lost joys," and—

**VOICE WITHOUT.**

Victory! victory! [The Phantom vanishes.]

**MAHMUD.**

What sound of the importunate earth has broken My mighty trance?

**VOICE WITHOUT.**

Victory! victory!

**MAHMUD.**

Weak lightning before darkness! poor faint smile Of dying Islam! Voice which art the response Of hollow weakness! Do I wake and live! Were there such things! or may the unquiet brain, Vexed by the wise mad talk of the old Jew, Have shaped itself these shadows of its fear? It matters not!—for nought we see or dream, Possess, or lose, or grasp at, can be worth More than it gives or teaches. Come what may, The future must become the past, and I As they were, to whom once this present hour, This gloomy crag of time to which I cling, Seemed an Elysian isle of peace and joy Never to be attained.—I must rebuke This drunkenness of triumph ere it die, And dying, bring despair.—Victory!—poor slaves!

**VOICE WITHOUT.**

Shout in the jubilee of death! The Greeks Are as a brood of lions in the net, Round which the kingly hunters of the earth Stand smiling. Anarchs, ye whose daily food Are curses, groans, and gold, the fruit of death, From Thule to the girdle of the world, Come, feast! the board groans with the flesh of men— The cup is foaming with a nation's blood, Famine and Thirst await: eat, drink, and die!

**SEMICHRUS I.**

Victorious Wrong, with vulture scream, Salutes the risen sun, pursues the flying day! I saw her ghastly as a tyrant's dream, Perch on the trembling pyramid of night, Beneath which earth and all her realms pavilioned In visions of the dawning undelight. [lay Who shall impede her flight? Who rob her of her prey?

**VOICE WITHOUT.**

Victory! victory! Russia's famished eagles Dare not to prey beneath the crescent's light. Impale the remnant of the Greeks! despoil! Violate! make their flesh cheaper than dust!

**SEMICHRUS II.**

Thou voice which art The herald of the ill in splendour hid! Thou echo of the hollow heart Of monarchy, bear me to thine abode

When desolation flashes o'er a world destroyed. Oh bear me to those isles of jagged cloud Which float like mountains on the earthquakes, mid The momentary oceans of the lightning; Or to some toppling promontory proud Of solid tempest, whose black pyramid, Riven, overhangs the founts intensely brightening Of those dawn-tinted deluges of fire Before their waves expire.

When heaven and earth are light, and only light In the thunder-night!

**VOICE WITHOUT.**

Victory! victory! Austria, Russia, England, And that tame serpent, that poor shadow, France, Cry peace, and that means death when monarchs speak.

Ho, there! bring torches, sharpen those res stakes! These chains are light, fitter for slaves and poisoners Than Greeks. Kill! plunder! burn! let none remain.

**SEMICHRUS I.**

Alas for Liberty! If numbers, wealth, or unfulfilling years, Or fate, can quell the free; Alas for Virtue! when Torments, or contumely, or the sneers Of erring judging men Can break the heart where it abides. Alas! if Love, whose smile makes this obscure world splendid, Can change, with its false times and tides, Like hope and terror— Alas for Love! And Truth, who wanderest lone and un befriended, If thou canst veil thy lie-consuming mirror Before the dazzled eyes of Error. Alas for thee! Image of the Above.

**SEMICHRUS II.**

Repulse, with plumes from conquest torn, Led the ten thousand from the limits of the morn Through many an hostile Anarchy! At length they wept aloud and cried, "The sea! the sea!" Through exile, persecution, and despair, Rome was, and young Atlantis shall become The wonder, or the terror, or the tomb Of all whose step wakes power lulled in her savage lair: But Greece was as a hermit child, Whose fairest thoughts and limbs were built To woman's growth, by dreams so mild She knew not pain or guilt; And now, O Victory, blush! and Empire, tremble, When ye desert the free! If Greece must be A wreck, yet shall its fragments reassemble, And build themselves again impregnably In a diviner clime, To Ampionic music, on some Cape sublime, Which frowns above the idle foam of Time.

**SEMICHRUS I.**

Let the tyrants rule the desert they have made; Let the free possess the paradise they claim; Be the fortune of our fierce oppressors weighed With our ruin, our resistance, and our name!
Our dead shall be the seed of their decay,
Our survivors be the shadows of their pride,
Our adversity a dream to pass away—
Their dishonour a remembrance to abide!

Victory! Victory! The bought Britons sends
The keys of ocean to the Islamite.
Now shall the blazon of the cross be veiled,
And British skill directing Othman might,
Thunder-strike rebel victory. O keep holy
This jubilee of unrevenged blood!
Kill! crush! despoil! Let not a Greek escape!

Darkness has dawned in the East
On the noon of time:
The death-birds descend to their feast,
From the hungry clime.
Let Freedom and Peace flee far
To a sunnier strand,
And follow Love's folding star!
To the Evening land!

The young moon has fed
Her exhausted horn
With the sunset's fire:
The weak day is dead,
But the night is not born;
And, like loveliness panting with wild desire,
While it trembles with fear and delight,
Hesperus flies from awakening night,
And pants in its beauty and speed with light
Fast-flashing, soft, and bright.
Thou beacon of love! thou lamp of the free!
Guide us far, far away,
To climes where now, veiled by the ardour of day,
Thou art hidden
From waves on which weary noon
Faints in her summer swoon,
Between kingless continents, sinless as Eden,
Around mountains and islands inviolably
Prankt on the sapphire sea.

Through the sunset of hope,
Like the shapes of a dream,
What Paradise islands of glory gleam
Beneath Heaven's cope.
Their shadows more clear float by—
The sound of their oceans, the light of their sky,
The music and fragrance their solitudes breathe,
Burst like morning on dreams, or like Heaven on death,
Through the walls of our prison;
And Greece, which was dead, is arisen!

The world's great age begins anew,
The golden years return,
The earth doth like a snake renew
Her winter weeds outworn:
Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires gleam
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.
A brighter Hellas rears its mountains
From waves serener far;
A new Peneus rolls its fountains
Against the morning-star.
Where fairer Tempeas bloom, there sleep
Young Cyclads on a sunnier deep.
A loftier Argo cleaves the main,
Fraught with a later prize;
Another Orpheus sings again,
And loves, and weeps, and dies.
A new Ulysses leaves once more
Calypos for his native shore.
O write no more the tale of Troy,
If earth Death's scroll must be!
Nor mix with Laian rage the joy
Which dawns upon the free:
Although a subtler sphinx renew
Riddles of death Thebes never knew.
Another Athens shall arise,
And to remoter time
Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,
The splendour of its prime;
And leave, if nought so bright may live,
All earth can take or heaven can give.
Saturn and Love their long repose
Shall burst, more bright and good
Than all who fell, than One who rose,
Than many unsubdued:
Not gold, not blood, their altar dowers,
But votive tears, and symbol flowers.
O cease! must hate and death return!
Cease! must men kill and die!
Cease! drain not to its dregs the urn
Of bitter prophecy.
The world is weary of the past,
O might it die or rest at last!
NOTES.

P. 168, col. 1, l. 30.

The quenchless ashes of Milan.

Milan was the centre of the resistance of the Lombard league against the Austrian tyrant. Frederick Barbarossa burnt the city to the ground, but liberty lived in its ashes, and it rose like an exhalation from its ruin.—See Sismondi's "Histoires des Républiques Italiennes," a book which has done much towards awakening the Italians to an imitation of their great ancestors.

P. 169, col. 2, l. 1.

CHORUS.

The popular notions of Christianity are represented in this chorus as true in their relation to the worship they superseded, and that which in all probability they will supersede, without considering their merits in a relation more universal. The first stanza contrasts the immortality of the living and thinking beings which inhabit the planets, and, to use a common and inadequate phrase, clothe themselves in matter, with the transience of the noblest manifestations of the external world.

The concluding verses indicate a progressive state of more or less exalted existence, according to the degree of perfection which every distinct intelligence may have attained. Let it not be supposed that I mean to dogmatize upon a subject concerning which, all men are equally ignorant, or that I think the Gordian knot of the origin of evil can be disentangled by that or any similar assertions. The received hypothesis of a Being resembling men in the moral attributes of his nature, having called us out of non-existence, and after inflicting on us the misery of the commission of error, should superadd that of the punishment and the privations consequent upon it, still would remain inexplicable and incredible. That there is a true solution of the riddle, and that in our present state the solution is unattainable by us, are propositions which may be regarded as equally certain; meanwhile, as it is the province of the poet to attach himself to those ideas which exalt and ennable humanity, let him be permitted to have conjectured the condition of that futurity towards which we are all impelled by an inextinguishable thirst for immortality. Until better arguments can be produced than sophisms which disgrace the cause, this desire itself must remain the strongest and the only presumption that eternity is the inheritance of every thinking being.

P. 169, col. 2, l. 41.

No hoary priests after that Patriarch.

The Greek Patriarch, after having been compelled to fulminate an anathema against the insurgents, was put to death by the Turks.

NOTES ON HELLAS.

Fortunately the Greeks have been taught that they cannot buy security by degradation, and the Turks, though equally cruel, are less cunning than the smooth-faced tyrants of Europe.

As to the anathema, his Holiness might as well have thrown his mitre at Mount Athos for any effect that it produced. The chiefs of the Greeks are almost all men of comprehension and enlightened views on religion and politics.

P. 172, col. 2, l. 30.

The freeman of a western poet chief.

A Greek who had been Lord Byron's servant commands the insurgents in Attica. This Greek, Lord Byron informs me, though a poet and an enthusiastic patriot, gave him rather the idea of a timid and unenterprising person. It appears that circumstances make men what they are, and that we all contain the germ of a degree of degradation or greatness, whose connexion with our character is determined by events.

P. 173, col. 1, l. 10.

The Greeks expect a Saviour from the west.

It is reported that this Messiah had arrived at a seaport near Lacedemon in an American brig. The association of names and ideas is irresistibly ludicrous, but the prevalence of such a rumour strongly marks the state of popular enthusiasm in Greece.

P. 175, col. 1, l. 19.

The sound As of the assault of an imperial city.

For the vision of Mahmud of the taking of Constantinople in 1445, see Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, vol. xii. p. 223.

The manner of the invocation of the spirit of Mahomet the Second will be censured as overdrawn. I could easily have made the Jew a regular conjuror, and the Phantom an ordinary ghost. I have preferred to represent the Jew as declining all pretension, or even belief, in supernatural agency, and as tempting Mahmud to that state of mind in which ideas may be supposed to assume the force of sensation, through the confusion of thought, with the objects of thought, and excess of passion animating the creations of the imagination.

It is a sort of natural magic, susceptible of being exercised in a degree by any one who should have made himself master of the secret associations of another's thoughts.
The final chorus is indistinct and obscure as the event of the living drama whose arrival it foretells. Prophecies of wars, and rumours of wars, &c. may safely be made by poet or prophet in any age; but to anticipate, however darkly, a period of regeneration and happiness, is a more hazardous exercise of the faculty which bards possess or feign. It will remind the reader, "magnus nec proximus intervallo" of Isaiah and Virgil, whose ardent spirits, overleaping the actual reign of evil which we endure and bewail, already saw the possible and perhaps approaching state of society in which the "lion shall lie down with the lamb," and "omnis fretomnia tellus." Let these great names be my authority and excuse.

Saturn and Love were among the deities of a real or imaginary state of innocence and happiness. All those who fell, or the Gods of Greece, Asia, and Egypt; the One, who rose, or Jesus Christ, at whose appearance the idols of the Pagan world were overthrown; and the many unsubdued, or the monstrous objects of the idolatry of China, India, and the Antarctic islands, and the native tribes of America, certainly have reigned over the understandings of men in conjunction or in succession, during periods in which all we know of evil has been in a state of portentous, and, until the revival of learning and the arts, perpetually increasing activity. The Grecian Gods seem indeed to have been personally more innocent, although it cannot be said that, as far as temperance and chastity are concerned, they gave so edifying an example as their successor. The sublime human character of Jesus Christ was deformed by an imputed identification with a power, who tempted, betrayed, and punished the innocent beings who were called into existence by his sole will; and for the period of a thousand years, the spirit of this most just, wise, and benevolent of men, has been propitiated with myriads of hecatombs of those who approached the nearest to his innocence and wisdom, sacrificed under every aggravation of atrocity and variety of torture. The horrors of the Mexican, the Peruvian, and the Indian superstitions are well known.

NOTE ON HELLAS. BY THE EDITOR.

The south of Europe was in a state of great political excitement at the beginning of the year 1821. The Spanish Revolution had been a signal to Italy—secret societies were formed—and when Naples rose to declare the Constitution, the call was responded to from Brundusium to the foot of the Alps. To crush these attempts to obtain liberty, early in 1821, the Austrians poured their armies into the Peninsula: at first their coming rather seemed to add energy and resolution to a people long enslaved. The Piedmontese asserted their freedom; Genoa threw off the yoke of the King of Sardinia; and, as if in playful imitation, the people of the little state of Massa and Carrara gave the conge to their sovereign and set up a republic.

Tuscany alone was perfectly tranquil. It was said, that the Austrian minister presented a list of sixty Carbonari to the grand-duke, urging their imprisonment; and the grand-duke replied, "I do not know whether these sixty men are Carbonari, but I know if I imprison them, I shall directly have sixty thousand start up." But though the Tuscans had no desire to disturb the paternal government, beneath whose shelter they slumbered, they regarded the progress of the various Italian revolutions with intense interest, and hatred for the Austrian was warm in every bosom. But they had slender hopes; they knew that the Neapolitans would offer no fit resistance to the regular German troops, and that the overthrow of the Constitution in Naples would act as a decisive blow against all struggles for liberty in Italy.

We have seen the rise and progress of reform. But the Holy Alliance was alive and active in those days, and few could dream of the peaceful triumph of liberty. It seemed then that the armed assertion of freedom in the south of Europe was the only hope of the liberals, as, if it prevailed, the nations of the north would imitate the example. Happily the reverse has proved the fact. The countries accustomed to the exercise of the privileges of freemen, to a limited extent, have extended, and are extending these limits. Freedom and knowledge have now a chance of proceeding hand in hand; and if it continues thus, we may hope for the durability of both. Then, as I have said, in 1821, Shelley, as well as every other lover of liberty, looked upon the struggles in Spain and Italy as decisive of the destinies of the world, probably for centuries to come. The interest he took in the progress of affairs was intense. When Genoa declared itself free, his hopes were at their highest. Day after day, he read the bulletins of the Austrian
army, and sought eagerly to gather tokens of its defeat. He heard of the revolt of Genoa with emotions of transport. His whole heart and soul were in the triumph of their cause. We were living at Pisa at that time; and several well-informed Italians, at the head of whom we may place the celebrated Vacca, were accustomed to seek for sympathy in their hopes from Shelley: they did not find such for the despair they too generally experienced, founded on contempt for their southern countrymen.

While the fate of the progress of the Austrian armies then invading Naples was yet in suspense, the news of another revolution filled him with exultation. We had formed the acquaintance at Pisa of several Constantinopolitan Greeks, of the family of Prince Caradja, formerly Hospodar of Wallachia, who, hearing that the bowstring, the accustomed finale of his viceroyalty, was on the road to him, escaped with his treasures, and took up his abode in Tuscany. Among these was the gentleman to whom the drama of Hellas is dedicated. Prince Mavrocordato was warmed by those aspirations for the independence of his country, which filled the hearts of many of his countrymen. He often intimated the possibility of an insurrection in Greece; but we had no idea of its being so near at hand, when, on the 1st of April, 1821, he called on Shelley; bringing the proclamation of his cousin Prince Ispilanti, and, radiant with exultation and delight, declared that henceforth Greece would be free.

Shelley had hymned the dawn of liberty in Spain and Naples, in two odes, dictated by the warmest enthusiasm;—he felt himself naturally impelled to decorate with poetry the uprise of the descendants of that people, whose works he regarded with deep admiration; and to adopt the vaticinatory character in prophesying their success. "Hellas" was written in a moment of enthusiasm. It is curious to remark how well he overcomes the difficulty of forming a drama out of such scant materials. His prophecies, indeed, came true in their general, not their particular purport. He did not foresee the death of Lord Londonderry, which was to be the epoch of a change in English politics, particularly as regarded foreign affairs; nor that the navy of his country would fight for instead of against the Greeks; and by the battle of Navarino secure their enfranchisement from the Turks. Almost against reason, as it appeared to him, he resolved to believe that Greece would prove triumphant; and in this spirit, auguring ultimate good, yet grieving over the vicissitudes to be endured in the interval, he composed his drama.

The chronological order to be observed in the arrangement of the remaining poems, is interrupted here, that his dramas may follow each other consecutively. "Hellas" was among the last of his compositions, and is among the most beautiful. The choruses are singularly imaginative, and melodious in their versification. There are some stanzas that beautifully exemplify Shelley's peculiar style; as, for instance, the assertion of the intellectual empire which must be for ever the inheritance of the country of Homer, Sophocles, and Plato:

But Greece and her foundations are
Built below the tide of war;
Based on the crystalline sea
Of thought and its eternity.

And again, that philosophical truth, felicitously imaged forth—

Revenge and wrong bring forth their kind,
The foul cubs like their parents are;
Their den is in the guilty mind,
And conscience feeds them with despair.

The conclusion of the last chorus is among the most beautiful of his lyrics; the imagery is distinct and majestic; the prophecy, such as poets love to dwell upon, the regeneration of mankind—and that regeneration reflecting back splendour on the foregone time, from which it inherits so much of intellectual wealth, and memory of past virtuous deeds, as must render the possession of happiness and peace of tenfold value.
OEIDIPUS TYRANNUS;

or,

SWELLFOOT THE TYRANT.

A Tragedy, in Two Acts.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL DORIC.

Choose Reform or Civil War,
When through thy streets, instead of hare with dogs,
A Consort-Queen shall hunt a King with hogs,
Riding on the IONIAN MINOTAUR.

ADVERTISEMENT.

This Tragedy is one of a triad, or system of three Plays, (an arrangement according to which the Greeks were accustomed to connect their Dramatic representations,) elucidating the wonderful and appalling fortunes of the Swellfoot dynasty. It was evidently written by some learned Theban, and from its characteristic dulness, apparently before the duties on the importation of Attic salt had been repealed by the Boeotarchs. The tenderness with which he beats the Pigs proves him to have been a sus Boother; possibly Epicurus de gregi porcis; for, as the poet observes,

"A fellow feeling makes us wonderous kind."

No liberty has been taken with the translation of this remarkable piece of antiquity, except the suppressing a seditious and blasphemous chorus of the Pigs and Bulls at the last act. The word Hoydipous, (or more properly (Edipus,) has been rendered literally Swellfoot, without its having been conceived necessary to determine whether a swelling of the hind or the fore feet of the Swinish Monarch is particularly indicated.

Should the remaining portions of this Tragedy be found, entitled, "Swellfoot in Angaria," and "Charité," the Translator might be tempted to give them to the reading Public.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

TYRANT SWELLFOOT, King of Thebes.
IONA TAURINA, his Queen.
MAMMON, Arch-Priest of Famine.
PURGIANAX, Arch-Priest of Famine.
DARCY, Wizards, Ministers of SWELLFOOT.
LAOCONON,

The GADFLY.
The LECH.
The RAT.
The MINOTAUR.
Moses, the Jew-gilder.
SOLOMON, the Porkman.
ZAPHHAMAN, Pig-Butcher.

Chorus of the Swinish Multitude.
Guards, Attendants, Priests, &c. &c.

Scene.—Thebes.
ACT I.

SCENE I.

A magnificent Temple, built of thigh-bones and death's-heads, and tiled with scalp. Over the Altar the statue of Famine, veiled; a number of boars, sows, and sucking-pigs, crowned with thistle, shamrock, and oak, sitting on the steps, and clinging round the Altar of the Temple.

Enter SWELLFoot, in his royal robes, without perceiving the Pigs.

SWELLFoot.

Thou supreme Goddess! by whose power divine These graceful limbs are clothed in proud array;
Of gold and purple, and this kingly paunch
Swells like a sail before a favouring breeze,
And these most sacred nether promontories
Lie satisfied with layers of fat; and these
Boeotian cheeks, like Egypt's pyramid,
Sustain the cone of my untroubled brain,
That point, the emblem of a pointless nothing!
Thou to whom Kings and laurelled Emperors,
Radical-butchers, Paper-money-millers,
Bishops and deacons, and the entire army
Of those fat martyrs to the persecution
Of stifling turtle-soup, and brandy-devils,
Offer their secret vows! Thou plenteous Ceres
Of their Eleusis, hail!

THE SWINE.

Eigh! eigh! eigh! eigh! eigh!

SWELLFoot.

Ha! what are ye,
Who, crowned with leaves devoted to the Furies,
Cling round this sacred shrine?

Aigh! aigh! aigh!

SWELLFoot.

What! ye that are
The very beasts that offered at her altar
With blood and groans, salt-cake, and fat, and
inwards,
Ever propitiate her reluctant will
When taxes are withheld!

SWINE.

Ugh! ugh! ugh!

SWELLFoot.

What! ye who grub
With filthy mouts my red potatoes up
In Allan's rushy bog! Who eat the oats
Up, from my cavalry in the Hebrides!
Who swell the hogwash soup my cooks digest
From bones, and rags, and scraps of shoe-leather,
Which should be given to cleaner Pigs than you!

* See Universal History for an account of the number of people who died, and the immense consumption of garlic by the wretched Egyptians, who made a sepulchre for the name as well as the bodies of their tyrants.
SWELLFOOT.
Call in the Jews, Solomon the court porkman, Moses the sow-gelder, and Zephaniah the hog-butcher.

GUARD.
They are in waiting, sire.

Enter Solomon, Moses, and ZEPHANIAH.

SWELLFOOT.
Out with your knife, old Moses, and spay those sows,
[The Pigs run about in consternation*.]
That load the earth with pigs; cut close and deep.
Moral restraint I see has no effect,
Nor prostitution, nor our own example,
Starvation, typhus-fever, war, nor prison—
This was the art which the arch-priest of Famine
Hinted at in his charge to the Theban clergy—
Cut close and deep, good Moses.

MOSES.
Let your Majesty
Keep the boars quiet, else—

SWELLFOOT.
Zephaniah, cut
That fat hog's throat, the brute seems overfed;
Seditious hunks! to whine for want of grains.

ZEPHANIAH.
Your sacred Majesty, he has the dropsy;—
We shall find pints of hydatids in his liver,
He has not half an inch of wholesome fat
Upon his carious ribs—

SWELLFOOT.
'Tis all the same,
Hell serve instead of riot-money, when
Our murmuring troops bivouaque in Thebes' streets;
And January winds, after a day
Of butchering, will make them relish carrion.
Now, Solomon, I'll sell you in a lump
The whole kit of them.

SOLOMON.
Why, your Majesty,
I could not give—

SWELLFOOT.
Kill them out of the way,
That shall be price enough, and let me hear
Their everlasting grunts and whines no more!
[Exeunt, driving in the Swine.

Enter Maxhos, the Arch Priet, and PURGANAX, Chief of the Council of Wizards.

PURGANAX.
The future looks as black as death, a cloud,
Dark as the frown of Hell, hangs over it—
The troops grow mutinous—the revenue fails—
There's something rotten in us—for the level
Of the State slopes, its very bases topple;
The boldest turn their backs upon themselves!

MAMMON.
Why what's the matter, my dear fellow, now!—
Do the troops mutiny—decimate some regiments;
Does money fall!—come to my mint—coin paper,
Till gold be at a discount, and, ashamed
To show his billious face, go purge himself,
In emulation of her vestal whiteness.

* The Prometheus Bound of Eschylus.
Has a loud trumpet like the Scarabee;
His crooked tail is barbed with many stings,
Each able to make a thousand wounds, and each
Immediate; from his convex eyes
He sees fair things in many hideous shapes,
And trumpets all his falsehood to the world.
Like other beetles he is fed on dung—
He has eleven feet with which he crawls,
Trailing a blistering slime; and this foul beast
Has tracked Iona from the Theban limits,
From isle to isle, from city unto city,
Urging her flight from the far Chersonese
To fabulous Solyma, and the Etna's Isle,
Ortygia, Melite, and Calypso's Rock,
And the swart tribes of Garamant and Fez,
Eolia and Elysium, and thy shores,
Parthenope, which now, alas! are free!
And through the fortunate Saturnian land,
Into the darkness of the West.

MAMMON.
But if
This Gadfly should drive Iona hither!
PURGANAX.
Gods! what an if! but there is my grey Rat;
So thin with want, he can crawl in and out
Of any narrow chink and filthy hole,
And he shall creep into her dressing-room,
And—

MAMMON.
My dear friend, where are your wits! as if
She does not always toast a piece of cheese,
And bait the trap! and rate, when lean enough
To crawl through such chinks——
PURGANAX.
But my Leech—a leech
Fit to suck blood, with lubricous round rings,
Capaciously expatiative, which make
His little body like a red balloon,
As full of blood as that of hydrogen,
Sucked from men's hearts; insatiably he sucks
And clings and pulls—a horse-leech, whose deep maw
The plethoric King Swellfoot could not fill,
And who, till full, will cling for ever.

MAMMON.
This
For Queen Iona might suffice, and less;
But 'tis the swinish multitude I fear,
And in that fear I have—
PURGANAX.
Done what!

MAMMON.
Disinherited
My eldest son Chrysaor, because he
Attended public meetings, and would always
Stand prating there of commerce, public faith,*
Economy, and unadulterate coin,
And other topics, ultra-radical;
And have entailed my estate, called the Fool's
Paradise,
And funds, in fairy-money, bonds, and bills,
Upon my accomplished daughter Banknotina,
And married her to the Gallows.*

* "If one should marry a gallows, and begot young gibbets,
I never saw one so prone."—Cymbeline.

PURGANAX.
A good match!

MAMMON.
A high connexion, Purganax. The bridegroom
Is of a very ancient family
Of Honnslow Heath, Tyburn, and the New Drop,
And has great influence in both Houses;—Oh!—
He makes the fondest husband; may too fond:—
New-married people should not kis in public;—
But the poor souls love one another so!
And then my little grandchildren, the Gibbets,
Promising children as you ever saw,—
The young playing at hanging, the elder learning
How to hold radicals. They are well taught too,
For every Gibbet says its catechism,
And reads a select chapter in the Bible
Before it goes to play.

[A most tremendous humming is heard.
PURGANAX.
Ha! what do I hear!
Enter Gadfly.
PURGANAX.
Your Gadfly, as it seems, is tired of gadding.

GADFLY.
Hum! hum! hum!
From the lakes of the Alps, and the cold grey scalps
Of the mountains, I come!
Hum! hum! hum!
From Morocco and Fez, and the high palaces
Of golden Byzantium;
From the temples divine of old Palestine,
From Athens and Rome,
With a ha! and a hum!
I come! I come!

All inn-doors and windows
Were open to me!
I saw all that sin does,
Which lamps hardly see
That burn in the night by the curtained bed,—
The impudent lamps! for they blushed not red.
Dinging and singing,
From slumber I rung her,
Loud as the clank of an ironmonger!
Hum! hum! hum!

Far, far, far,
With the trumpet of my lips, and the stings at my hips,
I drove her——
Far, far, far,
From city to city, abandoned of pity,
A ship without needle or star;—
Homeless she passed, like a cloud on the blast,
Seeking peace, finding war;—
From afar, and afar;—
Hum! hum! hum!

I have stung her and wrung her!
The venom is working;—
And if you had hung her
With canting and quirking,
She could not be deader than she will be soon;
I have hummed her and drummed her
From place to place, till at last I have dumbed her.
Hum! hum! hum!
OR, SWELLFOOT THE TYRANT.

LEECH.

I will suck
Blood or muck!  
The disease of the state is a plethory,
Who so fit to reduce it as I?  

RAT.

I'll sliply seize and
Let blood from her weasand,—
Creeping through crevice, and chink, and cranny,
With my snaiky tail, and my sides so scranny.

PURGANAX.

Aroint ye! thou unprofitable worm! [To the Leech.
And thou, dull beetle, get thee back to hell! [To the Gadfly.

To sting the ghosts of Babylonian kings,
And the ox-headed Io.

PCRGANAX.

Aroint ye! thou unprofitable worm! [To the Leech.
And thou, dull beetle, get thee back to hell! [To the Gadfly.

To sting the ghosts of Babylonian kings,
And the ox-headed Io.

Hail! Iona the divine,
We will be no longer swine,
But bulls with horns and dewlaps.

You know, my lord, the Minotaur

For,
You know, my lord, the Minotaur —

PURGANAX (fiercely).

Be silent! get to hell! or I will call
The cat out of the kitchen. Well, Lord Mammon,
This is a pretty business! 

[Exit the Rat.

MAMMON.

I will go
And spell some scheme to make it ugly then. [Exit.

Enter Swellfoot.

SWELLFOOT.

She is returned! Taurina is in Thebes
When Swellfoot wishes that she were in hell!
Oh, Hymen! clothed in yellow jealousy,
And waving o'er the couch of wedded kings
The torch of Discord with its fiery hair;
This is thy work, thou patron saint of queens!
Swellfoot is wived! though parted by the sea,
The very name of wife had conjugal rights;
Her cursed image ate, drank, slept with me,
And in the arms of Adiposa oft
Her memory has received a husband's —

[Enter Mammon.

MAMMON.

I wonder that grey wizards
Like you should be so beardless in their schemes;
It had been but a point of policy
To keep Iona and the swine apart.
Divide and rule! but ye have made a junction
Between two parties who will govern you,
But for my art.— Behold this bag! it is
The poison bag of that Green Spider huge,
On which our spies skulked in ovation through
The streets of Thebes, when they were paved with
dead:
A bane so much the deadlier fills it now, As calumny is worse than death,—for here The Gadfly's venom, fifty times distilled, Is mingled with the vomit of the Leech, In due proportion, and black ratsbane, which That very Rat, who, like the Pontic tyrant, Nurtures himself on poison, dare not touch: — All is sealed up with the broad seal of Fraud, Who is the Devil's Lord High Chancellor, And over it the primate of all Hell Mummured this pious baptism: —" Be thou called The green bag; and this power and grace be thine: That thy contents, on whomsoever poured, Turn innocence to guilt, and gentlest looks To savage, foul, and fierce deformity. Let all, baptised by thy infernal dew, Be called adulterer, drunkard, liar, wretch! No name left out which orthodoxy loves, Court Journal or legitimate Review!— Be they called tyrant, beast, fool, glutton, lover Of other wives and husbands than their own— The heaviest sin on this side of the Alps! Wither they to a ghastly caricature Of what was human!—let not man nor beast Behold their face with unaverted eyes! Or hear their names with ears that tingle Not with blood of indignation, rage, and shame!" This is a perilous liquor; — good my Lords. [Swellfoot approaches to touch the green bag.]

Beware! for God's sake, beware! — if you should The seal, and touch the fatal liquor —[break] PURGANAX.

There! Give it to me. I have been use to handle All sorts of poisons. His dread majesty Only desires to see the colour of it.

ACT II.

SCENE I.
The Public Sty.
The Boars in full Assembly.
Enter PURGANAX.

PURGANAX. Grant me your patience, Gentlemen and Boars, Ye, by whose patience under public burthens The glorious constitution of these sties Subsists, and shall subsist. The lean pig-rates Grow with the growing populace of swine, The taxes, that true source of piggishness, (How can I find a more appropriate term To include religion, morals, peace, and plenty, And all that fit Beulona as a nation To teach the other nations how to live?) Increase with piggishness itself; and still Does the revenue, that great spring of all The patronage, and pensions, and by-payments, Which free-born pigs regard with jealous eyes, Diminish, till at length, by glorious steps, And the revenue will amount to ——nothing! The failure of a foreign market for Sausages, bristles, and blood-puddings, And such home manufactures, is but-partial; And, that the population of the pigs, Instead of hog-wash, has been fed on straw And water, is a fact which ——you know — That is — it is a state necessity — Temporary, of course. Those impious pigs, Who, by frequent squeaks, have dared impugn The settled Swellfoot system, or to make Irreverent mockery of the genuflexions Inculcated by the arch-priest, have been whip* Into a loyal and an orthodox whine. Things being in this happy state, the Queen Iona ——

A loud cry from the Pigs.

She is innocent! most innocent!

PURGANAX. That is the very thing that I was saying, Gentlemen Swine; the Queen Iona being Most innocent, no doubt, returns to Thebes, And the lean sows and boars collect about her, Wishing to make her think that they believe (I mean those more substantial pigs, who still Rich hog-wash, while the others mouth damp straw.)
That she is guilty; thus, the lean-pig faction
Seeks to obtain that hog-wash, which has been
Your immemorial right, and which I will
Maintain you in to the last drop of—

A BOAR (interrupting him).

What

Does any one accuse her of?

PURGANAX.

Why, no one
Makes any positive accusation;—but
There were hints dropped, and so the privy wizards
Conceived that it became them to advise
His Majesty to investigate their truth;—
Not for his own sake; he could be content
To let his wife play any pranks she pleased,
If, by that sufferance, he could please the pigs;
But then he fears the morals of the swine,
The sows especially, and what effect
It might produce upon the purity and
Religion of the rising generation
Of sucking-pigs, if it could be suspected
That Queen Iona—

FIRST BOAR.

Well, go on; we long
To hear what she can possibly have done.

PURGANAX.

Why, it is hinted, that a certain bull—
Thus much is known:— the milk-white bulls that feed
Beside Cithamnos and the crystal lakes
Of the Cisalpine mountains, in fresh dews
Of lotus-grass and blossoming asphodel,
Sleeking their silken hair, and with sweet breath
Loading the morning winds until they faint
With living fragrance, are so beautiful I
Well, I say nothing;—but Europa rode
On such a one from Asia into Crete,
And the enamoured sea grew calm beneath
His gliding beauty. And Pasiphae,
Iona's grandmother,—but she is innocent!
And that both you and I, and all assert.
Most innocent!

FIRST BOAR.

Mast innocent!

PURGANAX.

Behold this Bag; a bag—

SECOND BOAR.

Oh! no Green Bags! Jealousy's eyes are green,
Scorpions are green, and water-snakes, and efts,
And verdigris, and—

PURGANAX.

Honourable swine, in piggish souls can prepossessions reign!
Allow me to remind you, grass is green—
All flesh is grass;—no bacon but is flesh—
Ye are but bacon. This divining Bag
(which is not green, but only bacon colour)
Is filled with liquor, which if sprinkled o'er
A woman guilty of—we all know what—
Makes her so hideous, till she finds one blind,
She never can commit the like again.
If innocent, she will turn into an angel,
And rain down blessings in the shape of comfits
As she flies up to heaven. Now, my proposal
Is to convert her sacred Majesty

Into an angel, (as I am sure we shall do),
By pouring on her head this mystic water.

I know that she is innocent; I wish
Only to prove her so to all the world.

FIRST BOAR.

Excellent, just, and noble Purganax!

SECOND BOAR.

How glorious it will be to see her Majesty
Flying above our heads, her petticoats
Streaming like,—like—

THIRD BOAR.

Any thing.

PURGANAX.

Oh, no! But like a standard of an admiral's ship,
Or like the banner of a conquering host,
Or like a cloud dyed in the dying day,
Unravelled on the blast from a white mountain;
Or like a meteor, or a war-steed's mane,
Or water-fall from a dizzy precipice
Scattered upon the wind.

FIRST BOAR.

Or a cow's tail,—

SECOND BOAR.

Or any thing, as the learned Boar observed.

PURGANAX.

Gentlemen Boars, I move a resolution,
That her most sacred Majesty should be
Invited to attend the feast of Famine,
And to receive upon her chaste white body
Dews of Apotheosis from this Bag.

[AGreat confusion is heard of the Pigs out of Doors,
Which communicates itself to those within. During
the first Strophe, the doors of the Sty are staved in,
And a number of exceedingly lean Figs and Sows
And Boars rush in.]

SEMICHORUS I.

No! Yes!

SEMICHORUS II.

Yes! No!

A law!

SEMICHORUS I.

A flaw!

SEMICHORUS I.

Porkers, we shall lose our wash,
Or must share it with the lean pigs!

FIRST BOAR.

Order! order! be not rash!
Was there ever such a scene, Pigs!

AN OLD SOW (rushing in).

I never saw so fine a dash
Since I first began to wean pigs.

SECOND BOAR (solemnly).

The Queen will be an angel time enough.
I vote, in form of an amendment, that
Purganax rub a little of that stuff
Upon his face—

OR, SWELLFOOT THE TYRANT.
188 (EDIPUS TYRANNUS;

Purganax.

[His heart is seen to beat through his waistcoat.
Gods! What would ye be at?

Sechichorus I.
Purganax has plainly shown a cloven foot and jack-daw feather.

Sechichorus II.
I vote Swellfoot and Iona try the magic test together; whenever royal spouses bicker, both should try the magic liquor.

an old boar (aside).
A miserable state is that of pigs, for if their drivers would tear caps and wigs, the swine must bite each other's ear therefore.

an old sow (aside).
A wretched lot Jove has assigned to swine; squabbling makes pig-herds hungry, and they dine on bacon, and whip sucking-pigs the more.

Chorus.
Hog-wash has been taken away; if the Bull-Queen is divested, we shall be in every way hunted, stripped, exposed, molested; let us do whate'er we may, that she shall not be arrested.

Queen, we entrench you with walls of brawn, and palisades of tusks, sharp as a bayonet: place your most sacred person here. We pawn our livesthat none a finger dare to lay on it. Those who wrong you, wrong us; those who hate you, hate us; those who sting you, sting us; those who baityou, bait us; the oracle is now about to be fulfilled by circumvolving destiny; which says: "Thebes, choose reform or civil war, when through your streets, instead of hare with dogs, a Consort Queen shall hunt a Kino with hogs, riding upon the Ionian Minotaur."

Enter Iona Taurina.

Iona taurina (coming forward).
Gentlemen swine, and gentle lady-pigs, the tender heart of every boar acquits their Queen, of any act incongruous with native piggishness, and she reposing with confidence upon the grunting nation, has thrown herself, her cause, her life, her all, her innocence, into their hoggish arms; nor has the expectation been deceived of finding shelter there. Yet know, great boars, (for such who ever lives among you finds you, and so do I) the innocent are proud! I have accepted your protection only in compliment of your kind love and care, not for necessity. The innocent are safest there where trials and dangers wait; innocent Queens o'er white-hot plough-shares tread unsinged; and ladies, Erin's laureate sings it.*

* "Rich and rare were the gems she wore." See Moore's Irish Melodies.

Decked with rare gems, and beauty rarer still, walked from Killarney to the Giant's Causeway, through rebels, smugglers, troops of yeomanry, white-boys, and orange-boys, and constables, tithe-proctors, and excise people, uninjured! Thus I—

Lord Purganax, I do commit myself into your custody, and am prepared to stand the test, whatever it may be!

Purganax.
This magnanimity in your sacred Majesty must please the pigs. You cannot fail of being a heavenly angel. Smoke your bits of glass, ye loyal swine, or her transfiguration will blind your wondering eyes.

an old boar (aside).
They do not smoke you first.

Purganax.
At the approaching feast of Famine, let the expiation be.

Swine.
Content! content!

Iona Taurina (aside).
I, most content of all, know that my foes even thus prepare their fall!

[Exeunt <

Scene II.
The interior of the Temple of Famine. The statue of the Goddess, a skeleton clothed in party-colored rags, seated upon a heap of skulls and loaves intermingled. A number of exceedingly fat Priests in black garments arrayed on each side, with marrow-bones and cleavers in their hands. A flourish of trumpets.

Enter Mammon as Arch-priest, Swellfoot, Dakst, Purganax, Iona Taurina, followed by Iona Taurina guarded. On the other side enter the Swine.

Chorus of Priests,
Accompanied by the Court Porkman on marrow-bones and cleavers.

Goddess bare, and gaunt, and pale,
Empress of the world, all hail!
What though Cretans old called thee City-crested Cybele?
We call thee Famine!
Goddess of fastsand feasts, starving and cramming;
Through thee, for emperors, kings, and priests and lords, who rule by viziers, sceptres, bank-notes, words, the earth pours forth its plenteous fruits, corn, wool, linen, flesh, and roots—[fat, those who consume these fruits through thee grow lean, those who produce these fruits through thee grow lean, whatever change takes place, oh, stick to that! and let things be as they have ever been; at least while we remain thy priests, and proclaim thy fasts and feasts!

Through thee the sacred Swellfoot dynasty
Is based upon a rock amid that sea
Whose waves are swine—so let it ever be!

MAMMON.
I fear your sacred Majesty has lost
The appetite which you were used to have.
Allow me now to recommend this dish—
A simple kickshaw by your Persian cook,
Such as is served at the great King's second table.
The price and pains which its ingredients cost,
Might have maintained some dozen families
A winter or two—not more—so plain a dish
Could scarcely disagree.—

SWELLFOOT.
After the trial,
And these fastidious pigs are gone, perhaps
I may recover my lost appetite,—
I feel the gout flying about my stomach—
Give me a glass of Maraschino punch.

PURGANAX.
[Putting his glass, and standing up.]
The glorious constitution of the Pigs!
All.
A toast! a toast! stand up, and three times three!

DARKY.
No heel-taps—darken day-lights!

LAOCTONOS.
Claret, somehow,
Puts me in mind of blood, and blood of claret!

SWELLFOOT.
Laocoon is fishing for a compliment,
But 'tis his due, Yes, you have drunk more wine,
And shed more blood, than any man in Thebes.

MAMMON.
I hear a crackling of the giant bones
Of the dread image, and in the black pits
Which once were eyes, I see two livid flames:
These prodigies are oracular, and show
The presence of the unseen Deity.
Mighty events are hastening to their doom!

MAMMON.
The Bag
Is here.
PURGANAX.
I have rehearsed the entire scene
With an ox-bladder and some ditch-water,
On Lady P.—it cannot fail.

[Taking up the bag.]
Your Majesty (to SWELLFOOT)
In such a filthy business had better
Stand on one side, lest it should sprinkle you.
A spot or two on me would do no harm;
Nay, it might hide the blood, which the sad
genius
Of the Green Isle has fixed, as by a spell,
Upon my brow—which would stain all its seas,
But which those seas could never wash away!

IONA TAURINA.
My Lord, I am ready—nay I am impatient,
To undergo the test.

[While the veiled figure has been chanting this
strophe, Mammon, Dakby, Laoctonos, and Swell-

Then hail to thee, hail to thee, Famine!
Hail to thee, Empress of Earth!
When thou risest, dividing possessions;
When thou risest, uprooting oppressions;
In the pride of thy ghastly mirth.
Over palaces, temples, and graves,
We will rush as thy minister-slaves,
Trampling behind in thy train,
Till all be made level again!
foot, have surrounded Iona Taurina, who, with her hands folded on her breast, and her eyes lifted to Heaven, stands, as with saint-like resignation, to wait the issue of the business, in perfect confidence of her innocence.

Purpanax, after unsealing the Green Bag, is gravely about to pour the liquor upon her head, when suddenly the whole expression of her figure and countenance changes; she snatches it from his hand with a loud laugh of triumph, and empties it over Swellfoot and his whole Court, who are instantly changed into a number of filthy and ugly animals, and rush out of the Temple. The image of Famine then arises with a tremendous sound, the Pigs begin scrambling for the loaves, and are tripped up by the sculls; all those who eat the loaves are turned into Bulls, and arrange themselves quietly behind the altar. The image of Famine sinks through a chasm in the earth, and a Minotaur rises.

MINOTAUR.
I am the Ionian Minotaur, the mightiest Of all Europa's taurine progeny— I am the old traditional man bull; And from my ancestors having been Ionian, I am called Ion, which, by interpretation, Is John; in plain Theban, that is to say, My name's John Bull; I am a famous hunter, And can leap any gate in all Boeotia, Even the palingsof the royal park, Or double ditchabout the new inclosures; And if your Majesty will deign to mount me, At least till you have hunted down your game, I will not throw you.
In the brief journal I kept in those days, I find recorded, in August 1820, Shelley “begins Swellfoot the Tyrant, suggested by the pigs at the fair of San Giuliano.” This was the period of Queen Caroline’s landing in England, and the struggles made by Geo. IV. to get rid of her claims; which failing, Lord Castlereagh placed the “Green Bag” on the table of the House of Commons, demanding, in the King’s name, that an inquiry should be instituted into his wife’s conduct. These circumstances were the theme of all conversation among the English. We were then at the Baths of San Giuliano; a friend came to visit us on the day when a fair was held in the square, beneath our windows: Shelley read to us his Ode to Liberty; and was riotously accompanied by the grunting of a quantity of pigs brought for sale to the fair. He compared it to the “chorus of frogs” in the satiric drama of Aristophanes; and it being an hour of merriment, and one ludicrous association suggesting another, he imagined a political satirical drama on the circumstances of the day, to which the pigs would serve as chorus—and Swellfoot was begun. When finished, it was transmitted to England, printed and published anonymously; but stifled at the very dawn of its existence by the “Society for the Suppression of Vice,” who threatened to prosecute it, if not immediately withdrawn. The friend who had taken the trouble of bringing it out, of course did not think it worth the annoyance and expense of a contest, and it was laid aside.

Hesitation of whether it would do honour to Shelley prevented my publishing it at first; but I cannot bring myself to keep back anything he ever wrote, for each word is fraught with the peculiar views and sentiments which he believed to be beneficial to the human race; and the bright light of poetry irradiates every thought. The world has a right to the entire compositions of such a man; for it does not live and thrive by the out-worn lesson of the dullard or the hypocrite, but by the original free thoughts of men of Genius, who aspire to pluck bright truth

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from the pale-faced moon;
Or dive into the bottom of the deep,
Where fathom-line could never touch the ground,
And pluck up drowned—**

truth. Even those who may dissent from his opinions will consider that he was a man of genius, and that the world will take more interest in his slightest word, than from the waters of Lethe, which are so eagerly prescribed as medicinal for all its wrongs and woes. This drama, however, must not be judged for more than was meant. It is a mere plaything of the imagination, which even may not excite smiles among many, who will not see wit in those combinations of thought which were full of the ridiculous to the author. But, like everything he wrote, it breaths that deep sympathy for the sorrows of humanity, and indignation against its oppressors, which make it worthy of his name.
EARLY POEMS.

MUTABILITY.

We are as clouds that veil the midnight moon; How restlessly they speed, and gleam, and quiver, Streaking the darkness radiantly!—yet soon Night closes round, and they are lost for ever:

Or like forgotten lyres, whose dissonant strings Give various response to each varying blast, To whose frail frame no second motion brings One mood or modulation like the last.

We rest—A dream has power to poison sleep; We rise—One wandering thought pollutes the day; We feel, conceive or reason, laugh or weep; Embrace fond woe, or cast our cares away:

It is the same!—For, be it joy or sorrow, The path of its departure still is free; Man's yesterday may never be like his morrow; Nought may endure but Mutability.

ON DEATH.

There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.—Ecclesiastes.

The pale, the cold, and the moony smile Which the meteor beam of a starless night Sheds on a lonely and sea-girt isle, Ere the dawning of morn's undoubted light, Is the flame of life so fickle and wan That flies round our steps till their strength is gone.

O man! hold thee on in courage of soul Through the stormy shades of thy worldly way, And the billows of cloud that around thee roll Shall sleep in the light of a wondrous day, Where hell and heaven shall leave thee free To the universe of destiny.

This world is the nurse of all we know, This world is the mother of all we feel, And the coming of death is a fearful blow, To a brain unencumbered with nerves of steel; When all that we know, or feel, or see, Shall pass like an unreal mystery.

The secret things of the grave are there, Where all but this frame must surely be, Though the fine-wrought eye and the wondrous ear No longer will live to hear or to see All that is great and all that is strange In the boundless realm of unending change.

Who telleth a tale of unspeaking death! Who lifteth the veil of what is to come! Who painteth the shadows that are beneath The wide-winding caves of the peopled tomb! Or uniteth the hopes of what shall be With the fears and the love for that which we see!

A SUMMER-EVENING CHURCH-YARD,
LECHDALE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

The winds have swept from the wide atmosphere Each vapour that obscured the sun's last ray; And pallid evening twines its beaming hair In dusky braids around the languid eyes of day;

Silence and twilight, unbeloved of men, Creep hand in hand from yon obscurest glen. To the world's sweet spells towards the departing day, Encircling the earth, air, stars, and sea; The winds are still, or the dry church-tower grass Shall sleep in the light of a wondrous day, Where hell and heaven shall leave thee free To the universe of destiny.

The dead are sleeping in their sepulchres: And mouldering as they sleep, a thrilling sound, Breathed from their wormy beds all living things around, And mingling with the still night and mute sky Its awful hush is felt inaudibly.

Thus solemnised and softened, death is mild And terrorless as this serenest night: Here could I hope, like some inquiring child Sporting on graves, that death did hide from human Sweet secrets, or beside its breathless sleep Cull That loveliest dreams perpetual watch did keep.
TO * * * *.

ΔΕΚΑΤΕΙ ΔΙΟΙΚΗ ΠΟΤΜΟΝ ΠΟΤΜΟΝ.

On! there are spirits in the air,
And genii of the evening breeze,
And gentle ghosts, with eyes as fair
As star-beams among twilight trees:—
Such lovely ministers to meet
Oft hast thou turned from men thy lonely feet.

With mountain winds, and babbling springs,
And mountain seas, that are the voice
Of these inexplicable things,
Thou didst hold commune, and rejoice
When they did answer thee; but they
Cast, like a worthless boon, thy love away.

And thou hast sought in starry eyes
Beams that were never meant for thine,
Another's wealth;— tame sacrifice
To a fond faith! still dost thou pine!
Still dost thou hope that greeting hands,
Voice, looks, or lips, may answer thy demands?

Ah! wherefore didst thou build thine hope
On the false earth's inconstancy?
Did thine own mind afford no scope
Of love, or moving thought to thee!
That natural scenes or human smiles
Could steal the power to wind thee in their wiles.

Yes, all the faithless smiles are fled
Whose falsehood left thee broken-hearted;
The glory of the moon is dead;
Night's ghost and dreams have now departed;
Thine own soul still is true to thee,
But changed to a foul fiend through misery.

This fiend, whose ghastly presence ever
Beside thee like thy shadow hangs,
Dread not to chase;— the mad endeavour
Would source thee to sever pangs.
Be as thou art. Thy settled fate,
Dark as it is, all change would aggravate.

STANZAS.—APRIL, 1814.

Away! the moon is dark beneath the moon,
Rapid clouds have drunk the last pale beam of even:
Away! the gathering winds will call the darkness soon,
And profoundest midnight shroud the serene lights of heaven.
Pause not! The time is past! Every voice cries, Away!
Tempest not with one last glance thy friend's ungentle mood:
Thy lover's eye, so glazed and cold, dares not entreat thy stay:
Duty and dereliction guide thee back to solitude.

Away, away! to thy sad and silent home;
Four bitter tears on its desolated hearth;
Watch the dim shades as like ghosts they go and come,
And complicate strange webs of melancholy mirth.
The leaves of wasted autumn woods shall float
Around thine head,
The blooms of dewy spring shall gleam beneath thy feet:
But thy soul or this world must fade in the frost
That binds the dead,
Ere midnight's frown and morning's smile, ere thou and peace may meet.

The cloud shadows of midnight possess their own repose,
For the weary winds are silent, or the moon is in the deep;
Some respite to its turbulence unresting ocean knows;
Whatever moves, or toils, or grieves, hath its appointed sleep.
Thou in the grave shalt rest— yet till the phantoms flee
Which that house and heath and garden made dear to thee erstwhile,
Thy remembrance, and repentance, and deep musings, are not free
From the music of two voices, and the light of one sweet smile.

LINES.

The cold earth slept below,
Above the cold sky shone,
And all around
With a chilling sound,
From caves of ice and fields of snow,
The breath of night like death did flow
Beneath the sinking moon.
The wintry hedge was black,
The green grass was not seen,
The birds did rest
On the bare thorn's breast,
Whose roots, beside the pathway track,
Had bound their folds o'er many a crack
Which the frost had made between.

Thine eyes glowed in the glare
Of the moon's dying light,
As a fen-fire's beam
On a sluggish stream
Gleams dimly— so the moon shone there,
And it yellowed the strings of thy tangled hair,
That shook in the wind of night.
The moon made thy lips pale, beloved;
The wind made thy bosom chill;
The night did shad
On thy dear head
Its frozen dew, and thou didst lie
Where the bitter breath of the naked sky
Might visit thee at will.
November, 1814.
TO WORDSWORTH.

Post of Nature, thou hast wept to know
That things depart which never may return;
Childhood and youth, friendship and love's first
glow,
Have fled like sweet dreams, leaving thee to mourn.
These common woes I feel. One loss is mine,
Which thou too feel'st; yet I alone deplore.
Thou wert as a lone star, whose light did shine
On some frail bark in winter's midnight roar:
Thou hast like a rock-built refuge stood
Above the blind and battling multitude:
In honoured poverty thy voice did weave
Songs consecrate to truth and liberty,—
Thus having been, that thou shouldst cease to be.

FEELINGS OF A REPUBLICAN ON THE FALL OF BONAPARTE.

I hated thee, fallen tyrant! I did groan
To think that a most unambitious slave,
Like thou, shouldst dance and revel on the grave
Of Liberty. Thou mightst have built thy throne—
Where it had stood even now: thou didst prefer
A frail and bloody pomp, which time has swept
In fragments towards oblivion. Massacre,
For this I prayed, would on thy sleep have crept.
Treason and Slavery, Rapine, Fear, and Lust,
And stifled thee, their minister. I know
Too late, since thou and France are in the dust,
That Virtue owns a more eternal foe
Than force or fraud: old Custom, legal Crime,
And bloody Faith, the foulest birth of time.

NOTE ON THE EARLY POEMS. BY THE EDITOR.

The remainder of Shelley's Poems will be arranged in the order in which they were written. Of course, mistakes will occur in placing some of the shorter ones; for, as I have said, many of these were thrown aside, and I never saw them till I had the misery of looking over his writings, after the hand that traced them was dust; and some were in the hands of others, and I never saw them till now. The subjects of the poems are often to me an unerring guide; but on other occasions, I can only guess, by finding them in the pages of the same manuscript book that contains poems with the date of whose composition I am fully conversant. In the present arrangement all his poetical translations will be placed together at the end of the volume.

The loss of his early papers prevents my being able to give any of the poetry of his boyhood. Of the few I give as early poems, the greater part were published with "Alastor;" some of them were written previously, some at the same period. The poem beginning, "Oh, there are spirits in the air," was addressed in idea to Coleridge, whom he never knew; and at whose character he could only guess imperfectly, through his writings, and accounts he heard of him from some who knew him well. He regarded his change of opinions as rather an act of will than conviction, and believed that in his inner heart he would be haunted by what Shelley considered the better and holier aspirations of his youth. The summer evening that suggested to him the poem written in the churchyard of Lechdale, occurred during his voyage up the Thames, in the autumn of 1815. He had been advised by a physician to live as much as possible in the open air; and a fortnight of a bright warm July was spent in tracing the Thames to its source. He never spent a season more tranquilly than the summer of 1815. He had just recovered from a severe pulmonary attack; the weather was warm and pleasant. He lived near Windsor Forest, and his life was spent under its shades, or on the water; meditating subjects for verse. Hitherto, he had chiefly aimed at extending his political doctrines; and attempted so to do by appeals, in prose essays, to the people, exhorting them to claim their rights; but he had now begun to feel that the time for action was not ripe in England, and that the pen was the only instrument wherewith to prepare the way for better things.

In the scanty journals kept during those years, I find a record of the books that Shelley read during several years. During the years of 1814 and 1815, the list is extensive. It includes in Greek; Homer, Hesiod, Theocritus—the histories of Thucydides and Herodotus, and Diogenes Laertius. In Latin; Petronius, Suetonius, some of the works of Cicero, a large proportion of those of Seneca and Livy. In English; Milton's Poems, Wordsworth's Excursion, Southey's Madoc and Thalaba, Locke on the Human Understanding, Bacon's Novum Organum. In Italian, Ariosto, Tasso, and Alfieri. In French, the Réveries d'un Solitaire of Rousseau. To these may be added several modern books of travels. He read few novels.
POEMS WRITTEN IN MDCCCXVI.

THE SUNSET.

There late was One, within whose subtle being,
As light and wind within some delicate cloud
That fades amid the blue noon's burning sky,
Genius and death contended. None may know
The sweetness of the joy which made his breath
Fail, like the trances of the summer air,
When, with the Lady of his love, who then
First knew the unreserve of mingled being,
He walked along the pathway of a field,
Which to the east a hoar wood shadowed o'er,
But to the west was open to the sky.
There now the sun had sunk, but lines of gold
Hung on the ashen clouds, and on the points
Of the far level grass and nodding flowers,
And the old dandelion's hoary beard,
And, mingled with the shades of twilight, lay
On the brown massy woods—and in the east
The broad and burning moon lingeringly rose
Between the black trunks of the crowded trees,
While the faint stars were gathering overhead.—
"Is it not strange, Isabel," said the youth,
"I never saw the sun! We will walk here
To-morrow; thou shalt look on it with me."
That night the youth and lady mingled lay
In love and sleep—but when the morning came
The lady found her lover dead and cold.
Let none believethat God in mercy gave
That stroke. The lady died not, nor grew wild,
But year by year lived on—in truth I think
Her gentleness and patience and sad smiles,
And that she did not die, but lived to tend
Her aged father, were a kind of madness,
If madness 'tis to be unlike the world.
For but to be her were to read the tale
Woven by some subtlest bard, to make hard hearts
Dissolve away in wisdom-working grief:—
Her eye-lashes were torn away with tears,
Her lips and cheeks were like things dead—so pale;
Her hands were thin, and through their wandering veins
And weak articulations might be seen
Day's ruddy light. The tomb of thy dead self
Which one vexed ghost inhabits, night and day,
Is all, lost child, that now remains of thee!

"Inheritor of more than earth can give,
Passionless calm and silence unproved,
Whether the dead find, oh, not sleep! but rest,
And are the uncomplaining things they seem,
Or live, or drop in the deep sea of Love?
Oh, that like thine, mine epitaph were—Peace!"
This was the only moan she ever made.

HYMN TO INTELLECTUAL BEAUTY.

The awful shadow of some unseen Power
Floats tho' unseen among us; visiting
This various world with as inconstant wing
As summer winds that creep from flower to flower;
Like moonbeams that behind some pity mountain
It visits with inconstant glance [shower,
Each human heart and countenance;
Like hues and harmonies of evening,
Like clouds in starlight widely spread,
Like memory of music fled,
Like aught that for its grace may be
Dear, and yet dearer for its mystery.

Spirit of Beauty, that dost consecrate
With thine own hues all thou dost shine upon
Of human thought or form, where art thou gone?
Why dost thou pass away and leave our state,
This dim vast vale of tears, vacant and desolate?
Ask why the sunlight not for ever
Weaves rainbows o'er yon mountain river;
Why aught should fail and fade that once is shown;
Why fear and dream and death and birth
Cast on the daylight of this earth
Such gloom; why man has such a scope
For love and hate, despondency and hope;

No voice from some sublimner world hath ever
To sage or poet these responses given:
Therefore the names of Demon, Ghost, and Heaven,
Remain the records of their vain endeavour;
Frail spells, whose uttered charm might not avail
From all we hear and all we see, [to sever,
Doubt, chance, and mutability.
Thy light alone, like mist o'er mountains driven,
Or music by the night wind sent
Through strings of some still instrument,
Or moonlight on a midnight stream,
Gives grace and truth to life's unquiet dream.

Love, Hope, and Self-esteem, like clouds, depart
And come, for some uncertain moments lent.
Man were immortal and omnipotent,
Didst thou, unknown and awful as thou art,
Keep with thy glorious train firm state within his
Thou messenger of sympathies [heart.
That wax and wane in lovers' eyes;
Thou, that to human thought art nourishment,
Like darkness to a dying flame!
Depart not as thy shadow came:
Depart not, lest the grave should be,
Like life and fear, a dark reality.
While yet a boy I sought for ghosts, and sped
Thro' many a listening chamber, cave, and ruin,
And starlight wood, with fearful steps pursuing
Hopes of high talk with the departed dead.
I called on poisonous names with which our youth
I was not heard, I saw them not; [is fed:
When musings deeply on the lot
Of life, at that sweet time when winds are woeing
All vital things that wake to bring
News of birds and blossoming,
Sudden, thy shadow fell on me;
I shrieked, and clasped my hands in ecstacy!
I vowed that I would dedicate my powers
To thee and thine: have I not kept the vow!
With beating heart and streaming eyes, even
I call the phantoms of a thousand hours [now
Each from his voiceless grave: they have in visioned
Of studious zeal or love's delight [bowers
Outwatched with me the envious night:
They know that never joy illum'd my brow,
Which thro' the summer is not heard nor seen,
And every form containing thee,
Whom, Spirit fair, thy spells did bind
It's calm, to one who worships thee,
Now float above thy darkness, and now rest
One legion of wild thoughts, whose wandering wings
Seeking among the shadows that pass by
Some say that gleams of a remoter world
Some phantom, some faint image; till the breath
They know that never joy illum'd my brow,
Which thro' the summer is not heard nor seen,
And every form containing thee,
Whom, Spirit fair, thy spells did bind
It's calm, to one who worships thee,
Now float above thy darkness, and now rest
One legion of wild thoughts, whose wandering wings
Seeking among the shadows that pass by
Some say that gleams of a remoter world
Some phantom, some faint image; till the breath
This world from its dark slavery,
That thou, O awful Loveliness,
Seeking among the shadows that pass by
Some say that gleams of a remoter world
Some phantom, some faint image; till the breath
This world from its dark slavery,
That thou, O awful Loveliness,
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Some phantom, some faint image; till the breath
This world from its dark slavery,
That thou, O awful Loveliness,
Seeking among the shadows that pass by
Some say that gleams of a remoter world
Some phantom, some faint image; till the breath
This world from its dark slavery,
The torpor of the year when feeble dreams
Visit the hidden buds, or dreamless sleep
Holds every future leaf and flower,—the bound
With which from that detested trance they leap;
The works and ways of man, their death and birth,
And that of him, and all that he may be;
All things that move and breathe with toil and sound
Are born and die, revolve, subside, and swell.
Power dwells apart in its tranquillity,
Remote, serene, and inaccessible:
And this, the naked countenance of earth,
On which I gaze, even these primaeval mountains,
Teach the adverting mind. The glaciers creep,
Slowly rolling on; there, many a precipice
Is there, that from the boundaries of the sky
Rolls its perpetual stream; vast pines are strewn
Its destined path, or in the mangled soil
Branchless and shattered stand; the rocks, drawn
From you remotest waste, have overthrown
The limits of the dead and living world,
Never to be reclaimed. The dwelling-place
Of insects, beasts, and birds, becomes its spoil;
Their food and their retreat for ever gone,
So much of life and joy is lost. The race

Of man flies far in dread; his work and dwelling
Vanish, like smoke before the tempest's stream,
And their place is not known. Below, vast caves
Shine in the rushing torrent's restless gleam,
Which from those secret chasms in tumult welling
Meet in the Vale, and one majestic River,
The breath and blood of distant lands, for ever
Rols its loud waters to the ocean waves,
Breathes its swift vapours to the circling air.

Mont Blanc yet gleams on high:—the power is there,
The still and solemn power of many sights
And many sounds, and much of life and death.
In the calm darkness of the moonless nights,
In the lone glare of day, the snows descend
Upon that Mountain; none beholds them there,
Nor when the flakes burn in the sinking sun,
The star-beams dart through them:—Winds con-
Silent and serenely, and heap the snow, with breath
Rapid and strong, but silently! Its home
The voiceless lightning in these solitudes
Keeps innocently, and like vapour broods
Over the snow. The secret strength of things,
Of heaven is as a law, inhabits thee!
And what were thou, and earth, and stars, and sea,
If to the human mind's imaginings
SWITZERLAND, June 23, 1816.

NOTE ON POEMS OF 1816. BY THE EDITOR.

Shelley wrote little during this year. The
Poem entitled the "Sunset" was written in the
spring of the year, while still residing at Bishops-
gate. He spent the summer on the shores of the
Lake of Geneva. "The Hymn to Intellectual
Beauty" was conceived during his voyage round
the lake with Lord Byron. He occupied himself
during this voyage, by reading the Nouvelle Héloïse
for the first time. The reading it on the very spot
where the scenes are laid, added to the interest;
and he was at once surprised and charmed by
the passionate eloquence and earnest enthralling
interest that pervades this work. There was some-
thing in the character of Saint-Preux, in his
abnegation of self, and in the worship he paid to
Love, that coincided with Shelley's own disposi-
tion; and, though differing in many of the views,
and shocked by others, yet the effect of the whole
was fascinating and delightful.

"Mont Blanc" was inspired by a view of that
mountain and its surrounding peaks and valleys,
as he lingered on the Bridge of Arve on his way
through the Valley of Chamouni. Shelley makes
the following mention of this poem in his publica-
tion of the History of Six Weeks' Tour, and Let-
ters from Switzerland:—

"The poem entitled 'Mont Blanc,' is written
by the author of the two letters from Chamouni
and Vevey. It was composed under the immediate
impression of the deep and powerful feelings ex-
cited by the objects which it attempts to describe;
and as an undisciplined overflowing of the soul,
rests its claim to approbation on an attempt to
imitate the untameable wildness and inaccessible
solemnity from which those feelings sprang."

This was an eventful year, and less time was
given to study than usual. In the list of his read-
ing I find, in Greek : Theocritus, the Prometheus
of Æschylus, several of Plutarch's Lives and the
works of Lucian. In Latin: Lucretius, Pliny's
Letters, the Annals and Germany of Tacitus. In
French: the History of the French Revolution,
by Lacretelle. He read for the first time, this
year, Montaigne's Essays, and regarded them ever
after as one of the most delightful and instructive
books in the world. The list is scanty in English
works—Locke's Essay, Political Justice, and
Coleridge's Lay Sermon, form nearly the whole.
It was his frequent habit to read aloud to me in
the evening; in this way we read, this year, the
New Testament, Paradise Lost, Spencer's Fairy
Queen, and Don Quixote.
There was a youth, who, as with toil and travel,
Had grown quite weak and grey before his time;
Nor any could the restless griefs unravel
Which burned within him, withering up his prime
And goading him, like fiends, from land to land.
Not his the load of any secret crime,
For nought of ill his heart could understand,
But pity and wild sorrow for the same;
Not his the thirst for glory or command,
Baffled with blast of hope-consuming shame;
Nor evil joys which fire the vulgar breast,
And quench in speedy smoke its feeble flame,
Had left within his soul the dark unrest:
Nor what religion fables of the grave
Feared he,—Philosophy's accepted guest.
For none than he a purer heart could have,
Or that loved good more for itself alone;
Of nought in heaven or earth was he the slave.
What sorrow, strange, and shadowy, and unknown,
Sent him, a hopeless wanderer, through mankind!—
If with a human sadness he did groan,
He had a gentle yet aspiring mind;
Just, innocent, with varied learning fed;
And such a glorious consolation find
In others' joy, when all their own is dead:
He loved, and laboured for his kind in grief;
And yet, unlike all others, it is said
That from such toil he never found relief.
Although a child of fortune and of power,
Of an ancestral name the orphan chief,
His soul had wedded wisdom, and her dower
Is love and justice, clothed in which he sate
Apart from men, as in a lonely tower,
Pitying the tumult of their dark estate.—
Yet even in youth did he not 'er abuse
The strength of wealth or thought, to consecrate
Those false opinions which the harsh rich use
To blind the world they famish for their pride;
Nor did he hold from any man his dues,
But, like a steward in honest dealings tried,
With those who toiled and wept, the poor and wise,
His riches and his cares he did divide.
Fearsome he was, and scorning all disguise,
What he dared do or think, though men might start,
He spoke with mild yet unaverted eyes.
Liberal he was of soul, and frank of heart,
And to his many friends—all loved him well—
Whate'er he knew or felt he would impart.
If words he found those inmost thoughts to tell;
If not, he smiled or wept; and his weak foes
He neither spurned nor hated—though with fell
And mortal hate their thousand voices rose,
They past like aimless arrows from his ear.—
Nor did his heart or mind its portal close
To those, or them, or any, whom life's sphere
May comprehend within its wide array.
What sadness made that vernal spirit sere?
He knew not. Though his life day after day,
Was failing, like an unreplenished stream,
Though in his eyes a cloud and burthen lay,
Through which his soul, like Vesper's serene beam
Piercing the chasms of ever rising clouds,
Shone, softly burning; though his lips did seem
Like reeds which quiver in impetuous floods;
And through his sleep, and o'er each waking hour,
Thoughts after thoughts, unresting multitudes,
Were driven within him by some secret power,
Which bade them blaze, and live, and roll afar,
Like lights and sounds, from haunted tower to tower,
O'er castled mountains borne, when tempest's war
Is levied by the night-contending winds,
And the pale dalesmen watch with eager ear;—
Though such were in his spirit, as the fiends
Which wake and feed on everliving woe,—
What was this grief, which ne'er in other minds
A mirror found,—he knew not—none could know;
But on whose'er might question him he turned
The light of his frank eyes, as if to show
He knew not of the grief within that burned, but asked forbearance with a mournful look; or spoke in words from which none ever learned the cause of his disquietude; or shook with spasms of silent passion; or turned pale: so that his friends soon rarely undertook to stir his secret pain without avail;— for all who knew and loved him then perceived that there was drawn an adamantine veil between his heart and mind,— both unrelieved wrought in his brain and bosom separate strife.

Some said that he was mad, others believed that memories of an antenatal life made this, where now he dwelt, a penal hell: and others said that such mysterious grief from God's displeasure, like a darkness, fell on souls like his, which owned no higher law than love; love calm, steadfast, invincible by mortal fear or supernatural awe; and others,— "Tis the shadow of a dream which the veiled eye of memory never saw,

But through the soul's abyss, like some dark stream through shattered mines and caverns underground rolls, shaking its foundations; and no beam of joy may rise, but it is quenched and drowned in the dim whirlpools of this dream obscure.

Soon its exhausted waters will have found a lair of rest beneath thy spirit pure, O Athanase!— in one so good and great, evil or tumult cannot long endure."

So spake they: idly of another's state babbling vain words and fond philosophy: this was their consolation; such debate men held with one another; nor did he, like one who labours with a human woe, decline this talk; as if its theme might be another, not himself, he to and fro questioned and canvassed it with subtlest wit; and none but those who loved him best could know that which he knew not, how it galled and bit his weary mind, this converse vain and cold; for like an eyeless nightmare grief did sit upon his being; a snake which fold by fold pressed out the life of life, a clinging fiend which clenched him if he stirred with deadlier boldness and so his grief remained— let it remain— untold.

* The Author was pursuing a fuller development of the ideal character of Athanase, when it struck him that in an attempt at extreme refinement and analysis, his conception might be betrayed into the assuming a morbid character. The reader will judge whether he is a loser or gainer by this difference.—Author's Note.

FRAGMENTS OF PRINCE ATHANASE.

PART II.

FRAGMENT I.

Prince Athanase had one beloved friend, an old, old man, with hair of silver white, blend and lips where heavenly smiles would hang and with his wise words; and eyes whose arrowy light shone like the reflex of a thousand minds. He was the last whom superstition's blight had spared in Greece— the blight that cramps and And in his olive bower at Cnose, [blinda,— had sate from earliest youth. Like one who finds a fertile island in the barren sea, one mariner who has survived his mates many a dream month in a great ship— so he with soul-sustaining songs, and sweet debates of ancient lore, there fed his lonely being: "The mind becomes that which it contemplates,"— and thus Zonoras, by far more seeing, Their bright creations, grew like wisest men; and when he heard the crash of nations fleeing a bloodier power than ruled thy ruins then, o sacred Hellas! many weary years he wandered, till the path of Laian's glen was grass-grown— and the unremembered tears were dry in Laian for their honoured chief, who fell in Byzant, pierced by Moslem spears:— and as the lady looked with faithful grief from her high lattice over the rugged path, where she once saw that horseman toil, with brief And blighting hope, who with the news of death struck body and soul as with a mortal blight, she saw beneath the chestnuts, far beneath, an old man toiling up, a weary wight; and soon within her hospitable hall she saw his white hairs glittering in the light.

* The idea Shelley had formed of Prince Athanase was a good deal modelled on Alastor. In the first sketch of the poem he named it Pandemos and Urania. Athanase seeks through the world the one whom he may love. He meets, in the ship in which he is embark'd, a lady, who appears to him to embody his ideal of love and beauty. But she proves to be Pandemos, or the earthly and unworthy Venus, who, after disappointing his cherished dreams and hopes, deserts him. Athanase, crushed by sorrow, pines and dies. "On his death-bed the lady, who can really reply to his soul, comes and kisses his lips."—The Death-bed of Athanase. The poet describes her— her hair was brown, her spher'd eyes were brown, and in their dark and liquid moisture swam, like the dim orb of the eclipsed moon; yet when the spirit flashed beneath, there came the light from them, as when tears of delight double the western planet's serene frame.

This slender note is all we have to aid our imagination in shaping out the form of the poem, such as its author imagined—M. S.
Of the wood fire, and round his shoulders fall,
And his wan visage and his withered mien,
Yet calm and gentle and majestical.

And Athanase, her child, who must have been
Then three years old, sate opposite and gazed
In patient silence.

FRAGMENT II.

Secum was Zonoras; and as daylight finds
One amaranth glittering on the path of frost.
When autumn nights have nipt all weaker kinds,
Thus through his age, dark, cold, and tempest-tost,
Shone truth upon Zonoras; and he filled
From fountains pure, nigh overgrown and lost,
The spirit of Prince Athanase, a child,
With soul-sustaining songs of ancient lore
And philosophic wisdom, clear and mild.

And sweet and subtle talk now evermore,
The pupil and the master shared; until,
Sharing that undiminishable store,
The youth, as shadows on a grassy hill
Outrun the winds that chase them, soon outran
His teacher, and did teach with native skill
Strange truths and new to that experienced man.
Still they were friends, as few have ever been
Who mark the extremes of life's discordant span.

So in the caverns of the forest green,
Or by the rocks of echoing ocean hoar,
Zonoras and Prince Athanase were seen
By summer woodmen; and when winter's roar
Sounded o'er earth and sea its blast of war,
The Balearic fisher, driven from shore,
Hanging upon the peaked wave afar,
Then saw their lamp from Laian's turret gleam,
Piercing the stormy darkness, like a star
Which pours beyond the sea one steadfast beam,
Whilst all the constellations of the sky
Seemed reeling through the storm; they did but seem—

For, lo! the wintry clouds are all gone by,
And bright Arcturus through yon pines is glowing,
And far o'er southern waves, immovably
Belted Orion hangs— warm light is flowing
From the young moon into the sunset's chasm.

"On thine own bird the sweet enthusiasm
Which overflows in notes of liquid gladness,
Filling the sky like light! How many a spasm
"Of fevered brains, oppressed with grief and mad-
Were lulled by thee, delightful nightingale! [necn.
And these soft waves, murmuring a gentle sadness,
"And the far sighings of yon piny dale
Made vocal by some wind, we feel not here.—
I bear alone what nothing may avail

"To lighten—a strange load!"—No human ear
Heard this lament; but o'er the visage wan
Of Athanase, a ruffling atmosphere
Of dark emotion, a swift shadow ran,
Like wind upon some forest-bosomed lake,
Glassy and dark.—And that divine old man
Beheld his mystic friend's whole being shake,
Even where its utmost depths were gloomiest—
And with a calm and measured voice he spake,
And, with a soft and equal pressure, prest
That cold lean hand:—"Dost thou remember yet
When the curved moon then lingering in the west
"Paused, in yon waves her mighty horns to wet,
How in those beams we walked, half resting on the sea?
"Tis just one year—sure thou dost not forget—

"Then Plato's words of light in thee and me
Lingered like moonlight in the moonless east,
For we had just then read—thy memory
"Is faithful now—the story of the feast;
And Agathon and Diotima seemed
From death and dark forgetfulness released."

FRAGMENT III.

"Twas at the season when the Earth upsprings
From slumber, as a sphered angel's child,
Shadowing its eyes with green and golden wing*,
Stands up before its mother bright and mild,
Of whose soft voice the air expectant seems—
So stood before the sun, which shone and smiled
To see it risethus joyous from its dreams,
The fresh and radiant Earth. The hoary grove
Waxed green— and flowers burst forth like starry
beams;—
The grass in the warm sun did start and move,
And sea-buds burst beneath the waves serene:—
How many a one, though none be near to love,
Loves then the shade of his own soul, half seen
In any mirror—or the spring's young minions,
The winged leaves amid the copses green:—

How many a spirit then puts on the pinions
Of fancy, and outstrips the lagging blast,
And his own steps—and over wide dominions
Sweeps in his dream-drawn chariot, far and fast.
More fleet than storms—the wide world shrinks
When winter and despondency are past. [below,
"Twas at this season that Prince Athanase
Passe'd the white Alps—those eagle-baffling moun-
tains
Slept in their shrouts of snow;—beside the ways
The waterfalls were voiceless—for their fountains
Were changed to mines of sunless crystal now,
Or by the curdling winds like brazen wings
Which clanged along the mountain's marble brow—
Warped into adamantine fretwork, hung
And filled with frozen light the chasm below.

FRAGMENT IV.

Thou art the wine whose drunkenness is all
We can desire, O Love! and happy souls,
Ere from thy veins the leaves of autumn fall,
Catch thee, and feed from the ivory o'erflowing bowls
Thousands who thirst for thy ambrosial dew;
Thou art the radiance which where ocean rolls
Invarest it; and when the heavens are blue
Thou fillest them; and when the earth is fair,
The shadow of thy moving wings imbue
Its deserts and its mountains, till they wear
Beauty like some bright robe;—thou ever soarest
Among the towers of men, and as soft air
In spring, which moves the unawakened forest,
Clothing with leaves its branches bare and bleak,
Thou floatest among men; and aye implorest
That which from thee they should implore:—the weak
Alone kneel to thee, offering up the hearts
The strong have broken—yet where shall any seek
A garment whom thou clothest not!

MARIANNE'S DREAM.

A pale dream came to a Lady fair,
And said, A boon, a boon, I pray!
I know the secrets of the air;
And things are lost in the glare of day,
Which I can make the sleeping see,
If they will put their trust in me.

And thou shalt know of things unknown,
If thou wilt let me rest between
The velvety lids, whose fringe is thrown
Over thine eyes so dark and athen;
And half in hope, and half in fright,
The Lady closed her eyes so bright.

At first all deadly shapes were driven
Tumultuously across her sleep,
And o'er the vast cope of bending heaven
All ghastly-visaged clouds did sweep;
And the Lady ever looked to spy
If the gold sun shout forth on high.

And as towards the east she turned,
She saw aloft in the morning air,
Which now with hues of sunrise burned,
A great black Anchor rising there;
And wherever the Lady turned her eyes
It hung before her in the skies.

The sky was blue as the summer sea,
The depths were cloudless over head.
The air was calm as it could be,
There was no sight nor sound of dread,
But that black Anchor floating still
Over the piny eastern hill.

The Lady grew sick with a weight of fear,
To see that Anchor ever hanging,
And veiled her eyes; she then did hear
The sound as of a dim low clanging,
And looked abroad if she might know
Was it aught else, or but the flow
Of the blood in her own veins, to and fro.

There was a mist in the sunless air,
Which shook as it were with an earthquake's shock,
But the very woods that blossomed there
Were moveless, and each mighty rock
Stood on its basis steadfastly;
The Anchor was seen no more on high.

But piled around with summits hid
In lines of cloud at intervals,
Stood many a mountain pyramid
Among whose everlasting walls
Two mighty cities shone, and ever
Through the red mist their domes did quiver.

On two dread mountains, from whose crest,
Might seem, the eagle for her brood
Would never have hung her dizziness
Those tower-encircled cities stood.
A vision strange such towers to see,
Sculptured and wrought so gorgeously,
Where human art could never be.

And columns framed of marble white,
And giant fanes, dome over dome
Piled, and triumphant gates, all bright
With workmanship, which could not come
From touch of mortal instrument,
Shot o'er the vales, or lustre lent
From its own shapes magnificent.

But still the Lady heard that clang
Filling the wide air far away;
And still the mist whose light did hang
Among the mountains shook alway,
So that the Lady's heart beat fast,
As half in joy and half aghast,
On those high domes her look she cast.

Sudden from out that city sprung
A light that made the earth grow red;
Two flames that each with quivering tongue
Licked its high domes, and over-head
Among those mighty towers and fanes
Dropped fire, as a volcano rains
Its sulphurous ruin on the plains.
And hark! a rush, as if the deep
Had burst its bonds; she looked behind
And saw over the western steep
A raging flood descend, and wind
Through that wide vale: she felt no fear,
But said within herself, 'Tis clear
These towers are Nature’s own, and she
To save them has sent forth the sea.

And now those raging billows came
Where that fair Lady sate, and she
Was borne towards the showering flame
By the wild waves heaped tumultuously,
And, on a little plank, the flow
Of the whirlpool bore her to and fro.

The waves were fiercely vomited
From every tower and every dome,
And dreary light did widely shed
O'er that vast flood's suspended foam,
Beneath the smoke which hung its night
On the stained cope of heaven's light.

The plank whereon that Lady sate
Was driven through the chasms, about and
about,
Between the peaks so desolate
Of the drowning mountain, in and out,
As the thistle-beard on a whirlwind sails—
While the flood was filling those hollow vales.

At last her plank an eddy crost,
And bore her to the city’s wall,
Which now the flood had reached almost;
It might the stoutest heart appal
To hear the fire roar and hiss
Through the domes of those mighty palaces.

The eddy whirled her round and round
Before a gorgeous gate, which stood
Piercing the clouds of smoke which bound
Its aery arch with light like blood;
She looked on that gate of marble clear
With wonder that extinguished fear:
For it was filled with sculptures rarest,
Of forms most beautiful and strange,
Like nothing human, but the fairest
Of winged shapes, whose legious range
Throughout the sleep of those who are,
Like this same Lady, good and fair.

And as she looked, still lovelier grew
Those marble forms;— the sculptor sure
Was a strong spirit, and the hue
Of his own mind did there endure
After the touch, whose power had braided
Such grace, was in some sad change faded.

She looked, the flames were dim, the flood
Grew tranquil as a woodland river
Winding through hills in solitude;
Those marble shapes then seemed to quiver,
And their fair limbs to float in motion,
Like weeds unfolding in the ocean.

And their lips moved; one seemed to speak,
When suddenly the mountain crackt,
And through the chasm the floor did break
With an earth-uplifting cataract:
The statues gave a joyous scream,
And on its wings the pale thin dream
Lifted the Lady from the stream.

The dizzy flight of that phantom pale
Waked the fair Lady from her sleep,
And she arose, while from the veil
Of her dark eyes the dream did creep;
And she walked about as one who knew
That sleep has sights as clear and true
As any waking eyes can view.

TO CONSTANTIA

Singing.

Thus to be lost and thus to sink and die,
Perchance were death indeed!— Constantia, turn!
In thy dark eyes a power like light doth lie,
Even though the sounds which were thy voice,
which burn
Between thy lips, are laid to sleep;
Within thy breath, and on thy hair, like odour it
And from thy touch like fire doth leap. [is yet,
Even while I write, my burning cheeks are wet,
Alas, that the torn heart can bleed, but not forget!

A breathless awe, like the swift change
Unseen but felt in youthful slumbers,
Wild, sweet, but uncommunicably strange,
Thou breathest now in fast ascending numbers.
The cope of heaven seems rent and cloven
By the enchantment of thy strain,
And on my shoulders wings are woven,
To follow its sublime career,
Beyond the mighty moons that wane
Upon the verge of nature's utmost sphere,
Till the world's shadowy walls are past and
disappear.

Her voice is hovering o'er my soul— it lingers
O'ershadowing it with soft and lulling wings,
The blood and life within those snowy fingers
Teach witchcraft to the instrumental strings.
My brain is wild, my breath comes quick—
The blood is listening in my frame,
And thronging shadows, fast and thick,
Fall on my overflowing eyes;
My heart is quivering like a flame;
As morning dew, that in the sunbeam dies,
I am dissolved in these consuming ecstacies.

I have no life, Constantia, now, but thee,
Whilst, like the world-surrounding air, thy song
Flows on, and fills all things with melody.—
Now is thy voice a tempest swift and strong,
On which, like one in trance upborne,
Secure o'er rocks and waves I sweep,
Rejoicing like a cloud of morn,
Now 'tis the breath of summer night,
Which, when the starry waters sleep,
Round western isles, with incense-blossoms bright,
Lingerings, suspends my soul in its voluptuous
flight.
TO CONSTANTIA.

The rose that drinks the fountain dew
In the pleasant air of noon,
Grows pale and blue with altered hue—
In the gaze of the nightly moon;
For the planet of frost, so cold and bright,
Makes it wan with her borrowed light.

Such is my heart—roses are fair,
And that at best a withered blossom;
But thy false care did idly wear
Its withered leaves in a faithless bosom!
And fed with love, like air and dew,
Its growth—

DEATH.

They die—the dead return not—Misery
Sits near an open grave and calls them over,
A Youth with hoary hair and haggard eye—
They are names of kindred, friend and lover,
Which he so feebly calls—they all are gone!
Fond wretch, all dead, those vacant names alone,
This most familiar scene, my pain—
These tombs alone remain.

Misery, my sweetest friend—oh! weep no more!
Thou wilt not be consoled—I wonder not!
For I have seen thee from thy dwelling’s door
Watch the calm sunset with them, and this spot
Was even as bright and calm, but transitory,
And now thy hopes are gone, thy hair is hoary;
This most familiar scene, my pain—
These tombs alone remain.

SONNET.—OZYMANDIAS.

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal these words appear:
“My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!”
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

ON F. G.

Her voice did quiver as we parted,
Yet knew I not that heart was broken
From which it came, and I departed
Heeding not the words then spoken.
Misery—O Misery,
This world is all too wide for thee.

LINES TO A CRITIC.

Honey from silkworms who can gather,
Or silk from the yellow bee!
The grass may grow in winter weather
As soon as hate in me.

Hate men who cant, and men who pray,
And men who rail like thee;
An equal passion to repay
They are not coy like me.

Or seek some slave of power and gold,
To be thy dear heart’s mate;
Thy love will move that bigot cold,
Sooner than me thy hate.

A passion like the one I prove
Cannot divided be;
I hate thy want of truth and love—
How should I then hate thee?

December, 1817.

LINES.

That time is dead for ever, child,
Drowned, frozen, dead for ever!
We look on the past,
And stare aghast
At the spectres wailing, pale, and ghast,
Of hopes which thou and I beguiled
To death on life’s dark river.

The stream we gazed on then rolled by;
Its waves are unreturning;
But we yet stand
In a lone land,
Like tombs to mark the memory
Of hopes and fears, which fade and flee
In the light of life’s dim morning.

November 5th, 1817.
NOTE ON POEMS OF 1817.

BY THE EDITOR.

The very illness that oppressed, and the aspect of death which had approached so near Shelley, appears to have kindled to yet keener life the Spirit of Poetry in his heart. The restless thoughts kept awake by pain clothed themselves in verse. Much was composed during this year. The "Revolt of Islam," written and printed, was a great effort—"Rosalind and Helen" was begun—and the fragments and poems I can trace to the same period, show how full of passion and reflection were his solitary hours.

In addition to such poems as have an intelligible aim and shape, many a stray idea and transitory emotion found imperfect and abrupt expression, and then again lost themselves in silence. As he never wandered without a book, and without implements of writing, I find many such in his manuscript books, that scarcely bear record; while some of them, broken and vague as they are, will appear valuable to those who love Shelley's mind, and desire to trace its workings. Thus in the same book that addresses "Constantia, Singing," I find these lines:—

My spirit like a charmed bark doth swim
Upon the liquid waves of thy sweet singing,
Far away into the regions dim
Of rapture—as a boat with swift sails winging
Its way adown some many-winding river.

And this apostrophe to Music:
No, Music, thou art not the God of Love,
Unless Love feeds upon its own sweet self,
Till it becomes all music murmurs of.

In another fragment he calls it—
The silver key of the fountain of tears,
Where the spirit drinks till the brain is wild;
Softest grave of a thousand tears,
Where their mother, Care, like a drowsy child,
Is laid asleep in flowers.

And then again this melancholy trace of the sad thronging thoughts, which were the well whence he drew the idea of Athanase, and express the restless, passion-fraught emotions of one whose sensibility, kindled to too intense a life, perpetually preyed upon itself:

To thirst and find no fill—to wall and wander
With short unstable steps—to pause and ponder—
To feel the blood run through the veins and tingle
Where busy thought and blind sensation mingle;
To nurse the image of unfelt carcasses
Till dim imagination just possesses
The half created shadow.

In the next page I find a calmer sentiment, better fitted to sustain one whose whole being was love:

Wealth and dominion fade into the mass
Of the great sea of human right and wrong.
When once from our possession they must pass;
But love, though misdirected, is among
The things which are immortal, and surpass
All that frail stuff which will be—or which was.

In another book, which contains some passionate outbreaks with regard to the great injustice that he endured this year, the poet writes:

My thoughts arise and fade in solitude,
The verse that would invest them melts away
Like moonlight in the heaven of spreading day:
How beautiful they were, how firm they stood,
Piecking the starry sky like woven pearl!

He had this year also projected a poem on the subject of Otho, inspired by the pages of Tacitus. I find one or two stanzas only, which were to open the subject:—

Otho.
The word not, Cassius, and thou couldst not be,
Last of the Romans, though thy memory claims
From Brutus his own glory—and on thee
Rests the full splendour of his sacred fame:
Nor he who dared make the foul tyrant quail,
Amid his covering senate with thy name,
Though thou and he were great—it will avail
To thine own fame that Otho's should not fail.

Twill wrong thee not—thou would'st, if thou couldst feel,
Abjure such envious fame—great Otho died
Like thee—he sanctified his country's steel,
At once the tyrant and tyrannicide,
In his own blood—a deed it was to buy
Tears from all men—though full of gentle pride,
Such pride as from impetuous love may spring,
That will not be refused its offering.

I insert here also the fragment of a song, though
I do not know the date when it was written,—but it was early:—

TO

Yet look on me—take not thine eyes away,
Which feed upon the love within mine own,
Which is indeed but the reflected ray
Of thine own beauty from my spirit thrown.

Yet speak to me—thy voice is as the tone
Of my heart's echo, and I think I hear
That thou yet lovest me; yet thou alone
Like one before a mirror, without care
Of sight but thine own features, imaged there;
And yet I wear out life in watching thee;
A toil so sweet at times, and thou indeed
Art kind when I am sick, and pity me.

He projected also translating the Hymns of Homer; his version of several of the shorter ones remain, as well as that to Mercury, already published in the Posthumous Poems. His readings this year were chiefly Greek. Besides the Hymns of Homer and the Iliad, he read the Dramas of Eschylus and Sophocles, the Symposium of Plato, and Arrian's Historia Indica. In Latin, Apuleius alone is named. In English, the Bible was his constant study; he read a great portion of it aloud in the evening. Among these evening readings, I find also mentioned the Fairy Queen, and other modern works, the production of his contemporaries, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Moore, and Byron.

His life was now spent more in thought than action—he had lost the eager spirit which believed it could achieve what it projected for the benefit of mankind. And yet in the converse of daily life Shelley was far from being a melancholy man. He was eloquent when philosophy, or politics, or taste, were the subjects of conversation. He was playful—and indulged in the wild spirit that mocked itself and others—not in bitterness, but in sport. The Author of "Nightmare Abbey" seized on some points of his character and some habits of his life when he painted Scythrop. He was not addicted to "port or madeira," but in youth he had read of "Illuminati and Eleutherachs," and believed that he possessed the power of operating an immediate change in the minds of men and the state of society. These wild dreams had faded; sorrow and adversity had struck home; but he struggled with despondency as he did with physical pain. There are few who remember him sailing paper boats, and watching the navigation of his tiny craft with eagerness—or repeating with wild energy the "Ancient Mariner," and Southey's "Old Woman of Berkeley,"—but those who do, will recollect that it was in such, and in the creations of his own fancy, when that was most daring and ideal, that he sheltered himself from the storms and disappointments, the pain and sorrow, that beset his life,
POEMS WRITTEN IN MDCCCXVIII.

ROSLIND AND HELEN.

ADVERTISEMENT

The story of Rosalind and Helen is, undoubtedly, not an attempt in the highest style of poetry. It is in no degree calculated to excite profound meditation; and if, by interesting the affections and amusing the imagination, it awaken a certain ideal melancholy favourable to the reception of more important impressions, it will produce in the reader all that the writer experienced in the composition. I resigned myself, as I wrote, to the impulse of the feelings which moulded the conception of the story; and this impulse determined the pauses of a measure, which only pretends to he regular, inasmuch as it corresponded with, and expressed, the irregularity of the imaginations which inspired it.

I do not know which of the few scattered poems I left in England will be selected by my bookseller to add to this collection. One, which I sent from Italy, was written after a day's excursion among those lovely mountains which surround what was once the retreat, and where is now the sepulchre, of Petrarch. If any one is inclined to condemn the insertion of the introductory lines, which image forth the sudden relief of a state of deep despondency by the radiant visions disclosed by the sudden burst of an Italian sunrise in Autumn, on the highest peak of those delightful mountains, I can only offer as my excuse, that they were not erased at the request of a dear friend, with whom added years of intercourse only added to my apprehension of its value, and who would have had more right than any one to complain, that she has not been able to extinguish in me the very power of delineating sadness.

NAPLES, Dec. 20, 1818.

SCENE.—The Shore of the Lake of Como.

HELEN. Come hither, my sweet Rosalind. 'Tis long since thou and I have met: And yet methinks it were unkind Those moments to forget. Come, sit by me. I see thee stand By this lone lake, in this far land, Thy loose hair in the light wind flying, Thy sweet voice to each tone of even United, and thine eyes replying To the hues of yon fair heaven. Come, gentle friend! wilt sit by me! And be as thou wert wont to be Ere we were disunited! None doth behold us now: the power That led us for that this lone hour Will be but ill requited If thou depart in scorn: oh! come, And talk of our abandoned home. Remember, this is Italy, And we are exiles. Talk with me Of that our land, whose wilds and floods, Barren and dark although they be, Were dearer than these chestnut woods;

ROSLIND. Is it a dream, or do I see And hear frail Helen! I would flee Thy tainting touch; but former years Arise, and bring forbidden tears; And my o'erburthened memory Seeks yet its lost repose in thee. I share thy crime. I cannot choose But weep for thee: mine own strange grief But seldom stoops to such relief;
Nor ever did I love thee less,
Though mourning o'er thy wickedness
Even with a sister's woe. I knew
What to the evil world is due,
And therefore sternly did refuse
To link me with the infamy
Of one so lost as Helen. Now
Bewildered by my dire despair,
Wondering I blush, and weep that thou
Shouldst love me still,—thou only!—There,
Let us sit on that grey stone,
Till our mournful talk be done.

HELEN.
Alas! not there; I cannot bear
The murmur of this lake to hear.
A sound from thee, Rosalind dear,
Which never yet I heard elsewhere
But in our native land, recurs,
Even here where now we meet. It stirs
Too much of suffocating sorrow!
In the dell of yo dark chestnut wood
Is a stone seat, a solitude
Less like our own. The ghost of peace
Will not desert this spot. To-morrow,
If thy kind feelings should not cease,
We may sit there.
And I will follow.

HENRY.
'Tis Fenici's seat
Where you are going! This is not the way,
Mama; it leads behind those trees that grow
Close to the little river.

HELEN.
Yes; I know;
I was bewildered. Kiss me, and be gay,
Dear boy, why do you sob?

HENRY.
I do not know:
But it might break any one's heart to see
You and the lady cry so bitterly.

HELEN.
It is a gentle child, my friend. Go home,
Henry, and play with Lilla till I come.
We only cried with joy to see each other;
We are quite merry now—Good night.

The boy
Lifted a sudden look upon his mother,
And in the gleam of forced and hollow joy
Which lightened o'er her face, laughed with the glee
Of light and unsuspecting infancy,
And whispered in her ear, "Bring home with you
That sweet, strange lady-friend." Then off he flew,
But stopped, and beckoned with a meaning smile,
Where the road turned. Pale Rosalind the while,
Hiding her face, stood weeping silently.

In silence then they took the way
Beneath the forest's solitude.
It was a vast and antique wood,
Through which they took their way;
And the grey shades of evening
O'er that green wilderness did fling
Still deeper solitude.
Pursuing still the path that wound
The vast and knotted trees around,
Through which slow shades were wandering,
To a deep lawny dell they came,
To a stone seat beside a spring.
O'er which the columned wood did frame
A roofless temple, like the fane
Where, ere new creeds could faith obtain,
Man's early race once knelt beneath
The overhanging deity.
O'er this fair fountain hung the sky,
Now spangled with rare stars. The snake,
The pale snake, that with eager breath
Creeps here his noontide thirst to slake,
Is beaming with many a mingled hue,
Shed from thy dome's eternal blue,
When he floats on that dark and lucid flood
In the light of his own loneliness;
And the birds that in the fountain dip
Their plumes, with fearless fellowship
Above and round him wheel and hover.
The fitful wind is heard to stir
One solitary leaf on high;
The chirping of the grasshopper
Fills every pause. There is emotion
In all that dwells at noontide here:
Then, through the intricate wild wood,
A maze of life and light and motion
Was woven. But there is stillness now;
Gloom, and the trance of Nature now:
The snake is in his cave asleep;
The birds are on the branches dreaming;
Only the shadows creep;
Only the glow-worm is gleaming;
Only the owls and the nightingales
Wake in this dell when day-light fails,
And grey shades gather in the woods;
And the owls have all fled far away
In a merrier glen to hoot and play,
For the moon is veiled and sleeping now.
The accustomed nightingale still broods
On her accustomed bough;
But she is mute; for her false mate
Has fled and left her desolate.

This silent spot tradition old
Had peopled with the spectral dead.
For the roots of the speaker's hair felt cold
And stiff, as with tremulous lips he told
That a hellish shape at mid-night led
The ghost of a youth with hoary hair,
And sate on the seat beside him there,
Till a naked child came wandering by,
When the fiend would change to a lady fair!
A fearful tale! The truth was worse:
For here a sister and a brother
Had solemnised a monstrous curse,
Meeting in this fair solitude:
For beneath you very sky,
Had they resigned to one another
Body and soul. The multitude,
Tracking them to the secret wood,
Tore limb from limb their innocent child,
And stabbed and trampled on its mother;
But the youth, for God's most holy grace,
A priest saved to burn in the market-place.
Duly at evening Helen came
To this lone silent spot,
From the wrecks of a tale of wilder sorrow
So much of sympathy to borrow
As soothed her own dark lot.
Duly each evening from her home,
With her fair child would Helen come
To sit upon that antique seat,
While the hues of day were pale;
And the bright boy beside her feet
Now lay, lifting at intervals
His broad blue eyes on her;
Now, where some sudden impulse calls
Following. He was a gentle boy
And in all gentle sports took joy;
Oft in a dry leaf for a sail,
With a small feather for a sail,
His fancy on that spring would float,
If some invisible breeze might stir
Its marble calm: and Helen smiled
Through tears of awe on the gay child,
To think that a boy as fair as he,
In years which never more may be,
By that same fount, in that same wood,
The likesweet fancies had pursued;
And that a mother, lost like her,
Had mournfully sat watching him.
Then all these scenes would swim
Through the mist of a burning tear.
For many months had Helen known
This scene; and now she thither turned
Her footsteps, not alone.
The friend whose falsehood she had mourned,
Sate with her on that seat of stone.
Silent they sate; for evening,
And the power its glimpses bring
Had, with one awful shadow, quelled
The passion of their grief. They sate
With linked hands, for unrepelled
Had Helen taken Rosalind's.
Like the autumn wind, when it unbinds
The tangled locks of the nightshade's hair,
Which is twined in the sultry summer air
Round the walls of an outworn sepulchre,
Did the voice of Helen, sad and sweet,
And the sound of her heart th'ever-beat,
As with sighs and words she breathed on her,
Unbend the knots of her friend's despair,
Till her thoughts were free to float and flow;
And from her labouring bosom now,
Like the bursting of a prision flame,
The voice of a long-pent sorrow came.

ROSA LIND.
I saw the dark earth fall upon
The coffin; and I saw the stone
Laid over him whom this cold breast
Had pillowed to his nightly rest!
Thou knowest not, thou canst not know
My agony. Oh! I could not weep:
The sources whence such blessings flow
Were not to be approached by me!
But I could smile, and I could sleep,
Though with a self-accusing heart.
In morning's light, in evening's gloom.
I watched—and would not thence depart,—
My lord and lady's unlamented tomb.
My children knew their sire was gone
But when I told them, "he is dead,"
They laughed aloud in frantic glee,
They clapped their hands and leaped about,
Answering each other's ecstasy
With many a prank and merry shout,
But I sat silent and alone,
Wrapped in the mock of mourning weed.
They laughed, for he was dead; but I
Sate with a hard and tearless eye,
And with a heart which would deny
The secret joy it could not quell,
Low muttering o'er his loathed name;
Till from that self-contention came
Remorse where sin was none; a hell
Which in pure spirits should not dwell.
I'll tell the truth. He was a man
Hard, selfish, loving only gold,
Yet full of guile: his pale eyes ran
With tears, which each some falsehood told,
And oft his smooth and bridled tongue
Would give the lie to his flushing cheek:
He was a coward to the strong;
He was a tyrant to the weak,
On whom his vengeance he would wreak:
For scorn, whose arrows search the heart,
From many a stranger's eye would dart,
And on his memory cling, and follow
His soul to its home so cold and hollow.
He was a tyrant to the weak,
And we were such, alas the day!
Oft, when my little ones at play,
Were in youth's natural lightness gay,
Or if they listened to some tale
Of travellers, or of fairy land,—
When the light from the wood-fire's dying brand
Flashed on their faces,—if they heard
Or thought they heard upon the stair
His footstep, the suspended word
Died on my lips: we all grew pale;
The babe at my bosom was hushed with fear
If it thought it heard its father near;
And my two wild boys would near my knee
Cling, cowed and cowering fearfully.
I'll tell the truth: I loved another.
His name in my ear was ever ringing.
His form to my brain was ever clinging;
Yet if some stranger breathed that name,
My lips turned white, and my heart beat fast:
My nights were once haunted by dreams of flame,
My days were dim in the shadow cast,
By the memory of the same!
Day and night, day and night,
He was my breath and life and light,
For three short years, which soon were past.
On the fourth, my gentle mother
Led me to the shrine, to be
His sworn bride eternally.
And now we stood on the altar stair,
When my father came from a distant land,
And with a loud and fearful cry,
Rushed between us suddenly.
I saw the stream of his grey hair,
I saw his lean and lifted hand,
And heard his words,—and live! O God!
Wherefore do I live,—"Hold, hold!"
He cried,—"I tell thee 'tis her brother!"
Thy mother, boy, beneath the sod
Of yon church-yard rests in her shroud so cold.  
I am now weak, and pale, and old:  
The youth upon the pavement fell:  
But I was calm. I went away;  
I was clammy-cold like clay!  
I did not weep — I did not speak;  
I was clammy -cold like clay!  
That she could die and be content;  
So I went forth from the same church door  
To another husband's bed.  
And this was he who died at last,  
When weeks and months and years had past,  
Through which I firmly did fulfill  
My duties, a devoted wife,  
With the stern step of vanquished will,  
Walking beneath the night of life,  
Whose hours extinguished, like slow rain  
Falling for ever, pain by pain,  
The very hope of death's dear rest;  
Which, since the heart within my breast  
Of natural life was dispossed,  
Its strange sustainer there had been.

When flowers were dead, and grass was green  
Upon my mother's grave,— that mother  
Whom to outlive, and cheer, and make  
My own dull blood: 'twas like a thought  
Of liquid love, that spread and wrought  
Under my bosom and in my brain,  
And hour by hour, day after day,  
That wert could not charm away,  
But laid in sleep my wakeful pain,  
Until I knew it was a child,  
And then I wept. For long, long years  
These frozen eyes had shed no tears:  
But now — 'twas the season fair and mild  
When April has wept itself to May:  
I sat through the sweet sunny day  
By my window bowered round with leaves,  
And down my cheeks the quick tears ran  
Like twinkling rain-drops from the coves,  
When warm spring showers are passing o'er:  
O Helen, none can ever tell  
The joy it was to weep once more!

I wept to think how hard it were  
To kill my babe, and take from it  
The sense of light, and the warm air,  
And my own fond and tender care,  
And love and smiles; ere I knew yet  
That these for it might, as for me,  
Be the masks of a grinning mockery.  
And haply, I would dream, 'twere sweet  
To feed it from my faded breast,  
Or mark my own heart's restless beat  
Rock it to its untroubled rest;  
And watch the growing soul beneath  
Dawn in faint smiles; and hear its breath,  
Half interrupted by calm sighs;  
And search the depth of its fair eyes  
For long departed memories!  
And so I lived till that sweet load  
Was lightened. Darkly forward flowed  
The stream of years, and on it bore  
Two shapes of gladness to my sight;  
Two other babes, delightful more  
In my lost soul's abandoned night,  
Than their own country ships may be  
Sailing towards wrecked mariners,  
Who cling to the rock of a wintry sea.  
For each, as it came, brought soothing tears,  
And a loosening warmth, as each one lay  
Sucking the sullen milk away,  
About my frozen heart did play,  
And weaned it, oh how painfully!—  
As they themselves were weaned each one  
From that sweet food,— even from the thirst  
Of death, and nothingness, and rest,  
Strange inmate of a living breast:  
Which all that I had undergone  
Of grief and shame, since she, who first  
The gates of that dark refuge closed,  
Came to my sight, and almost burst  
The seal of that Lethean spring;  
But these fair shadows interposed:  
For all delights are shadows now!  
And from my brain to my dull brow  
The heavy tears gather and flow:  
I cannot speak.— Oh let me weep!

The tears which fell from her wan eyes  
Glimmered among the moonlight dew!  
Her deep hard sobs and heavy sighs  
Their echoes in the darkness throw.  
When she grew calm, she thus did keep  
The tenor of her tale:—

He died,  
I know not how. He was not old,  
If age be numbered by its years;  
But he was bowed and bent with fears,  
Pale with the quenchless thirst of gold,  
Which, like fierce fever, left him weak;  
And his strait lip and bloated cheek  
Were warped in spasms by hollow sneers;  
And selfish cares with barren plough,  
Not age, had lined his narrow brow,  
And foul and cruel thoughts, which feed  
Upon the withering life within,
Like vipers on some poisonous weed.

Whether his illwere death or sin

None knew, until he died indeed,

And then men owned they were the same.

Seven days within my chamber lay

That corse, and my babes made holiday:

At last, I told them what is death:

The eldest, with a kind of shame,

Came to my knees with silent breath,

And sate awe-stricken at my feet;

And soon the others left their play,

And sate there too. It is unmeet

To shed on the brief flower of youth

The withering knowledge of the grave;

From me remorse then wrung that truth.

I could not bear the joy which gave

Too just a response to mine own.

In vain. I dared not feign a groan;

And in their artless looks I saw,

That my own thought was theirs; and they

Expressed it not in words, but said,

Each in its heart, how every day

Will pass in happy work and play,

Now he is dead and gone away!

After the funeral all our kin

Assembled, and the will was read.

My friend, I tell thee, even the dead

Have strength, their putrid shrouds within,

To blast and torture. Those who live

Still fear the living, but a corse

Is merciless, and power doth give

To such pale tyrants half the spoil

He rends from those who groan and toil,

Because they blush not with remorse

Among their crawling worms. BehoM,

I have no child! my tale grows old

With grief, and staggers: let it reach

The limits of my feeble speech,

And languidly at length recline

On the brink of its own grave and mine.

Thou knowest what a thing is Poverty

Among the fallen on evil days:

'Tis Crime, and Fear, and Infamy,

And houseless Want in frozen ways

Wandering ungarmented, and Pain,

And, worse than all, that inward stain,

Foul Self-contempt, which drowns in sneers

Youth's star-like smile, and makes itstears

First like hot gall, then dry for ever!

And well thou knowest a mother never

Could doom her children to this ill,

And well he knew the same. The will

Imported, that if e'er again

I sought my children to behold,

Or in my birth-place did remain

Beyond three days, whose hours were told,

They should inherit nought: and he,

The court-yard through which I past;

But went with footsteps firm and fast

Till I came to the brink of the ocean gree:

And there, a woman with grey hairs,

Who had my mother's servant been,

Kneeling, with many tears and prayers,

Made me accept a purse of gold,

Half of the earnings she had kept

To refuge her when weak and old.

With woe, which never sleeps or slept,

I wander now. 'Tis a vain thought—

But on yon alp, whose snowy head

Mid the azure air is islanded

We see it o'er the flood of cloud,

Which sunrise from its eastern caves

Drives, wrinkling into golden waves,

Hung with its precipices proud,

From that grey stone where first we met),

There, now who knows the dead feel nought?

Should be my grave; for he who yet

Is my soul's soul, once said: "Twere sweet

'Mid stars and lightningsto abide,

And winds and lullingsnows, that beat

With their soft flakesthe mountain wide,

When weary meteor lamps repose,

And languid storms their pinions close:

And all things strong and bright and pure,

And ever-during, aye endure:

Who knows, if one were buried there.

But these things might our spirits make,

Amid the all-surrounding air,

Their own eternitypartake!"

Then 'twas a wild and playful saying

At which I laughed or seemed to laugh:

They were his words: now heed my praying,

And let them be my epitaph.

Thy memory for a term may bo

My monument. Wilt remember me?

I know thou wilt, and cannot forgive

Whilest in this erring world to live
My soul disdained not, that I thought
Its lying forms were worthy aught,
And much less thee.

HELEN.
O speak not so,
But come to me and pour thy woe
Into this heart, full though it be,
Aye overflowing with its own:
I thought that grief had severed me
From all beside who weep and groan;
Its likeness upon earth to be,
Its express image; but thou art
More wretched. Sweet! we will not part
Henceforth, if death be not division;
If so, the dead feel no contrition.

ROSALIND.
Yes, speak. The faintest stars are scarcely shown
Of their thin beams, by that delusivemorn
Which sinks again in darkness, like the light
Of early love, soon lost in total night.

HELEN.
Alas! Italian winds are mild,
But my bosom is cold— wintry cold—
When the warm air weaves, among the fresh leaves
Soft music, my poor brain is wild,
And I am weak like a nursling child,
Though my soul with grief is grey and old.

ROSALIND.
Weep not at thine own words, tho' they must make
Me weep. What is thy tale?

HELEN.
I fear 'twill shake
Thy gentle heart with tears. Thou well
Rememberest when we met no more,
And, though I dwelt with Lionel,
That friendless caution pierced me sore
With grief—a wound my spirit bore
Indignantly; but when he died,
With him lay dead both hope and pride.

ROSALIND.
Alas! all hope is buried now.
But then men dreamed the aged earth
Was labouring in that mighty birth,
Which many a poet and a sage
Has set on his visionary youth.
Mid life, then love its course begins,
Though they be children of one mother;
And so through this dark world they fleet
Divided, till in death they meet:
But he loved all things ever. Then
He passed amid the strife of men,
And stood at the throne of armed power
Pleasing for a world of woe:
Secure as one on a rock-built tower
O'er the wrecks which the surge trails to and fro,
Mid the passions wild of human kind
He stood, like a spirit calming them;
For, it was said, his words could bind
Like music the lulled crowd, and stem
That torrent of unquiet dream.
Which mortals truth and reason deem,
But is revenge and fear, and pride.
Joyous he was; and hope and peace
On all who heard him did abide,
Raining like dew from his sweet talk,
As where the evening star may walk
Along the brink of the gloomy seas,
Like misty mists of splendour quiver.

His very gestures touched to tears
The unpersuaded tyrant, never
So moved before: his presence stung
The torturers with their victims' pain,
And none knew how; and through their ears,
The subtle witchcraft of his tongue
Unlocked the hearts of those who keep
Gold, the world's bond of slavery.

Men wondered and some sneered to see
One sow what he could never reap:
For he is rich, they said, and young,
And might drink from the depths of luxury.
If he seeks fame, fame never crowned
The champion of a trampled creed:
If he seeks power, power is enthroned
'Mid ancient rights and wrongs, to feed
Which hungry wolves with praise and spoil,
Those who would sit near power must toil;
And such, there sitting, all may see.

That poor and hungry men should break
The laws which wreck them toil and scorn,
We understand; but Lionel
We know is rich and nobly born.

That poor and hungry men should break
The laws which wreck them toil and scorn,
We understand; but Lionel
We know is rich and nobly born.

So wondered they; yet all men loved
Young Lionel, though few approved;
All but the priests, whose hatred fell
Likethe unseen blight of a smiling day,
The withering honey-dew, which clings
Under the bright green buds of May,
Whilst they unfold the emerald wings:
Under the bright green buds of May,
Whilst they unfold the emerald wings:
On the strange creeds priests hold so dear,
Because they bring them land and gold.
Of devils and saints and all such gear,
He made tales which whose heard or read
Would laugh till he were almost dead.
So this grew a proverb: "Don't get old
Till Lionel's 'handcuff'd bell' you hear,
And then you will laugh yourself young again."
Ah! smiles and joyance quickly died,
For public hope grew pale and dim
In an altered time and tide,
And in its wasting withered him,
As a summer flower that blooms too soon
Dropped in the smile of the waning moon,
When it scatters through an April night
The frozen dews of wrinkling blight.
None now hoped more. Grey Power was seated
Safely on her ancestral throne;
And Faith, the Python, undecked,
Even to its blood-stained steps dragged on
Her foul and wounded train; and men
Were trampled and deceived again,
And words and shows again could bind
The wailing tribes of human-kind
In scorn and famine. Fire and blood
Raged round the raging multitude,
And soon his deep and sunny hair,
As rose-o’crshadowed lilies are;
‘Mid its new joy of a new care:
Though prosperous; and my heart grew full
The impulse of an altered wind,
Past woe its shadow backward threw,
Almost from our own looks, and aught
Which rapt us soon, when we might meet,
And subtlemists of sense and thought
Tempering their loveliness too keen,
On its rent boughs — again arrayed
The next spring shows leaves pale and rare.

And so, my friend, it then befel
To many, most to Lionel,
Whose hope was like the life of youth
Within him, and when dead, became
A spirit of unresting flame,
Which goaded him in his distress
For ever now his health declined,
Was healed, while mine grew sick with fear:
In his own heart ‘twas merciless,
To all things else none may express
Its innocence and tenderness.

‘Twas said that he had refuge sought
In love from his unquiet thought
In distant lands, and been deceived
By some strange show; for there were found,
Blotted with tears, as those relieved
By their own words are wont to do,
These mournful verses on the ground,
By all who read them blotted too.

“How am I changed! my hopes were once like fire:
I loved, and I believed that life was love. How am I lost! on wings of swift desire
Among Heaven’s winds my spirit once did move. I slept, and silver dreams did aye inspire
My liquid sleep. I woke, and did approve
All nature to my heart, and thought to make
A paradise of earth for one sweet sake.
I love, but I believe in love no more:
I feel desire, but hope not. O, from sleep
Most vainly must my weary brain implore
Its long-lost flattery now. I wake to weep,
And sit through the long day gawing the core
Of my bitter heart, and, like a miser, keep,
Since none in what I feel take pain or pleasure,
To my own soul its self-consuming treasure.”

He dwelt beside me near the sea;
And oft in evening did we meet,
When the waves, beneath the star-light, see
O’er the yellow sands with silver feet,
And talked. Our talk was sad and sweet,
Till slowly from his mien there passed
The desolation which it spoke;
And smiles,—as when the lightning’s blast
Has parched some heaven-delighting oak,
The next spring shows leaves pale and rare,
But like flowers delicate and fair,
On its rent boughs—again arrayed
His countenance in tender light:
His words grew subtle fire, which made
The air his hearers breathed delight:
His motions, like the winds, were free,
With which they drag from mines of gore
The chains their slaves yet ever wore;
With which they drag from mines of gore
The chains their slaves yet ever wore;
And, did he wake, a winged band
Raged round the raging multitude,
And, did he wake, a winged band
Raged round the raging multitude,
With some disease of mind, and turned
To many, most to Lionel,
To many, most to Lionel,
And, did he wake, a winged band
Raged round the raging multitude,
And, did he wake, a winged band
Raged round the raging multitude,
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Raged round the raging multitude,
With some disease of mind, and turned
To many, most to Lionel,
To many, most to Lionel,
And, did he wake, a winged band
Raged round the raging multitude,
And, did he wake, a winged band
Raged round the raging multitude,
Seemed now its mellow springs to move,
When life had failed, and all its pains;
And sudden sleep would seize him oft
Like death, so calm, but that a tear,
His pointed eye-lashes between,
Would gather in the light serene
Of smiles, whose lustre bright and soft
Beneath lay undulating there.
His breath was like inconstant flame,
As eagerly it went and came;
And I hung o'er him in his sleep,
Till, like an image in the lake
Which rains disturb, my tears would break
The shadow of that slumber deep;
Then he would bid me not to weep,
And say, with flattery false, yet sweet,
That death and he could never meet,
If I would never part with him.
And so we loved, and did unite
All that in us was yet divided:
For when he said, that many a rite,
By men to bind but once provided,
Could not be shared by him and me,
Or they would kill him in their glee,
I shuddered, and then laughing said,
"We will have rites our faith to bind,
But our church shall be the starry night,
Or they would kill him in their glee,
Could not be shared by him and me,
The vengeance of their slaves—a trial,
The rulers or the slaves of law
Felt with a new surprise and awe
That they were human, till strong shame
Made them again become the same.
The prison blood-hounds, huge and grim,
From human looksthe infection caught,
They stand on the brink of that mighty river,
Whose waves they have tainted with death:
It is fed from the depths of a thousand dells,
Around them it foams, and rages, and swells,
And their swords and their sceptres I floating see,
Like wrecks, in the surge of eternity."
I dwelt beside the prison gate,
And the strange crowd that out and in
Passed, some, no doubt, with mine own fate,
Whose waves they have tainted with death:
It is fed from the depths of a thousand dells,
Around them it foams, and rages, and swells,
And their swords and their sceptres I floating see,
Like wrecks, in the surge of eternity."
I dwelt beside the prison gate,
And our faint limbs were intertwined,
In the sweet depth of woven caresses,
His neck, and win me so to mingle
When of the playfully would bind
Quick, but not strong; and with my tresses
Sweet smiles, yet sad, arise and fade
In the bowers of mossy lonelinesses
You might hear the beating of his heart,
Made his pale lips quiver and part.
And the breath, with intermitting flow,
Amid the dew of his tender eyes;
And the softest strain of music made
Our spirits, like delighted things
That walk the air on subtle wings,
Floated and mingled far away,
'Mid the warm winds of the sunny day.
And when the evening star came forth
Abovethecurve of the new bent moon,
And light and sound ebbed from the earth,
Like the tide of the full and weary sea
To the depths of its own tranquility,
Our natures to its own repose
Did the earth's breathless sleep attune:
Like flowers, which on each other close
Their languid leaves when day-light's gone,
We lay, till new emotions came,
Which seemed to make each mortal frame
One soul of interwoven flame,
A life in life, a second birth,
In worlds diviner far than earth,
Which, like two strains of harmony
That mingle in the silent sky,
Then slowly diurnate, past by
And left the tenderness of tears,
A soft oblivion of all fears,
A sweet sleep: so we travelled on
Till we came to the home of Lionel,
On Lionel: yet day by day
When I looked, and saw that there was death
The truth flash'd o'er me like quick madness
And the old man's sobs did waken me
As we alighted, wept to see
The ancient steward, with hair all hoar,
Beside the hoary western sea,
Among the mountains wild and lone,
Till we came to the home of Lionel,
A sweet sleep: so we travelled on
A soft oblivion of all fears,
Then slowly disunite, past by
That mingle in the silent sky,
Which, like two strains of harmony
A life in life, a second birth,
One soul of interwoven flame,
Woven in devices fine and quaint,
Whose god was in her heart and brain:
She, the temple thence had planned;
And she that temple thence had planned;
But it was Lionel's own hand
Had wrought the image. Each new moon
Was sculptured, "To Fidelity;"
And in the shrine an image sate,
All veiled: but there was seen the light
Of smiles, which faintly could express
A mingled pain and tenderness,
Through that ethereal drapery.
The left hand held the head, the right—
Beyond the veil, beneath the skin,
You might see the nerves quivering within—
Was forcing the point of a barbed dart
Into its side-convolving heart.
An unskilled hand, yet one informed
With genius, had the marble warmed
With that pathetic life. This tale
It told: A dog had from the sea,
When the tide was raging fearfully,
Dragged Lionel's mother, weak and pale,
Then died beside her on the sand,
And she that temple thence had planned;
But it was Lionel's own hand
Had wrought the image. Each new moon
That lady did, in this lone fane,
The rites of a religion sweet,
Whose god was in her heart and brain:
The seasons' most lovely flowers were strewn
On the marble floor beneath her feet,
The seasons' most lovely flowers were strewn
On the marble floor beneath her feet,
And she brought crowns of sea-buds white,
Whose odour is so sweet and faint,
And weeds, like branching chrysalis,
Woven in devices fine and quaint,
And tears from her brown eyes did stain
The altar: need but look upon
That dying statue, fair and wan,
If tears should cease, to weep again:
And rare Arabian odours came,
Through the myrtle copse, steaming thenco
From the hissing frankincense,
Whose smoke, wool-white as ocean foam,
Hung in dense flocks beneath the dome,
That ivory dome, whose azure light
With golden stars, like heaven, was bright
O'er the split cedars' pointed flame;
And the lady's harp would kindle there
The melody of an old air,
Softer than sleep; the villagers
Mix their religion up with hers,
And as they listened round, shed tears.
One eve he led me to this fane:
Daylight on its last purple cloud
Was lingering grey, and soon her strain
The nightingale began; now loud,
Climbing in circles the windless sky,
Now dying music; suddenly
It is scattered in a thousand notes,
And now to the bushed ear it floats
Like field-smells known in infancy,
Then failing, soothes the air again.
We sate within that temple lone,
Pavilioned round with Parian stone:
His mother's harp stood near, and oft
I had awakened music soft
Amid its wires: the nightingale
Was pausing in her heaven-taught tale:
"Now drain the cup," said Lionel,
"Which the poet-bird has crowned so well
With the wine of her bright and liquid song!
Heardst thou not sweet words among
That heaven-resounding minstrelsy!
Heardst thou not, that those who die
Awake in a world of mystery!
That love, when limbs are interwoven,
And sleep, when the night of life is cloven,
And thought, to the world's dim boundaries
clinging,
And muses when one beloved is singing,
Is death? Let us drain right joyously
The cup which the sweet bird fills for me."
He paused, and to my lips he bent
His own: like spirit his words went
Through all my limbs with the speed of fire;
And in keen eyes, glittering through mine,
Filled me with the flame divine,
Which in their orbs was burning far,
Like the light of an unmeasured star,
In the sky of midnight dark and deep:
Yes, 'twas his soul that did inspire
Sounds, which my skill could ne'er awaken;
And first, I felt my fingers sweep
The harp, and a long quivering cry
Burst from my lips in symphony:
The dusk and solid air was shaken,
As swift and swifter the notes came
From my touch, that wandered like quick flame,
And from my bosom, labouring
With some unutterable thing:
The awful sound of my own voice made
My faint lips tremble; in some mood
Of wordless thought Lionel stood
So pale, that even beside his cheek
The snowy column from its shade
Caught whiteness: yet his countenance
Risen upward, burned with radiance
Of spirit-piercing joy, whose light,
Like the moon struggling through the night
Of whirlwind-ripped clouds, did break
With beams that might not be confined.
I paused, but soon his gestures kindled
New power, as by the moving wind
The waves are lifted, and my song
To low soft notes now changed and dwindled,
And from the twinkling wires among,
My languid fingers drew and flung
Circles of life-dissolving sound,
Yet faint: in airy rings they bound
My Lionel, who, as every strain
Grew fainter but more sweet, his men
Sunk with the sound relaxedly;
And slowly now he turned to me,
As slowly faded from his face
That awful joy: with looks serene
He was soon drawn to my embrace,
And my wild song then died away
In murmurs: words, I dare not say,
We mixed, and on his lips mine fed
Till they methought felt still and cold:
"What is it with thee, love?" I said;
No word, no look, no motion! yes,
There was a change, but spare to guess,
Nor let that moment's hope be told.
I looked, and knew that he was dead,
And fell, as the eagle on the plain
Falls when life deserts her brain,
And the mortal lightning is veiled again.
O that I were now dead! but such,
Did they not, love, demand too much,
Those dying murmurs! He forbade.
O that I once again were mad!
And yet, dear Rosalind, not so,
For I would live to share thy wo.
Sweet boy! did I forget thee too?
Alas, we know not what we do
When we speak words.

No memory more
Is in my mind of that sea-shore.
Madness came on me, and a troop
Of misty shapes did seem to sit
Beside me, on a vessel's poop,
And the clear north-wind was driving it.
Then I heard strange tongues, and saw strange flowers,
And the stars methought grew unlike ours,
And the azure sky and the stormless sea
Made me believe that I had died,
And walked in a world, which was to me
Drear hell, though heaven to all beside.
Then a dead sleep fell on my mind,
Whilst animal life many long years
Had rescued from a chasm of tears;
And when I waked, I wept to find
That the same lady, bright and wise,
With silver locks and quick brown eyes,
The mother of my Lionel,
Had tended me in my distress,
And died some months before. Nor less
Wonder, but far more peace and joy,
Brought in that hour my lovely boy;
For through that trance my soul had well
The impress of thy being kept;
And if I waked, or if I slept,
No doubt, though memory faithless be,
Thy image ever dwelt on me;
And thus, O Lionel! like thee
Is our sweet child. "Tis sure most strange
I knew not of so great a change,
As that which gave him birth, who now
Is all the solace of my woe.
That Lionel great wealth had left
By will to me, and that of all
The ready lies of law bereft,
My child and me might well befall.
But let me think not of the scorn,
Which from the meanest I have borne,
When, for my child's beloved sake,
I mixed with slaves, to vindicate
The very laws themselves do make:
Let me not say scorn is my fate,
Lest I be proud, suffering the same
With those who live in deathless fame.

She ceased.—"Lo, where red morning thro' the woods
Is burning o'er the dew!" said Rosalind.
And with these words they rose, and towards the flood
Of the blue lake, beneath the leaves now wind
With equal steps and fingers intertwined:
Thence to a lonely dwelling, where the shore
Is shadowed with rocks, and cypresses
Cleave with their dark green cones the silent skies,
And with their shadows the clear depths below,
And where a little terrace from its bowers,
Of blooming myrtle and faint lemon-flowers,
Scatters its sense-dissolving fragrance o'er
The liquid marble of the windless lake;
And where the aged forest's limbs look hoar,
Under the leaves which their green garments make,
They come: 'tis Helen's home, and clean and white,
Like one which tyrants spare on our own land
In some such solitude, its casements bright
Shone through their vine-leaves in the morning sun,
And even within 'twas scarce like Italy.
And when she saw how all things there were planned,
As in an English home, dim memory
Disturbed poor Rosalind: she stood as one
Whose mind is where his body cannot be,
Till Helen led her where her child yet slept,
And said, "Observe, that brow was Lionel's,
Those lips were his, and so he ever kept
One arm in sleep, pillowing his head with it.
You cannot see his eyes, they are two wells
Of liquid love: let us not wake him yet."
But Rosalind could bear no more, and wept
A shower of burning tears, which fell upon
His face, and so his opening lashes shone
With tears unlike his own, as he did sleep
In sudden wonder from his innocent sleep.

So Rosalind and Helen lived together
Thenceforth, changed in all else, yet friends again,
Such as they were, when o'er the mountain heather
They wandered in their youth, through sun and rain.
And after many years, for human things
Change even like the ocean and the wind,
Her daughter was restored to Rosalind,
And in their circle thence some visitings
Of joy 'mid their new calm would intervene:
A lovely child she was, of looks serene,
And motions which o'er things indifferent shed
The grace and gentleness from whence they came.
And Helen's boy grew with her, and they fed
From the same flowers of thought, until each mind
Like springs which mingle in one flood became,
And in their union soon their parents saw
The shadow of the peace denied to them.
And Rosalind,—for when the living stem
Is cankered in its heart, the tree must fall,—
Died ere her time; and with deep grief and awe
The pale survivors followed her remains
Beyond the region of dissolving rains,
Up the cold mountain she was wont to call
Her tomb; and on Chiavenna's precipice
They raised a pyramid of lasting ice,
Whose polished sides, ere day had yiewien sun,
Caught the first glow of the unrisen sun,
The last, when it had sunk; and through the night
The charioteers of Arctos wheeled round
Its glittering point, as seen from Helen's home,
Whose sad inhabitants each year would come,
With willing steps climbing that rugged height,
And hang long locks of hair, and garlands bound
With amaranth flowers, which, in the clime's despite,
Filled the frorie air with unaccustomed light:
Such flowers, as in the wintry memory bloom
Of one friend left, adorned that frozen tomb.

Helen, whose spirit was of softer mould,
Whose sufferings too were less, death slower led
Into the peace of his dominion cold:
She died among her kindred, being old;
And know, that if love die not in the dead
As in the living, none of mortal kind
Are blest, as now Helen and Rosalind.
LINES WRITTEN AMONG THE EUGANEAN HILLS.

Macht a green isle needs must be
In the deep wide sea of misery,
Or the mariner, worn and wan,
Never thus could voyage on
Day and night, and night and day,
Drifting on his dreary way,
With the solid darkness black
Closing round his vessel's track;
Whilst above, the sunless sky,
Big with clouds, hangs heavily,
And behind the tempest fleet
Hurries on with lightning feet,
Riving sail, and cord, and plank,
Till the ship has almost drank
Death from the o'er-brimming deep;
And sinks down, down, like that sleep
When the dreamer seems to be
Weltering through eternity;
And the dim low line before
Of a dark and distant shore
Still recedes, as ever still
Longing with divided will;
But no power to seek or shun,
He is ever drifted on
O'er the unreposing wave,
To the haven of the grave.
What, if there no friends will greet;
What, if there no heart will meet
His with love's impatient beat;
Wander wheresoe'er he may,
Can he dream before that day
To find refuge from distress
In friendship's smile, in love's caress!
Then 'twill wreak him little woe
Whether such there be or no:
Senseless is the breast, and cold,
Which relenting love would fold;
Bloodless are the veins and chill
Which the pulse of pain did fill:
Every little living nerve
That from bitter words did swerve
Round the tortured lips and brow,
Are like sapless leaflets now
Frozen upon December's bough.

On the beach of a northern sea
Which tempests shake eternally,
Lies a solitary heap,
One white skull and seven dry bones,
On the margin of the stones,
Where a few grey rushes stand,
Boundaries of the sea and land:
Nor is heard one sound of wail
But the sea-mews, as they sail
O'er the billows of the gale;
Or the whirlwind up and down
Howling, like a slaughtered town.

When a king in glory rides
Through the pomp of fratricides:
Those unburied bones around
There is many a mournful sound;
There is no lament for him,
Like a sunless vapour, dim,
Who once clothed with life and thought
What now moves nor murmurs not.

Ay, many flowering islands lie
In the waters of wide Agony:
To such a one this morn was led
My bark, by soft winds piloted.
'Mid the mountains Euganean,
I stood listening to the pean
With which the legioned rooks did hail
The sun's uprise majestic;
Gathering round with wings all hoar,
Through the dewy mist they soar
Like grey shades, till the eastern heaven
Bursts, and then, as clouds of even,
Flecked with fire and azure, lie
In the unapproachable sky,
So their plumes of purple grain,
Starred with drops of golden rain,
Gleam above the sunlight woods,
As in silent multitudes
On the morning's fitful gale
Through the broken mist they sail;
And the vapours cloven and gleaming
Follow down the dark steep streaming,
Till all is bright, and clear, and still,
Round the solitary hill.

Beneath is spread like a green sea
The waveless plain of Lombardy,
Bounded by the vaporous air,
Islanded by cities fair;
Underneath day's azure eyes,
Ocean's nursling, Venice lies,—
A peopled labyrinth of walls,
Amphitrite's destined halls.
Which her hoary sire now paves
With his blue and beaming waves.
Lo! the sun upspringing behind,
Broad, red, radiant, half-reclined
On the level quivering line
Of the waters crystalline;
And before that chasm of light,
As within a furnace bright,
Column, tower, and dome, and spire,
Shine like obelisks of fire,
Pointing with inconstant motion
From the altar of dark ocean
To the sapphire-tinted skies;
As the flames of sacrifice
From the marble shrines did rise
As to pierce the dome of gold
Where Apollo spoke of old.
Sun-girt City! thou hast been
Ocean's child, and then his queen;
Now is come a darker day,
And thou soon must be his prey,
If the power that raised thee here
Hallow so thy watery bier.
A less drear ruin then than now,
With thy conquest-branded brow
Stooping to the slave of slaves
From thy throne among the waves,
Wilt thou be, when the sea-mew
Flies, as once before it flew,
O'er thine isles depopulated,
And all is in its ancient state,
Save where many a palace-gate
With green sea-flowers overgrown
Like a rock of ocean's own,
To plester o'er the abandon'd sea
As the tides change sullenly.

The fisher on his watery way,
Wandering at the close of day,
Will spread his sail and seize his oar,
Till he pass the gloomy shore,
Lest thy dead should, from their sleep
Bursting o'er the starlight deep,
Lead a rapid masque of death
O'er the waters of his path.

Those who alone thy towers behold
Quivering through aerial gold,
As I now behold them here,
Would imagine not they were
Sepulchres, where human forms,
Like pollution-nourish'd worms,
To the corpse of greatness cling,
Murdered and now mouldering:
But if Freedom should awake
In her omnipotence, and shake
From the Celtic Anarch's hold
All the keys of dungeons cold,
Where a hundred cities lie
Chained like thee, ingloriously,
Thou and all thy sister band
Might adorn this sunny land,
Twining memories of old time
With new virtues more sublime.

Padua, thou within whose walls
Those mute guests at festivals,
Son and Mother, Death and Sin,
Till Death cried, "I win, I win!"
And Sin cursed to lose the wager,
But Death promised, to assuage her,
That he would petition for
Her to be made Vice-Emperor,
When the destined years were o'er,
Over all between the Po
And the eastern Alpine snow,
Under the mighty Austrian.
Sin smiled so as Sin only can,  
And since that time, ay, long before,  
Both have ruled from shore to shore,  
That incestuous pair, who follow  
Tyrants as the sun the swallow,  
As Repentance follows Crime,  
And as changes follow Time.  

In thine halls the lamp of learning,  
Padua, now no more is burning;  
Like a meteor, whose wild way  
Is lost over the grave of day,  
It gleams betrayed and to betray:  
Once remotest nations came  
To adore that sacred flame,  
When it lit not many a hearth  
On this cold and gloomy earth;  
Now new fires from Antique light  
Spring beneath the wide world's might;  
But their spark lies dead in thee,  
Trampled out by tyranny.  

As the Norway woodman quells,  
In the depth of piny dells,  
One light flame among the brakes,  
While the boundless forest shakes,  
The spark beneath his feet is dead,  
He starts to see the flames it fed  
Howling through the darkened sky  
With myriad tongues victoriously,  
And sinks down in fear: so thou,  
O tyranny! beholdest now  
Light around thee, and thou hearest  
The loud flames ascend, and fearst:  
Grovel on the earth; ay, hide  
In the dust thy purple pride!  

Noon descends around me now:  
'Tis the noon of autumn's glow,  
When a soft and purple mist  
Like a vaporous amethyst,  
Mingling light and fragrance, far  
From the curved horizon's bound  
To the point of heaven's profound,  
Fillsthe overflowing sky;  
And the plainsthat silentlie  
Underneath; the leaves unsodden  
Where the infant frost has trodden  
With his morning-winged feet,  
Whose bright print is gleaming yet;  
And the red and golden vines,  
Piercing with their trellised lines  
The rough, dark-skirted wilderness;  
The dun and bladed grass no less,  
Pointing from this hoary tower  
In the windless air; the flower  
Glimmering at the top of the line  
Of the olive-sandalled Apennine  
In the south dimly islanded;  
And the Alps, whose snowy are spread  
High between the clouds and sun;  
And of living things each one;  
And my spirit, which so long  
Darkened this swift stream of song,  
Interpenetrated lie  
By the glory of the sky;  
Be it love, light, harmony,  
Odour, or the soul of all  
Which from heaven like dew doth fall,  
Or the mind which feeds this verse  
Peopling the lone universe.  
Noon descends, and after noon  
Autumn's evening meets me soon,  
Leading the infantine moon,  
And that one star, which to her  
Almost seems to minister  
Half the crimson light she brings  
From the sunset's radiant springs:  
And the soft dreams of the morn  
(Which like winged winds had borne  
To that silent isle, which lies  
'Mid remembered agonies.  
The frail bark of this lone being),  
Pass, to other sufferers fleeing,  
And its ancient pilot, Pain,  
Sits beside the helm again.  

Other flowering isles must be  
In the sea of life and agony:  
Other spirits float and flee  
O'er that gulf: even now, perhaps,  
On some rock the wild wave wrapps,  
With folding wings they waiting sit  
For my bark, to pilot it  
To some calm and blooming cove,  
Where for me, and those I love,  
May a windless bower be built,  
Far from passion, pain, and guilt,  
In a dell 'mid lawny hills,  
Which the wild sea-murmur fills,  
And soft sunshine, and the sound  
Of old forestsechoing round,  
And the light and smell divine  
Of all flowers that breathe and shine.  
We may live so happy there,  
That the spirits of the air,  
Envying us, may even entice  
To our healing paradise  
The polluting multitude;  
But their rage would be subdued  
By that clime divine and calm,  
And the winds whose wings rain balm  
On the uplifted soul, and leaves  
Under which the bright sea heaves;  
While each breathless interval  
In their whisperings musical  
The inspired soul supplies  
With its own deep melodies;  
And the love which heals all strife  
Circling, like the breath of life,  
All things in that sweet abode  
With its own mild brotherhood.  
They, not it, would change; and soon  
Every spire beneath the moon  
Would repent its envy vain,  
And the earth grow young again.
POEMS WRITTEN IN 1818.

JULIAN AND MADDALO:

A Conversation.

The meadows with fresh streams, the bees with thyme,
The goats with the green leaves of budding spring,
Are saturated—not nor Love with tears.

Virgil's Gallic.

Count Maddalo is a Venetian nobleman of ancient
family and of great fortune, who, without mixing much
in the society of his countrymen, resides chiefly at his
magnificent palace in that city. He is a person of the
most consummate genius; and capable, if he would
direct his energies to such an end, of becoming the
redeemer of his degraded country. But it is his weak-
ness to be proud: he derives, from a comparison of
his own extraordinary mind with the dwarfish intellects
that surround him, an intense apprehension of the
nothingness of human life. His passions and his
powers are incomparably greater than those of other
men, and, instead of the latter having been employed
in curbing the former, they have mutually lent each
other strength. His ambition preys upon itself, for
want of objects which it can consider worthy of ex-
erion. I say that Maddalo is proud, because I can
find no other word to express the concentrated and
impatient feelings which consume him; but it is on
his own hopes and affections only that he seems to
trample, for in social life no human being can be more
gentle, patient, and unassuming than Maddalo. He
is cheerful, frank, and witty. His more serious con-
versation is a sort of intoxication; men are held by it
as by a spell. He has travelled much; and there is
an inexpressible charm in his relation of his adventures
in different countries.

Julian is an Englishman of good family, passionately
attached to those philosophical notions which assert
the power of man over his own mind, and the
immense improvements of which, by the extinction of
certain moral superstitions, human society may yet be
susceptible. Without concealing the evil in the world,
he is for ever speculating how good may be made
superior. He is a complete infidel, and a scoffer at
all things reputed holy; and Maddalo takes a wicked
pleasure in drawing out his taunts against religion.
What Maddalo thinks on these matters is not exactly
known. Julian, in spite of his heterodox opinions, is
conjectured by his friends to possess some good quali-
ties. How far this is possible the pious reader will
determine. Julian is rather serious.

Of the Maniac I can give no information. He seems
by his own account to have been disappointed in love.
He was evidently a very cultivated and amiable person
when in his right senses. His story, told at length,
might be like many other stories of the same kind:
the unconnected exclamations of his agamy will perhaps
be found a sufficient comment for the text of every
heart.

I rode one evening with Count Maddalo
Upon the bank of land which breaks the flow
Of Adria towards Venice: a bare strand
Of hillocks, heaped from ever-shifting sand,
Matted with thistles and amphibious weeds,
Such as from earth's embrace the salt ooze breeds,
Is this, an uninhabited sea-side,
Which the lone fisher, when his nets are dried,
Abandons; and no other object breaks
The waste, but one dwarf tree and some few stakes
Broken and unrepair'd, and the tide makes
A narrow space of levels thereon,
Where 'twas our wont to ride while day went down.
This ride was my delight. I love all waste
And solitary places; where we taste
The pleasure of believing what we see
Is boundless, as we wish our souls to be:
And such was this wide ocean, and this shore
More barren than its billows: and yet more

Than all, with a remembered friend I love
To ride as then I rode— for the winds drove
The living spray along the sunny air
Into our faces; the blue heavens were bare,
Stripped to their depths by the awakening north:
And, from the waves, sound like delight broke forth
Harmonizing with solitude, and sent
Into our hearts aerial merriment.

So, as we rode, we talked; and the swift thought,
Winging itself with laughter, lingered not,
But flew from brain to brain:—such glee was ours,
Charged with light memories of remembered hours,
None slow enough for sadness: till we came
Homeward, which always makes the spirit tame.
This day had been cheerful but cold, and now
The sun was sinking, and the wind also.
Our talk grew somewhat serious, as may be
Talk interrupted with such raillery.
Over the horizon of the mountains — Oh!
Had struck, methinks, his eagle spirit blind
Or hope can paint, or suffering can achieve,
Thy mountains, seas, and vineyards, and the
Of heaven descends upon a land like thee,
By gazing on its own exceeding light.
Meanwhile the sun paused ere it should alight
Over the horizon of the mountains — Oh!
How beautiful is sunset, when the glow
Of heaven descends upon a land like thee,
Thou paradise of exiles, Italy!
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Should we be less in deed than in desire?—
—"Ay, if we were not weak,—and we aspire,
How vainly! to be strong," said Maddalo:
"You talk Utopian—"

"It remains to know,"
I then rejoined, "and those who try, may find
How strong the chains are which our spirit bind:
Brittle perchance as straw. We are assured
Much may be conquered, much may be endured,
Of what degrades and crushes us. We know
That we have power over ourselves to do
And suffer—what, we know not till we try;
But something nobler than to live and die:
So taught the kings of old philosophy,
Who reigned before religion made men blind;
And those who suffer with theirs suffering kind,
Yet feel this faith, religion."

"My dear friend,"
Said Maddalo, "my judgment will not bend
To your opinion, though I think you might
Make such a system refutation tight,
As far as words go. I knew one like you,
Who to this city came some months ago,
With whom I argued in this sort,— and he
Is now gone mad— and so he answered me,
Poor fellow!— But if you would like to go,
We'll visit him, and his wild talk will show
How vain are such aspiring theories."

"I hope to prove the induction otherwise,
And that a want of that true theory still,
Which seeks a soul of goodness in things ill,
Or in himself or others, has thus bowed
His being:— there are some by nature proud,
Who, patient in all else, demand but this—
To hear but of the oppression of the strong,
Or those absurd deceits (I think with you
In some respects, you know) which carry through
The excellent impostors of this earth
When they outface detection. He had worth,
Poor fellow! but a humourist in his way."

"Alas, what drove him mad?"

"I cannot say:
A lady came with him from France, and when
She left him and returned, he wandered then
About you lonely isles of desert sand,
Till he grew wild. He had no cash nor land
Remaining:— the police had brought him here—
Some fancy took him, and he would not bear
Removal, so I fitted up for him
Those rooms beside the sea, to please his whim;
And sent him busts, and books, and urns for
Flowers,
Which had adorned his life in happier hours,
And instruments of music. You may guess
A stranger could do little more or less
For one so gentle and unfortunate—
And these are his sweet strains which charm the
weight
From madmen's chains, and make this hell appear
A heaven of sacred silence, hushed to hear."

"Nay, this was kind of you,—he had no claim,
As the world says."

"None but the very same
Which I on all mankind, were I, as he,
Fallen to such deep reverse. His melody
Is interrupted now: we hear the din
Of madmen, shriek on shriek, again begin:
Let us now visit him: after this strain,
He ever communes with himself again,
And sees and hears not any."

Having said
These words, we called the keeper, and he led
To an apartment opening on the sea—
There the poor wretch was sitting mournfully
Near a piano, his pale fingerstwined
Into an old court-yard. I heard on high,
Then, fragments of most touching melody,
But looking up saw not the singer there.—
Thro' the black bars in the tempestuous air
I saw, like weeds on a wrecked palace growing,
Long tangled locks flung wildly forth and flowing,
Of those on a sudden who were beguiled
Into strange silence, and looked forth and smiled,
Hearing sweet sounds. Then I:

"Methinks there were
A cure of those with patience and kind care,
If music can thus move. But what is he,
Whom we seek here!"

"Of his sad history
I know but this," said Maddalo: "he came
To Venice a dejected man, and fame
Said he was wealthy, or he had been so.
Some thought the loss of fortune wrought him woe;
But he was ever talking in such sort
As you do,—but more sadly:— he seemed hurt,
Even as a man with his peculiar wrong,
To hear but of the oppression of the strong,
Or those absurd deceits (I think with you
In some respects, you know) which carry through
The excellent impostors of this earth
When they outface detection. He had worth,
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These words, we called the keeper, and he led
To an apartment opening on the sea—
There the poor wretch was sitting mournfully
Near a piano, his pale fingers twined
One with the other; and the oxe and wind
Rushed through an open casement, and did sway
His hair, and starred it with the brackish spray:
His head was leaning on a music-book,
And he was muttering; and his lean limbs shook.
His lip was pressed against a folded leaf,
In hue too beautiful for health, and grief
Smiled in their motions as they lay apart,
As one who wrought from his own fervid heart
The eloquence of passion: soon he raised
His sad meek face, and eyes lustrous and glazed,
And spoke,—sometimes as one who wrote, and
thought
His words might move some heart that heeded not,
If sent to distant lands;—and then as one
Reproaching deeds never to be undone,
With wondering self-compassion;—then his speech
Was lost in grief, and then his words came each
Unmodulated and expressionless,—
But that from one jarred accent you might guess
It was despair made them so uniform:
And all the while the loud and gusty storm
Hissed through the window, and we stood behind,
Scalping his accents from the envious wind,
Woe! — I had sworn that he had said
Distinctly, such impression his words made.

"Month after month," he cried, "to bear this load,
And, as a jade urged by the whip and goad,
To drag life on—which like a heavy chain
Lengthens behind with many a link of pain,
And not to speak my grief—O, not to dare
To give a human voice to my despair;
But live, and move, and, wretched thing! smile on,
As if I never went aside to groan,

And wear this mask of falsehood even to those
Who are most dear—not for my own repose.

Than needs must be, more changed and cold
As if I never went aside to groan,
Alas! no scorn, nor pain, nor hate, could be
But that I cannot bear more altered faces
But live, and move, and, wretched thing! smile on,
And not to speak my grief—O, not to dare
To drag life on—which like a heavy chain
Lengthens behind with many a link of pain,

To own me for their father. Would the dust
Mure misery, disappointment, and mistrust,

What Power delights to torture us? I know
That to myself I do not wholly owe
What now I suffer, though in part I may.

Alas! none strewed fresh flowers upon the way
Where, wandering heedlessly, I met pale Pain,
Am I not wan like thee? At the grave's call
I haste, invited to thy wedding-ball,

If I have erred, there was no joy in error,
But pain, and insult, and unrest, and terror;
I have not, as some do, bought penitence
With pleasure, and a dark yet sweet offence;

If this sad writing thou shouldst ever see;
My secret groans must be unheard by thee;

For then if love, and tenderness, and truth,
Met love excited by far other seeming

To meet the ghastly paramour, for whom
Thou hast deserted me,— and made the tomb
To avarice, or misanthropy, or lust:
Nor dream that I will join the vulgar lie,

Didst thou not seek me for thine own content?
Did not thy love awaken mine? I thought
Thou wouldst weep tears, bitter as blood, to know
Thy lost friend's incommunicable woe.

Didst thou not seek me for thine own content?
Did not thy love awaken mine? I thought
Thou wouldst weep tears, bitter as blood, to know
Thy lost friend's incommunicable woe.

To peace, and that is truth, which follow ye!
Love sometimes leads astray to misery.
Yet think not, though subdued (and I may well
Say that I am subdued)—that the full hell
Within me would infect the untainted breast
Of sweetest peace, I woke, and found my state
Such as it is—

O thou, my spirit's mate! Who, for thou art compassionate and wise,
Wouldst pity me from thy most gentle eyes
If this sad writing thou shouldst ever see;
My secret groans must be unheard by thee;
Thou wouldst weep tears, bitter as blood, to know
Thy lost friend's incommunicable woe.
Ye few by whom my nature has been weighed
In friendship, let me not that name degrade,
By placing on your hearts the secret load
Which crushes mine to dust. There is one road
To peace, and that is truth, which follow ye!
Love sometimes leads astray to misery.
Yet think not, though subdued (and I may well
Say that I am subdued)—that the full hell
Within me would infect the untainted breast
Of sweetest peace, I woke, and found my state
Such as it is—

Believe that I am ever still the same
In creed as in resolve; and what may tame
My heart, must leave the understanding free,
Or all would sink under this agony.—
Nor dream that I will join the vulgar lie,
Or with my silence sanction tyranny,
Or seek a moment's shelter from my pain
In any madness which the world calls gain;
Aim, or revenge, or thoughts as stern
As those which make me what I am, or turn
To avarice, or misanthropy, or lust;

Heap on me soon, O grave, thy welcome dust!
Till then the dungeon may demand its prey;
And Poverty and Shame may meet and say,
Halting beside me in the public way,—
'That love-devoted youth is ours: let's sit
Beside him: he may live some six months yet.'—
Or the red scaffold, as our country bends,
May ask some willing victim; or ye, friends,
May fall under some sorrow, which this heart
Or hand may share, or vanquish, or avert;
I am prepared, in truth, with no proud joy,
To do or suffer aught, as when a boy
I did devote to justice, and to love,
My nature, worthless now.

"I must remove
A veil from my pent mind. 'Tis torn aside!"—
O! pallida death's dedicated bride,
Thou mockery which art sitting by my side,
Am I not wan like thee? At the grave’s call
I haste, invited to thy wedding-ball,

My creed should have redeemed me from repenting;
Till then the dungeon may demand its prey;

Didst thou not seek me for thine own content?
Did not thy love awaken mine? I thought
Thou wouldst weep tears, bitter as blood, to know
Thy lost friend's incommunicable woe.

"You say that I am proud; that when I speak,
My lip is tortured with the wrongs, which break
The spirit it expresses.—Never one
Humbled himself before, as I have done;"—
Even the instinctive worm on which we tread
Turns, though it wound not—then, with prostrate head,
Sink in the dust, and writhe like me—and dies:

"You say that I am proud; that when I speak,
My lip is tortured with the wrongs, which break
The spirit it expresses.—Never one
Humbled himself before, as I have done;"—
Even the instinctive worm on which we tread
Turns, though it wound not—then, with prostrate head,
Sink in the dust, and writhe like me—and dies:

"Nay was it I who woul'd thee to this breast,
Which like a serpent thou envestomest
As in repayment of the warmth it lent!
Didst thou not seek me for thine own content!
Did not thy love awaken mine? I thought
Thou wert she who said 1 You kiss me not
Ever; I fear you do not love me now.'
In truth I loved even to my overthrow
Her who would fain forget these words, but they
Cling to her mind, and cannot pass away.

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Her who would fain forget these words, but they
Cling to her mind, and cannot pass away.
And from my pen tho words flow as I write,
Not even in secret, not to my own heart—
But from my lips the unwilling accents start,
After long years and many trials.

Such features to love's work... This taunt,
Are words; I thought never to speak again,
Met mine first, years long past,—since
Shall not thy defence: for since thy lip
With soft fire under mine,— I have not dwindled,
When all beside was cold:— that thou on me
And was to thee the flame upon thy hearth,
Henceforth, if an example for the same
With love's too partial praise! Let none relent
Should rain these plagues of blistering agony—
To disunite in horror! These were not
And can forget not— they were ministered,
To disunite in horror! These were not
Thou sealest them with many a bare broad word,
And sear'dst my memory o'er them,—for I heard
And can forget not— they were ministered,
One after one, those curses. Mix them up
Like self-destroying poisons in one cup;
And they will make one blessing, which thou ne'er
Didst imprecate for on me—death!

It were
A cruel punishment for one most cruel,
If such can love, to make that love the fuel
Of the mind's hell— hate, scorn, remorse, despair:
But me, whose heart a stranger's tear might wear
As water-drops the sandy fountain stone;
Who loved and pitted all things, and could mean
For woes which others heard not, and could see
The absent with the glass of phantasy,
And near the poor and trampled sit and weep,
Following the captive to his dungeon deep;
Me, who am as a nerve o'er which do creep
The else-unfelt oppressions of this earth,
And was to thee the flame upon thy hearth,
When all beside was cold:—that thou on me
Should rain these plagues of blistering agony—
Such curses are from lips once eloquent
And didst speak thus and thus. I live to show
How much men bear and die not.

When all beside was cold:—that thou on me
Should rain these plagues of blistering agony—
Such curses are from lips once eloquent
And didst speak thus and thus. I live to show
How much men bear and die not.

But thou mayst have less bitter cause to grieve!
I give thee tears for scorn, and love for hate;
And, that thy lot may be less desolate
Than his on whom thou tramplest, I refrain
From that sweet sleep which medicines all pain.
Then—when thou speakest of me—never say,
He had for love forgone love!—Here I rest away
All human passions, all revenge, all pride;
I think, speak, act no ill; I do but hide
Under these words, like embers, every spark
Of that which has consumed me. Quick and dark
The grave is yawning:— as its roof shall cover
My limbs with dust and worms, under and over,
So let oblivion hide this grief. The air
Closes upon my accents as despair
Upon my heart—let death upon my care!

He ceased, and overcome, leant back awhile;
Then rising, with a melancholy smile,
Went to a sofa, and lay down, and slept
A heavy sleep, and in his dreams he wept,
And muttered some familiar name, and we
Wept without shame in his society.
I think I never was impressed so much!
The man, who was not, must have lacked a touch
Of human nature. Then we lingered not,
Although our argument was quite forgot;
But, calling the attendants, went to dine
At Maddalo's;—yet neither cheer nor wine
Could give us spirits, for we talked of him,
And nothing else, till daylight made stars dim.
And we agreed it was some dreadful ill
Wrought on him boldly, yet unspeakable,
By a dear friend; some deadly change in love
Of one vowed deeply which he dreamed not of;
For whose sake he, it seemed, had fixed a blot
Of falsehood in his mind, which flourished not
But in the light of all-beholding truth;
And having stamped this canker on his youth,
She had abandoned him:— and how much more
Might be his woe, we guessed not:—he had store
Of friends and fortune once, as we could guess
From his nice habits and his gentleness:
These now were lost;—it were a grief indeed
If he had changed one unsustaining reed
For all that such a man might else adorn.
The colours of his mind seemed yet un wormed;
For the wild language of his grief was high—
Such as in measure were called poetry.
And I remember one remark, which then
Maddalo made: he said—' Most wretched men

"That you had never seen me! never heard
My voice! and more than all had ne'er endured
The deep pollution of my loathed embrace;
That your eyes ne'er had lieve in my face!
That, like some maniac monk, I had torn out
The nerves of manhood by their bleeding root
With mine own quivering fingers! so that ne'er
Our hearts had for a moment mingled there,
To disunite in horror! These were not
With the grimace of hate, how horrible
They seek:— for thou on me lookedst so and bo,
The close-unfetioned oppression of this earth,
Such curses are from lips once eloquent
And didst speak thus and thus. I live to show
How much men bear and die not.

Is dim to see that (charactered in vain
On this unfeeling leaf) which burns the brain
And eats into it, blotting all things fair,
And wise and good, which time had written there.
Those who inflict must suffer, for they see
The work of their own hearts, and that must be
Our chastisement or recompense. — O child!
I would that thine were like to be more mila
For both our wretched sakes,—for thine the most,
Who feelst already all that thou hast lost,
Without the power to wish it thine again.
And, as slow years pass, a funeral train,
Each with the ghost of some lost hope or friend
Following it like its shadow, wilt thou bend
No thought on my dead memory!

"Alas, love!
Fears me not: against thee I'd not move
A finger in despite. Do I not live
That thou mayst have less bitter cause to grieve!
I give thee tears for scorn, and love for hate;
And, that thy lot may be less desolate
Than his on whom thou tramplest, I refrain
From that sweet sleep which medicines all pain.
Then—when thou speakest of me—never say,
He had for love forgone love!—Here I rest away
All human passions, all revenge, all pride;
I think, speak, act no ill; I do but hide
Under these words, like embers, every spark
Of that which has consumed me. Quick and dark
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Maddalo made: he said—' Most wretched men

"Thou wilt tell,
With the grimace of hate, how horrible
It was to meet my love when thou grew less;
Thou wilt admire how I could o'er address
Such features to love's work... This taunt,
Though true,
(For indeed Nature nor in form nor hue
Bestowed on me her choicest workmanship)
Shall not be thy defence: for since thy lip
Met mine first, years long past,—since thine eye
kindled
With soft fire under mine,—I have not dwindled,
Nor changed in mind, or body, or in aught
But as love changes what it loveth not
After long years and many trials.

"How vain
Are words; I thought never to speak again,
Not even in secret, not to my own heart—
But from my lips the unwilling accents start,
And from my pen the words flow as I write,
Dazzling my eyes with scalding tears—my sight

POEMS WRITTEN IN 1818.
Are cradled into poetry by wrong:
They learn in suffering what they teach in song.

If I had been an unconnected man,
I, from the moment, should have formed some plan
Never to leave sweet Venice: for to me
It was delight to ride by the lone sea:
And then the town is silent—one may write
Or read in gondolas, by day or night,
Having the little brazen lamp alight,
Unseen, uninterrupted:—books are there,
Pictures, and casts from all those statues fair
Which were twin-born with poetry!—and all
We seek in towns, with little to recall
Regret for the green country:—I might sit
In Maddalo's great palace, and his wit
And subtle talk would cheer the winter night,
And make me know myself:—and the firelight
Would flash upon our faces, till the day
Slight dawn, and make me wonder at my stay.
But I had friends in London too. The chief attraction here was that I sought relief
From the deep tenderness that maniac wrought
Within me—'twas perhaps an idle thought,
But I imagined that if, day by day,
I watched him, and seldom went away,
And studied all the beatings of his heart
With zeal, as men study some stubborn art
For their own good, and could by patience find
An entrance to the caverns of his mind,
I might reclaim him from his dark estate.

The following morning, urged by my affairs,
I left bright Venice.

After many years,
And many changes, I returned: the name
Of Venice, and its aspect, was the same;
But Maddalo was travelling, far away,
Among the mountains of Armenia.
His dog was dead: his child had now become
A woman, such as it has been my doom
To meet with few; a wonder of this earth,
Where there is little of transcendent worth,—
Like one of Shakespeare's women. Kindly she,
And with a manner beyond courtesy,
Received her father's friend; and, when I asked,
Of the worn maniac, she her memory tasked,
And told, as she had heard, the mournful tale:
"That the poor sufferer's health began to fail
Two years from my departure: but that then
The lady, who had left him, came again;
Her mien had been imperious, but she now
Looked meek; perhaps remorse had brought her low.
Her coming made him better; and they stayed
Together at my father's,—for I played,
As I remember, with the lady's shawl;
I might be six years old:—But, after all,
She left him."—

"Why, her heart must have been tough;
How did it end?"

"And was not this enough?"

"Child, is there no more?"

"Something within that interval which bore
The stamp of why they parted, how they met;—
Yet, if thine aged eyes disdain to wet
Those wrinkled cheeks with youth's remembered
Ask me no more; but let the silent years
Be closed and cerrèd over their memory,
As yon mute marble where their corpses lie."
I urged and questioned still: she told me how
All happened—but the cold world shall not know.

MISCELLANEOUS.

PASSAGE OF THE APENNINES.

LISTEN, LISTEN, MARY MINE,
To the whisper of the Apennine,
It bursts on the roof like the thunder's roar,
Or like the sea on a northern shore,
Heard in its raging ebb and flow
By the captives pent in the cave below.
The Apennine in the light of day
Is a mighty mountain dim and grey,
Which between the earth and sky doth lay;
But when night comes, a chaos dread
On the dim starlight then is spread,
And the Apennine walks abroad with the storm.

MAY 42, 1818.

THE PAST.

WILT thou forget the happy hours
Which we buried in Love's sweet bowers,
Heap ing over their corpses cold
Blossoms and leaves instead of mould!
Blossoms which were the joys that fell,
And leaves, the hopes that yet remain.

Forget the dead, the past! O yet
There are ghosts that may take revenge for it;
Memories that make the heart a tomb,
Regrets which glide through the spirit's gloom,
And with ghastly whispers tell
That joy, once lost, is pain.
THE WOODMAN AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

A woodman, whose rough heart was out of tune (I think such hearts yet never came to good),
Hated to hear, under the stars or moon,
One nightingale in an interfluous wood
Satiating the hungry dark with melody;—
And, as a vale is watered by a flood,
Or as the moonlight fills the open sky
Struggling with darkness—as a tuberose
Peoples some Indian dell with scents which lie
Like clouds above the flower from which they rose,
The singing of that happy nightingale
In this sweet forest, from the golden close
Of evening till the star of dawn may fail,
Was interfused upon the silentness;
The folded roses and the violet pale
Heard her within their slumbers, the abyss
Of heaven with all its planets; the dull ear
Of the night-cradled earth; the loneliness
Of the circumfluous waters,— every sphere
And every wind of the mute atmosphere,
And every beast stretched in its rugged cave,
And every bird lilled on its mousy bough,
And every silver moth, fresh from the grave,
Which is its cradle— ever from below
Aspiring like one who loves too fair, too far,
To be consumed within the purest glow
Of one serene and unapproached star,
As if it were a lamp of earthly light,
Unconscious as some human lovers are,
Itself how low, how high, beyond all height
The heaven where it would perish!— and every form
That worshipped in the temple of the night
Was awed into delight, and by the charm
Girt as with an interminable zone,
Whilst that sweet bird, whose music was a storm
Of sound, shook forth the dull oblivion
Out of their dreams; harmony became love
In every soul but one. . . .

And so this man returned with axe and saw
At evening close from killing the tall tree,
The soul of whom by nature's gentle law
Was each a wood-nymph, and kept ever green
The pavement and the roof of the wild copse,
Chequering the sunlight of the blue serene
With jagged leaves,— and from the forest tops
Singing the winds to sleep—or weeping oft
Fast showers of aerial water drops
Into their mother's bosom, sweet and soft,
Nature's pure tears which have no bitterness;—
Around the cradles of the birds aloft
They spread themselves into the loneliness
Of fan-like leaves, and over pallid flowers
Hang like moist clouds; or, where high branches kiss,
Make a green space among the silent bowers,
Like a vast fan in a metropolis,
Surrounded by the columns and the towers
All overwrought with branch-like traceries
In which there is religion—and the mute
Persuasion of unkindled melodies,
Odours and gleams and murmurs, which the lute
Of the blind pilot-spirit of the blast
Stirs as it sails, now grave and now acute,
Wakening the leaves and waves are it has past
To such brief unison as on the brain
One tone, which never can recur, has cast,
One accent never to return again.

TO MARY

O Mary dear, that you were here
With your brown eyes bright and clear,
And your sweet voice, like a bird
Singing love to its lone mate
In the ivy bower disconsolate;
Voice the sweetest ever heard!
And your brow more * * * * * * * sky
Of this azure Italy.
Mary dear, come to me soon,
I am not well whilst thou art far;
As sunset to the spher'd moon,
As twilight to the western star,
Thou, beloved, art to me.
O Mary dear, that you were here!
The Castle echo whispers "Here!"

Est, September, 1818.

ON A FADED VIOLET.

The colour from the flower is gone,
Which like thy sweet eyes smiled on me;
The odour from the flower is flown,
Which breathed of thee and only thee!
A withered, lifeless, vacant form,
It lies on my abandoned breast,
And mocks the heart which yet is warm
With cold and silent rest.
I weep— my tears revive it not.
I sigh— it breathes no more on me;
Its mute and uncomplaining lot
Is such as mine should be.
MISCELLANEOUS.

MISERY.—A FRAGMENT.

Come, be happy!—sit near me, 
Shadow-vested Misery:
Coy, unwilling, silent bride,
Mourning in thy robe of pride,
Desolation—defied!

Come, be happy!—sit near me:
Sad as I may seem to thee,
I am happier far than thou,
Lady, whose imperial brow
Is encircled with woe.

Misery! we have known each other,
Like a sister and a brother
Living in the same lone home,
Many years— we must live some
Hours or ages yet to come.

Tis an evil lot, and yet
Let us make the best of it;
If love can live when pleasure dies,
We two will love, till in our eyes
This heart's Hell seem Paradise.

Come, be happy!—lie thee down
On the fresh grass newly mown,
Where the grasshopper doth sing
Merrily—one joyous thing
In a world of sorrowing!

There our tent shall be the willow,
And mine arm shall be thy pillow;
Sounds and odours, sorrowful
Because they once were sweet,
Shall lull us to slumber deep and dull.

Ha! thy frozen pulses flutter
With a love thou dar’st not utter.
Thou art murmuring—thou art weeping—
Is thine icy bosom leaping
While my burning heart lies sleeping?

Kiss me;—oh! thy lips are cold;
Round my neck thine arms enfold—
They are soft, but chill and dead;
And thy tears upon my head
Burn like points of frozen lead.

Hasten to the bridal bed—
Underneath the grave 'tis spread:
In darkness may our love be hid,
Oblivion be our coverlid—
We may rest, and none forbid.

Let us laugh, and make our mirth,
At the shadows of the earth,
As dogs bay the moonlight clouds,
Which, like spectres, wrap in shrouds,
Pass o'er night in multitudes.

All the wide world, beside us
Show like multitudinous
Puppets passing from a scene;
What but mockery can they mean,
Where I am—where thou hast been!

STANZAS,
WRITTEN IN DEJECTION, NEAR NAPLES.

The sun is warm, the sky is clear,
The waves are dancing fast and bright,
Blue isles and snowy mountains wear
The purple noon's transparent light:
The breath of the moist air is light,
Around its unexpanded buds;
Like many a voice of one delight,
The winds, the birds, the ocean floods,
The City's voice itself is soft like Solitude's.

I see the Deep's untrampled floor
With green and purple sea-weeds strown;
I see the waves upon the shore,
Like light dissolved in star-showers, thrown:
I sit upon the sands alone,
The lightning of the noon-tide ocean
Is flashing round me, and a tone
Arises from its measured motion,
How sweet! did any heart now share in my emotion.

Alas! I have nor hope nor health,
Nor peace within nor calm around,
Nor that content surpassing wealth
The sage in meditation found,
And walked with inward glory crowned—
Nor fame, nor power, nor love, nor leisure.
Others I see whom these surround
Smiling they live, and call life pleasure;
To me that cup has been dealt in another measure.

Yet now despair itself is mild,
Even as the winds and waters are;
I could lie down like a tired child,
And weep away the life of care,
Which I have borne, and yet must bear,
Till death like sleep might steal on me,
And I might feel in the warm air
My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea
Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monotony.

Some might lament that I were cold,
As I when this sweet day is gone,
Which my lost heart, too soon grown old,
Insults with this untimely moan;
They might lament—for I am one
Whom men love not,—and yet regret,
Unlike this day, which, when the sun
Shall on its stainless glory set,
Will linger, though enjoyed, like joy in memory

December, 1818.
MAZENGLI.

O! foster-nurse of man's abandoned glory
Since Athens, its great mother, sunk in splendour,
Thou shadowest forth that mighty shape in story,
As Ocean its wrecked fanses, severe yet tender:

The light-invested angel Poesy
Was drawn from the dim world to welcome thee.

And thou in painting didst transcribe all taught
By loftiest meditations; marble knew
The sculptor's fearless soul—and, as he wrought,
The grace of his own power and freedom grew.

And more than all, heroic, just, sublime,
Thou wert among the false—was this thy crime?

Yes; and on Pisa’s marble walls the twine
Of direst weeds hangs garlanded— the snake
Inhabits its wrecked palaces;— in thine
A beast of subtle venom now doth make
Its lair, and sits amid their glories overthrown,
And thus thy victim’s fate is as thine own.

The sweetest flowers are ever frail and rare,
And love and freedom blossom but to wither;
And good and ill like vines entangled are,
So that their grapes may oft be plucked together;

Divide the vintage ere thou drink, then make
Thy heart rejoice for dead Mazenghi's sake.

No record of his crime remains in story,
But if the morning bright as evening shone,
It was some high and holy deed, by glory
Pursued into forgetfulness, which won
From the blind crowd he made secure and free
The patriot's meed, toil, death, and infamy.

For when by sound of trumpet was declared
A price upon his life, and there was set
A penalty of blood on all who shared
So much of water with him as might wet
His lips, which speech divided not—he went
Alone, as you may guess, to banishment.

Amid the mountains, like a hunted beast,
He hid himself, and hunger, toil, and cold,
Month after month endured; it was a feast
When he found those globes of deep red gold
Suspended in the emerald atmosphere.

And in the roofless huts of vast morasses,
Deserted by the fey-stricken serf,
All overgrown with reeds and long rank grasses,
And hillocks heaped of moss-inwoven turf,
And where the huge and speckled aloe made,
Rooted in stones, a broad and pointed shade,

* This fragment refers to an event, told in Sismondi’s Histoire des Républiques Italiennes, which occurred during the war when Florence finally subdued Pisa, and reduced it to a province. The opening stanzas are addressed to the conquering city.—M. S.

SONG FOR TASSO.

I loved—alas! our life is love;
But when we cease to breathe and move,
I do suppose love ceases too.
I thought, but not as now I do,
Keen thoughts and bright of linked lore,
Of all that men had thought before,
And all that Nature shows, and more.

And still I love, and still I think,
But strangely, for my heart can drink
The dregs of such despair, and live,
And love;
And if I think, my thoughts come fast;
I mix the present with the past,
And each seems uglier than the last.

Sometimes I see before me flee
A silver spirit's form, like thee,
0 Leonora, and I sit
[ ] still watching it,
Till by the grated casement's ledge
It fades, with such a sigh, as sedge
Breathes o'er the breezy streamlet's edge.

SONNET.

Lift not the painted veil which those who live
Call Life; though unreal shapes be pictured
There, and it but mimic all we would believe
With colours idly spread,—behind, lurk Fear
And Hope, twin Destinies; who ever weave
Their shadows, o'er the chasm, sightless and drear.

I knew one who had lifted it—he sought,
For his lost heart was tender, things to love,
But found them not, alas! nor was there aught
The world contains, the which he could approve.

Through the unheeding many he did move,
A splendour among shadows, a bright blot
Upon this gloomy scene, a Spirit that strove
For truth, and like the Preacher found it not.
NOTE ON THE POEMS OF 1818.

BY THE EDITOR.

Rosalind and Helen was begun at Marlow, and thrown aside—till I found it; and, at my request, it was completed. Shelley had no care for any of his poems that did not emanate from the depths of his mind, and develop some high or abstruse truth. When he does touch on human life and the human heart, no pictures can be more faithful, more delicate, more subtle, or more pathetic. He never mentioned Love, but he shed a grace, borrowed from his own nature, that scarcely any other poet has bestowed, on that passion. When he spoke of it as the law of life, which inasmuch as we rebel against, we err and injure ourselves and others, he promulgated that which he considered an irrefragable truth. In his eyes it was the essence of our being, and all woe and pain arose from the war made against it by selfishness, or insensibility, or mistake. By reverting in his mind to this first principle, he discovered the source of many emotions, and could disclose the secret of all hearts, and his delineations of passion and emotion touch the finest chords of our nature.

Rosalind and Helen was finished during the summer of 1818, while we were at the Baths of Lucca. Thence Shelley visited Venice, and circumstances rendering it eligible that we should remain a few weeks in the neighbourhood of that city, he accepted the offer of Lord Byron, who lent him the use of a villa he rented near Este; and he sent for his family from Lucca to join him.

I Capucini was a villa built on the site of a Capuchin convent, demolished when the French suppressed religious houses; it was situated on the very over-hanging brow of a low hill at the foot of a range of higher ones. The house was cheerful and pleasant; a vine-trellised walk, a Pergola, as it is called in Italian, led from the hall door to a summer-house at the end of the garden, which Shelley made his study, and in which he began the Prometheus; and here also, as he mentions in a letter, he wrote Julian and Maddalo; a slight ravine, with a road in its depth, divided the garden from the hill, on which stood the ruins of the ancient castle of Este, whose dark massive wall gave forth an echo, and from whose ruined crevices, owls and bats flitted forth at night, as the crescent moon sunk behind the black and heavy battlements.

We looked from the garden over the wide plain of Lombardy, bounded to the west by the far Apennines, while to the east, the horizon was lost in misty distance. After the picturesque but limited view of mountain, ravine, and chestnut wood at the Baths of Lucca, there was something infinitely gratifying to the eye in the wide range of prospect commanded by our new abode.

Our first misfortune, of the kind from which we soon suffered even more severely, happened here. Our little girl, an infant in whose small features I fancied that I traced great resemblance to her father, showed symptoms of suffering from the heat of the climate. Teething increased her illness and danger. We were at Este, and when we became alarmed, hastened to Venice for the best advice. When we arrived at Fusina, we found that we had forgotten our passport, and the soldierson duty attempted to prevent our crossing the laguna; but they could not resist Shelley’s impetuosity at such a moment. We had scarcely arrived at Venice, before life fled from the little sufferer, and we returned to Este to weep her loss.

After a few weeks spent in this retreat, which were interspersed by visits to Venice, we proceeded southward. We often hear of persons disappointed by a first visit to Italy. This was not Shelley’s case—the aspect of its nature, its sunny sky, its majestic storms; of the luxuriant vegetation of the country, and the noble marble-built cities, enchanted him. The sight of the works of art were full enjoyment and wonder; he had not studied pictures or statues before, he now did so with the eye of taste, that referred not to the rules of schools, but to those of nature and truth. The first entrance to Rome opened to him a scene of remains of antique grandeur that far surpassed his expectations; and the unspeakable beauty of Naples and its environs added to the impression he received of the transcendent and glorious beauty of Italy. As I have said, he wrote long letters during the first year of our residence in this country; and these, when published,
will be the best testimonials of his appreciation of
the harmonious and beautiful in art and nature,
and his delicate taste in discerning and describing
them *.

Our winter was spent at Naples. Here he wrote
the fragments of Mazenghi and the Woodman and
the Nightingale, which he afterwards threw aside.
At this time Shelley suffered greatly in health. He
put himself under the care of a medical man, who
promised great things, and made him endure severe
bodily pain, without any good results. Constant
and poignant physical suffering exhausted him; and
though he preserved the appearance of cheerfulness,
and often greatly enjoyed our wanderings in the en-
virons of Naples, and our excursions on its sunny
sea, yet many hours were passed when his thoughts,
shadowed by illness, became gloomy, and then he
escaped to solitude, and in verses, which he hid
from fear of wounding me, poured forth morbid but
too natural bursts of discontent and sadness. One
looks back with unspeakable regret and gnawing
remorse to such periods; fancying that had one
been more alive to the nature of his feelings, and
more attentive to soothe them, such would not
have existed—and yet enjoying, as he appeared to
do, every sight or influence of earth or sky, it
was difficult to imagine that any melancholy he
showed was aught but the effect of the constant
pain to which he was a martyr.

We lived in utter solitude—and such is often
not the nurse of cheerfulness; for then, at least
with those who have been exposed to adversity,
the mind broods over its sorrows too intently;
while the society of the enlightened, the witty,
and the wise, enables us to forget ourselves by making

us the sharers of the thoughts of others, which is
a portion of the philosophy of happiness. Shelley
never liked society in numbers, it harassed and
wearied him; but neither did he like loneliness,
and usually when alone sheltered himself against
memory and reflection, in a book. But with one
or two whom he loved, he gave way to wild and
joyous spirits, or in more serious conversation ex-
pounded his opinions with vivacity and eloquence.
If an argument arose, no man ever argued better
—he was clear, logical, and earnest, in supporting
his own views; attentive, patient, and impartial,
while listening to those on the adverse side. Had
not a wall of prejudice been raised at this time
between him and his countrymen, how many
would have sought the acquaintance of one, whom
to know was to love and to revere! how many of
the more enlightened of his contemporaries have
since regretted that they did not seek him! how
very few knew his worth while he lived, and of
those few, several were withheld by timidity or
envy from declaring their sense of it. But no man
was ever more enthusiastically loved—more looked
up to as one superior to his fellows in intellectual
endowments and moral worth, by the few who
knew him well, and had sufficient nobleness of
soul to appreciate his superiority. His excellence
is now acknowledged; but even while admitted,
not duly appreciated. For who, except those who
were acquainted with him, can imagine his un-
wearied benevolence, his generosity, his systematic
forbearance? And still less is his vast superiority in
intellectual attainments sufficiently understood—
his sagacity, his clear understanding, his learning,
his prodigious memory; all these, as displayed in
conversation, were known to few while he lived, and
are now silent in the tomb:

Ahi orbo mondo ingrato,
Gran cagion hai di dever pianger meco.
Che quel ben ch'era in te, perdut' hai seco.

* These letters, together with various essays, transla-
tions, and fragments, being the greater portion of the
prose writings left by Shelley, are now in the press.—
M. S.
THE MASQUE OF ANARCHY.

I.
As I lay asleep in Italy,
There came a voice from over the sea,
And with great power it forth led me
To walk in the visions of Poetry.

II.
I met Murder on the way—
He had a mask like Castlereagh—
Very smooth he looked, yet grim;
Seven bloodhounds followed him:

III.
All were fat; and well they might
Be in admirable plight,
For one by one, and two by two,
He tossed them human hearts to chew,
Which from his wide cloak he drew.

IV.
Next came Fraud, and he had on,
Like Lord E——, an ermine gown;
His big tears, for he wept well,
Turned to mill-stones as they fell;

V.
And the little children, who
Round his feet played to and fro,
Thinking every tear a gem,
Had their brains knocked out by them.

VI.
Clothed with the bible as with light,
And the shadow of the night,
Like S * * * next, Hypocrisy,
On a crocodile came by.

VII.
And many more Destructions played
In this ghastly masquerade,
All disguised, even to the eyes,
Like bishops, lawyers, peers, or spies.

VIII.
Last came Anarchy; he rode
On a white horse splashed with blood;
He was pale even to the lips,
Like Death in the Apocalypse.

IX.
And he wore a kingly crown;
In his hand a sceptre shone;
On his brow this mark I saw—
"I am God, and King, and Law!"

X.
With a pace stately and fast,
Over English land he past,
Trampling to a mire of blood
The adoring multitude.

XI.
And a mighty troop around,
With their trampling shook the ground,
Waving each a bloody sword,
For the service of their Lord.

XII.
And, with glorious triumph, they
Rode through England, proud and gay,
Drunk as with intoxication
Of the wine of desolation.

XIII.
O'er fields and towns, from sea to sea,
Passed the pageant swift and free,
Tearing up, and trampling down,
Till they came to London town.

XIV.
And each dweller, panic-stricken,
Felt his heart with terror sicken,
Hearing the tremendous cry
Of the triumph of Anarchy.

XV.
For with pomp to meet him came,
Clothed in arms like blood and flame,
The hired murderers who did sing,
"Thou art God, and Law, and King.

XVI.
"We have waited, weak and lone,
For thy coming, Mighty One!
Our purses are empty, our swords are cold,
Give us glory, and blood, and gold."
Lawyers and priests, a motley crowd,
To the earth their pale brows bowed,
Like a sad prayer not over loud,
Whispering—"Thou art Law and God!"

Then all cried with one accord,
"Thou art King, and Law, and Lord;
Anarchy, to thee we bow,
Be thy name made holy now!"

And Anarchy, the skeleton,
Bowed and grinned to every one,
As well as if his education
Had cost ten millions to the nation.

For he knew the palaces
Of our kings were nightly his;
His the sceptre, crown, and globe,
And the gold-inwoven robe.

So he sent his slaves before
To seize upon the Bank and Tower,
And was proceeding with intent
To meet his pensioned parliament,

When one fled past, a maniac maid,
And her name was Hope, she said:
"My father, Time is weak and grey
With waiting for a better day;
See how idiot-like he stands,
Trembling with his palsied hands!"

"He has had child after child,
And the dust of death is piled
Over every one but me—
Misery! oh, Misery!"

Then she lay down in the street,
Right before the horses' feet,
Expecting with a patient eye,
Murder, Fraud, and Anarchy.

When between her and her foes
A mist, a light, an image rose,
Small at first, and weak and frail
Like the vapour of the vale:

Till as clouds grow on the blast,
Like tower-crowned giants striding fast,
And glare with lightnings as they fly,
And speak in thunder to the sky,

It grew—a shape arrayed in mail
Brighter than the viper's scale,
And upborne on wings whose grain
Was like the light of sunny rain.

On its helm, seen far away,
A planet, like the morning's, lay:
And those plumes it light rained through,
Like a shower of crimson dew.

With step as soft as wind it passed
O'er the heads of men—so fast
That they knew the presence there,
And looked—and all was empty air.

As flowers beneath May's footsteps waken,
As stars from night's loose hair are shaken,
As waves arise when loud winds call,
Though sprang where'er that step did fall.

And the prostrate multitude
Looked—and ankle-deep in blood,
Hope, that maiden most serene,
Was walking with a quiet mien:

And Anarchy, the ghastly birth,
Lay dead earth upon the earth;
The Horse of Death, tameless as wind,
Fled, and with his hoofs did grind
To dust the murderers thronged behind.

A rushing light of clouds and splendour,
A sense, awakening and yet tender,
Was heard and felt—and at its close
These words of joy and fear arose:

As if their own indignant earth,
Which gave the sons of England birth,
Had felt their blood upon her brow,
And shuddering with a mother's throe,

Had turned every drop of blood,
By which her face had been bedewed,
To an accent unwithstood,
As if her heart had cried aloud:

"Men of England, Heirs of Glory,
Heroes of unwritten story,
Nurslings of one mighty mother,
Hopes of her, and one another!

"Rise, like lions after slumber,
In unvanquishable number,
Shake your chains to earth like dew,
Which in sleep had fall'n on you."
Ye are many, they are few.
| XXXIX. | "What is Freedom? Ye can tell
| | That which Slavery is too well,
| | For its very name has grown
| | To an echo of your own.
| | "'Tis to work, and have such pay
| | As just keeps life from day to day
| | In your limbs as in a cell
| | For the tyrants' use to dwell:
| | "So that ye for them are made,
| | Loom, and plough, and sword, and spade;
| | With or without your own will bent
| | To their defence and nourishment.
| | "'Tis to see your children weak
| | With their mothers pine and peak;
| | When the winter winds are bleak:
| | They are dying whilst I speak.
| | "'Tis to hunger for such diet,
| | As the rich man in his riot
| | Casts to the fat dogs that lie
| | Surfeiting beneath his eye.
| | "'Tis to let the Ghost of Gold
| | Take from toil a thousand-fold
| | More than e'er its substance could
| | In the tyrannies of old:
| | "Paper coin—that forgery
| | Of the title deeds, which ye
| | Hold to something of the worth
| | Of the inheritance of Earth.
| | "'Tis to be a slave in soul,
| | And to hold no strong control
| | Over your own wills, but be
| | All that others make of ye.
| | "And at length when ye complain,
| | With a murmur weak and vain,
| | "'Tis to see the tyrant's crew
| | Ride over your wives and you:
| | Blood is on the grass like dew!
| | "Then it is to feel revenge,
| | Fiercely thirsting to exchange
| | Blood for blood—and wrong for wrong:
| | Do not thus when ye are strong!
| | "Birds find rest in narrow nest,
| | When weary of their winged quest;
| | Beasts find fare in woody lair,
| | When storm and snow are in the air.
| "Horses, oxen, have a home,
| | When from daily toil they come;
| | Household dogs, when the wind roars,
| | Find a home within warm doors.
| "Asses, swine, have litter spread,
| | And with fitting food are fed;
| | All things have a home but one:
| | Thou, O Englishman, hast none!
| "This is slavery—savage men,
| | Or wild beasts within a den,
| | Would endure not as ye do:
| | But such ills they never knew.
| "What art thou, Freedom! Oh! could slaves
| | Answer from their living graves
| | This demand, tyrants would flee
| | Like a dream's dim imagery.
| "'Tis to see your children weak
| | With their mothers pine and peak,
| | When the winter winds are bleak:
| | They are dying whilst I speak.
| "'Tis to hunger for such diet,
| | As the rich man in his riot
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| "This is slavery—savage men,
| | Or wild beasts within a den,
| | Would endure not as ye do:
| | But such ills they never knew.
| "What art thou, Freedom! Oh! could slaves
| | Answer from their living graves
| | This demand, tyrants would flee
| | Like a dream's dim imagery.
| "Thou art clothes, and fire, and food
| | For the trampled multitude:
| | No—in countries that are free
| | Such starvation cannot be,
| | As in England now we see.
| "To the rich thou art a check;
| | When his foot is on the neck
| | Of his victim, thou dost make
| | That he treads upon a snake.
| "Thou art Justice—ne'er for gold
| | May thy righteous laws be sold,
| | As laws are in England:—thou
| | Shieldest alike the high and low.
| "Thou art Wisdom—freemen never
| | Dream that God will doom for ever
| | All who think those things untrue,
| | Of which priests make such ado.
| "Thou art Peace—never by thee
| | Weild blood and treasure wasted be,
| | As tyrants wasted them, when all
| | Leagued to quench thy flame in Gaul.
"What if English toil and blood
Was poured forth, even as a flood?
It availed,—O Liberty!
To dim—but not extinguish thee.

"Thou art Love—the rich have kist
Thy feet; and like him following Christ,
Given their substance to the free,
And through the rough world followed thee.

"Oh turn their wealth to arms, and make
War for thy beloved sake,
On wealth and war and fraud; whence they
Drew the power which is their prey.

"Science, and Poetry, and Thought,
Are thy lamps; they make the lot
Of the dwellers in a cot
Such, they curse their maker not.

"Spirit, Patience, Gentleness,
All that can adorn and bless,
Art thou: let deeds, not words, express
Thine exceeding loveliness.

"Let a vast assembly be
Of the fearless and the free,
On some spot of English ground,
Where the plains stretch wide around.

"Let the blue sky overhead,
The green earth on which ye tread,
All that must eternal be,
Witness the solemnity.

"From the corners uttermost
Of the bounds of English coast;
From every hut, village, and town,
Where those who live and suffer, moan
For others' misery, or their own:

"From the workhouse and the prison,
Where pale as corpses newly risen,
Women, children, young, and old,
Groan for pain, and weep for cold;

"From the haunts of daily life,
Where is waged the daily strife
With common wants and common cares,
Which sow the human heart with tares.

"Lastly, from the palaces,
Where the murmur of distress
Echoes, like the distant sound
Alive around;

"Those prison-halls of wealth and fashion,
Where some few feel such compassion
For those who groan, and toil, and wail,
As must make their brethren pale;

"Ye who suffer woes untold,
Or to feel, or to behold
Your lost country bought and sold
With a price of blood and gold.

"Let the tyrants pour around
With a quick and startling sound,
Like the loosening of a sea,
Troops of armed emblazonry.

"Stand ye calm and resolute,
Like a forest close and mute,
With folded arms, and looks which are
Weapons of an unvanquished war.

"And let Panic, who outspeeds
The career of armed steeds,
Pass, a disregarded shade,
Through your phalanx undismayed.

"Let the laws of your own land,
Good or ill, between ye stand,
Hand to hand; and foot to foot,
Arbiters of the dispute.
THE MASQUE OF ANARCHY.

LXXXIII.
"The old laws of England—they
Whose reverend heads with age are grey,
Children of a wiser day;
And whose solemn voice must be
Thine own echo—Liberty!"

LXXXIV.
"On those who first should violate
Such sacred heralds in their state,
Rest the blood that must ensue;
And it will not rest on you.

LXXXV.
"And if then the tyrants dare,
Let them ride among you there;
Slash, and stab, and maim, and hew;
What they like, that let them do.

LXXXVI.
"With folded arms and steady eyes,
And little fear, and less surprise,
Look upon them as they slay,
Till their rage has died away:

LXXXVII.
"Then they will return with shame,
To the place from which they came,
And the blood thus shed will speak
In hot blushes on their cheek:

LXXXVIII.
"Every woman in the land
Will point at them as they stand—
They will hardly dare to greet
Their acquaintance in the street:

LXXXIX.
"And the bold true warriors,
Who have hugged danger in the wars,
Will turn to those who would be free,
Ashamed of such base company:

XC.
"And that slaughter to the nation
Shall steam up like inspiration,
Eloquent, oracular,
A volcano heard afar:

XCI.
"And these words shall then become
Like Oppression's thundered doom,
Ringing through each heart and brain,
Heard again—again—again!

XCII.
"Rise, like lions after slumber
In unvanquishable number!
Shake your chains to earth, like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you:
Ye are many—they are few!"
PETER BELL THE THIRD.

By

MICHING MALLECHO, ESQ.

Is it a party in a parlour,
Crammed just as they on earth were crammed,
Some sipping punch—some sipping tea,
But, as you by their faces see,
All silent, and all—damned!

Peter Bell, by W. Wordsworth.

OPHELIA.—What means this, my lord?

HAMLET.—Marry, this is Miching Mallecho; it means mischief.

Shakespeare.

DEDICATION.

TO THOMAS BROWN, ESQ., THE YOUNGER, H.F.

DEAR TOM,

Allow me to request you to introduce Mr. Peter Bell to the respectable family of the Fudges; although he may fall short of those very considerable personages in the more active properties which characterize the Rat and the Apostate, I suspect that even you, their historian, will confess that he surpasses them in the more peculiarly legitimate qualification of intolerable dulness.

You know Mr. Examiner Hunt; well— it was he who presented me to two of the Mr. Bells. My intimacy with the younger Mr. Bell naturally sprung from this introduction to his brothers. And in presenting him to you, I have the satisfaction of being able to assure you that he is considerably the dullest of the three.

There is this particular advantage in an acquaintance with any one of the Peter Bells, that if you know one Peter Bell, you know three Peter Bells; they are not one, but three; not three, but one. An awful mystery, which, after having caused torrents of blood, and having been hymned by groans enough to deafen the music of the spheres, is at length illustrated to the satisfaction of all parties in the theological world, by the nature of Mr. Peter Bell.

Peter is a polyhedric Peter, or a Peter with many sides. He changes colours like a chameleon, and his coat like a snake. He is a Proteus of a Peter. He was at first sublime, pathetic, impressive, profound; then dull; then prosy and dull; and now dull—O, so very dull! it is an ultra-legitimate dulness.

You will perceive that it is not necessary to consider Hell and the Devil as supernatural machinery. The whole scene of my epic is in this world which is**—So Peter informed us before his conversion to White Obi—

**—The world of all of us, and where We find our happiness, or not at all.

Let me observe that I have spent six or seven days in composing this sublime piece; the orb of my moon-like genius has made the fourth part of its revolution round the dull earth which you inhabit, driving you mad, while it has retained its calmness and its splendour, and I have been fitting this its last phase to occupy a permanent station in the literature of my country.

Your works, indeed, dear Tom, sell better; but mine are far superior. The public is no judge; posterity sets all to rights.

Allow me to observe that so much has been written of Peter Bell, that the present history can be considered only, like the Iliad, as a continuation of that series of cyclic poems, which have already been candidates for bestowing immortality upon, at the same time that they receive it from, his character and adventures. In
this point of view, I have violated no rule of syntax in beginning my composition with a conjunction; the full stop which closes the poem continued by me, being, like the full stops at the end of the Iliad and Odyssey, a full stop of a very qualified import.

Hoping that the immorality which you have given to the Fudges, you will receive from them; and in the firm expectation, that when London shall be an habitation of bitterns, when St. Paul’s and Westminster Abbey shall stand, shapeless and nameless ruins, in the midst of an unpeopled marsh; when the piers of Waterloo-Bridge shall become the nuclei of islets of reeds and osiers, and cast the jagged shadows of their broken arches on the solitary stream, some transatlantic commentator will be weighing in the scales of some new and now unimagined system of criticism, the respective merits of the Bells and the Fudges, and their historians,

I remain, dear Tom,

Yours sincerely

MICHING MALLECHO.

December 1, 1819.

P.S.—Pray excuse the date of place; so soon as the profits of the publication come in, I mean to hire lodgings in a more respectable street.

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PROLOGUE. | HELL. | DAMNATION.
---|---|---
DEATH. | SIN. | DOUBLE DAMNATION.
The Devil | GRACE.

PROLOGUE.

Peter Bells, one, two and three,
O’er the wide world wandering be.—
First, the antemortal Peter,
Wrapt in weeds of the same metre,
The so long predestined raiment
Clothed, in which to walk his way meant
The second Peter; whose ambition
Is to link the proposition,
As the mean of two extremes—
(This was learnt from Aldric’s themes)
Shielding from the guilt of schism
The orthodoxal syllogism;
The First Peter—he who was
Like the shadow in the glass
Of the second, yet unripe,
His substantial antitype.—
Then came Peter Bell the Second,
Who henceforward must be reckoned
The body of a double soul,
And that portion of the whole
Without which the rest would seem
Ends of a disjointed dream—
And the Third is he who has
O’er the grave been forced to pass

To the other side, which is—
Go and try else,—just like this.

Peter Bell the First was Peter Smugger, milder, softer, neater,
Like the soul before it is
Born from that world into this.
The next Peter Bell was he,
Predevote, like you and me,
To good or evil as may come;
HIs was the severer doom,—
For he was an evil Cotter,
And a polygamic Potter.*
And the last is Peter Bell,
Damned since our first parents fell,
Damned eternally to Hell—
Surely he deserves it well!

* The oldest scholiasts read—
A polygamic Potter.

This is at once more descriptive and more megalophonous,—but the alliteration of the text had captivated the vulgar ear of the herd of later commentators.
AND Peter Bell, when he had been
With fresh-imported Hell-fire warmed,
Grew serious—from his dress and mien
'Twas very plainly to be seen
Peter was quite reformed.

His eyes turned up, his mouth turned down;
His accent caught a nasal twang;
He oiled his hair,* there might be heard
The grace of God in every word
Which Peter said or sang.

But Peter now grew old, and had
An ill no doctor could unravel;
His torments almost drove him mad;—
Some said it was a fever bad—
Some swore it was the gravel.

His holy friends then came about,
And with long preaching and persuasion,
Convinced the patient that, without
The smallest shadow of a doubt,
He was predestined to damnation.

They said—"Thy name is Peter Bell;
Thy skin is of a brimstone hue;
Alive or dead—aye, sick or well—
The one God made to rhyme with hell;
The other, I think, rhymes with you."

Then Peter set up such a yell!—
The nurse, who with some water gruel
Was climbing up the stairs, as well
As her old legs could climb them—fell,
And broke them both—the fall was cruel.

The Parson from the casement leapt
Into the lake of Windermere—
And many an eel—though no adept
In God's right reason for it—kept
Gnawing his kidneys half a year.

* To those who have not duly appreciated the distinction between Whale and Russia oil, this attribute might rather seem to belong to the Dandy than the Evangelic. The effect, when to the windward, is indeed so similar, that it requires a subtle naturalist to discriminate the animals. They belong, however, to distinct genera.

And all the rest rushed through the door,
And tumbled over one another,
And broke their skulls.—Upon the floor
Meanwhile sat Peter Bell, and swore,
And cursed his father and his mother;

And raved of God, and sin, and death,
Blaspheming like an infidel;
And said, that with his clenched teeth,
He'd seize the earth from underneath,
And drag it with him down to hell.

As he was speaking came a spasm,
And wrenched his gnashing teeth asunder;
Like one who sees a strange phantasm
He lay,—there was a silent chasm
Between his upper jaw and under.

And yellow death lay on his face;
And a fixed smile that was not human
Told, as I understand the case,
That he was gone to the wrong place:—
I heard all this from the old woman.

Then there came down from Langdale Pike
A cloud, with lightning, wind and hail;
It swept over the mountains like
An ocean,—and I heard it strike
The woods and crags of Grasmere vale.

And I saw the black storm come
Nearer, minute after minute;
Its thunder made the cataracts dumb;
With hiss, and clash, and hollow hum,
It neared as if the Devil was in it.

The Devil was in it:—he had bought
Peter for half-a-crown; and when
The storm which bore him vanished, nought
That in the house that storm had caught
Was ever seen again.

The gaping neighbours came next day—
They found all vanished from the shore:
The Bible, whence he used to pray,
Half scorched under a hen-coop lay;
Smashed glass—and nothing more!
PART THE SECOND.

The Devil.

Peter thought he had parents dear,
Brothers, sisters, cousins, cronies,
In the fens of Lincolnshire;
He perhaps had found them there
Had he gone and boldly shown his
Solemn phiz in his own village;
Where he thought oft when a boy
He'd clomb the orchard walls to pilage
The produce of his neighbour's tillage,
With marvellous pride and joy.

And the Devil thought he had,
Mid the misery and confusion
Of an unjust war, just made
A fortune by the gainful trade
Of giving soldiers rations bad—
The world is full of strange delusion.

That he had a mansion planned
In a square like Grosvenor-square,
That he was aping fashion, and
That he now came to Westmorland
To see what was romantic there.

And all this, though quite ideal,—
Ready at a breath to vanish,—
Was a state not more unreal
Than the peace he could not feel,
Or the care he could not banish.

After a little conversation,
The Devil told Peter, if he chose,
He'd bring him to the world of fashion
By giving him a situation
In his own service—and new clothes.

And Peter bowed, quite pleased and proud,
And after waiting some few days
For a new livery—dirty yellow
Turned up with black—the wretched fellow
Was bowled to Hell in the Devil's chaise.

The Devil, I safely can aver,
Has neither hoof, nor tail, nor sting;
Nor is he, as some sages swear,
A spirit, neither here nor there,
In nothing—yet in everything.

He is—what we are; for sometimes
The Devil is a gentleman;
At others a bard bartering rhymes
For sack; a statesman spinning crimes;
A swindler, living as he can;
A thief, who cometh in the night,
With whole boots and net pantaloons,
Like some one whom it were not right
To mention—or the luckless wight,
From whom he steals nine silver spoons.

But in this case he did appear
Like a slop-merchant from Wapping,
And with smug face, and eye severe,
On every side did perk and peer
Till he saw Peter dead or napping.

He had on an upper Benjamin
(For he was of the driving schism)
In the which he wrapt his skin
From the storm he travelled in,
For fear of rheumatism.

He called the ghost out of the corpse;—
It was exceedingly like Peter,—
Only its voice was hollow and hoarse—
It had a queerish look of course—
Its dress too was a little neater.

The Devil knew not his name and lot,
Peter knew not that he was Bell:
Each had an upper stream of thought,
Which made all seem as it was not;
Fitting itself to all things well.

The world is full of strange delusion.

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Brothers, sisters, cousins, cronies,
In the fens of Lincolnshire;
He perhaps had found them there
Had he gone and boldly shown his
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PART THE THIRD.

Helle.

**Hell** is a city much like London—
A populous and a smoky city;
There are all sorts of people undone,
And there is little or no fun done;
Small justice shown, and still less pity.

There is a Castles, and a Canning,
A Cobbett, and a Castlereagh;
All sorts of caitiff corpses planning,
All sorts of cozening for trepanning
Corpses less corrupt than they.

There is a * • *, who has lost
His wits, or sold them, none knows which;
He walks about a double ghost,
And though as thin as Fraud almost—
Ever grows more grim and rich.

There is a Chancery Court; a King;
A manufacturing mob; a set
Of thieves who by themselves are sent
Similar thieves to represent;
An army; and a public debt.

Which last is a scheme of paper money,
And means—being interpreted—
Bees, “keep your wax—give us the honey,
And we will plant, while skies are sunny,
Flowers, which in winter serve instead.”

There is great talk of revolution—
And a great chance of despotism—
German soldiers—camps—confusion—
Tumults—lotteries—rage—delusion—
Gin—suicide—and methodism.

Taxes too, on wine and bread,
And meat, and beer, and tea, and cheese,
From which those patriots pure are fed,
Who gorge before they reel to bed
The tenfold essence of all these.

There are mincing women, mewing,
(Like cats, who amant miser,.*)
Of their own virtue, and pursuing
Their gentler sisters to that ruin,
Without which—what were chastity.†

* One of the attributes in Linnaeus’s description of the Cat. To a similar cause the caterwauling of more than one species of this genus is to be referred;—except, indeed, that the poor quadruped is compelled to quarrel with its own pleasures, whilst the biped is supposed only to quarrel with those of others.
† What would this husk and excuse for a virtue be

Lawyers—judges—old hobnobbers
Are there—bailiffs—chancellors—
Bishops—great and little robbers—
Rhymesters—pamphleteers—stock-jobbers—
Men of glory in the wars—

Things whose trade is, over ladies
To lean, and flirt, and stare, and simper,
Till all that is divine in woman
Grows cruel, courteous, smooth, inhuman,
Crucified ‘twixt a smile and whimper.

Thrusting, toiling, wailing, moiling,
Frowning, preaching—such a riot!
Each with never-ceasing labour,
Whilst he thinks he cheats his neighbour,
Cheating his own heart of quiet.

And all these meet at levees;—
Dinners convivial and political;—
Suppers of epic poets;—teas,
Where small talk dies in agonies;—
Breakfasts professional and critical;

Lunches and snacks so aldermanic
That one would furnish forth ten dinners,
Where reigns a Cretan-tongued panic,
Lest news ofuss, Dutch, or Alcmanic
Should make some losers, and some winners

At conversazioni—balls—
Conventicles—and drawing-rooms—
Courts of law—committees—calls
Of a morning—clubs—book-stalls—
Churches—masquerades—and tombs.

And this is Hell—and in this smother
All are damnable and damned;
Each one damning, dams the other;
They are damned by one another,
By none other are they damned.

*Tis a lie to say, “God damns!”* *
Where was Heaven’s Attorney General
When they first gave out such flames?
Let there be an end of shams,
They are mines of poisonous mineral.

Without its kernel prostitution, or the kernel prostitutions
without this husk of a virtue ? I wonder the women of
the town do not form an association, like the society for
the suppression of vice, for the support of what may be
called the “King, Church, and Constitution,” of their
order. But this subject is almost too horrible for a joke.
* This libel on our national oath, and this accusation of
Statesmen damn themselves to be
Cursed; and lawyers damn their souls
To the auction of a fee;
Churchmen damn themselves to see
God's sweet love in burning coals.

The rich are damned, beyond all cure,
To taunt, and starve, and trample on
The weak and wretched; and the poor
Damn their broken hearts to endure
Stripe on stripe, with groan on groan.

Sometimes the poor are damned indeed
To take—not means for being blest,—
But Cobbett's snuff, revenge; that weed
From which the worms that it doth feed
Squeeze less than they before possessed.

And some few, like we know who,
Damned—but God alone knows why—
To believe their minds are given
To make this ugly Hell a Heaven;
In which faith they live and die.

Thus, as in a town, plague-stricken,
Each man be he sound or no
Must indifferently sicken;
As when day begins to thicken,
None knows a pigeon from a crow,—

So good and bad, sane and mad,
The oppressor and the oppressed;
Those who weep to see what others
Smile to inflict upon their brothers;
Lovers, haters, worst and best;

All are damned—they breathe an air,
Thick, infected, joy-dispelling:
Each pursues what seems most fair,
Mining like moles, through mind, and there
Scoop palace-caverns vast, where Care
In throned state is ever dwelling.

PART THE FOURTH.

Lo, Peter in Hell's Grosvenor-square,
A footman in the devil's service!
And the misjudging world would swear
That every man in service there
To virtue would prefer vice.

But Peter, though now damned, was not
What Peter was before damnation.
Men oftentimes prepare a lot
Which ere it finds them, is not what
Suits with their genuine station.

All things that Peter saw and felt
Had a peculiar aspect to him;
And when they came within the belt
Of his own nature, seemed to melt,
Like cloud to cloud, into him.

And so the outward world uniting
To that within him, he became
Considerably uninviting
To those, who meditation slighting,
Were moulded in a different frame.

And he scorned them, and they scorned him;
And he scorned all they did; and they
Did all that men of their own trim
Are wont to do to please their whim,
Drinking, lying, swearing, play.

Lo, Peter in Hell's Grosvenor-square,
A footman in the devil's service!
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And he scorned all they did; and they
Did all that men of their own trim
Are wont to do to please their whim,
Drinking, lying, swearing, play.

Such were his fellow-servants; thus
His virtue, like our own, was built
Too much on that indignant fuss
Hypocrite Pride stirs up in us
To bully out another's guilt.

He had a mind which was somehow
At once circumference and centre
Of all he might or feel or know;
Nothing went ever out, although
Something did ever enter.

He had as much imagination
As a pint-pot;— he never could
Fancy another situation,
From which to dart his contemplation,
Than that wherein he stood.

Yet his was individual mind,
And now created all he saw
In a new manner, and refined
Those new creations, and combined
Them, by a master-spirit's law.

Thus—though unimaginative—
An apprehension clear, intense,
Of his mind's work, had made alive
The things it wrought on; I believe
Wakening a sort of thought in sense.

But from the first 'twas Peter's drift
To be a kind of moral eunuch,
He touched the hem of nature's shift,
Felt faint—and never dared uplift
The closest, all-concealing tunic.

all our countrymen of being in the daily practice of solemnly asseverating the most enormous falsehood, I fear deserves the notice of a more active Attorney General than that here alluded to.
She laughed the while, with an arch smile,  
And kissed him with a sister's kiss,  
And said—" My best Diogenes,  
I love you well—but, if you please,  
Tempt not again my deepest bliss.

"Tis you are cold—for I, not coy,  
Yield love for love, frank, warm and true;  
And Burns, a Scottish peasant boy—  
His errors prove it—knew my joy  
More, learned friend, than you.

"Bocca baciata non perde ventura  
Anzi rinnuova come fa la luna;—  
So thought Boccaccio, whose sweet words might  
cure a  
Male prude, like you, from what you now  
edure, a  
Low-tide in soul, like a stagnant laguna."

Then Peter rubbed his eyes severe,  
And smoothed his spacious forehead down,  
With his broad palm;—'twixt love and fear,  
He looked, as he no doubt felt, queer,  
And in his dream sate down.

The Devil was no uncommon creature;  
A leaden-witted thief—just huddled  
Out of the dross and scum of nature;  
A toad-like lump of limb and feature,  
With mind, and heart, and fancy muddled.

He was that heavy, dull, cold thing,  
The spirit of evil well may be:  
A drone too base to have a sting;  
Who gluts, and grimes his lazy wing,  
And calls lust, luxury.

Now he was quite the kind of right  
Round whom collect, at a fixed era,  
Venison, turtle, hock, and claret,—  
Good cheer—and those who come to share it—  
And best East Indian madeira!

It was his fancy to invite  
Men of science, wit, and learning,  
Who came to lend each other light;  
He proudly thought that his gold's might  
Had set those spirits burning.

And men of learning, science, wit,  
Considered him as you and I  
Think of some rotten tree, and sit  
Lounging and dining under it,  
Exposed to the wide sky.

And all the while, with loose fat smile,  
The willing wretch sat winking there,  
Believing 'twas his power that made  
That jovial scene—and that all paid  
Homage to his unnoticed chair.

Though to be sure this place was Hell;  
He was the Devil—and all they—  
What though the claret circled well,  
And wit, like ocean, rose and fell—  
Were damned eternally.

PART THE FIFTH.

Grace.

Among the guests who often staid  
Till the Devil's petits-soupers,  
A man there came, fair as a maid,  
And Peter noted what he said,  
Standing behind his master's chair.

He was a mighty poet—and  
A subtle-souled psychologist;  
All things he seemed to understand,  
Of old or new—of sea or land—  
But his own mind—which was a mist.

This was a man who might have turned  
Hell into Heaven—and so in gladness  
A Heaven unto himself have earned;  
But he in shadows undiscerned  
Trusted,—and damned himself to madness.

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

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

Now Peter, when he heard such talk,  
Would, heedless of a broken pate,  
Stand like a man asleep, or baulk  
Some wishing guest of knife or fork,  
Or drop and break his master's plate.

At night he oft would start and wake  
Like a lover, and began  
In a wild measure songs to make  
On moor, and glen, and rocky lake,  
And on the heart of man.

And on the universal sky—  
And the wide earth's bosom green,—  
And the sweet, strange mystery  
Of what beyond these things may lie,  
And yet remain unseen.
For in his thought he visited
The spots in which, ere dead and damned,
He his wayward life had led;
Yet knew not whence the thoughts were fed,
Which thus his fancy crammed.

And these obscure remembrances
Stirred such harmony in Peter,
That whosoever he should please,
He could speak of rocks and trees
In poetic metre.

For though it was without a sense
Of memory, yet he remembered well
Many a ditch and quick-set fence;
Of lakes he had intelligence,
He knew something of heath, and fell.

He had also dim recollections
Of pedlars tramping on their rounds;
Milk-pans and pails; and odd collections
Of saws, and proverbs; and reflections
Old parsons make in burying-grounds.

But Peter's verse was clear, and came
Announcing from the frozen hearth
Of a cold age, that none might tame
The soul of that diviner flame
It augured to the Earth.

Like gentle rains, on the dry plains,
Making that green which late was grey,
Or like the sudden moon, that stains
Some gloomy chamber's window panes
With a broad light like day.

For language was in Peter's hand,
Like clay, while he was yet a potter;
And he made songs for all the land,
Sweet both to feel and understand,
As pipkins late to mountain Cotter.

And Mr. —- , the bookseller,
Gave twenty pounds for some;— then
scorning
A footman's yellow coat to wear,
Peter, too proud of heart, I fear,
Instantly gave the Devil warning.

Whereat the Devil took offence,
And swore in his soul a great oath then,
" That for his damned impertinence,
He'd bring him to a proper sense
Of what was due to gentlemen!" —

PART THE SIXTH.

Damnation.

"O that mine enemy had written
A book!"— cried Job:— a fearful curse;
If to the Arab, as the Briton,
Twas galling to be critic-bitten:—
The Devil to Peter wished no worse.

When Peter's next new book found vent,
The Devil to all the first Reviews
A copy of it slily sent,
With five-pound note as compliment,
And this short notice— "Pray abuse."

Then seriatim, month and quarter,
Appeared such mad tirades.— One said—
"Peter seduced Mrs. Foy's daughter,
Then drowned the mother in Ullswater,
The last thing as he went to bed."

Another— "Let him shave his head!
Where's Dr. Willis!— Or is he joking?
What does the rascal mean or hope,
No longer imitating Pope,
In that barbarian Shakespeare poking!"

One more, "Is incest not enough!
And must there be adultery too?
Grace after meat! Miserable and Liar!
Thief! Blackguard! Scoundrel! Fool! Hell-fire
Is twenty times too good for you.

"By that last book of yours we think
You've double damned yourself to scorn;
We warned you whilst yet on the brink
You stood. From your black name will shrink
The babe that is unborn."

All these Reviews the Devil made
Up in a parcel, which he had
Safely to Peter's house conveyed.
For carriage, ten-pence Peter paid—
Untied them— read them— went half mad.

"What!" cried he, "this is my reward
For nights of thought, and days of toil!
Do poets, but to be abhorred
By men of whom they never heard,
Consume their spirits' oil?"

"What have I done to them—and who
Is Mrs. Foy! 'Tis very cruel
To speak of me and Emma so!
Adultery! God defend me! Oh!
I've half a mind to fight a duel."

"Or," cried he, a grave look collecting,
"Is it my genius, like the moon,
Sets those who stand her face inspecting,
That face within their brain reflecting,
Like a crazed bell-chime, out of tune!"
For Peter did not know the town,
But thought, as country readers do,
For half a guinea or a crown,
He bought oblivion or renown
From God's own voice* in a review.

All Peter did on this occasion
Was, writing some sad stuff in prose.
It is a dangerous invasion
When poets criticise; their station
Is to delight, not pose.

The Devil then sent to Leipsic fair,
For Bön's translation of Kant's book;
A world of words, tail foremost, where
Right—wrong—false—true—and foul—and fair,
As in a lottery-wheel are shook.

Five thousand crammed octavo pages
Of German psychologies,—he
Who his furor verborum assuages
Thereon, deserves just seven months' wages
More than will'er be due to me.

I looked on them nine several days,
And then I saw that they were bad;
A friend, too, spoke in their dispraise,—
He never read them;—with amaze
I found Sir William Drummond had.

When the book came, the Devil sent
It to P. Verbovale, Esquire,
With a brief note of compliment,
By that night's Carlisle mail. It went,
And set his soul on fire.

Fire, which ex luce praebens sumum,
Made him beyond the bottom see
Of truth's clear well—when I and you Ma'am,
Go, as we shall do, subter humum,
We may know more than he.

Now Peter ran to seed in soul
Into a walking paradox;
For he was neither part nor whole,
Nor good, nor bad—nor knave nor fool,
—Among the woods and rocks.

Furious he rode, where late he ran,
Lashing and spurring his tame hobby;
Turned to a formal puritan,
A solemn and unsexual man,—
He half believed While Obi,
This steed in vision he would ride,
High trotting over nine-inch bridges,
With Flibbertigibbet, imp of pride,
Mocking and mowing by his side—
A mad-brained goblin for a guide—
Over corn-fields, gates, and hedges.

* Vox populi, vox dei. As Mr. Godwin truly observes
of a more famous saying, of some merit as a popular
maxim, but totally destitute of philosophical accuracy.

† Quad, Qui velata eras — e. c. all the words which have
been, are, or may be expended by, for, against, with, or on
him. A sufficient proof of the utility of this history. Peter's
progenitor who selected this name seems to have possessed
a pure anticipated cognition of the nature and modesty of
this ornament of his posterity.

After these ghastly rides, he came
Home to his heart, and found from thence
Much stolen of its accustomed flame;
His thoughts grew weak, drowsy, and lame
Of their intelligence.

To Peter's view, all seemed one hue;
He was no whig, he was no Tory;
No Deist and no Christian he;—
He got so subtle, that to be
Nothing, was all his glory.

One single point in his belief
From his organisation sprung,
The heart-enrooted faith, the chief
Ear in his doctrines' blighted sheaf,
That "happiness is wrong;"

So thought Calvin and Dominic;
So think their fierce successors, who
Even now would neither stint nor stick
Our flesh from off our bones to pick,
If they might "do their do."

His morals thus were undermined—
The old Peter—the hard, old Potter
Was born anew within his mind;
He grew dull, harsh, sly, unrefined,
As when he tramped beside the Otter*.

In the death hues of agony
Lambently flashing from a fish,
Now Peter felt amused to see
Shades like a rainbow's rise and flee,
Mixed with a certain hungry wish.

So in his Country's dying face
He looked—and lovely as she lay,
Seeking in vain his last embrace,
Wailing her own abandoned case,
With hardened sneer he turned away:

And coolly to his own soul said:—
"Do you not think that we might make
A poem on her when she's dead?—
Or, no—a thought is in my head—
Her shroud for a new sheet I'll take.

"My wife wants one.—Let who will bury
This mangled corpse! And I and you,
My dearest Soul, will then make merry,
As the Prince Regent did with Sherry,—
Ay—and at last desert me too."

* A famous river in the new Atlantis of the Dynastophic Pantisocraticists.
† See the description of the beautiful colours produced
during the agonising death of a number of trout, in the
fourth part of a long poem in blank verse, published
within a few years. That poem contains curious evidence
of the gradual hardening of a strong but circumscribed
sensibility, of the perversion of a penetrating but panic-
stricken understanding. The author might have derived
a lesson which he had probably forgotten from these sweet
and sublime verses.

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

‡ Nature.
And so his Soul would not be gay,
   But moaned within him; like a fawn
Moaning within a cave, it lay
Wounded and wasting, day by day,
Till all its life of life was gone.

As troubled skies stain waters clear,
The storm in Peter's heart and mind
Now made his verses dark and queer:
They were the ghosts of what they were,
Shaking dim grave-clothes in the wind.

For he now raved enormous folly,
   Of Baptisms, Sunday-schools, and Graves,
"Would make George Colman melancholy,
To have heard him, like a male Molly,
Chaunting those stupid staves.

Yet the Reviews, who heaped abuse
On Peter while he wrote for freedom,
So soon as in his song they spy,
The folly which soothes tyranny,
Praise him, for those who feed 'em.

— He was a man, too great to scan;—
A planet lost in truth's keen rays:—
His virtue, awful and prodigious;—
He was the most sublime, religious,
Pure-minded Poet of these days."

As soon as he read that, cried Peter,
"Eureka! I have found the way
To make a better thing of metre
Than e'er was made by living creature
Up to this blessed day."

Then Peter wrote odes to the Devil;—
In one of which he meekly said:
"May Carnage and Slaughter,
Thy niece and thy daughter,
May Rapine and Famine,
Thy gorge ever cramming,
Glut thee with living and dead!

"May death and damnation,
   And consternation,
Fit up from hell with pure intent!
Slash them at Manchester,
Glasgow, Leeds and Chester;
Drench all with blood from Avon to Trent.

"Let thy body-guard yeomen
Hew down babes and women,
And laugh with bold triumph till Heaven
be rent,
When Moloch in Jewry,
Munched children with fury,
It was thou, Devil, dining with pure intent."

PART THE SEVENTH.

Double Damnation.

Then the Devil knew his proper cue.—
Soon as he read the ode, he drove
To his friend Lord Mac Murderhouse's,
A man of interest in both houses,
And said:— "For money or for love
   Find some cure or sinecure;
To feed from the superfluous taxes,
A friend of ours—a poet—fewer
Have fluttered faster to the lure
Than he." His lordship stands and racks his

Stupid brains, while one might count
As many beads as he had boroughs,—
At length replies; from his mean front,
Like one who rubs out an account,
Smoothing away the unmeaning furrows:

"It happens fortunately, dear Sir,
I can. I hope I need require
No pledge from you, that he will stir
In our affairs,—like Oliver,
That he'll be worthy of his hire."

These words exchanged, the news sent off
To Peter, home the Devil hied,—
Took to his bed; he had no cough,
No doctor,—meat and drink enough,—
Yet that same night he died.

The Devil's corpse was leaded down;
His decent heirs enjoyed his pelf,
Mourning-coaches, many a one,
Followed his hearse along the town:—
   Where was the devil himself?

When Peter heard of his promotion,
His eyes grew like two stars for bliss:
There was a bow of sleek devotion,
Engendering in his back; each motion
Seemed a Lord's shoe to kiss.

He hired a house, bought plate, and made
A genteel drive up to his door,
With sifted gravel neatly laid,—
As if defying all who said,
Peter was ever poor.

* It is curious to observe how often extremes meet.
Cobbett and Peter use the same language for a different
purpose: Peter is in earnest; Cobbett
Cobbett is, however, more mischievous than Peter, because
he pollutes a holy and now unconquerable cause with the
principles of legitimate murder: whilst the other only
makes a bad one ridiculous and odious.
If either Peter or Cobbett should see this note, each will
feel more indignation at being compared to the other than
at any censure implied in the moral perversion laid to
their charge.
But a disease soon struck into
The very life and soul of Peter—
He walked about— slept— had the hue
Of health upon his cheeks— and few
Dug better— none a heartier eater.

And yet a strange and horrid curse
Clung upon Peter, night and day,
Month after month the thing grew worse,
And deadlier than in this my verse,
I can find strength to say.

Peter was dull—he was at first
Dull—O, so dull— so very dull!
Whether he talked, wrote, or rehearsed—
Still with this dulness was he cursed—
Dull— beyond all conception— dull.

No one could read his books— no mortal,
But a few natural friends, would hear him ;
The parson came not near his portal;
His state was like that of the immortal
Described by Swift— no man could bear him.

His sister, wife, and children yawned,
With a long, slow, and drear ennui,
All human patience far beyond ;
Their hopes of Heaven each would have pawned,
Any where else to be.

But in his verse, and in his prose,
The essence of his dulness was
Concentrated and compressed so close,
'Twould have made Guatimozin doze
On his red gridiron of brass.

A printer's boy, folding those pages,
Fell slumbrously upon one side;
Like those famed seven who slept three ages.
To wakeful frenzy's vigil rages,
As opiates, were the same applied.

Even the Reviewers who were hired
To do the work of his reviewing,
With adamantine nerves, grew tired ;—
Gaping and torpid they retired,
To dream of what they should be doing.

And worse and worse, the drowsy curse
Yawned in him, till it grew a pest—
A wide contagious atmosphere,
Creeping like cold through all things near :
A power to infect and to infest.

His servant-maids and dogs grew dull ;
His kitten, late a sportive elf,
The woods and lakes, so beautiful,
Of dim stupidity were full,
All grew dull as Peter's self.

The earth under his feet— the springs,
Which lived within it a quick life,
The air, the winds of many wings,
That fan it with new murmurings,
Were dead to their harmonious strife.

The birds and beasts within the wood,
The insects, and each creeping thing,
Were now a silent multitude;
Love's work was left unwrought— no brood
Near Peter's house took wing.

And every neighbouring cottager
Stupidly yawned upon the other :
No jack-ass brayed; no little cur
Cocked up his ears;— no man would stir
To save a dying mother.

Yet all from that charmed district went
But some half-idiot and half-knave,
Who rather than pay any rent,
Would live with marvellous content,
Over his father's grave.

No bailiff dared within that space,
For fear of the dull charm, to enter;
A man would bear upon his face,
For fifteen months in any case,
The yawn of such a venture.

Seven miles above— below— around—
This pest of dulness holds its sway ;
A ghastly life without a sound ;
To Peter's soul the spell is bound—
How should it ever pass away!
MISCELLANEOUS.

LINES,
WRITTEN DURING THE CASTLEBREAGH ADMINISTRATION.

Corpses are cold in the tomb,
Stones on the pavement are dumb,
Abortions are dead in the womb,
And their mothers look pale—like the white shore
Of Albion, free no more.

Her sons are as stones in the way—
They are masses of senseless clay—
They are trodden and move not away,—
The abortion, with which she travailleth,
Is Liberty—smitten to death.

Then trample and dance, thou Oppressor,
For thy Victim is no redressor,
Thou art sole lord and possessor
Of her corpses, and cloths, and abortions—they pave
Thy path to the grave.

Hearest thou the festival din,
Of death, and destruction, and sin,
And wealth, crying Havoc! within—
*Tis the Bacchanal triumph, which makes truth
Thine Epithalamium. 

Ay, marry thy ghastly wife!
Let fear, and disquiet, and strife
Spread thy couch in the chamber of life,
Marry Ruin, thou tyrant! and God be thy guide
To the bed of the bride.

SONG
TO THE MEN OF ENGLAND.

Men of England, wherefore plough
For the lords who lay ye low!
Wherefore weave with toil and care,
The rich robes your tyrants wear!

Wherefore feed, and clothe, and save,
From the cradle to the grave,
Those ungrateful drones who would
Drain your sweat—nay, drink your blood!

Wherefore, Bees of England, forge
Many a weapon, chain, and scourge,
That those stingless drones may spoil
The forced produce of your toil!

Have ye leisure, comfort, calm,
Shelter, food, love's gentle balm!
Or what is it ye buy so dear
With your pain and with your fear?

The seed ye sow, another reaps;
The wealth ye find, another keeps;
The robes ye weave, another wears;
The arms ye forge, another bears.

Sow seed—but let no tyrant reap;
Find wealth,—let no impostor heap;
Weave robes,—let not the idle wear;
Forge arms,—in your defence to bear.

Shrink to your cellars, holes, and cells;
In halls ye deck, another dwells.
Why shake the chains ye wrought! Ye see
The steel ye tempered glance on ye.

With plough and spade, and hoe and loom,
Trace your grave, and build your tomb.
And weave your winding-sheet, till fair
England be your sepulchre.

S IMILES.
FOR TWO POLITICAL CHARACTERS OF 1813.

As from an ancestral oak
Two empty ravens sound their clarion,
Yell by yell, and croak by croak,
When they scent the noonday smoke
Of fresh human carrion:—

As two gibbering night-birds flit,
From their bowers of deadly hue,
Through the night to frighten it,
When the morn is in a fit,
And the stars are none or few:—

As a shark and dog-fish wait
Under an Atlantic isle,
For the negro-ship, whose freight
In the theme of their debate,
Wrinkling their red gills the while—

Are ye, two vultures sick for battle,
Two scorpions under one wet stone,
Two bloodless wolves whose dry throats rattle,
Two crows perched on the murrained cattle,
Two vipers tangled into one.
AN ODE,
TO THE ASSERTORS OF LIBERTY.

Arise, arise, arise!
There is blood on the earth that denies ye bread;
Be your wounds like eyes
To weep for the dead, the dead, the dead.
What other grief were it just to pay!
Your sons, your wives, your brethren, were they;
Who said they were slain on the battle day!

Awaken, awaken, awaken!
The slave and the tyrant are twin-born foes;
Be the cold chains shaken
To the dust, where your kindred repose, repose:
Their bones in the grave will start and move,
When they hear the voices of those they love,
Most loud in the holy combat above.

Wave, wave high the banner!
When Freedom is riding to conquest by:
Though the slaves that fan her
Be famine and toil, giving sigh for sigh.
And ye who attend her imperial car,
Lift not your hands in the banded war,
But in her defence whose children ye are.

Glory, glory, glory,
To those who have greatly suffered and done!
Never name in story
Was greater than that which ye shall have won.
Conquerors have conquered their foes alone,
Whose revenge, pride, and power, they have overthrown:
Ride ye, more victorious, over your own.

Bind, bind every brow
With crowns of violet, ivy, and pine:
Hide the blood-stains now
With hues which sweet nature has made divine,
Green strength, azure hope, and eternity.
But let not the pansy among them be;
Ye were injured, and that means memory.

ENGLAND IN 1819.

An old, mad, blind, despised, and dying king,—
Princes, the drops of their dull race, who flow
Through public scorn—mud from a muddy spring,—
Rulers, who neither see, nor feel, nor know,
But leech-like to their fainting country cling,
Till they drop, blind in blood, without a blow,—
A people starved and stabbed in the untilled field,—
An army, which liberteide and prey
Makes as a two-edged sword to all who wield,
Golden and sanguine laws which tempt and slay,—
Religion Christless, Godless—a book sealed;
A Senate—Time’s worst statute unrepealed,—
Are graves, from which a glorious Phantom may Burst, to illumine our tempestuous day.

ODE TO HEAVEN.

CHORUS OF SPIRITS.

FIRST SPIRIT.

Palace-roof of cloudless nights!
Paradise of golden lights!
Deep, immeasurable, vast,
Which art now, and which wert then!
Of the present and the past,
Of the eternal where and when,
Presence-chamber, temple, home,
Ever-canopying dome,
Of acts and ages yet to come!

Glorious shapes have life in thee,
Earth, and all earth’s company;
Living globes which ever throng
Thy deep chasms and wildrnesses;
And green worlds that glide along;
And swift stars with flashing tresses;
And icy moons most cold and bright,
And mighty suns beyond the night,
Atoms of intensest light.

Even thy name is as a god,
Heaven! for thou art the abode
Of that power which is the glass
Wherein man his nature sees.
Generations as they pass
Worship thee with bended knees.
Their unremaining gods and they
Like a river roll away;
Thou remainest such alway.

SECOND SPIRIT.

Thou art but the mind’s first chamber,
Round which its young fancies clamber,
Like weak insect in a cave,
Lighted up by stalactites;
But the portal of the grave,
Where a world of new delights
Will make thy best glories seem
But a dim and noonday gleam
From the shadow of a dream!

THIRD SPIRIT.

Peace! the abyss is wreathed with scorn
At your presumption, atom-born!
What is heaven? and what are ye
Who its brief expanded inherit?
What are suns and spheres which flee
With the instinct of that spirit
Of which ye are but a part?
Drops which Nature’s mighty heart
Drives through thinnest veins. Depart!

What is heaven? a globe of dew,
Filling in the morning new
Some-eyed flower, whose young leaves waken
On an imagined world:
Constellated suns unshaken,
Orbits measureless, are furled
In that frail and fading sphere,
With ten millions gathered there,
To tremble, gleam, and disappear.
ODE TO THE WEST WIND.*

I.

O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,
Yellow, and black, and pale, and hecticred,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou,
Who chariost to their dark wintry bed
The winged seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the spring shall blow
Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odours plain and hill:

Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and preserver; hear, oh hear!

II.

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's com-
motion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean,
Angels of rain and lightning: there are spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head
Of some fierce Maenad, even from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height,
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge
Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the doom of a vast sepulchre,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might
Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail, will burst: Oh hear!

III.

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,
All overgrown with azure moss and flowers
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers
Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know
Thy voice, and suddenly grow grey with fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves: Oh hear!

IV.

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share
The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than thou, O uncontrollable! If even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be
The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip the skyey speed
Scarce seemed a vision, I would ne'er have striven
As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
Oh! lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!
A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
One too like thee: tameless, and swift, and proud.

V.

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies
Will take from both a deep autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, spirit fierce,
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!
Drive my dead thoughts over the universe
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth;
And, by the incantation of this verse,
Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips to unawakened earth
The trumpet of a prophecy! O wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

*This poem was conceived and chiefly written in a
wood that skirtsthe Arno, near Florence, and on a day
when that tempestuous wind, whose temperature is at
once mild and animating, was collecting the vapours which
pour down the autumnal rains. They began, as I foresaw,
at sunset, with a violent tempest of hail and rain, attended
by that magnificent thunder and lightning peculiar to the
Cisalpine regions.
The phenomenon alluded to at the conclusion of the third
stanza is well known to naturalists. The vegetation at the
bottom of the sea, of rivers, and of lakes, sympathises
with that of the land in the change of seasons, and is con-
sequently influenced by the winds which announce it.
Poets are on this cold earth,
As cameleons might be,
Hidden from their early birth
In a cave beneath the sea;
Where light is, cameleons change!
Where love is not, poets do:
Fame is love disguised: if few
Find either, never think it strange
That poets range.

Yet dare not stain with wealth or power
A poet's free and heavenly mind:
If bright cameleons should devour
Any food but beams and wind,
They would grow as earthly soon
As their brother lizards are.
Children of a sunnier star,
Spirits from beyond the moon,
Oh, refuse the boon!

TO WILLIAM SHELLEY.
(With what truth I may say—
Roma! Roma! Roma!
Non piu come era prima!)

My lost William, thou in whom
Some bright spirit lived, and did
That decaying robe consume
Which its lustre faintly hid,
Here its ashes find a tomb,
But beneath this pyramid
Thou art not—if a thing divine
Like thee can die, thy funeral shrine
Is thy mother's grief and mine.

Where art thou, my gentle child!
Let me think thy spirit feeds,
With its life intense and mild,
The love of living leaves and weeds,
Among these tombs and ruins wild;—
Let me think that through low seeds
Of the sweet flowers and sunny grass,
Into their hues and scents may pass,
A portion———

June, 1819.

ON
THE MEDUSA OF LEONARDO DA VINCI,
IN THE FLORENTINE GALLERY.

It lieth, gazing on the midnight sky,
Upon the cloudy mountain peak supine;
Below, far lands are seen tremblingly;
Its horror and its beauty are divine.

Upon its lips and eyelids seems to lie
Loveliness like a shadow, from which shine,
Fiery and lurid, struggling underneath,
The agonies of anguish and of death.

Yet it is less the horror than the grace
Which turns the gazer's spirit into stone
Whereon the lineaments of that dead face
Are graven, till the characters be grown
Into itself, and thought no more can trace;
'Tis the melodious hues of beauty thrown
Athwart the darkness and the glare of pain,
Which humanize and harmonize the strain.

And from its head as from one body grow,
As [ ] grass out of a watery rock,
Hairs which are vipers, and they curl and flow,
And their long tangles in each other lock,
With unending involutions show
Their mailed radiance, as it were to mock
The torture and the death within, and saw
The solid air with many a ragged jaw.

And from a stone beside, a poisonous eft
Peeps idly into these Gorgonian eyes;
Whilst in the air a ghastly bat, bereft
Of sense, has flitted with a mad surprise
Out of the cave this hideous light hath cleft,
And he comes hastening like a moth that hies
After a taper; and the midnight sky
Flares, a light more dread than obscurity.

'Tis the tempestuous loveliness of terror;
For from the serpents gleams a brazen glare
Kindled by that inextricable error,
Which makes a thrilling vapour of the air
Become a [ ] and ever-shifting mirror
Of all the beauty and the terror there—
A woman's countenance, with serpent locks,
Gazing in death on heaven from those wet rocks.

Florence, 1819.
EDITOR'S NOTE ON POEMS OF 1819.

NOTE ON THE POEMS OF 1819.

BY THE EDITOR.

Though Shelley's first eager desire to excite his countrymen to resist openly the oppressions existing during "the good old times" had faded with early youth, still his warmest sympathies were for the people. He was a republican, and loved a democracy. He looked on all human beings as inheriting an equal right to possess the dearest privileges of our nature, the necessaries of life, when fairly earned by labour, and intellectual instruction. His hatred of any despotism, that looked upon the people as not to be consulted or protected from want and ignorance, was intense. He was residing near Leghorn, at Villa Valsovan, writing The Cenci, when the news of the Manchester Massacre reached us; it roused in him violent emotions of indignation and compassion. The great truth that the many, if accordant and resolute, could control the few, as was shown some years after, made him long to teach his injured countrymen how to resist. Inspired by these feelings, he wrote the Masque of Anarchy, which he sent to his friend, Leigh Hunt, to be inserted in the Examiner, of which he was then the Editor.

"I did not insert it," Leigh Hunt writes in his valuable and interesting preface to this poem, when he printed it in 1832, "because I thought that the public at large had not become sufficiently discerning to do justice to the sincerity and kind-heartedness of his spirit, that walked in this flaming robe of verse." Days of outrage have passed away, and with them the exasperation that would cause such an appeal to the many to be injurious. Without being aware of them, they at one time acted on his suggestions, and gained the day; but they rose when human life was respected by the minister in power; such was not the case during the administration which excited Shelley’s abhorrence.

The poem was written for the people, and is therefore in a more popular tone than usual; portions strike as abrupt and unpolished, but many stanzas are all his own. I heard him repeat, and admired those beginning,—

My Father Time is old and grey,

before I knew to what poem they were to belong. But the most touching passage is that which describes the blessed effects of liberty; they might make a patriot of any man, whose heart was not wholly closed against his humbler fellow-creatures.

Shelley loved the people, and respected them as often more virtuous, as always more suffering, and, therefore, more deserving of sympathy, than the great. He believed that a clash between the two classes of society was inevitable, and he eagerly ranged himself on the people's side. He had an idea of publishing a series of poems adapted expressly to commemorate their circumstances and wrongs—he wrote a few, but in those days of prosecution for libel they could not be printed. They are not among the best of his productions, a writer being always shackled when he endeavours to write down to the comprehension of those who could not understand or feel a highly imaginative style; but they show his earnestness, and with what heartfelt compassion he went home to the direct point of injury—that oppression is detestable, as being the parent of starvation, nakedness, and ignorance. Besides these outpourings of compassion and indignation, he had meant to adorn the cause he loved with loftier poetry of glory and triumph—such is the scope of the Ode to the Assertors of Liberty. He sketched also a new version of our national anthem, as addressed to Liberty.

My Father Time is old and grey,
She is thine own pure soul
Moulding the mighty whole,
God save the Queen!

She is thine own deep love
Rained down from heaven above,
Wherever she rest or move,
God save our Queen!

Wilder her enemies
In their own dark disguise,
God save our Queen!
All earthly things that dare
Her sacred name to bear,
Strip them, as kings are, bare;
God save the Queen!

Be her eternal throne
Built in our hearts alone,
God save the Queen!
Let the oppressor hold
Canopied seats of gold;
She sits enthroned of old
O'er our hearts Queen.

Lips touched by seraphim
Breathe out the choral hymn
God save the Queen!
Sweet as if Angels sang,
Loud as the trumpet's clang
Wakening the world's dead gang;
God save the Queen!

Shelley had suffered severely from the death of our son during this summer. His heart, attuned to every kindly affection, was full of burning love for his offspring. No words can express the anguish he felt when his elder children were torn from him. In his first resentment against the Chancellor, on the passing of the decree, he had written a curse, in which there breathes, besides haughty indignation, all the tenderness of a father's love, which could imagine and fondly dwell upon its loss and the consequences. It is as follows:—

TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR.
Thy country's curse is on thee, darkest Crest
Of that foul, knotted, many-headed worm,
Which rends our Mother's bosom—Priestly Pest!*
Masked Resurrection of a buried form!

Thy country's curse is on thee! Justice sold,
Truth trampled, Nature's landmarks overthrown,
And hopes of fraud-accumulated gold,
Plead, loud as thunder, at Destruction's throne.

And whilst that slow sure Angel, which awe stands,
Watching the beck of Mutability,
Delays to execute her high commands,
And, though a nation weeps, sparest thine and thee;

O let a father's curse be on thy soul,
And let a daughter's hope be on thy tomb,
And both on thy grey head, a leaden cowl,
To weigh thee down to thine approaching doom!

* The Star Chamber.
afterwards we lost at Rome, written under the idea that we might suddenly be forced to cross the sea, so to preserve him. This poem, as well as the one previously quoted, were not written to exhibit the pangs of distress to the public; they were the spontaneous outbursts of a man who brooded over his wrongs and woes, and was impelled to shed the grace of his genius over the uncontrollable emotions of his heart:—

The billows on the beach are leaping around it,  
The bark is weak and frail.  
The sealooks black, and the cloudsthat bound it  
Darkly strewthegale.

Come with me, thou delightful child.  
Come with me, thoughthewave iswild.  
And thewindsare loose, we must not stay,  
Or theslavesoflaw may rendtheeaway.

They have taken thy brother and sister dear,  
They have made them unfitforthee;  
They have witheredthesmile and driedthetear,  
Which shouldhave beensacredtome.

To a blightingfaith and a causeofcrime  
They have bound them slavesinyouthlytime,  
And theywillcursemy name and thee.  
Becausewe fearlessare and free.

Come tbou,belovedas thouart,  
Another aleepethstill,  
Near thysweetmother'sanxiousheart,  
Which thouwithjoywiltfill;

And which indistantlandswillbe  
The dearestplaymateunto thee.

Fear notthetyrantswillruleforever,  
Or thepriestsoftheevilfaith;  
They standon thebrinkofthatragingriver.  
Whose waves thoyhave taintedwithdeath.

It is fed from thedepth ofa thousanddells,  
Around them itfoamsand ragesand swells;  
And theirswordsand theirsceptresI floatingsee,  
Like wreckson thesurgeofeternity.

Rest, rest, shrieknot, thougentlechild!  
The rockingoftheboatthoufearest.  
The cold sprayand the clamourwild?  
There sitbetweenus two, thou dearest;

Me and thy mother—wellwe know  
The stormat which thoutremblestso.  
With allitsdark and hungrygraves,  
Less cruelthan the savage slaves  
Who huntthee o'er those shelteringwaves.

This hour will in thy memory  
Be a dream of daysforgotten;  
We soon shall dwell by theazure sea  
Of serene and golden Italy,

Or Greece, the Mother of the free.  
And I will teach thineinfant tongue  
To call upon theirheroesold  
In their ownlanguage, and will mould  
Thy growing spirit in the flame  
Of Grecianlove; that by such name  
A patriot's birthright thou mayst claim.

I ought to observe that the fourth verse of this effusion is introduced in Rosalind and Helen.

When afterwards this child died at Rome, he wrote, apropos of the English burying-ground in that city, "This spot is the repository of a sacred loss, of which the yearnings of a parent's heart are now prophetic; he is rendered immortal by love, as his memory is by death. My beloved child lies buried here. I envy death the body far less than the oppressors the minds of those whom they have torn from me. The one can only kill the body, the other crushes the affections."

In this new edition I have added to the poems of this year, "Peter Bell the Third." A critique on Wordsworth's Peter Bell reached us at Leghorn, which amused Shelley exceedingly and suggested this poem.

I need scarcely observe that nothing personal to the Author of Peter Bell is intended in this poem. No man ever admired Wordsworth's poetry more;—he read it perpetually, and taught others to appreciate its beauties. This poem is, like all others written by Shelley, ideal. He conceived the idealism of a poet—a man of lofty and creative genius,—quitting the glorious calling of discovering and announcing the beautiful and good, to support and propagate ignorant prejudices and pernicious errors; imparting to the unenlightened, not that ardour for truth and spirit of toleration which Shelley looked on as the sources of the moral improvement and happiness of mankind; but false and injurious opinions, that evil was good, and that ignorance and force were the best allies of purity and virtue. His idea was that a man gifted even as transcendently as the Author of Peter Bell, with the highest qualities of genius, must, if he fostered such errors, be infected with dulness. This poem was written, as a warning—not as a narration of the reality. He was unacquainted personally with Wordsworth or with Coleridge, (to whom he alludes in the fifth part of the poem,) and therefore, I repeat, his poem is purely ideal;—it contains something of criticism on the compositions of these great poets, but nothing injurious to the men themselves.

No poem contains more of Shelley's peculiar views, with regard to the errors into which many of the wisest have fallen, and of the pernicious effects of certain opinions on society. Much of it is beautifully written—and though, like the burlesque drama of Swellfoot, it must be looked on as a playing-thing, it has so much merit and poetry—so much of himself in it, that it cannot fail to interest greatly, and by right belongs to the world for whose instruction and benefit it was written.
POEMS WRITTEN IN MDCCCXX.

THE SENSITIVE PLANT.

PART I

A Sensitive Plant in a garden grew,
And the young winds fed it with silver dew,
And it opened its fan-like leaves to the light,
And closed them beneath the kisses of night.

And the Spring arose on the garden fair,
And the Spirit of Love fell everywhere;
And each flower and herb on Earth's dark breast
Rose from the dreams of its wintry rest.

But none ever trembled and panted with bliss
In the garden, the field, or the wilderness,
Like a doe in the noontide with love's sweet want,
As the companionless Sensitive Plant.

The snowdrop, and then the violet,
Arose from the ground with warm rain wet,
And their breath was mixed with fresh odour, sent
From the turf, like the voice and the instrument.

Then the pied windflowers and the tulip tall,
And narcissi, the fairest among them all,
Who gaze on their eyes in the stream's recess,
Till they die of their own dear loveliness.

And the Naiad-like lily of the vale,
Whom youth makes so fair and passion so pale,
That the light of its tremulous bells is seen
Through their pavilions of tender green;

And the hyacinth purple, and white, and blue,
Which flung from its bells a sweet peal new
Of music so delicate, soft, and intense,
It was felt like an odour within the sense;

And the rose like a nymph to the bath addrest,
Which unveiled the depth of her glowing breast,
Till, fold after fold, to the fainting air
The soul of her beauty and love lay bare;

And the wand-like lily, which lifted up,
As a Mienad, its moonlight-coloured cup,
Till the fiery star, which is its eye,
Gazed through the clear dew on the tender sky;

And the jessamine faint, and the sweet tuberose,
The sweetest flower for scent that blows;
And all rare blossoms from every clime
Grew in that garden in perfect prime.

And on the stream whose inconstant bosom
Was prankt, under boughs of embowering blossom,
With golden and green light, slanting through
Their heaven of many a tangled hue.

Broad water-lilies lay tremulously,
And starry river-buds glimmered by,
And around them the soft stream did glide and dance
With a motion of sweet sound and radiance.

And the sinuous paths of lawn and of moss,
Which led through the garden along and across,
Some open at once to the sun and the breeze,
Some lost among bowers of blossoming trees.

Were all paved with daisies and delicate bells,
As fair as the fabulous asphodels,
And flowrets which drooping as day drooped too,
Fell into pavilions, white, purple, and blue,
To roof the glow-worm from the evening dew.

And from this undefiled Paradise
The flowers (as an infant's awakening eyes
Smile on its mother, whose singing sweet
Can first lull, and at last must awaken it),

When Heaven's blithe winds had unfolded them,
As mine-lamps enkindle a hidden gem,
Shone smiling to Heaven, and every one
Shared joy in the light of the gentle sun;

For each one was interpenetrated
With the light and the odour its neighbour shed,
Like young lovers whom youth and love make dear,
Wrapped and filled by their mutual atmosphere.

But the Sensitive Plant, which could give small fruit
Of the love which it felt from the leaf to the root,
Received more than all, it loved more than ever,
Where none wanted but it, could belong to the giver—

For the sensitive Plant has no bright flower;
Radiance and odour are not its dower;
It loves, even like Love, its deep heart is full,
It desires what it has not, the beautiful!

The light winds, which from unsustaining wings
Shed the music of many murmurings;
The beams which dart from many a star
Of the flowers whose hues they bear afar;
The plumed insectsswift and free,  
Like golden boats on a sunny sea,  
Laden with light and odour, which pass  
Over the gleam of the living grass;

The unseen clouds of the dew, which lie  
Like fire in the flowers till the sun rides high,  
Then wander like spirits among the spheres,  
Each cloud faint with the fragrance it bears;

The quivering vapours of dim noontide,  
Which, like a sea o’er the warm earth glide,  
In which every sound, and odour, and beam,  
Move, as reeds in a single stream;

Each and all like ministering angels were  
For the Sensitive Plant sweet joy to bear,  
Whilst the lagging hours of the day went by  
Like windless clouds o’er a tender sky.

And when evening descended from heaven above,  
And the Earth was all rest, and the air was all love,  
And delight, though less bright, was far more deep,  
And the day’s veil fell from the world of sleep,  
And the beasts, and the birds, and the insects were  
In an ocean of dreams without a sound;  
(drowned  
Whose waves never mark, though they ever impress  
The lights and which paves it, consciousness;  
(Only overhead the sweet nightingale  
Ever sang more sweet as the day might fail,  
And snatches of its Elysian chant  
Were mixed with the dreams of the Sensitive Plant.)

The Sensitive Plant was the earliest  
Up-gathered into the bosom of rest;  
A sweet child weary of its delight,  
The feeble and yet the favourite,  
Cradled within the embrace of night.

PART II.

There was a Power in this sweet place,  
An Eve in this Eden; a ruling grace  
Which to the flowers, did they waken or dream,  
Was as God is to the starry scheme.

A Lady, the wonder of her kind,  
Whose form was upborne by a lovelymind,  
Which, dilating, had moulded her mien and motion  
Like a sea-flower unfolded beneath the ocean,  
Tended the garden from morn to even:

And all killing insects and gnawing worms,  
And things of obscene and unlovely forms,  
She bore in a basket of Indian woof,  
Into the rough woods far aloof,  
In a basket, of grasses and wild flowers full,  
The freshest her gentle hands could pull  
For the poor banished insects, whose intent,  
Although they did ill, was innocent.

But the bee and the beamlike ephemeris,  
Whose path is the lightning’s, and soft moths that kiss  
The sweet lips of the flowers, and harm not, did she  
Make her attendant angels be.

And many an antenatal tomb,  
Where butterflies dream of the life to come,  
She left clinging round the smooth and dark  
Edge of the odorous cedar bark.

This fairest creature from earliest spring  
Thus moved through the garden ministering  
All the sweet season of summer tide,  
And ere the first leaf looked brown—she died!

PART III.

Three days the flowers of the garden fair,  
Like stars when the noon is awakened, were,  
Or the waves of the Baise, ere luminous  
She floats up through the smoke of Vesuvius.

And on the fourth, the Sensitive Plant  
Felt the sound of the funeral chant,  
And the steps of the bearers, heavy and slow,  
And the sobs of the mourners, deep and low;

The weary sound and the heavy breath,  
And the silent motions of passing death,  
And the small, cold, oppressive, and dank,  
Sent through the pores of the coffin plank;
The dark grass, and the flowers among the grass,
Were bright with tears as the crowd did pass;
From their sighs the wind caught a mournful tone,
And sate in the pines and gave groan for groan.

The garden, once fair, became cold and foul,
Like the corpse of her who had been its soul:
Which at first was lovely as if in sleep,
Then slowly changed, till it grew a heap
To make men tremble who never weep.

Swift summer into the autumn flowed,
And frost in the mist of the morning rode,
Though the noon-day sun looked clear and bright,
Mocking the spoil of the secret night.

The rose-leaves, like flakes of crimson snow,
Paved the turf and the moss below.
The lilies were drooping, and white, and wan,
Like the head and the skin of a dying man.

And Indian plants, of scent and hue
The sweetest that ever were fed on dew,
Leaf after leaf, day by day,
Were massed into the common clay.

And the leaves, brown, yellow, and grey, and red,
And white with the whiteness of what is dead,
Like troops of ghosts on the dry wind past;
Their whistling noise made the birds aghast.

And the gusty winds waked the winged seeds
Out of their birth-place of ugly weeds,
Till they clung round many a sweet flower's stem,
Which rotted into the earth with them.

The water-blooms under the rivulet
Fell from the stalks on which they were set;
And the eddies drove them here and there,
As the winds did those of the upper air.

Then the rain came down, and the broken stalks
Were bent and tangled across the walks;
The leafless net-work of parasite bowers
Massed into ruin, and all sweet flowers.

Between the time of the wind and the snow,
All loathliest weeds began to grow,
Whose coarse leaves were splashed with many a speck,
Like the water-snake's belly and the toad's back.

And thistles, and nettles, and darnels rank,
And the dock, and henbane, and hemlock dank,
Stretch'd out its long and hollow shank,
And stifled the air till the dead wind stank.

And plants, at whose names the verse feels loath,
Filled the place with a monstrous undergrowth,
Prickly, and pulpy, and blistering, and blue,
Livid, and starred with a lurid dew.

And agarics and fungi, with mildew and mould,
Started like mist from the wet ground cold;
Pale, fleshy, as if the decaying dead
With a spirit of growth had been animated!

Spawn, weeds, and filth, a leprous scum,
Made the running rivulet thick and dumb,
And at its outlet, flags huge as stakes
Dammed it up with roots knotted like water-snakes.

And hour by hour, when the air was still,
The vapours arose which have strength to kill:
At morn they were seen, at noon they were felt,
At night they were darkness no star could melt.

And unctuous meteors from spray to spray
Crept and flitted in broad noon-day
Unseen; every branch on which they sate
By a venomous blight was burned and bit.

The Sensitive Plant, like one forbid,
Wheat, and the tears within each lid
Of its folded leaves which together grew,
Were changed to a blight of frozen glue.

For the leaves soon fell, and the branches soon
By the heavy axe of the blast were hewn;
The sap shrank to the root through every pore,
As blood to a heart that will beat no more.

For Winter came: the wind was his whip;
One choppy finger was on his lip:
He had torn the cataracts from the hills,
And they clanked at his girdle like manacles;

His breath was a chain which without a sound
The earth, and the air, and the water bound;
He came, fiercely driven in his chariot-throne
By the tenfold blasts of the arctic zone.

Then the weeds which were forms of living death,
Fled from the frost to the earth beneath:
Their decay and sudden flight from frost
Was but like the vanishing of a ghost!

And under the roots of the Sensitive Plant
The moles and the dormice died for want:
The birds dropped stiff from the frozen air,
And were caught in the branches naked and bare.

First there came down a thawing rain,
And its dull drops froze on the boughs again,
Then there steamed up a freezing dew
Which to the drops of the thaw-rain grew.

And a northern whirlwind, wandering about
Like a wolf that had smelt a dead child out,
Shook the boughs thus laden, and heavy and stiff,
And snapped them off with his rigid grriff.

When winter had gone and spring came back,
The Sensitive Plant was a leafless wreck;
But the mandrakes, and toadstools, and docks, and
darnels,
Rose like the dead from their ruined chamert.
A VISION OF THE SEA.

Tis the terror of tempest. The rags of the sail Are flickering in ribbons within the fierce gale: From the stark night of vapours the dim rain is driven, And when lightning is loosed like a deluge from heaven, She sees the black trunks of the water-sprouts spin, And bend, as if heaven was ruining in, Which they seemed to sustain with their terrible mass As if ocean had sunk from beneath them: they pass To their graves in the deep with an earthquake of sound, And the waves and the thunders, made silent around, Leave the wind to its echo. The vessel, now tossed Through the low trailing rack of the tempest, is lost In the skirts of the thunder-cloud: now down the sweep Of the wind-cloven wave to the chasm of the deep It sinks, and the walls of the watery vale Whose depths of dread calm are unmoved by the gale, Dim mirrors of ruin, hang gleaming about; While the surf, like a chace of stars, like a rout Of death-flames, like whirlpools of fire-flowing iron, With splendour and terror the black ship environ;

Or like sulphur-flakes hurled from a mine of pale In fountains spout o'er it. In many a spire [fire, The pyramid-billows, with white points of brine, In the cope of the lightning inconstantly shine, As piercing the sky from the floor of the sea.

The great ship seems splitting! it cracks as a tree, While an earthquake is splintering its root, ere the blast Of the whirlwind that stript it of branches has past. The intense thunder-balls which are raining from heaven Have shattered its mast, and it stands black and riven. The chinks suck destruction. The heavy dead bulk On the living sea rolls an inanimate bulk, Like a corpse on the clay which is hung'ring to fold Its corruption around it. Meanwhile, from the hold, One deck is burst up from the waters below, And it splits like the icc when the thaw-breezes blow O'er the lakes of the desert! Who sit on the other! Is that all the crew that lie burying each other, Like the dead in a breach, round the foremast! Are those Twin tigers, who burst, when the waters arose, In the agony of terror, their chains in the hold (What now makes them tame, is what then made them bold) Who crouch, side by side, and have driven, like a crank, The deep grip of their claws through the vibrating Are those all! [plank]

Nine weeks the tall vessel had lain On the windless expanse of the watery plain, Where the death-darting sun cast no shadow at noon, And there seemed to be fire in the beams of the moon, Till a lead-coloured fog gathered up from the deep, Whose breath was quick pestilence; then, the cold sleep Crept, like blight through the ears of a thick field of corn, O'er the populous vessel. And even and morn, With their hammocks for coffins the seamen aghast Like dead men the dead limbs of their comrades cast Down the deep, which closed on them above and around, And the sharks and the dog-fish their grave-clothes unbound, And were glutted like Jews with this manna rained down From God on their wilderness. One after one The mariners died; on the eve of this day, When the tempest was gathering in cloudy array, But seven remained. Six the thunder had smitten, And they lie black as mummies on which Time has written His scorn of the embalmer; the seventh, from the deck An oak splinter pierced through his breast and his back, And hung out to the tempest, a wreck on the wreck.
No more! At the helm sits a woman more fair
Than heaven, when, unbinding its star-braided hair,
It sinks with the sun on the earth and the sea.
She clasps a bright child on her upgathered knee,
It laughs at the lightning, it mocks the mixed thunder:
Of the air and the sea, with desire and with wonder
It is beckoning the tigers to rise and come near,
It would play with those eyes where the radiance of fear
Is outshining the meteors; its bosom beats high,
The heart-fire of pleasure has kindled its eye;
Whilst its mother's is lustreless. "Smile not, my child,
But sleep deeply and sweetly, and so be beguiled
Of the pang that awaits us, whatever that be,
And 'tis borne down the mountainous vale of the
Like the dust of its fall, on the whirlwind are cast;
To be after-life what we have been before? [eyes,
The wind has burst out through the chasm, from
As a flood rends its barriers of mountainous
Black as a cormorant the screaming blast,
In settling, it topples, the leeward ports dip;
The tigers leap up when they feel the slow brine
Crawling inch by inch on them; hair, ears, limbs, and eyne,
Stand rigid with horror; a loud, long, hoarse cry
Burst at once from their vitalstremendously,
To be after-life what we have been before? [eyes,
Rebounding, like thunder, from craze to cave,
Mixed with the clash of the lashing rain,
Hurried on by the might of the hurricane:
The hurricane came from the west, and past on
Advances; twelve rowers with the impulse of despair.
Is yet smiling, and playing, and murmuring: so
As of some hideous engine whose brazen teeth smash
Breaching the waves, the lashing wind smashes
Headsawed and sheared, and the whirlwind does reign
And hissings crawl fast o'er the smooth ocean-streams,
Each sound like a centipede. Near this commotion,
Where the gripe of the tiger has wounded the veins,
Swollen with rage, strength, and effort; the whirl
Is the ship! On the verge of the wave where it lay
One tiger is mingled in ghastly affray [battle
With a sea-snake. The foam and the smoke of the
Is the ship! On the verge of the wave where it lay
As an arrowy serpent, pursuing the form
Of the wreck of the vessel peers out of the sea.
Swelling and rising, its head is a mountain top,
To his own with the speed of despair. Lo! a boat
Advances; twelve rowers with the impulse of thought
Urge on the keen keel, the brine foams. At the stern
Three marksmen stand levelling. Hot bullets burn
In the breast of the tiger, which yet bears him on
To his refuge and ruin. One fragment alone,
'Tis dwindling and sinking, 'tis now almost gone,
Of the wreck of the vessel pours out of the sea.
With her left hand she grasps it impecuniously,
With her right she sustains her fair infant. Death, Fear;
Love, Beauty, are mixed in the atmosphere,
Which trembles and burns with the fervour of dread
Around her wild eyes, her bright hand, and her head,
Like a meteor of light o'er the waters! her child
Is yet smiling, and playing, and murmuring: so
The false deep ere the storm. Like a sister and brother
The child and the ocean still smile on each other,
Whilst

Of clear morning, the beams of the sunrise flow in,
Unimpeded, keen, golden, and crystalline,
Banded armies of light and of air; at one gate
They encounter, but interpenetrate.
And that breach in the tempest is widening away,
And the caverns of cloud are torn up by the day,
And the fierce winds are sinking with weary wings,
Lulled by the motion and murmurings,
And the long glassy heave of the rocking sea,
And over head glorious, but dreadful to see,
The wrecks of the tempest, like vapours of gold,
Are consuming in sunrise. The heaped waves beheld,
The deep calm of blue heaven dilating above,
And, like passions made still by the presence of Love,
Beneath the clear surface reflecting it slide
Tremulous with soft influence; extending its tide
From the Andes to Atlas, round mountain and isle,
Round sea-birds and wrecks, paved with heaven's azure smile,
The wide world of waters is vibrating.

Where
Is the ship! On the verge of the wave where it lay
One tiger is mingled in ghastly affray [battle
With a sea-snake. The foam and the smoke of the
Stain the clear air with sunbows; the jar, and the rattle
Of solid bones crushed by the infinite stress
Of the snake's adamantine voluminosness;
And the hum of the hot blood that spouts and rains
Where the gripes of the tiger has wounded the veins,
Swollen with rage, strength, and effort; the whirl
And the splash
As of some hideous engine whose brazen teeth smash
The thin winds and soft waves into thunder! the screams
And hissings crawl fast o'er the smooth ocean-streams,
Each sound like a centipede. Near this commotion,
A blue shark is hanging within the blue ocean,
The fin-winged tomb of the victor. The other
Is winning his way from the fate of his brother,
To his own with the speed of despair. Lo! a boat
Advances; twelve rowers with the impulse of thought
Urge on the keen keel, the brine foams. At the stern
Three marksmen stand levelling. Hot bullets burn
In the breast of the tiger, which yet bears him on
To his refuge and ruin. One fragment alone,
'Tis dwindling and sinking, 'tis now almost gone,
Of the wreck of the vessel pears out of the sea.
With her left hand she grasps it impecuniously,
With her right she sustains her fair infant. Death, Fear;
Love, Beauty, are mixed in the atmosphere,
Which trembles and burns with the fervour of dread
Around her wild eyes, her bright hand, and her head,
Like a meteor of light o'er the waters! her child
Is yet smiling, and playing, and murmuring: so
The false deep ere the storm. Like a sister and brother
The child and the ocean still smile on each other,
THE CLOUD.

I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,  
From the seas and the streams;  
I bear light shades for the leaves when laid  
In their noon-day dreams.  
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken  
The sweet buds every one,  
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,  
As she dances about the sun.  
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,  
And whiten the green plains under,  
And then again I dissolve it in rain,  
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,  
And their great pines groan aghast;  
And all the night it's my pillow white,  
While I sleep in the arms of the blast.  
Sublime on the towers of my skiey bowers,  
Lightning my pilots sit;  
In a cavern under is fettered the thunder,  
It struggles and howls at fits;  
Over earth and ocean with gentle motion,  
This pilot is guiding me,  
Lured by the love of the genii that move  
In the depths of the purple sea;  
Over the rills, and the crags, and the hills,  
Over the lakes and the plains,  
Wherever he dream, under mountain or stream,  
The Spirit he loves remains;  
And I all the while bask in heaven's blue smile,  
Whilst he is溶解ing in rains.

The sanguine sunrise, with his meteor eyes,  
And his burning plumes outspread,  
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,  
When the morning star shines dead.  
As on the jag of a mountain crag,  
Which an earthquake rocks and swings,  
An eagle alone moment may sit  
In the light of its golden wings.  
And when sunset may breathe, from the light sea  
Beneath,  
Its ardours of rest and of love,  
And the crimson pall of eve may fall  
From the depth of heaven above,  
With wings folded I rest, on mine airy nest,  
As still as a brooding dove.

That orbed maiden, with white fire laden,  
Whom mortals call the moon,  
Glides glimmering over my fleece-like floor,  
By the midnight breezes strewn;  
And whenever the beat of her unseen feet,  
Which only the angels hear,  
May have broken the woof of my tent's thin roof,  
The stars peep behind her and peer;  
And I laugh to see them whirl and flee,  
Like a swarm of golden bees,  
When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent,  
Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,  
Like stripes of the sky fallen through me on high,  
Are each paved with the moon and these.
TO A SKYLARK.

I.
Hail to thee, blithe spirit!
Bird thou never wert,
That from heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

II.
Higher still and higher,
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

III.
In the golden lightening
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are brightening,
Thou dost float and run;
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

IV.
The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven,
In the broad day-light
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight.

V.
Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear,
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

VI.
All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflowed.

VII.
What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see,
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

VIII.
Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

IX.
Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:

X.
Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unheeded
Its aerial hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view:

XI.
Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-winged thieves.

XII.
Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass.

XIII.
Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine:
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

XIV.
Chorus hymeneal,
Or triumphal chant,
Matched with thine would be all
But an empty vaunt—
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

XV.
What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain!
What fields, or waves, or mountains!
What shapes of sky or plain!
What love of thine own kind! what ignorance of pain!

XVI.
With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be;
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee:
Thou lovest; but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

XVII.
Waking or asleep,
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream!

XVIII.
We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.
ODE TO LIBERTY.

Yet freedom, yet, thy banner torn but flying.
Streams like a thunder-storm against the wind.

I.

A glorious people vibrated again
The lightning of the nations: Liberty,
From heart to heart, from tower to tower, o'er Spain,
Scattering contagious fire into the sky,
Gleamed. My soul spurred the chains of its dismay,
And, in the rapid plumes of song,
Clothed itself sublime and strong;
As a young eagle soars the morning clouds among,
Hovering in verse o'er its accustomed prey;
Till from its station in the heavens of fame
The Spirit's whirlwind rapt it, and the ray
Of the remotest sphere of living flame
Which paves the void, was from behind it flung,
As foam from a ship's swiftness, when there came
A voice out of the deep; I will record the same.

II.

The Sun and the serenest Moon sprang forth;
The burning stars of the abyss were hurl'd
Into the depths of heaven. The deadal earth,
That island in the ocean of the world,
Hung in its cloud of all-sustaining air:
But this divinest universe
Was yet a chaos and a curse,
For thou wert not: but power from worst producing worse,
The spirit of the beasts was kindled there,
And of the birds, and of the watery forms,
And there was war among them and despair
Within them, raging without truce or terms:
The bosom of their violated nurse
Groaned, for beasts warred on beasts, and worms on worms,
And men on men; each heart was as a hell of

III.

Man, the imperial shape, then multiplied
His generations under the pavilion
Of the sun's throne: palace and pyramid,
Temple and prison, to many a swarming million,
Were, as to mountain-wolves their ragged caves.
This human living multitude
Was savage, cunning, blind, and rude,
For thou wert not; but o'er the populous solitude,
Like one fierce cloud over a waste of waves,
Hung tyranny; beneath, sate defiled
The sister-pest, congregator of slaves;
Into the shadow of her pinions wide,
Anarchs and priests who feed on gold and blood,
Till with the stain their innocent souls are dyed,
Drove the astonished herds of men from every side.

IV.

The nodding promontories, and blue isles,
And cloud-like mountains, and dividuous waves
Of Greece, basked glorious in the open smiles
Of favouring heaven: from their enchanted caves
Prophetic echoes flung dim melody
On the unapprehensive wild.
The vine, the corn, the olive mild,
Grew, savage yet, to human use unreconciled;
And like unfolded flowers beneath the sea,
Like the man's thought dark in the infant's brain,
Like aught that is which wraps what is to be,
Art's deathless dreams lay veiled by many a veil
Of Parian stone; and yet a speechless child,
Verse murmured, and Philosophy did strain
Her idle eyes for thee; when o'er the Egean main

V.

Athens arose: a city such as vision
Builds from the purple crags and silver towers
Of battlemented cloud, as in derision
Of kingliest masonry: the ocean floors
Pave it; the evening sky pavilions it;
Its portals are inhabited
By thunder-zoned winds, each head
Within its cloudy wings with sun-fire garlanded,
A divine work! Athens diviner yet
Gleamed with its crest of columns, on the will
Of man, as on a mount of diamond, set;
For thou wert, and thine all-creative skill
Peopled, with forms that mock the eternal dead
In marble immortality, that hill
Which was thine earliest throne and latest oracle.

VI.

Within the surface of Time's fleeting river
Its wrinkled image lies, as then it lay
Immoveably unquiet, and forever
It trembles, but it cannot pass away!
The voices of thy bards and sages thunder
With an earth-awakening blast
Through the caverns of the past;
Religion veils her eyes; Oppression shrinks aghast:
A winged sound of joy, and love, and wonder,
Which soars where Expectation never flew,
Rending the veil of space and time asunder!
One ocean feeds the clouds, and streams, and dew;
One sun illuminates Heaven; one spirit vast
With life and love makes chaos ever new,
As Athens doth the world with thy delight renew.
VII.

Then Rome was, and from thy deep bosom fairest,
Like a wolf-cub from a Cadmean Memad*.
She drew the milk of greatness, though thy dearest
From that Elysian food was yet unwearied;
And many a deed of terrible uprightness
By thy sweet love was sanctified;
And in thy smile, and by thy side,
Saintly Camillus lived, and firm Attilius died. [nese,
But when tears stained thy robe of vestal white-
And gold profaned thy capitolian throne,
Thou didst desert, with spirit-winged lightness,
The senate of the tyrants: they sunk prone
Slaves of one tyrant. Palatins sighed
Faint echoes of Ionian song; that tone
Thou didst delay to hear, lamenting to disown.

VIII.

From what Hyrcanian glen or frozen hill,
Or piny promontory of the Arctic main,
Or utmost islet inaccessible,
Didst thou lament the ruin of thy reign,
Teaching the woods and waves, and desert rocks,
And every Naïad's ice-cold urn,
To talk in echoes sad and stern,
Of that sublimest lore which man had dared unlearn!
For neither didst thou watch the wizard flocks
Of the Scald's dreams, nor haunt the Druid's
locks,
What if the tears rained through thy shattered
Waves quickly dried? for thou didst groan, not
When from its sea of death to kill and burn, [weep,
The Galilean serpent forth did creep,
And made thy world an undistinguishable heap.

IX.

A thousand years the Earth cried, Where art thou?
And then the shadow of thy coming fell
On Saxon Alfred's olive-cinctured brow:
And many a warrior-peopled citadel,
Like rocks, which fire lifts out of the flat deep,
Arose in sacred Italy,
Frowning o'er the tempestuous sea
Of kings, and priests, and slaves, in tower-crowned
That multitudinous anarchy did sweep,
Were quickly dried; for thou didst groan, not
When from its sea of death to kill and burn, [weep,
The Galilean serpent forth did creep,
And made thy world an undistinguishable heap.

X.

Thou huntress swifter than the Moon! thou terror
Of the world's wolves! thou bearer of the quiver,
Whose sun-like shafts pierce tempest-winged Error,
As light may pierce the clouds when they dissever
In the calm regions of the orient day!
Luther caught thy wakening glance:
Like lightning from his leaden lance
Reflected, it dissolved the visions of the trance
In which, as in a tomb, the nations lay;
And England's prophets hailed thee as their
In songs whose music cannot pass away, [queen,
Though it must flow for ever: not unseen
Before the spirit-sighted countenance
Of Milton didst thou pass, from the sad scene
Beyond whose night he saw, with a dejected mien.

* See the Bacchae of Euripides.
MISCELLANEOUS.

O that the free would stamp the impious name
Of * * * * into the dust; or write it there,
So that this blot upon the page of fame
Were as a serpent's path, which the light air
Erases, and the flat sands close behind!

Ye the oracle have heard:
Lift the victory-flashing sword,
And cut the snaky knots of this foul Gordian word,
Which, weak itself as stubble, yet can bind
Into a mass, irrefragably firm,
The axes and the rods which awe mankind;
The sound has poison in it, 'tis the serpent
Of what makes life foul, cankerous, and abhorred;
Disdain not thou, at thine appointed term,
To set thine armed heel on this reluctant worm.

O that the wise from their bright minds would kindle
Such lamps within the dome of this dim world,
That the pale name of Priest might shrink and dwindle
Into the hell from which it first was hurled,
A scoff of impious pride from fiends impure.

Blind Love, and equal Justice, and the Fame
Of what has been, the Hope of what will be?
O, Liberty! if such could be thy name
Wert thou disjoined from these, or they from
If thine or theirs were treasures to be bought thee:
By blood or tears, have not the wise and free
Wep't tears, and blood like tears! The solemn harmony

PAUSED, and the spirit of that mighty singing
To its abyss was suddenly withdrawn;
Then as a wild swan, when sublimely winging
Its path athwart the thunder-smoke of dawn,
Sinks headlong through the aerial golden light
On the heavy sounding plain,
When the bolt has pierced its brain;
As summer clouds dissolve unburthened of their
As a far taper fades with fading night; [rain;
As a brief insect dies with dying day,
My song, its pinions disarrayed of might,
Drooped; 'o'er it closed the echoes far away
Of the great voice which did its flight sustain,
As waves which lately paved his watery way
Hiss round a drowner's head in their tempestuous play.

ARETHUSA.

ARETHUSA arose
From her couch of snows
In the Acroceramian mountains,—
From cloud and from crag
With many a jag,
Shepherding her bright fountains.
She leap'd down the rocks
With her rainbow locks
Streaming among the streams;—
Her steps paved with green
The downward ravine
Which slopes to the western gleams;
And gliding and springing,
She went, ever singing,
In murmurs as soft as sleep;
The Earth seemed to love her,
And Heaven smiled above her,
As she lingered towards the deep.

Then Alpheus bold,
On his glacier cold,
With his trident the mountains strook;
And opened a chasm
In the rocks;—with the spasm
All Erymanthus shook.
And the black south wind
It concealed behind
The urns of the silent snow,
And earthquake and thunder
Did rend in sunder
The bars of the springs below:
The beard and the hair
Of the river God were
Seen through the torrent's sweep,
As he followed the light
Of the fleet nymph's flight
To the brink of the Dorian deep.

"Oh, save me! Oh, guide me!
And bid the deep hide me,
For he grasps me now by the hair!"

The loud Ocean heard,
To its blue depth stirred,
And divided at her prayer;
And under the water
The Earth's white daughter
SONG OF PROSERPINE, 
WHILE GATHERING FLOWERS ON THE PLAIN OF ENNA.

Sacred Goddess, Mother Earth,
Thou from whose immortal bosom,
Gods, and men, and beasts have birth,
Leaf and blade, and bud and blossom,
Breathe thine influence most divine
On thine own child, Proserpine.

If with mists of evening dew
Thou dost nourish these young flowers
Till they grow, in scent and hue,
Fairest children of the hours,
Breathe thine influence most divine
On thine own child, Proserpine.

HYMN OF APOLLO.

The sleepless Hours who watch me as I lie,
Curtailed with star-enwoven tapestries
From the broad moonlight of the sky,
Fanning the busy dreams from my dim eyes,—
Waken me when their Mother, the grey Dawn,
Tells them that dreams and that the moon is gone.

Then I arise, and climbing Heaven's blue dome,
I walk over the mountains and the waves,
Leaving my robe upon the ocean foam;
My footsteps pave the clouds with fire; the caves
Are filled with my bright presence, and the air
Leaves the green earth to my embraces bare.

The sunbeams are my shafts, with which I kill
Deceit, that loves the night and fears the day;
All men who do or even imagine ill
Fly me, and from the glory of my ray
Good minds and open actions take new might,
Until diminished by the reign of night.

I feed the clouds, the rainbows, and the flowers,
With their ethereal colours; the Moon's globe
And the pure stars in their eternal bowers
Are cinctured with my power as with a robe;
Whatever lamps on Earth or Heaven may shine
Are portions of one power, which is mine.

I stand at noon upon the peak of Heaven,
Then with unwilling steps I wander down
Into the clouds of the Atlantic even;
For grief that I depart they weep and frown:
What look is more delightful than the smile
With which I soothe them from the western isle!

I am the eye with which the Universe
Beholds itself and knows itself divine;
All harmony of instrument or verse,
All prophecy, all medicine are mine,
All light of art or nature;—to my song
Victory and praise in their own right belong.

HYMN OF PAN.

From the forests and highlands
We come, we come;
From the river-girt islands,
Where loud waves are dumb
Listening to my sweet pipings.

The wind in the reeds and the rushes,
The bees on the bells of thyme,
The birds on the myrtle bushes,
The cicale above in the lime,
The lizards below in the grass,
Were as silent as ever old Tmolus * was,
Listening to my sweet pipings.

Liquid Peneus was flowing,
And all dark Tempo lay
In Pelion's shadow, outgrowing
The light of the dying day,

* This and the former poem were written at the request of a friend, to be inserted in a drama on the subject of Midas. Apollo and Pan contended before Tmolus for the prize in music.
Speeded with my sweet pipings.
The Sileni, and Sirens, and Fauns,
And the Nymphs of the woods and waves,
To the edge of the moist river-lawns,
And the brink of the dewy caves,
And all that did then attend and follow,
Were silent with love, as you now, Apollo,
With envy of my sweet pipings.

I sang of the dancing stars,
I sang of the dead Earth,
And of Heaven—and the giant wars,
And Love, and Death, and Birth,—
And then I changed my pipings,—
Singing how down the vale of Menalus
I pursued a maiden and clasped a reed:
Gods and men, we are all deluded thus!
It breaks in our bosom and then we bleed:
All wept, as I think both ye now would,
If envy or age had not frozen your blood,
At the sorrow of my sweet pipings.

The deathless stars are bright above:
If I would cross the shade at night,
Within my heart is the lamp of love,
And that is day!
And the moon will smile with gentle light
On my golden plumes where'er they move;
The meteors will linger round my flight,
And make night day.

I dreamed that, as I wandered by the way,
Bare winter suddenly was changed to spring,
And gentle odours led my steps astray,
Mixed with a sound of waters murmurings
Along a shelving bank of turf, which lay
Under a copse, and hardly dared to fling
Its green arms round the bosom of the stream,
But kissed it and then fled: as thou mightest in dream.

There grew pied wind-flowers and violets,
Daisies, those pearled Arcturis of the earth,
The constellated flower that never sets;
Faint oxlips; tender blue bells, at whose birth
The sod scarce heaved; and that tallflower that
Its mother's face with heaven-collected tears,
When the low wind, its playmate's voice, it hears.

And in the warm hedge grew lush eglantine,
Green cow-bind and the moonlight-coloured May,
And cherry blossoms, and white cups, whose wine
Was the bright dew yet drained not by the day;
And wild roses, and ivy serpentine,
With its dark buds and leaves, wandering astray;
And flowers azure, black, and streaked with gold,
Fairer than any wakened eyes behold.

And nearer to the river's trembling edge
There grew broad flag-flowers, purple prant with
And starry river buds among the sedge, [white,
And floating water-lilies, broad and bright,
Which lit the oak that overhung the hedge
With moonlight beams of their own watery light;
And bulrushes, and reeds of such deep green
As soothed the dazzled eye with sober sheen.

And methought that of these visionary flowers
I made a nosegay, bound in such a way
That the same hues, which in their natural bowers
Were mingled or opposed, the like array
Kept these imprisoned children of the Hours
Within my hand,— and then, elate and gay,
I hastened to the spot whence I had come,
That I might there present it!—Oh! to whom I
LETTER
TO MARIA GISBORNE.

LIGBORN, July 1, 1820.

The spider spreads her webs, whether she be
In poet's tower, cellar, or barn, or tree;
The silkworm in the dark-green mulberry leaves
His winding-sheet and cradle ever weaves!
So I, a thing whom moralists call worm,
Sit spinning still round this decaying form,
Who thought to pay some interest for the debt
To Catalogue in this verse of mine:

Pledging the demons of the earthquake, who
Reply to them in lava-cry, halloo!
And call out to the cities o'er their head,—
Roofs, towns, and shrines,—the dying and the dead
Crash through the chinks of earth—and then all quaff

Another rouse, and hold their sides and laugh.
This quicksilver no gnome has drunk—within
The walnut-bowl it lies, veined and thin,
In colour like the wake of light that stains
The Tuscan deep, when from the moist moon rains
The inmost shower of its white fire—the breeze
Is still—blue heaven smiles over the pale seas.
And in this bowl of quicksilver—for I

Yield to the impulse of an infancy
Outlasting manhood—I have made to float
A rude idealism of a paper boat—
A hollow screw with cogs—Henry will know
The thing I mean, and laugh at me,—if so
He fears not I should do more mischief. Next
Lie bills and calculations much perplexed,
With stem-boats, frigates, and machinery quaint
Traced over them in blue and yellow paint.
Then comes a range of mathematical
Instruments, for plans nautical and statistical,
A heap of rosin, a green broken glass
With ink in it:—a china cup that was
What it will never be again, I think,
A thing from which sweet lips were wont to drink
The liquor doctors rail at—and which I
Will quaff in spite of them—and when we die
We'll toss up who died first of drinking tea,
And cry out,—heads or tails! where'er we be.
Near that a dusty paint-box, some old hooks,
And cry out,—heads or tails! where'er we be.
Baron de Tott's Memoirs beside them lie,
Near some odd volumes of old chemistry.
Through the chinks of earth—and then all quaff
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Another rouse, and hold their sides and laugh.
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The walnut-bowl it lies, veined and thin,
Of worms! The shriek of the world's carrion
How could one worth your friendship heed the war
On the unquiet world;— while such things are,
"I know the past alone— but summon home
Their censure, or their wonder, or their praise!
Veiling in awe her second-sighted eyes,
In vacant chairs your absent images,
You are not here! The quaint witch Memory sees
But I, an old diviner, who know well
Every false verse of that sweet oracle,
Turned to the sad enchantress once again,
And sought a respite from my gentle pain,
And felt the transversal lightning linger warm
Under the roof of blue Italian weather;
We watched the ocean and the sky together,
In acting every passage o'er and o'er
The purposes and thoughts of men whose eyes
Of tins wrong world:— and then anatomize
The frugal luxury of our country cheer,
And bursts the peopled prisons, and cries aloud,
As water does a sponge, so the moonlight
Staining the sacred waters with our tears;
Quenching a thirst ever to be renewed!
Of visionary rhyme;— in joy and pain
Of winds, and sigh, but tremble not; or how
You listened to some interrupted flow
Of visionary rhyme;— in joy and pain
Struck from the inmost fountains of my brain,
With the milk-white Snowdonian Antelope
When a man marries, dies, or turns Hindoo,
You will see Hunt; one of those happy souls
Wrought by wise poets in the waste of years,
Is still adorned by many a cast from Shout,
And brighter wreaths in neat disorder flung,
Make this dull world a business of delight,
Virtue and human knowledge, all that might
Fold itself up for a screenier clime
Of years to come, and find its recompense
In London, that great sea, whose ebb and flow
At once is deaf and loud, and on the shore
Vomits its wrecks, and still howls on for more.
Yet in its depth what treasures! You will see
Your old friend Godwin, greater none than he;
Though fallen on evil times, yet will he stand,
Among the spirits of our age and land,
Before the dread tribunal of To-come
The foremost, whilst a rebuke stands pale and dumb.
You will see Coleridge; he who sits obscure
In the exceeding lustre and the pure
Intense irradiation of a mind,
Which, with its own internal lustre blind,
Flags wearily through darkness and despair—
A cloud-encircled meteor of the air,
A hoarded eagle among blinking owls.
You will see Hunt; one of those happy souls
Which are the salt of the earth, and without whom
This world would smell like what it is—a tomb;
Who is, what others seem:— his room no doubt
Is still adorned by many a cast from Shout,
And coronals of bay from ribbons hung,
And brighter wreaths in neat disorder flung,
The gifts of the most learned among some dozens
Of female friends, sisters-in-law and cousins.
And there is he with his eternal puns,
Too wise for selfish bigots;— let his page,
In London, that great sea, whose ebb and flow
Brings its world to the world that is:
How I ran home through last year's thunder-storm,
You and I know in London.

MISCELLANEOUS.

On the unquiet world:— while such things are,
How could one worth your friendship heed the war
Of worms! The shriek of the world's carrion
Your censure, or their wonder, or their praise!

You are not here! The quaint witch Memory sees
But I, an old diviner, who know well
Every false verse of that sweet oracle,
Turned to the sad enchantress once again,
And sought a respite from my gentle pain,
And felt the transversal lightning linger warm
Under the roof of blue Italian weather;
We watched the ocean and the sky together,
In acting every passage o'er and o'er
The purposes and thoughts of men whose eyes
Of tins wrong world:— and then anatomize
The frugal luxury of our country cheer,
And bursts the peopled prisons, and cries aloud,
As water does a sponge, so the moonlight
Staining the sacred waters with our tears;
Quenching a thirst ever to be renewed!
Of visionary rhyme;— in joy and pain
Of winds, and sigh, but tremble not; or how
You listened to some interrupted flow
Of visionary rhyme;— in joy and pain
Struck from the inmost fountains of my brain,
With the milk-white Snowdonian Antelope
When a man marries, dies, or turns Hindoo,
You will see Hunt; one of those happy souls
Wrought by wise poets in the waste of years,
Is still adorned by many a cast from Shout,
And brighter wreaths in neat disorder flung,
Make this dull world a business of delight,
Virtue and human knowledge, all that might
Fold itself up for a screenier clime
Of years to come, and find its recompense
In London, that great sea, whose ebb and flow
At once is deaf and loud, and on the shore
Vomits its wrecks, and still howls on for more.
Yet in its depth what treasures! You will see
Your old friend Godwin, greater none than he;
Though fallen on evil times, yet will he stand,
Among the spirits of our age and land,
Before the dread tribunal of To-come
The foremost, whilst a rebuke stands pale and dumb.
You will see Coleridge; he who sits obscure
In the exceeding lustre and the pure
Intense irradiation of a mind,
Which, with its own internal lustre blind,
Flags wearily through darkness and despair—
A cloud-encircled meteor of the air,
A hooded eagle among blinking owls.
You will see Hunt; one of those happy souls
Which are the salt of the earth, and without whom
This world would smell like what it is—a tomb;
Who is, what others seem:— his room no doubt
Is still adorned by many a cast from Shout,
And coronals of bay from ribbons hung,
And brighter wreaths in neat disorder flung,
The gifts of the most learned among some dozens
Of female friends, sisters-in-law and cousins.
And there is he with his eternal puns,
Too wise for selfish bigots;— let his page,
In London, that great sea, whose ebb and flow
Brings its world to the world that is:
How I ran home through last year's thunder-storm,
POEMS WRITTEN IN 1820.

Piloted by the many-wandering blast,
And the rare stars rush through them, dim and fast.
All this is beautiful in every land.

But what see you beside? A shabby stand
Of hackney-coaches—a brick house or wall
Fencing some lonely court; white with the scrawl
Of our unhappy politics;—or worse—
A wretched woman reeling by, whose curse
Mixed with the watchman’s, partner of her trade,
You must accept in place of serenade—
Or yellow-haired Pollonia murmuring
To Henry, some unutterable thing.

I see a chaos of green leaves and fruit
Built round dark caverns, even to the root
Of the living stems who feed them; in whose
Bowers
There sleep in their dark dews the folded flowers;
Beyond, the surface of the unsickled corn
Trembles not in the slumbering air, and borne
In circles quaint, and ever-changing dance,
Like winged stars the fire-flies flash and glance
Pale in the open moonshine; but each one
Under the dark trees seems a little sun,
A meteor tamed; a fixed star gone astray
From the silver regions of the Milky-way.

Afar the Contadino’s song is heard,
Rude, but made sweet by distance;— and a bird
Which cannot be a nightingale, and yet
I know none else that sings so sweet as it
At this late hour;— and then all is still:
Now Italy or London, which you will!

Next winter you must pass with me; I’ll have
My house by that time turned into a grave
Of dead dependences and low-thoughted care,
And all the dreams which our tormentors are.
O that Hunt and — were there,
With every thing belonging to them fair!—
We will have books; Spanish, Italian, Greek,
And ask one week to make another week
As like his father, as I’m unlike mine.
Though we eat little fish and drink no wine,
Yet let’s be merry; we’ll have tea and toast;
Custards for supper, and an endless host
Of syllabubs and jellies and mince-pies,
And other such lady-like luxuries,—
Feasting on which we will philosophise.
And we’ll have fires out of the Grand Duke’s
Wood,
To thaw the six weeks’ winter in our blood.
And then we’ll talk;—what shall we talk about? Oh! there are themes enough for many a bout
Of thought-entangled descant; as to nerves—
With cones and parallelograms and curves
I’ve sworn to strangle them if once they dare
To bother me,—when you are with me there.
And they shall never more sip laudanum
From Helicon or Himeros;—well, come,
And in thy sight its fading plumes display;
The watery bow burned in the evening flame,
But the shower fell, the swift Sun went his way—
And that is dead,—O, let me not believe
That any thing of mine is fit to live!

Wordsworth informs us he was nineteen years
Considering and retouching Peter Bell;
Watering his laurels with the killing tears
Of slow, dull care, so that their roots to hell
Might pierce, and their wide branches blot the spheres
Of heavens, with dewy leaves and flowers; this well
May be, for Heaven and Earth conspire to foil
The over-busy gardener’s blundering toil.

My Witch indeed is not so sweet a creature
As Ruth or Lucy, whom his graceful praise
Clothes for our grandsons—but she matches Peter,
Though he took nineteen years, and she three days
In dressing. Light the vest of flowing metre
She wears; he, proud as dandy with his stays,
Has hung upon his wiry limbs a dress
Like King Lear’s “looped and windowed raggedness.”

If you strip Peter, you will see a fellow,
Scorched by Hell’s hyperequatorial climate
Into a kind of a sulphureous yellow:
A lean mark, hardly fit to fling a rhyme at;
In shape a Scaramouch, in hue Othello,
If you unveil my Witch, no priest nor primate
Can shrive you of that sin,—if sin there be
In love, when it becomes idolatry.

TO MARY,

(ON HER OBJECTING TO THE FOLLOWING POEM, UPON THE SCORE OF ITS CONTAINING NO HUMAN INTEREST.)

I.
How, my dear Mary, are you critic-bitten,
(For vipers kill, though dead,) by some review,
That you condemn these verses I have written,
Because they tell no story, false or true!
What, though no mice are caught by a young kitten,
May it not leap and play as grown cats do,
Till its claws come?—Frithee, for this time,
Content thee with a visionary rhyme.

II.
What hand would crush the silken-winged fly,
The youngest of inconstant April’s minions,
Because it cannot climb the purest sky,
Where the swan sings, amid the sun’s dominions?
Not thine. Thou knowest ‘tis its doom to die,
When day shall hide within her twilight pinions,
The lucent eyes, and the eternal smile,
Serene as thine, which lent it life awhile.

III.
To thy fair feet a winged Vision came,
Whose date should have been longer than a day,
And o’er thy head did beat its wings for fame,
And in thy sight its fading plumes display;
The watery bow burned in the evening flame,
But the shower fell, the swift Sun went his way—
And that is dead,—O, let me not believe
That any thing of mine is fit to live!

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### THE WITCH OF ATLAS.

#### I.

Before those cruel Twins, whom at one birth
Incestuous Change bore to her father Time,
Error and Truth, had hunted from the earth
All those bright natures which adorned its prime,
And left us nothing to believe in, worth
The pains of putting into learned rhyme,
A lady-witch there lived on Atlas' mountain
Within a cavern by a secret fountain.

#### II.

Her mother was one of the Atlantides:
The all-beholding Sun had ne'er beheld
In his wide voyage o'er continents and seas
So fair a creature, as she lay enfolded
In the warm shadow of her loveliness;—
He kissed her with his beams, and made all golden
The chamber of grey rock in which she lay—
She, in that dream of joy, dissolved away.

#### III.

'Tis said, she was first changed into a vapour,
And then into a cloud, such clouds as flit,
Like splendour-winged moths about a taper,
Round the red west when the sun dies in it:
And then into a meteor, such as caper
On hill-tops when the moon is in a fit;
Then into one of those mysterious stars
Which hide themselves between the Earth and Mars.

#### IV.

Ten times the Mother of the Months had bent
Her bow beside the folding-star, and bidden
With that bright sign the billows to indent
The sea-deserted sand: like children chidden,
At her command they ever came and went:
Since in that cave a dewy splendour hidden,
Took shape and motion: with the living form
Of this embodied Power, the cave grew warm.

#### V.

A lovely lady garmented in light
From her own beauty—deep her eyes, as are
Two openings of unfathomable night
Seen through a tempest's cloven roof:—her hair
Dark—the dim brain whirls dizzy with delight,
Picturing her form:—her soft smiles ahone afar,
And her low voice was heard like love, and drew
All living things towards this wonder new.

#### VI.

And first the spotted camelopard came,
And then the wise and fearless elephant;
Then the sly serpent, in the golden flame
Of his own volumes interwoven:—all gaunt
And mazinque boasts his gentle looks made tame.
They drank before her at her sacred font;
And every beast of beating heart grew bold,
Such gentleness and power even to behold.

#### VII.

The brindled lioness led forth her young,
That she might teach them how they should forego
Their inborn thirst of death; the pard unstrung
His sinews at her feet, and sought to know
With looks whose motions spoke without a tongue
How he might be as gentle as the doe.
The magic circle of her voice and eyes
All savage natures did imparadise.

#### VIII.

And old Silenus, shaking a green stick
Of lilies, and the wood-gods in a crew
Came, blithe, as in the olive copsesthick
Cicadas are, drunk with the noonday dew:
And Driope and Paunus followed quick,
Teasing the God to sing them something new,
Where the quick heart of the great world doth
And felt that wondrous lady all alone,—
Sitting upon a seat of emerald stone.

#### IX.

And universal Pan, 'tis said, was there,
And th'adamanth of the deep mountains, through the trackless air,
And through those living spirits, like a want,
He passed out of his everlasting lair
Where the quick heart of the great world doth
And felt that wondrous lady all alone,—
Sitting upon a seat of emerald thron.

#### X.

And every nymph of stream and spreading tree,
And every shepherdess of Ocean's flocks,
Who drives her white waves over the green sea;
And Ocean, with the brine on his grey locks,
All came, much wondering how the enwombed
Could have brought forth so beautiful a birth:—
Her love subdued their wonder and their mirth.

#### XI.

The herdsmen and the mountain maidens came,
And the rude kings of pastoral Garamant—
Their spirits shook within them, as a flame
Stirred by the air under a cavern gaunt:
Pigmies, and Polyphemus, by many a name,
Centaurs and Satyrs, and such shapes as haunt
Wet cliffs,—and lumps neither alive nor dead,
Dog-headed, bosom-eyed, and bird-footed.

#### XII.

For she was beautiful: her beauty made
The bright world dim, and everything beside
Seemed like the fleeting image of a shade:
No thought of living spirit could abide
(Which toher lookshad ever been betrayed,)
On any object in the world so wide,
But on her form, and in her inmost eyes.

#### XIII.

Which when the lady knew, she took her spindle
And twined three threads of fleecy mist, and three
Long lines of light, such as the dawn may kindle
The clouds and waves and mountains with, and she
As many star-beams, ere their lamps could dwindle
In the belated moon, wound skilfully;
And with those threads a subtle veil she wove—
A shadow for the splendour of her love.
The deep recesses of her odorous dwelling
Were stored with magic treasures—sounds of air,
Folded in cells of crystal silence there:
Such as we hear in youth, and think the feeling
Will never die—yet ere we are aware,
The feeling and the sound are fled and gone,
And the regret they leave remains alone.

And there lay visions swift, and sweet, and quaint,
Each in its thin sheath like a chrysalis;
Some eager to burst forth, some weak and faint
With the soft burden of intensest bliss
It is its work to bear to many a saint
Whose heart adores the shrine which holiest is.

And odours in a kind of aviary
Of ever-blooming Eden-trees she kept,
Cipt in a floating net, a love-sick Fairy
Had woven from dew-beams while the moon yet slept:
They beat their vans; and each was an adept
When loosed and missioned, making wings of winds,
To stir sweet thoughts or sad, in destined minds.

And liquors clear and sweet, whose healthful might
Could medicine the sick soul to happy sleep,
And change eternal death into a night
Of glorious dreams—or if eyes needs must weep
Could make their tears all wonder and delight,
She in her crystal vials did closely keep:
If men could drink of those clear vials, 'tis said
The living were not envied of the dead.

Her cave was stored with scrolls of strange device,
The works of some Saturnian Archimage,
Which taught the expiations at whose price
Men from the Gods might win that happy ago
Too lightly lost, redeeming native rice;
And who might quench the earth-consuming
Of gold and blood—till men should live and move
Harmonious as the sacred stars above.

And how all things that seem untamable,
Not to be checked and not to be confined,
Obey the spell of wisdom's wizard skill;
Time, Earth, and Fire—the Ocean and the Wind,
And all their shapes—and man's imperial will;
And other scrolls whose writings did unbind
The inmost lore of Love—let the profane
Tremble to ask what secrets they contain.

And wondrous works of substances unknown,
To which the enchantment of her father's power
Had changed those ragged blocks of savage stone,
Were heaped in the recesses of her bower;
Carved lamps and chalices, and phials which shone
In their own golden beams—each like a flower,
Out of whose depth a fire-fly shakes his light
Under a cypress in a starless night.
This lady never slept, but lay in trance
All night within the fountain—as in sleep.
Its emerald crags glowed in her beauty's glance:
Through the green splendour of the water deep
She saw the constellations reed and dance
Like fire-flies—and withal did ever keep
The tenour of her contemplations calm,
With open eyes, closed foot, and folded palm.

And when the whirlwinds and the clouds descended
From the white pinnacles of that cold hill,
She passed at dewfall to a space extended,
Where, in a lawn of flowering asphodel
Amid a wood of pines and cedars blended,
There yawned an inextinguishable well
Of crimson fire, full even to the brim,
And overflowing all the margin trim.

Within the which she lay when the fierce war
Of wintry winds shook that innocuous liquor
In many a mimic moon and bearded star,
O'er woods and lawns—the serpent heard it flicker
And creeping still, he crept afar—
And when the windless snow descended thicker
Than autumn leaves, she watched it as it came
Melt on the surface of the level flame.

She had a Boat which some say Vulcan wrought
For Venus, as the chariot of her star;
But it was found too feeble to be fraught
With all the ardours in that sphere which are,
And so she sold it, and Apollo bought
And gave it to this daughter: from a car
Changed to the fairest and the lightest boat
Which ever upon mortal stream did float.

And others say, that, when but three hours old,
The first-born Love out of his cradle leapt,
And clove dun Chaos with his wings of gold,
And like a horticultural adept,
Stole a strange seed, and wrapt it up in mould,
And sowed it in his mother's star, and kept
Watering it all the summer with sweet dew,
And with his wings fanning it as it grew.

The plant grew strong and green—the snowy flower
Fell, and the long and gourd-like fruit began
To turn the light and dew by inward power
To its own substance: woven treacery ran
Of light firm texture, ribbed and branching, o'er
The solid rind, like a leaf's veined fan,
Of which Love scooped this boat, and with soft
Piloted it round the circumfluous ocean.

This boat she moored upon her fount, and lit
A living spirit within all its frame,
Breathing the soul of swiftness into it.
Couched on the fountain like a panther tame,
One of the twain at Evan's feet that sit;
Or as on Vesta's sceptre a swift flame,
Or on blind Homer's heart a winged thought,—
In joyous expectation lay the boat.

Then by strange art she kneaded fire and snow
Together, tempering the repugnant mass
With liquid love—all things together grow
Through which the harmony of love can pass;
And a fair Shape out of her hands did flow
A living Image, which did far surpass
In beauty that bright shape of vital stone
Which drew the heart out of Pygmalion.

A sexless thing it was, and in its growth
It seemed to have developed no defect
Of either sex, yet all the grace of both,—
In gentleness and strength its limbs were decked;
The bosom lightly swelled with its full youth,
The countenance was such as might select
Some artist that his skill should never die,
Imaging forth such perfect purity.

From its smooth shoulders hung two rapid wings,
Fit to have borne it to the seventh sphere,
Tipt with the speed of liquid lightenings,
Dyed in the ardours of the atmosphere:
She led her creature to the boiling springs
Where the light boat was moored, and said—"Sit
And pointed to the prow, and took her seat [here!"
Beside the rudder with opposing feet.

And down the streams which clove those mountains
Around their inland islets, and amid
The panther-people forests, whose shade cast
Darkness and odours, and a pleasure hid
In melancholy gloom, the pinnace passed;
By many a star-surrounded pyramid
Of icy crag cleaving the purple sky,
And caverns yawning round unfathomably.

The silver noon into that winding dell,
With slanted gleam athwart the forest tops,
Tempered like golden evening, feebly fell;
A green and glowing light, like that which drops
From folded lilies in which glow-worms dwell,
When earth over her face night's mantle wraps;
Between the severed mountains lay on high
Over the stream, a narrow rift of sky.

And ever as she went, the Image lay
With folded wings and unwakened eyes;
And o'er its gentle countenance did play
The busy dreams, as thick as summer flies,
Chasing the rapid smiles that would not stay,
And drinking the warm tears, and the sweet sighs
Inhaling, which, with busy murmur vain,
They had aroused from that full heart and brain.

And ever down the prone vale, like a cloud
Upon a stream of wind, the pinnace went:
Now lingering on the pools, in which abode
In which they paused; now o'er the shallow road
Of white and dancing waters, all besprent
With sand and polished pebbles:—mortal boat
In such a shallow rapid could not float.
And down the earthquaking cataracts, which shiver
Their snow-like waters into golden air,
Or under chasms unfathomable ever
Sepulchre them, till in their rage they tear
A subterranean portal for the river,
It fled—the circling sunbows did upbear
Its fall down the hoar precipice of spray,
Lighting it far upon its lampless way.

And when the wizard lady would ascend
The labyrinths of some many-winding vale,
Which to the inmost mountain upward tend—
She called "Herraphroditus" and the pale
And heavy hue which slumber could extend
Over its lips and eyes, as on the gale
A rapid shadow from a slope of grass,
Into the darkness of the stream did pass.

And it unfurled its heaven-coloured pinions;
With stars of fire spotting the stream below
And from above into the Sun's dominions
Flinging a glory, like the golden glow
In which spring clothes her emerald-winged
All interwoven with fine feathery snow [minions,
And moonlight splendour of intensest rime,
With which frost paints the pines in winter time.

And then it winnowed the Elysian air
Which ever hung about that lady bright,
With its ethereal vans—and speeding there,
Like a star up the torrent of the night,
Or a swift eagle in the morning glare
Breasting the whirlwind with impetuous flight,
The pinnace, oared by those enchanted wings,
Clove to the fierce streams towardstheir upper springs.

The water flashed like sunlight by the prow
Of a noon-wandering meteor flung to Heaven;
The still air seemed as if its waves did flow
In tempest down the mountains,—loosely driven
The lady's radiant hair streamed to and fro;
Beneath, the billows having vainly striven
Indignant and impetuous, roared to feel
The swift and steady motion of the keel.

Or, when the weary moon was in the wane,
Or in the noon of interlunar night,
The lady-witch in visions could not chain
Her spirit; but sailed forth under the light
Of shooting stars, and bade extend amain
Histrong-outspeeding wings, th'Hermaphrodite;
She to the Austral waters took her way,
Beyond the fabulous Thamondocona.

Where, like a meadow which no scythe has shaven,
Which rain could never bend, or whirl-blast shake,
With the Antarctic constellations paven,
Canopus and his crew, lay th' Austral lake—
There she would build herself a windless haven
Out of the clouds whose moving turrets make
The bastions of the storm, when through the sky
The spirits of the tempest thundered by.

A haven, beneath whose translucent floor
The tremulous stars sparkled unfathomably,
And around which the solid vapours hoar,
Based on the level waters, to the sky
Lifted their dreadful crags; and like a shore
Of wintry mountains, inaccessible
Hemmed in with rifts and precipices gray,
And hanging crags, many a cove and bay.

And whilst the outer lake beneath the lath
Of the winds' scourge, foamed like a wounded
And the incessant hail with stony clash [thing;
Ploughed up the waters, and the flagging wing
Of the roused cormorant in the lightning flash
Looked like the wreck of some wind-wandering
Fragment of inky thunder-smoke—this haven
Was as a gem to copy Heaven engraven.

On which that lady played her many pranks,
Circling the image of a shooting star,
Even as a tiger on Hydaspes' banks
Outspeeds the Antelopes which speediest are,
In her lightboat; and many quirps and cranks
She played upon the water; till the car
Of the late moon, like a sick matron wan,
To journey from the misty east began.

They framed the imperial tent of their great Queen
Of woven exhalations, underlaid
With lambent lightning-fire, as may be seen
A dome of thin and open ivory inlaid
With crimson silk—crestsets from the serene
Hung there, and on the water for her tread,
A tapestry of fleece-like mist was strewn,
Dyed in the beams of the ascending moon.

And on a throne o'erlaid with starlight, caught
Upon those wandering isles of aery dew,
Which highest shoals of mountain shipwreck not,
She sat, and heard all that had happened new
Betweenthe earth and moon since they had brought
The last intelligence—and now she grew
Pale as that moon, lost in the watery night—
And now she wept, and now she laughed outright.

Those were tame pleasures.—She would often climb
The steepest ladder of the cruddled rack
Up to some beaked cape of cloud sublime,
And like Arion on the dolphin's back
Ride singing through the shoreless air. Oft time
Following the serpent lightning's winding track,
She ran upon the platforms of the wind,
And laughed to hear the fire-balls roar behind.
And sometimes to those streams of upper air,
Which whirl the earth in its diurnal round,
She would ascend, and win the spirits there
To let her join their chorus. Mortals found
That on those days the sky was calm and fair,
And mystic snatch's of harmonious sound
Wandered upon the earth where'er she passed,
And happy thoughts of hope, too sweet to last.

But her choice sport was, in the hours of sleep,
To glide adown old Nilus, when he threads
Egypt and Ethiopia, from the steep
Of utmost Axumé, until he spreads,
Like a calm flock of silver-fleeced sheep,
His waters on the plain: and crested heads
Of cities and proud temples gleam amid,
And many a vapour-belted pyramid.

BY MORIS AND THE MARCOID LAKES,
Strewn with faint blooms like bridal chamber
Where naked boys bridding tame water-nakes,
Or chariotteering ghastly alligators,
Had left on the sweet waters mighty wakes,
Of those huge forms— within the brazen doors
Of the great Labyrinth slept both boy and beast,
Tired with the pomp of their Osirian feast

And where within the surface of the river
The shadows of the masy temples lie,
And never are erased—but tremble ever
Like things which every cloud can doom to die,
Through lotus-pav'n canals, and where soever
The works of man pierced that serenest sky
With tombs, and towers, and fane, 'twas her delight
To wander in the shadow of the night.

With motion like the spirit of that wind
Whose soft step deepens slumber, her light feet
Past through the peopled haunt's of human kind,
Scattering sweet visions from her presence sweet,
Through fane and palace-court and labyrinth mined
With many a dark and subterranean street
Under the Nile; through chambers high and deep
She past, observing mortals in their sleep.

A pleasure sweet doubtless it was to see
Mortals subdued in all the shapes of sleep.
Here lay two sister-twins in infancy;
There a lone youth who in his dreams did weep;
Within, two lovers linked intimately
In their loose locks which over both did creep
Like ivy from one stem;— and there lay calm,
Old age with snow-brighthair and folded palm.

But other troubled forms of sleep she saw,
Not to be mirrored in a holy song,
Distortions foul of supernatual awe,
And pale imaginings of visioned wrong,
And all the code of custom's lawless law
Written upon the brows of old and young:
"This," said the wizard maiden, "is the strife
Which stirs the liquid surface of man's life."

THL WITCH OF ATLAS.

And little did the sight disturb her soul—
We, the weak mariners of that wide lake,
Where'er its shores extend or billows roll,
Our course un piloted and starless make
O'er its wide surface to an unknown goal,—
But she in the calm depths her way could take,
Where in bright bowers immortal forms abide,
Beneath the waltering of the restless tide.

And she saw princess couched under the glow
Of sunlike gems; and round each temple-court
In dormitories ranged, row after row,
She saw the priests asleep,—all of one sort,
For all were educated to be so.
The peasants in their huts, and in the port
The sailors she saw cradled on the waves,
And the dead lulled within their dreamless graves.

And all the forms in which those spirits lay,
Wore to her sight like the diaphanous
Veils, in which those sweet ladies oft array
Their delicate limbs, who would conceal from us
Only their scorn of all concealment: they
Move in the light of their own beauty thus.
But these and all now lay with sleep upon them,
And little thought a Witch was looking on them.

She all those human figures breathing there
Beheld as living spirits—to her eyes
The naked beauty of the soul lay bare,
And often through a rude and worn disguise
She saw the inner form most bright and fair—
And then,—she had a charm of strange device,
Which, murmured on mute lip's with tend'tone,
Could make that spirit mingle with her own.

Alas, Aurora! what wouldst thou have given
For such a charm, when Tithon became grey?
Or how much, Venus, of thy silver heaven
Wouldst thou have yielded, ere Proserpina
Had half (oh! why not all?) the debt forgiven
Which dear Adonis had been doomed to pay,
To any witch who would have taught you it?
The Heliad doth not know its value yet.

'Tis said in after times her spirit free
Knew what love was, and felt itself alone—
But holy Dion could not chastise her
Before she stooped to kiss Endymion,
Than now this lady—like a sexless bee
Tasting all blossoms, and confined to none—
Among those mortal forms, the wizard-maiden
Passed with an eye serene and heart unladen.

To those she saw most beautiful, she gave
Strange panaceas in a crystal bowl.
They drank in their deep sleep of that sweet wave,
And lived thenceforth as if some control,
Mightier than life, were in them; and the grave
Of such, when deep oppressed the weary soul,
Was a green and over-arching bower
Lit by the gems of many a starry flower.
For on the night that they were buried, she
Rested the embalmers' ruining, and shook
The light out of the funeral lamps, to be
A mimic day within that deathy nook;
And she unwound the woven imagery
Of second childhood's swaddling bands, and took
The coffin, its last cradle, from its niche,
And threw it with contempt into a ditch.

And there the body lay, age after age,
Mute, breathing, beating, warm, and undecaying,
Like one asleep in a green hermitage,
With gentle sleep about itseyelids playing,
And living in its dreams beyond the rage
Of death or life; while they were still arraying
In liverysever new the rapid, blind,
And fleeting generations of mankind.

And she would write strange dreams upon the brain
Of those who were less beautiful, and make
All harsh and crooked purposes more vain
Than in the desert is the serpent's wake
Which the sand covers,—all his evil gain
The miser in such dreams would rise and shake
Into a beggar's lap;— the lying scribe
Would his own lies betray without a bribe.

The priests would write an explanation full,
Translating hieroglyphics into Greek,
How the god Apis really was a bull,
And nothing more; and bid the herald stick
The same against the temple doors, and pull
The old cant down; they licensed all to speak
Whate'er they thought of hawks, and cats, and geese,
By pastoralletrsto each diocese.

The king would dress an ape up in his crown
And robes, and seat him on his glorious seat,
And on the right hand of the sun like throne
Would place a gaudy mock-bird to repeat
The chattering of the monkey. — Every one
Of the prone courtiers crawled to kiss the feet
Of their great Emperor when the morning came;
And kissed— alas, how many kiss the same!

The soldiers dreamed that they were blacksmiths,
Walked out of quarters in somnambulism, (and
Round the red anvils you might see them stand
Like Cyclopes in Vulcan's sooty abysm,
Beating their swords to ploughshares,—in a band
The gaolers sent those of the liberalschism
Free through the streetsof Memphis; much, I wis,
To the annoyance of king Amasis.

And timid lovers who had been so coy,
They hardly knew whether they loved or not,
Would rise out of their rest, and take sweet joy,
To the fulfilment of their inmost thought;
And when next day the maiden and the boy
Met one another, both, like sinners caught,
Blushed at the thing which each believed was
Only in fancy— till the tenth moon shone; (done

And then the Witch would let them take no ill:
Of many thousand schemes which lovers find
The Witch found one,— and so they took their fill
Of happiness in marriage warm and kind.
Friends who, by practice of some envious skill,
Were torn apart, a wide wound, mind from
She did unite again with visions clear [mind !
Of deep affection and of truth sincere.

These were the pranks she played among the cities
Of mortal men, and what she did to sprites
And Gods, entangling them in her sweet ditties,
To do her will, and show their subtle sights,
I will declare another time; for it is
A tale more fit for the weird winter nights—
Than for these garish summer days, when we
Scarcely believe much more than we can see.

ODE TO NAPLES*.

EPODE I. a.
I stood within the city disinterred;+
And heard the autumnal leaves like light footfalls
Of spirits passing through the streets; and heard
The Mountain's slumberous voice at intervals
Thrill through those rooflesshalls;
The oracular thunder penetrating shook
The listening soul in my suspended blood;
I felt that Earth out of her deep heart spoke—
I felt, but heard not:— through white columns
The isle-sustaining Ocean flood, [glowed
A plane of light between two heavens of azure:
Around me gleamed many a bright sepulchre
Of whose pure beauty, Time, as if his pleasure
Were to spare Death, had never made erasure;
But every living lineament was clear
As in the sculptor's thought; and there
The wreaths of stony myrtle, ivy and pine,
Seemed only not to move and grow
Because the crystalsilence of the air
Weighed on their life; even as the Power divine,
Which then lulled all things, brooded upon mine.

EPODE II. a.
Then gentle winds arose,
With many a mingled close
Of wild Eolian sound and mountain odour keen;
And where the Baian ocean
Welters with air-like motion,
Within, above, around its bowers of starry green,
Moving the sea-flowers in those purple caves,
Even as the ever stormless atmosphere
Floats o'er the Elysian realm,
It bore me, like an Angel o'er the waves
Of sunlight, whose swift pinace of dewy air

* The Author has connected many recollections of his visit to Pompeii and Baile with the enthusiasm excited by the intelligence of the proclamation of a Constitutional Government at Naples. This has given a tinge of picturesque and descriptive imagery to the introductory Epodes, which depicture the scenes and some of the majestic feelings permanently connected with the scene of this animating event.—Author's Note.
+ Pompeii.
ODE TO NAPLES. 275

No storm can overwhelm;
I sailed where ever flows
Under the calm Serene
A spirit of deep emotion,
From the unknown graves
Of the dead kings of Melody *.

Shadowy Aornos darkened o'er
The horizon, heaven stript bare
Its depths over Elysium, where the prow
Made the invisible water white as snow;
From that Typhsean mount, Inarime,
There streamed a sunlit vapour, like the standard
Of some ethereal host,
Whilst from all the coast,
Loudcr and louder, gathering round, there wandered
Over the oracular woods and divine sea
Prophecies which grew articulate—
They seize me—I must speak them;—be they fate!

STROPHE a. 1.

Naples! thou Heart of men, which ever pantest I
Naked, beneath the lidless eye of heaven!
Elysian City, which to calm enchantest
The mutinous air and sea! they round thee, even
As sleep round Love, are driven!
Metropolis of a ruined Paradise
Long lost, late won, and yet but half regained!
Bright Altar of the bloodless sacrifice,
Which armed Victory offers up unstained
To Love, the flower-enchained!

Hail, hail, all hail!

STROPHE b. 2.

Then youngest giant birth,
Which from the groaning earth
Leap'st, clothed in armour of impenetrable scale!
Last of the Intercessors
Who 'gainst the Crowned Transgressors
Pleadest before God's love! Arrayed in Wisdom's mail,
Wave thy lightning lance in mirth;
Nor let thy high heart fail,
Though from their hundred gates the leagued Oppressors,
With hurried legions move!

Hail, hail, all hail!

ANTISTROPHE a.

What though Cimmerian Anarchs dare blaspheme
Freedom and thee! thy shield is as a mirror
To make their blind slaves see, and with fierce gleam
To turn his hungry sword upon the wearer;
A new Acteon's error
Shall theirs have been—devoured by their own
Be thou like the imperial Basilisk, [hounds!
Killing thy foe with unapparent wounds!
Gaze on oppression, till, at that dread risk
Aghast, she pass from the Earth's disk;
Fear not, but gaze—for freemen mightier grow,
And slaves more feeble, gazing on their foe.
If Hope, and Truth, and Justice may avail,
Thou shalt be great.—All hail!

ANTISTROPHE B. 2.

From Freedom's form divine,
From Nature's inmost shrine,

* Homer and Virgil.

Strip every impious gawd, rend Error veil by veil:
O'er Ruin desolate,
O'er Falsehood's fallen state,
Sit thou sublime, unawed; be the Destroyer pale!
And equal laws be thine,
And winged words let sail,
Freighted with truth even from the throne of God:
That wealth, surviving fate,
Be thine.—All hail!

ANTISTROPHE a. 7.

Didst thou not start to hear Spain's thrilling pean
From land to land re-echoed solemnly,
Till silence became music! From the Aegean *
To the cold Alps, eternal Italy
Starts to hear thine! The Sea
Which paves the desert streets of Venice, laughs
In light and music; widowed Genoa wan,
By moonlight spells ancestral epitaphs,
Murmuring, where is Doria! fair Milan,
Within whose veins long ran
The viper's palisyng venom, lifts her heel
To bruise his head. The signal and the seal
(If Hope, and Truth, and Justice can avail)
Art Thou of all these hopes.—O hail!

ANTISTROPHE B. 7.

Florence! beneath the sun,
Of cities fairest one,
Blushes within her bower for Freedom's expecta-
From eyes of quenchless hope
Rome tears the priestly cope,
As ruling once by power, so now by admiration,—
An athlete stript to run
From a remoter station
For the high prize lost on Philippi's shore:
As then Hope, Truth, and Justice did avail,
So now may Fraud and Wrong! O hail!

EPODE I. 8.

Hear ye the march as of the Earth-born Forms
Arrayed against the ever-living Gods!
The crash and darkness of a thousand storms
Bursting their inaccessible abodes
Of crags and thunder clouds!
See ye the banners blazoned to the day,
Inwrought with emblems of barbaric pride!
Dissonant threats skilSilence far away,
The Serene Heaven which wraps our Eden wide
With iron light is dyed,
The Anarchs of the North lead forth their legions
Like Chaos o'er creation, uncreating;
An hundred tribes nourished on strange religions
And lawless slaveries,—down the aerial regions
Of the white Alps, desolating,
Famished wolves that bide no waiting,
Blotting the glowing footsteps of old glory,
Trampling our columned cities into dust,
Their dull and savage lust
On Beauty's corse to sickness satiating—
Hoary
They come! The fields they tread look black and
With fire—from their red feet the streams run
gory!

EPODE II. 9.

Great Spirit, deepest Love!
Which rulest and dost move

* 0reus, the Island of Cicero.

† The viper was the armorial device of the Visconti, tyrants of Milan.
All things which live and are, within the Italian
Who spreadest heaven around it, [shore;
Whose woods, rocks, waves, surround it;
Who sittest in thy star, o'er Ocean's western floor,
Spirit of beauty! at whose soft command
The sunbeams and the showers distil its poison!
From the Earth's bosom chill;
O bid those beams be each a blinding brand
Of lightning! bid those showers be dew of poison!
Bid the Earth's plenty kill!
Bid thy bright Heaven above
Whilst light and darkness bound it,
Be their tomb who planned
To make it ours and thine!
Or, with thine harmonizing ardours fill
And raise thy sons, as o'er the prone horizon
Thy lamp feeds every twilight wave with fire—
The instrument to work thy will divine!
Then clouds from sunbeams, antelopes from leopards,
And frowns and fears from Thee—
Would not more swiftly flee,
Than Celtic wolves from the Ausonian shepherds.—
Whatever, Spirit, from thystarry shrine
Thou yieldest or withholdest, Oh let be
This City of thy worship, ever free!

AUTUMN:
\textbf{A DIBRE.}

The warm sun is failing, the bleak wind is wailing,
The bare boughs are sighing, the pale flowers are dying,
And the year is dead,
On the earth her death-bed, in a shroud of leaves
Is lying,
Come, months, come away,
From November to May,
In your saddest array;
Follow the bier
Of the dead cold year,
And like dim shadows watch by her sepulchre.

The chill rain is falling, the nipt worm is crawling,
The rivers are swelling, the thunder is knelling for the year;
The blithe swallows are flown, and the lizards each gone
To his dwelling;
Come, months, come away;
Put on white, black, and grey,
Let your light sisters play—
Ye, follow the bier
Of the dead cold year,
And make her grave green with tear on tear.

THE WANING MOON.

And like a dying lady, lean and pale,
Who totters forth, wrapt in a gauzy veil,
Out of her chamber, led by the insane
And feeble wanderings of her fading brain,
The moon arose up in the murky earth,
A white and shapeless mass.

DEATH.

DEATH is here, and death is there,
Death is busy everywhere,
All around, within, beneath,
Above is death—and we are death.

Death has set his mark and seal
On all we are and all we feel,
On all we know and all we fear,

First our pleasures die—and then
Our hopes, and then our fears—and when
These are dead, the debt is due,
Dust claims dust—and we die too.

All things that we love and cherish,
Like ourselves, must fade and perish;
Such is our rude mortal lot—
Love itself would, did they not.

LIBERTY.

The fiery mountains answer each other;
Their thunderings are echoed from zone to zone;
The tempestuous oceans awake one another,
And the ice-rocks are shaken round winter's throne,
When the clarion of the Typhoon is blown.

From a single cloud the lightning flashes,
Whilst a thousand isles are illumined around;
Earthquake is trampling one city to ashes,
An hundred are shuddering and tottering; the sound
Is bellowing underground.

But keener thy gaze than the lightning's glare,
And swifter thy step than the earthquake's trump;
Thou deafenest the rage of the ocean; thy stare
Makes blind the volcanoes; the sun's bright lamp
To thine is a fen-fire damp.

From billow and mountain and exhalation
The sunlight is darted through vapour and blast;
From spirit to spirit, from nation to nation,
From city to hamlet, thy dwelling is cast,—
And tyrants and slaves are like shadows of night
In the van of the morning light.

TO THE MOON.

Art thou pale for weariness
Of climbing heaven, and gazing on the earth,
Wandering companionless
Among the stars that have a different birth,—
And ever-changing, like a joyless eye
That finds no object worth its constancy!
SUMMER AND WINTER.

It was a bright and cheerful afternoon, 
Towards the end of the sunny month of June, 
When the north wind congregates in crowds 
The floating mountains of the silver clouds 
From the horizon—and the stainless sky 
Opens beyond them like eternity. 
All things rejoiced beneath the sun, the weeds, 
The river, and the corn-fields, and the reeds; 
The willow leaves that glanced in the light breeze, 
And the firm foliage of the larger trees.

It was a winter such as when birds die 
In the deep forests; and the fishes lie 
Stifened in the translucent ice, which makes 
Even the mud and slime of the warm lakes 
A wrinkled clod, as hard as brick; and when, 
Among their children, comfortable men 
Gather about great fires, and yet feel cold: 
Alas! then for the homeless beggar old!

THE TOWER OF FAMINE.

Amid the desolation of a city, 
Which was the cradle, and is now the grave, 
Of an extinguished people; so that pity 
Weeps over the shipwrecks of oblivion's wave, 
There stands the Tower of Famine. It is built 
Upon some prison-homes, whose dwellers rave 
For bread, and gold, and blood: pain, linked to 
Agitates the light flame of their hours, [guilt, 
Until its vital oil is spent or spilt: 
There stands the pile, a tower amid the towers 
And sacred domes; each marble-ribbed roof, 
The brazen-gated temples, and the bowers 
Of solitary wealth! the tempest-proof 
Pavilions of the dark Italian air 
Are by its presence dimmed—they stand aloof, 
And are withdrawn—so that the world is bare, 
As if a spectre, wrapt in shapeless terror, 
Amid a company of ladies fair 
Should glide and glow, till it became a mirror 
Of all their beauty, and their hair and hue, 
The life of their sweet eyes, with all its error, 
Should be absorbed, till they to marble grew.

AN ALLEGORY.

A portal as of shadowy adamant 
Stands yawning on the highway of the life 
Which we all tread, a cavern huge and gaunt; 
Around it rages an unceasing strife 
Of shadows, like the restless clouds that haunt 
The gap of some cleft mountain, lifted high 
Into the whirlwinds of the upper sky.

* At Pisa there still exists the prison of Ughetto, which goes by the name of "La Torre della Fame:" in the adjoining building the galley-slaves are confined. It is situated near the Ponte al Mare on the Arno.

And many passed it by with careless bread, 
Not knowing that a shadowy [ ] 
Tracks every traveller even to where the dead 
Wait peacefully for their companion new; 
But others, by more curious humour led, 
Pause to examine,—these are very few, 
And they learn little there, except to know 
That shadows follow them wherever they go.

THE WORLD'S WANDERERS.

Tell me, thou star, whose wings of light 
Speed thee in thy fiery flight, 
In what cavern of the night 
Will thy pinions close now?

Tell me, moon, thou pale and grey 
Pilgrim of heaven's homeless way, 
In what depth of night or day 
Seekest thou repose now?

Weary wind, who wanderest 
Like the world's rejected guest, 
Hast thou still some secret nest 
On the tree or bilow?

SONNET.

Ye hasten to the dead! What seek ye there, 
Ye restless thoughts and busy purposes 
Of the idle brain, which the world's livery wear! 
O thou quick Heart, which pantest to possess 
All that anticipation feigneth fair! 
Thou vainly curious Mind which wouldest guess 
Whence thou didst come, and whither thou mayest go, 
And that which never yet was known wouldst know— 
Oh, whither hasten ye, that thus ye press 
With such swift feet life's green and pleasant path, 
Seeking alike from happiness and woe 
A refuge in the cavern of grey death! 
O heart, and mind, and thoughts! What thing do you 
Hope to inherit in the grave below?

LINES TO A REVIEWER.

Alas! good friend, what profit can you see 
In hating such a hateless thing as me! 
There is no sport in hate where all the rage 
Is on one side. In vain would you assuage 
Your frowns upon an unresisting smile, 
In which not even contempt lurks, to beguile 
Your heart, by some faint sympathy of hate. 
Oh conquer what you cannot satiate! 
For to your passion I am far more coy 
Than ever yet was coldest maid or boy 
In winter noon. Of your antipathy 
If I am the Narcissus, you are free 
To pine into a sound with hating me.
NOTE ON THE POEMS OF 1820.

BY THE EDITOR.

We spent the latter part of the year 1819 in Florence, where Shelley passed several hours daily in the Gallery, and made various notes on its ancient works of art. His thoughts were a good deal taken up also by the project of a steamboat, undertaken by a friend, an engineer, to ply between Leghorn and Marseilles, for which he supplied a sum of money. This was a sort of plan to delight Shelley, and he was greatly disappointed when it was thrown aside.

There was something in Florence that disagreed excessively with his health, and he suffered far more pain than usual; so much so that we left it sooner than we intended, and removed to Pisa, where we had some friends, and, above all, where we could consult the celebrated Vacca, as to the cause of Shelley’s sufferings. He, like every other medical man, could only guess at that, and gave little hope of immediate relief; he enjoined him to abstain from all physicians and medicine, and to leave his complaint to nature. As he had vainly consulted medical men of the highest repute in England, he was easily persuaded to adopt this advice. Pain and ill-health followed him to the end, but the residence at Pisa agreed with him better than any other, and there in consequence we remained.

In the spring we spent a week or two near Leghorn, borrowing the house of some friends, who were absent on a journey to England.—It was on a beautiful summer evening, while wandering among the lanes, whose myrtle hedges were the bowers of the fire-flies, that we heard the carolling of the sky-lark, which inspired one of the most beautiful of his poems. He addressed the letter to Mrs. Gisborae from this house, which was hers; he had made his study of the workshop of her son, who was an engineer. Mrs. Gisborae had been a friend of my father in her younger days. She was a lady of great accomplishments, and charming from her frank and affectionate nature. She had the most intense love of knowledge, a delicate and trembling sensibility, and preserved freshness of mind, after a life of considerable adversity. As a favourite friend of my father we had sought her with eagerness, and the most open and cordial friendship was established between us.

We spent the summer at the baths of San Giuliano, four miles from Pisa. These baths were of great use to Shelley in soothing his nervous irritability. We made several excursions in the neighbourhood. The country around is fertile; and diversified and rendered picturesque by ranges of near hills and more distant mountains. The peasantry are a handsome, intelligent race, and there was a gladsome sunny heaven spread over us, that rendered home and every scene we visited cheerful and bright. During some of the hottest days of August, Shelley made a solitary journey on foot to the summit of Monte San Pelegrino—a mountain of some height, on the top of which there is a chapel, the object, during certain days in the year, of many pilgrimages. The excursion delighted him while it lasted, though he exerted himself too much, and the effect was considerable lassitude and weakness on his return. During the expedition he conceived the idea and wrote, in the three days immediately succeeding to his return, The Witch of Atlas. This poem is peculiarly characteristic of his tastes—wildly fanciful, full of brilliant imagery, and discarding human interest and passion, to revel in the fantastic ideas that his imagination suggested.

The surpassing excellence of The Cenci had made me greatly desire that Shelley should increase his popularity, by adopting subjects that would more suit the popular taste, than a poem conceived in the abstract and dreamy spirit of the Witch of Atlas. It was not only that I wished him to acquire popularity as redounding to his
name; but I believed that he would obtain a
greater mastery over his own powers, and greater
happiness in his mind, if public applause crowned
his endeavours. The few stanzas that precede
the poem were addressed to me on my representing
these ideas to him. Even now I believe that
I was in the right. Shelley did not expect symp-
athy and approbation from the public; but the
want of it took away a portion of the ardour that
ought to have sustained him while writing. He
was thrown on his own resources, and on the
inspiration of his own soul, and wrote because his
mind overflowed, without the hope of being appreci-
ated. I had not the most distant wish that he
should truckle in opinion, or submit his lofty aspi-
rations for the human race to the low ambition
and pride of the many, but I felt sure, that if his
poems were more addressed to the common feel-
ings of men, his proper rank among the writers
of the day would be acknowledged; and that
popularity as a poet would enable his countrymen
to do justice to his character and virtues; which,
in those days, it was the mode to attack with the
most flagitious calumnies and insulting abuse.
That he felt these things deeply cannot be doubted,
though he armed himself with the consciousness
of acting from a lofty and heroic sense of right.
The truth burst from his heart sometimes in soli-
tude, and he would write a few unfinished verses
that showed that he felt the sting; among such I
find the following:

Alas! this is not what I thought life was.
I knew that there were crimes and evil men,
Misery and hate; nor did I hope to pass
Untouched by suffering, through the rugged glen.
In mine own heart I saw as in a glass
The hearts of others. . . . . And when
I went among my kind, with triple brass
Of calm endurance my weak breast I armed,
To bear scorn, fear, and hate, a woful mass!

I believed that all this morbid feeling would
vanish, if the chord of sympathy between him and
his countrymen were touched. But my per-
suasions were vain, the mind could not be bent
from its natural inclination. Shelley shrank
instinctively from portraying human passion, with
its mixture of good and evil, of disappointment
and disquiet. Such opened again the wounds of his
own heart, and he loved to shelter himself rather
in the airiest flights of fancy, forgetting love and
hate, and regret and lost hope, in such imagina-
tions as borrowed their hues from sunrise or sun-
set, from the yellow moonshine or paly twilight,
from the aspect of the far ocean or the shadows of
the woods; which celebrated the singing of the
winds among the pines, the flow of a murmuring
stream, and the thousand harmonious sounds
which nature creates in her solitudes. These are
the materials which form the Witch of Atlas; it
is a brilliant congregation of ideas, such as his
senses gathered, and his fancy coloured, during
his rambles in the sunny land he so much loved.

Our stay at the baths of San Giuliano was
shortened by an accident. At the foot of our
garden ran the canal that communicated between
the Serchio and the Arno. The Serchio over-
flowed its banks, and breaking its bounds, this
canal also overflowed; all this part of the country
is below the level of its rivers, and the consequence
was, that it was speedily flooded. The rising
waters filled the square of the baths, in the lower
part of which our house was situated. The canal
overflowed in the garden behind; the rising waters
on either side at last burst open the doors, and
meeting in the house, rose to the height of six
feet. It was a picturesque sight at night, to see
the peasants driving the cattle from the plains
below, to the hills above the baths. A fire was
kept up to guide them across the ford; and the
forms of the men and the animals showed in dark
relief against the red glare of the flame, which
was reflected again in the waters that filled the
square.

We then removed to Pisa, and took up our
abode there for the winter. The extreme mild-
ness of the climate suited Shelley, and his soli-
tude was enlivened by an intercourse with several
intimate friends. Chance cast us, strangely
enough, on this quiet, half-unpeopled town; but
its very peace suited Shelley—its river, the near
mountains, and not distant sea, added to its
attractions, and were the objects of many delight-
ful excursions. We feared the south of Italy
and a hotter climate, on account of our child;
our former bereavement inspiring us with terror.
We seemed to take root here, and moved little
afterwards; often, indeed, entertaining projects
for visiting other parts of Italy, but still delaying.
But for our fears, on account of our child, I
believe we should have wandered over the world,
both being passionately fond of travelling. But
human life, besides its great unalterable necessities,
is ruled by a thousand liliputian ties, that shackle
at the time, although it is difficult to account after-
wards for their influence over our destiny.
POEMS WRITTEN IN MDCCCXXI.

EPIPSYCHIDION:

VERSES ADDRESSED TO THE NOBLE AND UNFORTUNATE LADY EMILIA V.

NOW IMPRISONED IN THE CONVENT OF ______.

"L' anima amante si alancia furio del creato, e si crea nel infinito un Mondo tutto per essa, diverso assai da questo oscuro e pauroso baratro."—Her own words.

My Song, I fear that thou wilt find but few
Who fitly shall conceive thy reasoning,
Of such hard matter dost thou entertain;
Whence, if by misadventure, chance should bring
Thee to base company (as chance may do),
Quite unaware of what thou dost contain,
I prithee comfort thy sweet self again,
My last delight! tell them that they are dull,
And bid them own that thou art beautiful.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The writer of the following lines died at Florence, as he was preparing for a voyage to one of the wildest of the Sporades, which he had bought, and where he had fitted up the ruins of an old building, and where it was his hope to have realised a scheme of life, suited perhaps to that happier and better world of which he is now an inhabitant, but hardly practicable in this. His life was singular; less on account of the romantic vicissitudes which diversified it, than the ideal tinge which it received from his own character and feelings. The present Poem, like the Vita Nuova of Dante, is sufficiently intelligible to a certain class of readers without a matter-of-fact history of the circumstances to which it relates; and to a certain other class it must ever remain incomprehensible, from a defect of a common organ of perception for the ideas of which it treats. Not but that, gran vergogna sarebbe a colui, che rimasse cosa sotto veste di figura, o di colore retorico: e domandato non sapessi demudare le sue parole da cotal veste, in guisa che avessero verace intendimento.

The present poem appears to have been intended by the writer as the dedication to some longer one. The stanza on the above page is almost a literal translation from Dante's famous canzone

Voi ch' intendendo, il terzo ciel movete, &c.

The presumptuous application of the concluding lines to his own composition will raise a smile at the expense of my unfortunate friend: be it a smile not of contempt, but pity.
EPIPSYCHIDION.

Sweet Spirit! Sister of that orphan one,
Whose empire is the name thou weep'st on,
In my heart's temple I suspend to thee
These votive wreaths of withered memory.

Poor captive bird! who, from thy narrow cage,
Pour'st such music, that it might assuage
The rugged hearts of those who prisoned thee,
Were they not deaf to all sweet melody?
This song shall be thy rose: its petals pale
Are dead, indeed, my adored Nightingale!
But soft and fragrant is the faded blossom,
And it has no thorn left to wound thy bosom.

High, spirit-winged Heart! who dost for ever
Beat thine unfeeling bars with vain endeavour,
Till those bright plumes of thought, in which
I tover-soared this low and worldly shade,
Lie shattered; and thy panting wounded breast
Stains with dear blood its unmaternal nest!
I weep vain tears: blood would less bitter be,
Yet poured forth gladlier, could it profit thee.

Seraph of Heaven! too gentle to be human,
Veiling beneath that radiant form of Woman
All that is insupportable in thee
Of light, and love, and immortality!
Sweet Benediction in the eternal Curse!
Veiled Glory of this lampless Universe!
Thou Moon beyond the clouds! Thou living
Form Among the Dead! Thou Star above the Storm!
Thou Wonder, and thou Beauty, and thou Terror!
Thou Harmony of Nature's art! Thou Mirror
In whom, as in the splendour of the Sun,
All shapes look glorious which thou gazest on!
Ay, even the dim words which obscure thee now
Flash, lightning-like, with unaccustomed glow;
I pray thee that thou blot from this sad song
All of its much mortality and wrong,
With those clear drops, which start like sacred dew
From the twin lights thy sweet soul darkens through,
Weeping, till sorrow becomes ecstasy:
Then smile on it, so that it may not die.

I never thought before my death to see
Youth's vision thus made perfect: Emily,
I love thee; though the world by no thin name
Will hide that love, from its unvalued shame.
Would we two had been twins of the same mother?
Or, that the name my heart lent to another
Could be a sister's bond for her and thee,
Blending two beams of one eternity!
Yet were one lawful and the other true,
These names, though dear, could paint not, as is due,
How beyond refuge I am thine. Ah me!
I am not thine: I am a part of thee.

Sweet Lamp! my moth-like Muse has burnt its
wings,
Og, like a dying swan who soars and sings,
Young Love should teach Time, in his own grey style,
All that thou art. Art thou not void of guile,
A lovely soul formed to be blest and bless
A well of sealed and secret happiness,
Whose waters like the light and music are,
Vanquishing dissonance and gloom! A Star
Which moves not in the moving Heavens, alone!
A smile amid dark frowns! a gentle tone
Amid rude voices! a belov'd light!
A Solitude, a Refuge, a Delight!
A lute, which those whom love has taught to play
Make music on, to soothe the roughest day
And lull fond grief asleep! a buried treasure!
A cradle of young thoughts of wingless pleasure!
A violet-shrouded grave of Woe— I measure
The world of fancies, seeking one like thee,
And find— alas! mine own infirmity.

She met me, Stranger, upon life's rough way,
And lured me towards sweet death; as Night by Day,
Winter by Spring, or Sorrow by swift Hope,
Led into light, life, peace. An antelope,
In the suspended impulse of its lightness,
Went from the snow-white snow, to meet the sun's
First beam which sheds a radiance on the ground.
In her mild light the stary spirits dance,
The sunbeams of those wells which ever leap
Under the lightnings of the soul— too deep
For the brief fathom-line of thought or sense.
The glory of her being, issuing thence,
Stains the dead, blank, cold air with a warm shade
Of unentangled mixture, made
By Love, of light and motion; one intense
Diffusion, one serene Omnipresence,
Whose flowing outlines mingle in their flowing
Around her cheeks and utmost fingers glowing
With the uninterrupted blood, which there
Quivers, in a mist of snow-like air
The crimson pulse of living morning quiver,
Continuously protracted, and ending never,
Till they are lost, and in that Beauty furled
Which penetrates and clasps and fulfills the world;
Scarce visible from extreme loveliness.
Warm fragrance seems to fall from her light dress,
And her loose hair; and where some heavy tress
The air of her own speed has disentwined,
The sweetness seems to satiate the faint wind;
And in the soul a wild odour is felt,
Beyond the sense, like fiery dews that melt
Into the bosom of a frozen bud.
See where she stands! a mortal shape induced
With love and life and light and deity,
And motion which can change but cannot die;
A shade of some bright Eternity
A shadow of some golden dream; a Splendour
Leaving the third sphere piloless; a tender
Reflection on the eternal Moon of Love,
Under whose motions life's dull billows move;
A Metaphor of Spring and Youth and Morning;
A vision like incarnate April, warning,
With smiles and tears, Frost the Anatomy
Into his summer grave.

Ah! woe is me!
What have I dared? where am I lifted?
Shall I descend, and perish not? I know
That Love makes all things equal: I have heard
By mine own heart this joyous truth averred:
The spirit of the worm beneath the sod,
In love and worship, blends itself with God.

Sponsor! Sister! Angel! Pilot of the Fate
Whose course has been so starless! O too late
Beloved! O too soon adored, by me!
For in the fields of immortality
My spirit should at first have worshipp'd thine,
A divine presence in a place divine;
Or should have moved beside it on this earth,
A shadow of that substance, from its birth;
But not as now—I love thee; yes, I feel
That on the fountain of my heart a seal
Is set, to keep its waters pure and bright
For thee, since in those tears thou hast delight.
We—are we not formed, as notes of music are,
For one another, though dissimilar;
Such difference without discord, as can make
Those sweetest sounds, in which all spirits shake,
As trembling leaves in a continuous air!

Thy wisdom speaks in me, and bids me dare
To stem the rocks on which high hearts are wreck'd.
I sprang, as one saluted with plumes of fire,
When it would seek in Hesper's setting sphere
Past, like a God throned on a winged planet,
Is as a dead leaf's in the owlet light,
Of its reverberated lightning. Narrow
Diminish till it is consumed away;
If you divide pleasure and love and thought,
And from the fountains, and the odours deep
That I beheld her not in solitudes
She met me, robed in such exceeding glory,
And in that silence, and in my despair
I questioned every tongueless wind that flew
And in that silence, and in my despair,
I questioned every tongueless wind that flew
And from the words, all sounds. In the words
That Love is like understanding, that grows bright,
And from the rain of every passing cloud,
True Love in this differs from gold and clay,
That to divide is not to take away.
Love is like understanding, that grows bright,
Gazing on many truths: 'tis like thy light,
Imagination! which, from earth and sky,
And from the depths of human phantasy,
As from a thousand prisms and mirrors, fills
The Universe with glorious beams, and kills
Error, the worm, with many a sun-like arrow
Of its reverberated lightning. Narrow
The heart that loves, the brain that contemplates,
The life that wears, the spirit that creates
One object, and one form, and builds thereby
A sepulchre for its eternity.

Mind from its object differs most in this:
Evil from good; misery from happiness;
The bane of the nobler; the impure
And frail, from what is clear and must endure.
If you divide suffering and dress, you may
Diminish till it is consumed away;
If you divide pleasure and love and thought,
Each part exceeds the whole; and we know not
How much, while any yet remains unshared,
Of pleasure may be gained, of sorrow spared:
This truth is that deep well, whence sages draw
The unevi'g light of hope; the eternal law
By which those live, to whom this world of life
Is as a garden ravaged, and whose strife
Tills for the promise of a later birth
The wilderness of this Elysian earth.

There was a Being whom my spirit oft
Met on its vision'd wanderings, far aloft,
In the clear golden prime of my youth's dawn,
Upon the fairy isles of sunny lawn,
Amid the enchanted mountains, and the caves
Of divine sleep, and on the air-like waves
Of wonder-level dream, whose tremulous floor
Is as a garden ravaged, and whose strife
Of antique verse and high romance,—in form,
Sound, colour,—in whatever checks that Storm
Which with the shattered present chokes the past;
And in that best philosophy, whose taste
Thou Spirit was the harmony of truth.—

Then, from the caverns of my dreamy youth
I sprang, as one saluted with plumes of fire,
And towards the loadstar of my one desire,
I flew, like a dizzy moth, whose flight
Is as a dead leaf's in the owlet light,
When it would seek in Hesper's setting sphere
A radiant death, a fiery sepulchre,
As if it were a lamp of earthly flame.—
But she, whom prayers or tears then could not tame,
Past, like a God throned on a winged planet,
Whose burning plumes to tenfold swiftness fan it,
Into the dreary cone of our life's shade;
And as a man with mighty loss dismayed,
I would have followed, though the grave between
Yawned like a gulf whose spectres are unseen:
When a voice said:—"O Thou of hearts the weakest,
The phantom is beside thee whom thou seekest."—
Then I—"Where!" the world's echo answered
"where!"
And in that silence, and in my despair,
I questioned every tongueless wind that flew
Over my tower of mourning, if it knew
Whither 'twas fled, this soul out of my soul;
And murmured names and spells which have
controul
The night which closed on her; nor uncreate
But neither prayer nor verse could dissipate
Over the sightless tyrants of our fate;
That world within this Chaos, mine and me,
The world I say of thoughts that worshipped
Of which she was the veiled Divinity,
And therefore I went forth, with hope and fear,
And struggling through its error with vain strife,
And stumbling in my weakness and my haste,
Feeding my course with expectation's breath,
And half bewilder'd by new forms, I past
Into the wintry forest of our life;
And every gentle passion sick to death,
Seeking among those untaught foresters
There,— One, whose voice was venom'd melody
And there I lay, with a chastecold bed:
Out of her looks into my vitals came,
Waxing and waning o'er Endymion.
The breath of her false mouth was like faint
Sate by a well, under bluenight-shade bowers;
According as she smiled or frowned on me;
She led me to a cave in that wild place,
As the Moon's image in a summer sea,
And all my being became bright or dim
And I was laid asleep, spirit and limb,
Between the Heaven and Earth of my calm mind,
And, as a cloud charioted by the wind,
Who makes all beautiful on which she smiles.
That wandering shrine of soft yet icy flame
Which ever is transformed, yet still the same,
And who was then its Tempest; and when She,
The Planet of that hour, was quenched, what frost
Crept o'er those waters, till from coast to coast
The moving billows of my being fell
Into a death of ice, immovable—
And then,— what earthquakes made it gape and split,
The white Moon smiling all the while on us;
These words conceal:— If not, each word would be
The key of stanchless tears. Weep not for me!

At length, into the obscure forest came
The vision I had sought through grief and shame.
A thousand trees that wintry wilderness of thorns
Flashed from her motion splendour like the Morn's,
And from her presence life was radiated
Through the grey earth and branches bare and dead;
So that her way was paved, and roofed above
With flowers as soft as thoughts of budding love;
And music from her respiration spread
Like light,— all other sounds were penetrated
By the small, still, sweet spirit of that sound,
So that the savage winds hung mute around;
And odours warm and fresh fell from her hair
Dissolving the dull cold in the froze air:
Soft as an Incarnation of the Sun,
When light is changed to love, this glorious One
Floated into the cavern where I lay,
And called my Spirit, and the dreaming clay
As smoke by fire, and in her beauty's glow
Was lifted by the thing that dreamed below
I knew it was the Vision veiled from me
So many years,— that it was Emily.

This Spheres of light who rule this passive Earth,
This world of love, this me:; and into birth
Awaken all its fruits and flowers, and dart
Magnetic might into its central heart;
And lift its billows and its mists, and guide
By everlasting laws each wind and tide
To its fit cloud, and its appointed cave;
And lull its storms, each in the craggy grave
Which was its cradle, luring to faint bowers
The armies of the rainbow-winged showers;
And, as those married lights, which from the towers
Of Heaven look forth and fold the wandering globe
In liquid sleep and splendour, as a robe;
And all their many-mingled influence blend,
If equal, yet unlike, to one sweet end;
So ye, bright regents, with alternate sway,
Govern my sphere of being, night and day!
Thou, not disdaining even a borrowed might;
Thou, not eclipseing a remoter light;
And, through the shadow of the seasons three,
From Spring to Autumn's sere maturity,
Light it into the Winter of the tomb,
Where it may ripen to a brighter bloom.
Thou too, O Comet, beautiful and fierce,
Who drew the heart of this frail Universe.
Towards thine own; till, wreck'd in that convulsion,
Alternating attraction and repulsion,
Thine went astray, and that was rent in twain;
Oh, float into our azure heaven again!
Be there love's folding-star at thy return;
The living Sun will feed thee from its urn
Of golden fire; the Moon will veil her horn
In thy last smiles; adoring Eos, Morn
Will worship thee with incense of calm breath
And lights and shadows; as the star of Death
And Birth is worshipped by those sisters wild
Called Hope and Fear—upon the heart are piled
Their offerings,—of this sacrifice divine.
A World shall be the altar.

Lady mine,
Scorn not these flowers of thought, the fading birth
Which from its heart of hearts that plant puts forth,
Whose fruit, made perfect by thy sunny eyes,
Will be as of the trees of Paradise.

The day is come, and thou wilt fly with me.
To whate'er of dull mortality
Is mine, remain a vestal sister still;
To the intense, the deep, the imperishable,
Not mine, but me, henceforth be thou united
Even as a bride, delighting and delighted.
The hour is come:—the destined Star has risen
Which shall descend upon a vacant prison.
The walls are high, the gates are strong, thick set
Of arms: more strength has Love than he or they;
For he can burst his charnel, and make free
A World shall be the altar.

Emily,
A ship is floating in the harbour now,
A wind is hovering o'er the mountain's brow;
There is a path on the sea's azure floor,
No keel has ever ploughed that path before;
The halcyons brood around the foamless isles;
The treacherous Ocean has forsworn its wiles;
The merry mariners are bold and free:
Our ministers, along the boundless Sea,
The winged storms, chanting their thunder-psalms,
To other lands, leave azure chasms of calm
Over this isle, or weep themselves in dew,
From which its fields and woods ever renew
Their green and golden immortality.
And from the sea there rise, and from the sky
There fall clear exhalations, soft and bright,
Which from its heart of hearts that plant puts forth,
Which is mine, remain a vestal sister still;
Unfolds itself, and may be felt not seen
The light clear element which the isle wears
As clear as elemental diamond,
Or serene morning air; and far beyond,
Parasite flowers illumine with dewy gems
You might faint with that delicious pain.
The soul in dust and chaos.

Undulate with the undulating tide:
There are thick woods where sylvan forms abide;
And many a fountain, rivulet, and pond,
As clear as elemental diamond,
Or serene morning air; and far beyond,
The moisy tracks made by the goats and deer
(Which the rough shepherd treads but once a year)
Pierce into glades, caverns, and bowers, and halls
Built round with ivy, which the waterfalls
Illumining, with sound that never fails,
Accompany the noonday nightingales;
And all the place is peopled with sweet airs,
The light clear element which the isle wears
Is heavy with the scent of lemon-flowers,
Which floats like mist laden with unseen showers,
And falls upon the eye-lids like faint sleep;
And from the moss violets and jonquils peep,
And dart their arrowy odour through the brain
With that deep music in unison:
Which is a soul within the soul—they seem
Like echoes of an antenatal dream.—
It is an isle 'twixt Heaven, Air, Earth, and Sea,
Cradled, and hung in clear tranquillity;
Bright as that wandering Eden Lucifer,
Washed by the soft blue Oceans of young air.
It is a favoured place. Famine or Blight,
Pestilence, War, and Earthquake, never light
Upon its mountain-peaks; blind vultures, they
Sail onward far upon their fatal way:
The winged storms, chanting their thunder-psalms,
To other lands, leave azure chasms of calm
Over this isle, or weep themselves in dew,
From which its fields and woods ever renew
Their green and golden immortality.
And from the sea there rise, and from the sky
There fall clear exhalations, soft and bright,
Veil after veil, each hiding some delight.
Which Sun or Moon or zephyr draw aside,
Tillyou might faint with that delicious pain.
The day is come, and thou wilt fly with me.
The lampless halls, and when they fade, the sky
Peeps through their winter-woof of tracery
With moonlight patches, or star atoms keen,
Or fragments of the day's intense serene;
Working mosaic on their Parian floors.
And, day and night, aloof, from the high towers
And terraces, the Earth and Ocean seem
To sleep in one another's arms, and dream
Of waves, flowers, clouds, woods, rocks, and all
that we
Read in their smiles, and call reality.

This isle and house are mine, and I have vowed
These to be lady of the solitude.
And I have fitted up some chambers there
Looking towards the golden Eastern air,
And level with the living winds, which flow
Like waves above the living waves below.
I have sent books and music there, and all
Those instruments with which high spirits call
The future from its cradle, and the past
Out of its grave, and make the present last
In thoughts and joys which sleep, but cannot die,
Folded within their own eternity.
Our simple life wants little, and true taste
Hires not the pale drudge Luxury to waste
The scene it would adorn, and therefore still,
Nature, with all her children, haunts the hill.
The ring-dove, in the embowering ivy, yet
Keeps up her love-lament, and the owls flit
Round the evening tower, and the young stars
glance
Between the quick bate in their twilight dance;
The spotted deer bask in the fresh moonlight
Before our gate, and the slow silent night
Is measured by the pants of their calm sleep.
Be this our home in life, and when years heap
Their withered hours, like leaves, on our decay,
Let us become the overhanging day,
The living soul of this Elysian isle,
Conscious, inseparable, one.
Meanwhile We two will rise, and sit, and walk together,
Under the roof of blue Ionian weather,
And wander in the meadows, or ascend
The mossy mountains, where the blue heavens bend
With lightest winds, to touch their paramour;
Or linger, where the pebble-paven shore,
Under the quick faint kisses of the sea
Trembles and sparkles as with ecstasy,—
Possessing and possesst by all that is
Within that calm circumference of bliss,
And by each other, till to love and live
Be one;—or, at the midnight hour, arrive

Where some old cavern hoar seems yet to keep
The moonlight of the expired night asleep,
Through which the awakened day can never peep;
A veil for our seclusion, close as Night's,
Where secure sleep may kill thine innocent lights;
Sleep, the fresh dew of languid love, the rain
Whose drops quench kisses till they burn again.
And we will talk, until thought's melody
Become too sweet for utterance, and it die
In words, to live again in looks, which dart
With thrilling tone into the voiceless heart,
Harmonising silence without a sound.
Our breath shall intermix, our bosoms bound,
And our veins beat together; and our lips,
With other eloquence than words, eclipse
The soul that burns between them; and the wells
Which boil under our being's inmost cells,
The fountains of our deepest life, shall be
Confused in passion's golden purity,
As mountain-springs under the morning Sun.
We shall become the same, we shall be one
Spirit within two frames, oh! wherefore two!
One passion in twin-hearts, which grows and grew
Till like two meteors of expanding flame,
Those spheres instinct with it become the same,
Touch, mingle, are transfigured; ever still
Burning, yet ever inconsumable:
In one another's substance finding food,
Like flames too pure and light and unimbued
To nourish their bright lives with baser prey,
Which point to Heaven and cannot pass away:
One hope within two wills, one will beneath
Two overshadowing minds, one life, one death,
And one annihilation. Woe is me!
The winged words on which my soul would pierce
Into the height of love's rare Universe,
Are chains of lead around its flight of fire.—
I pant, I sink, I tremble, I expire!

Weak verses, go, kneel at your Sovereign's feet,
And say:—"We are the masters of thy slave;
"What wouldest thou with us and ours and thine!"
Then call your sisters from Oblivion's cave,
All singing loud: "Love's very pain is sweet,
But its reward is in the world divine,
Which, if not here, it builds beyond the grave."
So shall ye live when I am there. Then haste
Over the hearts of men, until ye meet
Marina, Vanna, Primus, and the rest,
And bid them love each other, and be blest:
And leave the troop which errs, and which reproves,
And come and be my guest,—for I am Love's.
ADONAISS;

AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF JOHN KEATS,

AUTHOR OF **ENDYMION, HYPERION, ETC.**

POEMS WRITTEN IN 1821.

'Αντώνος ρήσειν μνημένος εἰς τούς ἄγονοι μουσικοί γίνεσθαι.

PREFACE.

It is my intention to subjoin to the London edition of this poem, a criticism upon the claims of its lamented object to be classed among the writers of the highest genius who have adorned our age. My known repugnance to the narrow principles of taste on which several of his earlier compositions were modelled, prove at least that I am an impartial judge. I consider the fragment of "Hyperion," as second to nothing that was ever produced by a writer of the same years.

John Keats died at Rome, of a consumption, in his twenty-fourth year, on the 27th of December, 1820, and was buried in the romantic and lonely cemetery of the protestants in that city, under the pyramid which is the tomb of Cestius, and the massy walls and towers, now mouldering and desolate, which formed the circuit of ancient Rome. The cemetery is an open space among the ruins, covered in winter with violets and daisies. It might make one in love with death, to think that one should be buried in so sweet a place.

The genius of the lamented person to whose memory I have dedicated these unworthy verses, was not less delicate and fragile than it was beautiful; and where canker-worms abound, what wonder, if its young flower was blighted in the bud? The savage criticism on his "Endymion" which appeared in the Quarterly Review, produced the most violent effect on his susceptible mind; the agitation thus originated ended in the rupture of a blood-vessel in the lungs; a rapid consumption ensued; and the succeeding acknowledgments from more candid critics, of the true greatness of his powers, were ineffectual to heal the wound thus wantonly inflicted.

It may be well said, that these wretched men know not what they do. They scatter their insults and their slanders without heed as to whether the poisoned shaft lights on a heart made callous by many blows; or one, like Keats's, composed of more penetrable stuff.

One of their associates is, to my knowledge, a most base and unprincipled calumniator. As to "Endymion," was it a poem, whatever might be its defects, to be treated contemptuously by those who had celebrated with various degrees of complacency and panegyric, "Paris," and "Woman," and a "Syrian Tale," and Mrs. Lefanu, and Mr. Barret, and Mr. Howard Payne, and a long list of the illustrious obscure? Are these the men, who in their venal good-nature, presumed to draw a parallel between the Rev. Mr. Milman and Lord Byron? What gnat did they strain at here, after having swallowed all those camels? Against what woman taken in adultery daresthe foremost of these literary prostitutes to cast his opprobrious stone? Miserable man! you, one of the meanest, have wantonly defaced one of the noblest specimens of the workmanship of God. Nor shall it be your excuse, that, murderer as you are, you have spoken daggers, but used none.

The circumstances of the closing scene of poor Keats's life were not made known to me until the Elegy was ready for the press. I am given to understand that the wound which his sensitive spirit had received from the criticism of "Endymion" was exacerbated at the bitter sense of unrequited benefit; the poor fellow seems to have been hooted from the stage of life, no less by those on whom he had wasted the promise of his genius, than those on whom he had lavished his fortune and his care. He was accompanied to Rome, and attended in his last illness by Mr. Severn, a young artist of the highest promise, who, I have been informed, "almost risked his own life and sacrificed every prospect, to unwearyed attendance upon his dying friend." Had I known these circumstances before the completion of my poem, I should have been tempted to add my feeble tribute of applause to the more solid recompense which the virtuous man finds in the recollection of his own motives. Mr. Severn can dispense with a reward from "such stuff as dreams are made of." His conduct is a golden augury of the success of his future career—may the unextinguished Spirit of his illustrious friend animate the creations of his pencil, and plead against Oblivion for his name!
ADONAIIS.

I weep for Adonais—he is dead!
Oh, weep for Adonais! though our tears
Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a head!
And thou, sad Hour, selected from all years
To mourn our loss, rouse thy obsequy compeers,
And teach them thine own sorrow; say: with me
Died Adonais; till the Future dares
Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall be
An echo and a light unto eternity!

Where wert thou, mighty Mother, when he lay,
When thy son lay, pierced by the shaft which flies
In darkness, where was lost Urania
When Adonais died! With veiled eyes,
'Mid listening Echoes, in her Paradise
She sate, while one, with soft enamoured breath,
Rekindled all the fading melodies,
With which, like flowers that mock the corpse
beneath,
He had adorned and hided the coming bulk of death.

Oh, weep for Adonais—he is dead!
Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and weep!
Yet wherefore! Quench within their burning bed
Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud heart keep,
Like his, a mute and uncomplaining sleep;
For he is gone, where all things wise and fair
Descend:—oh, dream not that the amorous Deep
Willyet restore him to the vital air;
Death feedson his mute voice, and laughs at our despair.

Most musical of mourners, weep again!
Lament anew, Urania!—He died,
Who was the Sire of an immortal strain,
Blind, old, and lonely, when his country's pride
The priest, the slave, and the libertine,
Trampled and mocked with many a loathed rite
Of lust and blood; he went, unterriﬁed,
Into the gulf of death; but his clear Sprite
Yet reigns o'er earth; the third among the sons of light.

But now, thy youngest, dearest one, has perished,
The nursing of thy widowhood, who grew,
Like a pale ﬂower by some sad maiden cherished,
And fed with true love tears instead of dew;
Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
Thy extreme hope, the loveliest and the last,
The bloom, whose petals nipt before they blew
Died on the promise of the fruit, is waste;
The broken lily lies—the storm is overpast.

To that high Capital, where kingly Death
Keeps his pale court in beauty and decay,
He came; and bought, with price of purest breath,
A grave among the eternal.—Come away!
Haste, while the vault of blue Italian day
Is yet his ﬁtting charnel-roof! while still
He lies, as if in dewy sleep he lay;
Awake him not! surely he takes his ﬁll
Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all ill.

Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
Oh, weep for Adonais!—The quick Dreams,
The passion-winged Ministers of thought,
Who were his flocks, whom near the living streams
Of his young spirit he fed, and whom he taught
The love which was its music, wander not,—
Wander no more, from kindling brain to brain,
But droop there, whence they sprung; and mourn
Their lot
Round the cold heart, where, after their sweet pain,
They never will gather strength, nor find a home again.

And one with trembling hand clasps his cold head,
And fans him with her moonlight wings, and cries,
"Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is not dead;
See, on the silken fringe of his faint eyes,
Like dew upon a sleeping flower, there lies
A tear some Dream has loosened from his brain."
Lost Angel of a ruined Paradise!
She knew not 'twas her own; as with no stain
She faded, like a cloud which had outwept its rain.
POEMS WRITTEN IN 1821.

One from a lucid urn of starry dew
Washed his light limbs, as if embalming them;
Another clip the profuse locks, and threw,
The wreath upon him, like an anadem,
Which frozen tears instead of pearls begem;
Another in her wilful grief would break
Her bow and winged reeds, as if to stem
A greater loss with one which was more weak;
And dull the barbed fire against his frozen cheek.

Another Splendour on his mouth alit,
That mouth whence it was wont to draw the breath
Which gave it strength to pierce the guarded wit,
And pass into the panting heart beneath
With lightning and with music: the damp death
Quenched its caress upon its icy lips;
And, as a dying meteor stains a wreath
Of moonlight vapour, which the cold night clips,
It flushed through his pale limbs, and passed to its eclipse.

And others came,—Desires and Adorations,
Winged Persuasions, and veiled Destinies,
Splendours, and Glooms, and glimmering Incarnations
Of hopes and fears, and twilight Phantasies;
And Sorrow, with her family of Sighs,
And Pleasure, blind with tears, led by the gleam
Of her own dying smile instead of eyes,
Came in slow pomp;—the moving pomp might seem
Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal stream.

All he had loved, and moulded into thought
From shape, and hue, and odour, and sweet sound,
Lamented Adonais. Morning sought
Her eastern watch-tower, and her hair unbound,
Wet with the tears which should adorn the ground,
Dimmed the aerial eyes that kindle day;
Afar the melancholy thunder moaned,
Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay,
And the wild winds flew around, sobbing in their dismay.

Lost Echo sits amid the voiceless mountains,
And feeds her grief with his remembered lay,
And will no more reply to winds or fountains,
Or amorous birds perched on the young green spray,
Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing day;
Since she can mimic not his lips, more dear
Than those for whose disdain they pined away
Into a shadow of all sounds:—a drear
Murmur, between their songs, is all the woodmen hear.

Grief made the young Spring wild, and she threw
Her kindling buds, as if the Autumn were, down
Or they dead leaves; since her delight is flown,
For whom should she have waked the sullen year!
To Phoebus was not Hyacinth so dear,
Nor to himself Narcissus, as to both
Thou Adonais; wan they stand and sere
Amid the faint compensations of their youth,
With dew all turned to tears; odour, to sighing ruth.

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale,
Mourns not her mate with such melodious pain;
Not so the eagle, who like thee could scale
Heaven, and could nourish in the sun's domain
Her mighty youth, with morning doth complain,
Soaring and screaming round her empty nest,
As Albion wails for thee: the curse of Cain
Light on his head who pierced thy innocent breast,
And scared the angel soul that was its earthly guest!

Ah woe is me! Winter is come and gone,
But grief returns with the revolting year;
The airs and streams renew their joyous tone;
The ants, the bees, the swallows, re-appear;
Fresh leaves and flowers deck the dead Seasons'
The amorous birds now pair in every brake;
Like unimprisoned flames, out of their trance awake.

Through wood and stream and field and hill and Ocean,
A quickening life from the Earth's heart has burst,
As it has ever done, with change and motion,
From the great morning of the world when first
God dawned on Chaos; in its stream immersed,
The lamps of Heaven flash with a softer light;
All baser things pant with life's sacred thirst;
Diffuse themselves; and spend in love's delight,
The beauty and the joy of their renewed might.

The leprous corpse touched by this spirit tender,
Exhales itself in flowers of gentle breath;
Like incarnations of the stars, when splendour
Is changed to fragrance, they illumine death,
And mock the merry worm that wakes beneath,
Nought we know die. Shall that alone which knows
Be as a sword consumed before the sheath
By sightless lightning? th' intense atom glows
A moment, then is quenched in a most cold repose.

Alas! that all we loved of him should be,
But for our grief, as if it had not been,
And grief itself be mortal! Woe is me!
Whence are we, and why are we! of what scene
The actors or spectators! Great and mean
Meet massed in death, who lends what life must borrow.
As long as skies are blue, and fields are green,
Evening must usher night, night urge the morrow,
Month follow month with woe, and year wake year to sorrow.

He will awake no more, oh, never more!
"Wakethou," cried Misery, "childless Mother, rise
Out of thy sleep, and slake, in thy heart's core,
A wound more fierce than his tears and sighs."
And all the Dreams that watched Urania's eyes,
And all the echoes whom their sister's song
Had held in holy silence, cried, "Arise!"
Swift as a Thought by the snake Memory stung,
From her ambrosial rest the fading Splendour sprung.
ADONAI8.

She rose like an autumnal Night, that springs
Out of the East, and followswild and drear
The golden Day, which, on eternal wings,
Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,
Has left the Earth a corpse. Sorrow and fear
So struck, so roused, so rapt, Urania,
So saddened round her like an atmosphere
Of stormy mist; so swept her on her way,
Even to the mournful place where Adonais lay.

Out of her secret Paradise she sped,
Through camps and cities rough with stone,
And human hearts, which to her aery tread
Yielding not, wounded the invisible
Palms of her tender feet where'er they fell;
And barbed tongues, and thoughts more sharp than
Rent the soft Form they never could repel;
Whose sacred blood, like the young tears of May,
Paved with eternal flowers that undeserving way.

"The sun comes forth, and many reptiles spawn;
He sets, and each ephemeral insect then
Is gathered into death without a dawn,
And the immortal stars awake again;
So it is in the world of living men:
A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight
Making earth bare and veiling heaven, and when
It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or shared its light
Leave to its kindred lamps the spirit's awful night."

Thus ceased she; and the mountain shepherds came,
Their garlands sere, their magic mantles rent;
The Pilgrim of Eternity, whose fame
Over his living head like Heaven is bent,
An early but enduring monument,
Came, veiling all the lightnings of his song
In sorrow; from her wilds Ierne sent
The sweetest lyrist of her saddest wrong,
And love taught grief to fall like music from his tongue.

"Stay yet awhile! speak to me once again;
Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may live;
And in my heartless breast and burning brain
That word, that kiss shall all thoughts else survive,
With food of saddest memory kept alive,
Now thou art dead, as if it were a part
Of thee, my Adonais! I would give
All that I am to be as thou now art,
But lam chained to Time, and cannot hence depart!

"O gentle child, beautiful as thou wert,
Why didst thou leave the trodden paths of men
Too soon, and with weak hands though mighty heart
Dare the unpastured dragon in his den!
Defenceless as thou wert, oh! where was then
Wisdom the mirror'd shield, or scorn the spear?
Or hadst thou waited the full cycle, when
Thy spirit should have filled its crescent sphere,
The monsters of life's waste had fled from thee like
deer.

"The herded wolves, bold only to pursue;
The obscene ravens, clamorous o'er the dead;
The vultures, to the conqueror's bannern true,
Who feed where Desolation first has fed,
And whose wings rain contagion;—how they fled,
When, like Apollo, from his golden bow,
The Pythonian of the age one arrow sped
And smiled!—The spoilers tempt no second blow,
They fawn on the proud feet that spur them lying low.

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XXXV.

What softer voice is hushed over the dead!
Athat what brow is that dark mantle thrown!
What form leans sadly o'er the white death-bed,
In mockery of monumental stone,
The heavy heart heaving without a moan!
If it be he, who, gentlest of the wise,
Taught, soothed, loved, honoured the departed one;
Let me not vex, with inharmonious sighs,
The silence of that heart's accepted sacrifice.

XXXVI.

Our Adonais has drunk poison—oh!
What deaf and viperous murderer could crown
Life's early cup with such a draught of woe?
The nameless worm would now itself disown:
It felt, yet could escape the magic tone
Whose prelude held all envvy, hate and wrong,
But what was howling in one breast alone,
Silent with expectation of the song,
Whose master's hand is cold, whose silver lyre unstrung.

XXXVII.

Live thou, whose infamy is not thy fame!
Live! fear no heavier chastisement from me,
Thou noteless blot on a remembered name!
But be thyself, and know thyself to be!
And ever at thy season be thou free
To spill the venom when thy fangs o'erflow:
Remorse and self-contempt shall cling to thee;
Hot shame shall burn upon thy secret brow,
And like a beaten hound tremble thou shalt—as now.

XXXVIII.

Nor let us weep that our delight is fled
Far from these carrion-kites that scream below;
He wakes or sleeps with the enduring dead;
Thou cannot soar where he is sitting now.
Dust to the dust! but the pure spirit shall flow
Back to the burning fountain whence it came,
A portion of the Eternal, which must glow
Through time and change, unquenchably the same,
Whilst thy cold embers choke the sordid heart of shame.

XXXIX.

Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not sleep—
He hath awakened from the dream of life—
'Tis we, who, lost in stormy visions, keep
With phantoms an unprofitable strife,
And in mad trance strike with our spirit's knife
Invincible nothings—We decay
Like corpses in a charnel; fear and grief
Convulse us and consume us day by day,
And cold hopes swarm like worms within our living clay.

XL.

He has outsoared the shadow of our night;
Envy and calumny, and hate and pain,
And that unrest which men miscall delight,
Can touch him not and torture not again;
From the contagion of the world's slow stain
He is secure, and now can never mourn
A heart grown cold, a head grown grey in vain;
Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to burn,
With sparkless ashes lead an unlamented urn.

XLI.

He lives, he wakes—tis Death is dead, not he;
Mourn not for Adonais—Thou young Dawn,
Turn all thy dew to splendour, for from thee
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone;
Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan!
Cease ye faint flowers and fountains, and thou Air
Which like a morning veil thy scarf hast thrown
O'er the abandoned Earth, now leave it bare
Even to the joyous stars which smile on its despair!

XLI.

He is a portion of the loveliness
Which once he made more lovely: he doth bear
His part, while the one Spirit's plastic stress
Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling
All new successions to the forms they wear
There torturing th' unwilling dress that checks its flight
To its own likeness, as each mass may bear;
And bursting in its beauty and its might
From trees and beasts and men into the Heavens' light.

XLI.

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown
Rose from their thrones, built beyond mortal
Far in the unapparent. Chatterton thought,
Rose pale, his solemn agony had not
Yet faded from him; Sidney, as he fought
And as he fell and as he lived and loved,
Sublimely mild, a Spirit without spot,
And love and life contend in it, for what
Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live there,
And move like winds of light on dark and stormy air.

XLI.

The splendours of the firmament of time
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not:
Like stars to their appointed height they climb,
And death is a low mist which cannot blot
The brightness it may veil. When lofty thought
Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,
And love and life contend in it, for what
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XLVI.

And many more, whose names on Earth are dark.
But whose transmitted effluence cannot die
So long as fire outlives the parent spark.
Rose, robed in dazzling immortality.
"Thou art become as one of us," they cry;
"It was for thee yon kingless sphere has long
Swung blind in unascended majesty,
Silent alone amid a Heaven of song.
Assume thy winged throne, thou Vesper of our throng!"
Who mourns for Adonais? oh come forth,
Fond wretch! and know thyself and him aright.
Clasp with thy panting soul the pendulous Earth;
As from a centre, dart thy spirit's light
Beyond all worlds, until its spacious might
Satiate the void circumference: then shrink
Even to a point within our day and night;
And keep thy heart light, lest it make thee sink
When hope has kindled hope, and lured thee to the brink.

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulchre,
Oh, not of him, but of our joy: 'tis nought
That ages, empires, and religions, there
Lie buried in the ravage they have wrought;
For such as he can lend,—they borrow not
Glory from those who made the world their prey;
And he is gathered to the kings of thought
Who waged contention with their times' decay,
And of the past are all that cannot pass away.

Go thou to Rome,—at once the Paradise,
The grave, the city, and the wilderness:
And where its wrecks like shattered mountains rise,
And flowering weeds, and fragrant copsest dress
The bones of Desolation's nakedness
Pass, till the Spirit of the spot shall lead
Thy footsteps to a slope of green access,
Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead
A light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread,

And grey walls moulder round, on which dull Time
Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand;
And one keen pyramid with wedge sublime,
Pavilioning the dust of him who planned
This refuge for his memory, doth stand
Like flame transformed to marble; and beneath
A field is spread, on which a newer band
Have pitched in Heaven's smile their camp of death,
Welcoming him we lose with scarce extinguished breath.

Here pause: these graves are all too young as yet
To have outgrown the sorrow which consigned
Its charge to each; and if the seal is set,
Here, on one fountain of a mourning mind,
Break it not thou! too surely shalt thou find
Thine own well full, if thou returnest home,
Of tears and gall. From the world's bitter wind
Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.
What Adonais is, why fear we to become?

The One remains, the many change and pass;
Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's shadows fly;
Life, like a dome of many-colored glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity,
Until Death tramples it to fragments.—Die,
If thou wouldst be with that which thou dost seek!
Follow where all is fled!—Rome's azure sky,
Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words are weak
The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to speak.

Why linger, why turn back, why shrink, my Heart!
Thy hopes are gone before: from all things here
They have departed; thou shouldst now depart!
A light is past from the revolving year,
And man, and woman; and what still is dear
Attracts to crush, repels to make thee wither.
The soft sky smiles,—the low wind whispers near:
'Tis Adonais calls! oh, hasten thither,
No more let Life divide what Death can join together.

That light whose smile kindles the Universe,
That Beauty in which all things work and move,
That Benediction which the eclipsing Curse
Of birth can quench not, that sustaining Love
Which through the web of being blindly wove
By man and beast and earth and air and sea,
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
The fire for which all thirst, now beams on me,
Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

The breath whose might I have invoked in song
Descends on me; my spirit's bark is driven
Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng
Whose sails were never to the tempest given;
The massy earth and spherical skies are riven!
I am borne darkly, fearfully afar;
Whilest burning through the inmost veil of Heaven,
The soul of Adonais, like a star,
Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are.
MISCELLANEOUS.

TO E**** V****.

**Madonna,** wherefore hast thou sent to me
Sweet-basil and mignonette!
Embleming love and health, which never yet
In the same wreath might be.
Alas, and they are wet!
Is it with thy kisses or thy tears?
For never rain or dew
Such fragrance drew
From plant or flower—the very doubt endears
My sadness ever new,
The sighs I breathe, the tears I shed for thee.

_March, 1821._

---

TIME.

Unfathomable Sea! whose waves are years,
Ocean of Time, whose waters of deep woe
Are brackish with the salt of human tears!
Thou shoreless flood, which in thy ebb and flow
Claspest the limits of mortality!
And sick of prey, yet howling on for more,
Treacherous in calm, and terrible in storm,
Vomitest thy wrecks on its inhospitable shore;
Whose hoofs outspeed the tempest's flight,
Bore the far from me;
My heart, for my weak feet were weary soon,
Did companion thee.

Ah! fleeter far than fleetest storm or steed,
Or the death they bear,
The heart which tender thought clothes like a dove
With the wings of care;
In the battle, in the darkness, in the need,
Shall mine cling to thee,
Nor claim one smile for all the comfort, love,
It may bring to thee.

---

TO NIGHT.

Swiftly walk over the western wave,
Spirit of Night!
Out of the misty eastern cave,
Where all the long and lone daylight,
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,—
Swift be thy flight!

Wrap thy form in a mantle grey,
Star-inwrought!
Blind with thine hair the eyes of day,
Kiss her until she be wearied out,
Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,
Touching all with thine opiate wand—
Come, long-sought!

When I arose and saw the dawn,
I sighed for thee;
When light rode high, and the dew was gone,
And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,
And the weary Day turned to his rest,
Lingering like an unloved guest,
I sighed for thee.

Thy brother Death came, and cried,
Wouldst thou me!
Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
Murmured like a noon-tide bee,
Shall I nestle near thy side!
Wouldst thou me!—And I replied,
No, not thee!

Death will come when thou art dead,
Soon, too soon—
Sleep will come when thou art fled;
Of neither would I ask the boon
I ask of thee, beloved Night—
Swift be thine approaching flight,
Come soon, soon!

---

FROM THE ARABIC.

AN IMITATION.

My faint spirit was sitting in the light
Of thy looks, my love;
It panted for thee like the hind at noon
For the brooks, my love.
Thy barb, whose hoofs outspeed the tempest's flight,
Bore thee far from me;
My heart, for my weak feet were weary soon,
Did companion thee.

Ah! fleeter far than fleetest storm or steed,
Or the death they bear,
The heart which tender thought clothes like a dove
With the wings of care;
In the battle, in the darkness, in the need,
Shall mine cling to thee,
Nor claim one smile for all the comfort, love,
It may bring to thee.

---

TO —

Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory—
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heaped for the beloved's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.
MUTABILITY.

The flower that smiles to-day
To-morrow dies;
All that we wish to stay,
Tempts and then flies;
What is this world's delight!
Lightning that mocks the night,
Brief even as bright.

Virtue, how frail it is!
Friendship too rare!
Love, how it sells poor bliss
For proud despair!
But we, though soon they fall,
Survive their joy and all
Which ours we call.

Whilst skies are blue and bright,
Whilst flowers are gay,
Whilst eyes that change ere night
Make glad the day;
Whilst yet the calm hours creep,
Dream thou—and from thy sleep
Then wake to weep.

THE FUGITIVES.

1.

The waters are flashing,
The white hail is dashing,
The lightnings are glancing,
The hoar-spray is dancing—
Away!
The whirlwind is rolling,
The thunder is tolling,
The forest is swinging,
The minster bells ringing—
Come away!
The Earth is like Ocean,
Wreck-strewn and in motion:
Bird, beast, man, and worm,
Have crept out of the storm—
Come away!

"Our boat has one sail,
And the helmsman is pale;—
A bold pilot I trow,
Who should follow us now,"—
Shouted He—
And she cried: "Ply the oar;
Put off gaily from shore!"—
As she spoke, bolts of death
Mixed with hail, specked their path
O'er the sea.

And from isle, tower, and rock,
The blue beacon-cloud broke,
Though dumb in the blast,
The red cannon flashed fast
From the lee.

"And fear'st thou, and fear'st thou!
And see'st thou, and hear'st thou!
And drive we not free
O'er the terrible sea,
I and thou!"

One boat-cloak did cover
The loved and the lover—
Their blood beats one measure,
They murmur proud pleasure
Soft and low—

While around the lashed Ocean,
Like mountains in motion,
Is withdrawn and uplifted,
Sunk, shattered, and shifted,
To and fro.

In the court of the fortress
Beside the pale portress,
Like a blood-hound well beaten
The bridegroom stands, eaten
By shame;

On the topmost watch-turret,
As a death-boding spirit,
Stands the grey tyrant father,
To his voice the mad weather
Seems tame;

And with curses as wild
As e'er cling to child,
He devotes to the blast
The best, loveliest, and last
Of his name!—

LINES.

Far, far away, O ye
Halcyons of Memory!
Seek some far calmer nest
Than this abandoned breast;—
No news of your false spring
To my heart's winter bring;
Once having gone, in vain
Ye come again.

Vultures, who build your bowers
High in the Future's towers!
Withered hopes on hopes are spread;
Dying joys choked by the dead,
Will serve your beaks for prey
Many a day.
TO ———

Mine eyes were dim with tears unshed;
Yes, I was firm—thus wert not thou;—
My baffled looks did fear yet dread
To meet thy looks—I could not know
How anxiously they sought to shine
With soothing pity upon mine.

To sit and curb the soul's mute rage
Which preys upon itself alone;
To curse the life which is the cage
Of fettered grief that dares not groan,
Hiding from many a careless eye
The scorned load of agony.

Whilst thou alone, then not regarded,
The [ ] thou alone should be,
To spend years thus, and be rewarded,
As thou, sweet love, required me
When none were near—Oh! I did wake
From torture for that moment's sake.

Upon my heart thy accents sweet
Of peace and pity fell like dew
On flowers half dead;—thy lips did meet
Mine tremblingly; thy dark eyes threw
Their soft persuasion on my brain,
Charming away its dream of pain.

We are not happy, sweet! our state
Is strange and full of doubt and fear;
More need of words that ills abate;
Reserve or censure come not near
Our sacred friendship, lest there be
No solace left for thou and me.

Gentle and good and mild thou art,
Nor can I live if thou appear
Aught but thyself, or turn thine heart
Away from me, or stoop to wear
The mask of scorn, although it be
To hide the love thou feel'st for me.

———

SONG.

RARELY, rarely, comest thou,
Spirit of Delight!
Wherefore hast thou left me now
Many a day and night!
Many a weary night and day
’Tis since thou art fled away.

How shall ever one like me
Win thee back again?
With the joyous and the free
Thou wilt scoff at pain.
Spirit false! thou hast forgot
All but those who need thee not.

As a lizard with the shade
Of a trembling leaf,
Thou with sorrow art dismayed;
Even the sighs of grief
Reproach thee, that thou art not near,
And reproach thou wilt not hear.

Let me set my mournful ditty
To a merry measure;
Thou wilt never come for pity,
Thou wilt come for pleasure;
Pity then will cut away
Those cruel wings, and thou wilt stay.

I love all that thou lovest,
Spirit of Delight!
The fresh Earth in new leaves dress,
And the starry night;
Autumn evening, and the morn
When the golden mists are born.

I love snow, and all the forms
Of the radiant frost;
I love waves, and winds, and storms,
Every thing almost
Which is Nature’s, and may be
Untainted by man’s misery.

I love tranquil solitude,
And such society
As is quiet, wise, and good;
Between thee and me
What difference! but thou dost possess
The things I seek, not love them less.

I love Love—though he has wings,
And like light can flee,
But, above all other things,
Spirit, I love thee—
Thou art love and life! O come,
Make once more my heart thy home.

———

TO ———

When passion’s trance is overpast,
If tenderness and truth could last
Or live, whilst all wild feelings keep
Some mortal slumber, dark and deep,
I should not weep, I should not weep!

It were enough to feel, to see
Thy soft eyes gazing tenderly,
And dream the rest—and burn and be
The secret food of fires unseen,
Couldst thou but be as thou hast been.

After the slumber of the year
The woodland violets re-appear;
All things revive in field or grove,
And sky and sea; but two, which move,
And for all others, life and love.
LINES

WRITTEN ON HEARING THE NEWS OF THE DEATH OF NAPOLEON.

What! alive and so bold, O Earth!
Art thou not over-bold?
What! leapest thou forth as of old
In the light of thy morning mirth,
The last of the flock of the starry fold?
Ha! leapest thou forth as of old?
Are not the limbs still when the ghost is fled,
And cannot thou more, Napoleon being dead?

How! is not thy quick heart cold?
What spark is alive on thy hearth?
How! is not his death-knell knolled?
And livest thou still, Mother Earth?
Thou wert warming thy fingers old
O'er the embers covered and cold
Of that most fiery spirit, when it fled—
What, Mother, do you laugh now he is dead!

"Who has known me of old," replied Earth,
"Or who has my story told?
It is thou who art over bold."

And the lightning of scorn laughed forth
As she sung, "To my bosom I fold
All my sons when their knell is knolled,
And so with living motion all are fed,
And the quick spring like weeds out of the dead.

"Still alive and still bold," shouted Earth,
"I grow bolder, and still more bold.
The dead fill me ten thousandfold
Fuller of speed, and splendour, and mirth;
I was cloudy, and sullen and cold,
Like a frozen chaos uprolled,
Till by the spirit of the mighty dead
My heart grew warm. I feed on whom I fed.

"Ay, alive and still bold," muttered Earth,
"Napoleon's fierce spirit rolled,
In terror, and blood, and gold,
A torrent of ruin to death from his birth.
Leave the millions who follow to mould
The metal before it be cold,
And weave into his shame, which like the dead
Shrouds me, the hopes that from his glory fled."

A FRAGMENT.

As a violet's gentle eye
Gazes on the azure sky,
Until its hue grows like what it beholds;
As a grey and empty mist
Lies like solid Amethyst,
Over the western mountain it enfolds,
When the sunset sleeps
Upon its snow.

As a strain of sweetest sound
Wraps itself the wind around,
Until the voiceless wind be music too;
As aught dark, vain and dull,
Basking in what is beautiful,
Is full of light and love.

GINEVRA.

Wild, pale, and wonder-stricken, even as one
Who staggers forth into the air and sun
From the dark chamber of a mortal fever,
Bewildered, and inceasing, and ever
Fancying strange comments in her dizzy brain
Of usual shapes, till the familiar train
Of objects and of persons passed like things
Strange as a dreamer's mad imaginings,
GINEVRA from the nuptial altar went;
The vows to which her lips had sworn assent
Rung in her brain still with a jarring din,
Deafening the lost intelligence within.

And so she moved under the bridal veil,
Which made the paleness of her cheek more pale,
And deepened the faint crimson of her mouth,
And darkened her dark locks, as moonlight doth,—
And of the gold and jewels glittering there
She scarce felt conscious,— but the weary glare
Lay like a chaos of unwelcome light,
Vexing the sense with gorgeous undelight.
A moonbeam in the shadow of a cloud
Was less heavenly fair— her face was bowed,
And as she passed, the diamonds in her hair
Were mirrored in the polished marble stair
Which led from the cathedral to the street;
And even as she went her light fair feet
Erased these images.

The bride-maidens who round her thronging came,
Some with a sense of self-rebuke and shame,
Envying the unenviable; and others
Making the joy which should have been another's
Their own by gentle sympathy; and some
Sighing to think of an unhappy home;
Some few admiring what can ever lure
Maidens to leave the heaven serene and pure
Of parents' smiles for life's great cheat; a thing
Bitter to taste, sweet in imagining.

But they are all dispersed—and lo! she stands
Looking in idle grief on her white hands,
Alone within the garden now her own;
And through the sunny air, with jangling tone,
The music of the merry marriage-bells,
Killing the azure silence, sinks and swells;—
Absorbed like one within a dream who dreams
That he is dreaming, until slumber seems
A mockery of itself— when suddenly
Antonio stood before her, pale as she.
With agony, with sorrow, and with pride,
He lifted his wan eyes upon the bride,
And said— "Is this thy faith?" and then as one
Whose sleeping face is stricken by the sun
With light like a harsh voice, which bids him rise
And look upon his day of life with eyes
Which weep in vain that they can dream no more,
GINEVRA saw her lover, and forbore
To shriek or faint, and checked the stifling blood
Rushing upon her heart, and unsubdued
Said— "Friend, if earthly violence or ill,
Suspicion, doubt, or the tyrannic will

* This fragment is part of a poem which Shelley intended to write, founded on a story to be found in the first volume of a book entitled "L'Osservatore Fiorentino."
POEMS WRITTEN IN 1821.

Of parents, chance, or custom, time, or change,
Or circumstance, or terror, or revenge,
Or wilderded looks, or words, or evil speech,
With all their stings and venom, can impeach
Our love— we love not— of the soul which hides
The victim from the tyrant, and divides
The cheek that whitens from the eyes that dart
Imperious inquisition to the heart
That is another's; could dissemble ours,
We love not— What! do not the silent hours
Bockon thee to Gherardi's hall blood!
Is not that ring— a pledge, he would have said,
Of broken vows, but she with patient look
Of the golden circle from her finger took,
And said— Accept this token of my faith,
The pledge of vows to be absolved by death;
And I am dead or shall be soon— my knell
Will mix its music with that merry bell;
Does it not sound as if they sweetly said,
'We toll a corpse out of the marriage bed!'
The flowers upon my bridal chamber strewn
Will serve unfaded for my bier— so soon
That even the dying violet will not die
From out the chamber where the women kept;—
Was heard approaching; he retired, while she
Was led amid the admiring company
She found Ginervra dead! if it be death,
To lie without motion, or pulse, or breath,
With waxen cheeks, and limbs cold, stiff, and white,
And open eyes, whose fixed and glassy light
Mocked at the speculation they had owned.
To liewithout motion, or pulse, or breath,
With all the stings and venom, can impeach
Or circumstance, or terror, or revenge,
Or parents, chance, or custom, time, or change.

Meanwhile the day sinks fast, the sun is set,
And in the lighted hall the guests are met;
The beautiful looked lovelier in the light
Of love, and admiration, and delight,
Reflected from a thousand hearts and eyes
Kindling a momentary Paradise.
This crowd is safer than the silent wood,
Where love's own doubts disturb the solitude;
On frozen hearts the fiery rain of vine
Falls, and the dew of music more divine
Tempers the deep emotions of the time
To spirits cladred in a sunny clime:
How many meet who never yet have met,
To part too soon, but never to forget!
Heart beauty, power, and wit
Of looks and words which ne'er enchanted yet!
But life's familiar veil was now withdrawn,
As if the future and the past were all
Tresured in the instant— so Gherardi's hall
Laughed in the mirth of its lord's festival,
Till some one asked— 'Where is the Bride?'
And a bride's-maid went, and ere she came again
A silence fell upon the guests—a pause
Of expectation, as when beauty awes
All hearts with its approach, though unshaved;
Then wonder, and then fear that wonder quelled;
For whispers passed from mouth to ear which drew
The colour from the hearer's cheeks, and flew
Louder and swifter round the company;
And then Gherardi entered with an eye
Of ostentatious trouble, and a crowd
Surrounded him, and some were weeping loud.

They found Ginerva dead! if it be death,
To lie without motion, or pulse, or breath,
With waxen cheeks, and limbs cold, stiff, and white,
And open eyes, whose fixed and glassy light
Mocked at the speculation they had owned.
To liewithout motion, or pulse, or breath,
With all the stings and venom, can impeach
Or circumstance, or terror, or revenge,
Or parents, chance, or custom, time, or change.
THE DIRGE.

Old winter was gone
In his weakness back to the mountains hoar,
And the spring came down
From the planet that hovers upon the shore
Where the sea of sunlight encroaches
On the limits of wintry night;—
If the land, and the air, and the sea,
Rejoice not when spring approaches,
We did not rejoice in thee,
Ginerva!

She is still, she is cold
On the bridal couch,
One step to the white death-bed,
And one to the bier.
And one to the charnel—and one, Oh where!
The dark arrow fled
In the noon.

Ere the sun through heaven once more has rolled,
The rats in her heart
Will have made their nest,
And the worms be alive in her golden hair;
While the spirit that guides the sun
Sits throned in his flaming chair,
She shall sleep.

EVENING.

The sun is set; the swallows are asleep;
The bats are flitting fast in the grey air;
The slow soft toads out of damp corners creep;
And evening's breath, wandering here and there
Over the quivering surface of the stream,
Wakes not one ripple from its summer dream.

There are no dews on the dry grass to-night,
Nor damp within the shadow of the trees;
The wind is intermitting, dry, and light;
And in the inconstant motion of the breeze
The dust and straws are driven up and down,
And whirled about the pavement of the town.

Within the surface of the fleeting river
The wrinkled image of the city lay,
Immoveably unquiet, and for ever
It trembles, but it never fades away;
Go to the [ ]
You, being changed, will find it then as now.

The chasm in which the sun has sunk, is shut
By darkest barriers of enormous cloud,
Like mountain over mountain huddled—but
Growing and moving upwards in a crowd,
And over it a space of watery blue,
Which the keen evening star is shining through.

TO-MORROW.

Where art thou, beloved To-morrow!
When young and old, and strong and weak,
Rich and poor, through joy and sorrow,
Thy sweet smiles we ever seek,—
In thy place—ah! well-a-day!
We find the thing we fled—To-day.

A BRIDAL SONG.

The golden gates of sleep unbar
Where strength and beauty, meet together,
Kindle their image like a star
In a sea of glassy weather!
Night, with all thy stars look down,—
Darkness, weep thy holiest dew,—
Never smiled the inconstant moon
On a pair so true.
Let eyes not see their own delight:—
Haste, swift Hour, and thy flight
Oft renew.

Fairies, sprites, and angels, keep her!
Holy stars, permit no wrong!
And return to wake the sleeper,
Dawn,—ere it be long.
O joy! O fear! what will be done
In the absence of the sun!
Come along!

A LAMENT.

Swifter far than summer's flight,
Swifter far than youth's delight,
Swifter far than happy night,
Art thou come and gone:
As the earth when leaves are dead,
As the night when sleep is sped,
As the heart when joy is fled,
I am left lone, alone.

The swallow Summer comes again,
The owlet Night resumes her reign,
But the wild swan Youth is fain
To fly with thee, false as thou.

My heart each day desires the morrow,
Sleep itself is turned to sorrow,
Vainly would my winter borrow
Sunny leaves from any bough.

Lilies for a bridal bed,
Roses for a matron's head,
Violets for a maiden dead,
Pansies let my flowers be:
On the living grave I bear,
Scatter them without a tear,
Let no friend, however dear,
Waste one hope, one fear for me.
THE BOAT,
ON THE SERCHIO.

Our boat is asleep on Serchio's stream,
Its sails are folded like thoughts in a dream,
The helm sways idly, hither and thither;
Dominic, the boat-man, has brought the mast,
And the oars and the sails; but 'tis sleeping fast,
Like a beast, unconscious of its tether.

The stars burnt out in the pale blue air,
And the thin white moon lay withering there,
To tower, and cavern, and rift, and tree,
The owl and the bat fled drowsily.
Day had kindled the dewy woods
And the rocks above and the stream below,
And the vapours in their multitudes,
And the Apennines' shroud of summer snow,
And clothed with light of aery gold
The mists in their eastern caves uprolled.

Day had awakened all things that be,
The lark and the thrush and the swallow free;
And the milkmaid's song and the mower's scythe,
And the matin-bell and the mountain bee:
Fire-flies were quenched on the dewy corn,
Glow-worms went out on the river's brim,
Like lamps which a student forgets to trim:
The beetle forgot to wind his horn,
The crickets were still in the meadow and hill:
Like a flock of rooks at a farmer's gun,
Night's dreams and terrors, every one,
Fled from the brains which are their prey,
From the lamp's death to the morning ray.

All rose to do the task He set to each,
Who shaped us to his ends and not our own;
The million rose to learn, and one to teach
What none yet ever knew or can be known.

And many rose
Whose woe was such that fear became desire;—
Mellchior and Lionel were not among those;
They from the throng of men had stepped aside,
And made their home under the green hillside.
It was that hill, whose intervening brow
Screens Lucca from the Pisan's envious eye,
Which the circumfluous plain waving below,
Like a wide lake of green fertility,
With streams and fields and marshes bare,
Divides from the far Apennines—which lie
Islanded in the immeasurable air.

"What think you, as she lies in her green cove,
Our little sleeping boat is dreaming of?
If morning dreams are true, why I should guess
That she was dreaming of our idleness,
And of the miles of watery way
We should have led her by this time of day."—

"Never mind," said Lionel,
"Give care to the winds, they can bear it well
About you poplar tops; and see!
The white clouds are driving merrily,
And the stars we miss this morn will light
More willingly our return to-night.—"
A FRAGMENT.

There were two cousins, almost like two twins,
Except that from the catalogue of sins
Nature had razed their love— which could not be
But by dismembering their nativity.
And so they grew together, like two flowers
Upon one stem, which the same beams and showers
Lull or awaken in their purple prime,
Which the same hand will gather—the same clime
Shake with decay. This fair day smiles to see
All those who love,—and who e'er loved like thee,
Fierdapisna! Scarcely Cosimo,
Within whose bosom and whose brain now glow
The ardours of a vision which obscure
The very idol of its portraiture;
He faints, dissolved into a sense of love;
But thou art as a planet spher'd above,
But thou art Love itself— ruling the motion
Of his subjected spirit: such emotion
Must end in sin or sorrow; if sweet May
Had not brought forth this morn— your wedding-day.

TO   

One word is too often profaned
For me to profane it,
One feeling too falsely disdained
For thee to disdain it.
One hope is too liked despair
For prudence to smother,
And Pity from thee more dear
Than that from another.

I can give not what men call love,
But wilt thou accept not
The worship the heart lifts above
And the Heavens reject not:
The desire of the moth for the star,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow?

GOOD-NIGHT.

I arise from dreams of thee
In the first sweet sleep of night,
When the winds are breathing low,
And the stars are shining bright.
I arise from dreams of thee,
And a spirit in my feet
Has led me—who knows how?
To thy chamber window, sweet!

Lines to an Indian Air.

I arise from dreams of thee
In the first sweet sleep of night,
When the winds are breathing low,
And the stars are shining bright.
I arise from dreams of thee,
And a spirit in my feet
Has led me—who knows how?
To thy chamber window, sweet!

The wandering airs they faint
On the dark, the silent stream—
The champak odours fail
Like sweet thoughts in a dream;
The nightingale's complaint,
It dies upon her heart,
As I must die on thine,
O beloved as thou art!

O lift me from the grass!
I die, I faint, I fail!
Let thy love in kisses ram
On my lips and eyelids pale.
My cheek is cold and white, alas!
My heart beats loud and fast,
Oh! press it close to thine again,
Where it will break at last.

MUSIC.

I pant for the music which is divine,
My heart in its thirst is a dying flower;
Pour forth the sound like enchanted wine.
Loosen the notes in a silver shower;
Like a herbless plain for the gentle rain,
I gasp, I faint, till they wake again.

Let me drink of the spirit of that sweet sound,
More, O more!—I am thirsting yet,
It loosens the serpent which care has bound
Upon my heart, to stifle it;
The dissolving strain, through every vein,
Passes into my heart and brain.

As the scent of a violet withered up,
Which grew by the brink of a silver lake,
When the hot noon has drained its dewy cup,
And mist there was none its thirst to slake—
And the violet lay dead while the odour flew
On the wings of the wind o'er the waters blue—

As one who drinks from a charmed cup
Of foaming, and sparkling, and murmuring wine,
Whom, a mighty Enchantress filling up,
Invites to love with her kiss divine.
TO

The serpent is shut out from paradise.
The wounded deer must seek the herd no more
In which its heart-cure lies:
The widowed dove must cease to haunt a bower,
Like that from which its mate with feigned sighs
Fled in the April hour.
I too, must seldom seek again
Near happy friends a mitigated pain.

Of hatred I am proud,—with scorn content;
Indifference, that once hurt me, now is grown
Itself indifferent.
But, not to speak of love, pity alone
Can break a spirit already more than bent.
The miserable one
Turns the mind's poison into food,—
Its medicine is tears,—its evil good.

Therefore if now I see you seldomer,
Dear friends, dear friend! know that I only fly
Your looks because they stir
Griefs that should sleep, and hopes that cannot die:
The very comfort that they minister
I scarce can bear; yet I,
So deeply is the arrow gone,
Should quickly perish if it were withdrawn.

When I return to my cold home, you ask
Why I am not as I have ever been?
You spoil me for the task
Of acting a forced part on life's dull scene,—
Of wearing on my brow the idle mask
Of author, great or mean,
In the world's Carnival. I sought
Peace thus, and but in you I found it not.

Full half an hour, to-day, I tried my lot
With various flowers, and every one still said,
"She loves me,—loves me not."
And if this meant a vision long since fled—
If it meant fortune, fame, or peace of thought—
If it meant—but I dread
To speak what you may know to well:
Still there was truth in the sad oracle.

The crane o'er seas and forests seeks her home;
No bird so wild, but has its quiet nest,
When it no more would roam;
The sleepless billows on the ocean's breast
Break like a bursting heart, and die in foam,
And thus, at length, find rest:
Doubtless there is a place of peace
Where my weak heart and all its throbs will cease.

I asked her, yesterday, if she believed
That I had resolution. One who had
Would ne'er have thus relieved
His heart with words,—but what his judgment bade
Would do, and leave the scorner unreprieved
These verses are too sad
To send to you, but that I know,
Happy yourself, you feel another's woe.

* See Faust.

A LAMENT.

O World! O life! O time!
On whose last steps I climb,
Trembling at that where I had stood before;
When will return the glory of your prime?
No more—Oh, never more!

Out of the day and night
A joy has taken flight:
Fresh spring, and summer, and winter boar,
Move my faint heart with grief, but with delight
No more—Oh, never more!

SONNET.

POLITICAL GREATNESS.

Nor happiness, nor majesty, nor fame,
Nor peace, nor strength, nor skill in arms or arts,
Shepherd those herds whom tyranny makes tame;
Verse echoes not one beating of their hearts:
History is but the shadow of their shame;
Art veils her glass, or from the pageant starts
As to oblivion their blind millions fleet,
Staining that Heaven with obscene imagery
Of their own likeness. What are numbers, knit
By force or custom? Man who man would be,
Must rule the empire of himself! in it
Must be supreme, establishing his throne
On vanquished will, quelling the anarchy
Of hopes and fears, being himself alone.

DIRGE FOR THE YEAR.

Orphan hours, the year is dead.
Come and sigh, come and weep!
Merry hours, smile instead,
For the year is but asleep:
See, it smiles as it is sleeping,
Mocking your untimely weeping.

As an earthquake rocks a corpse
In its coffin in the clay,
So White Winter, that rough nurse,
Rocks the dead-cold year to-day;
Solemn hours! wall alond
For your mother in her shroud.

As the wild air stirs and sways
The tree-swung cradle of a child,
So the breath of these rude days
Rocks the year:—be calm and mild,
Trembling hours; she will arise
With new love within her eyes.

January grey is here,
Like a sexton by her grave;
February bears the bier,
March with grief doth howl and rave,
And April weeps—but, O ye hours!
Follow with May's fairest flowers.
NOTE ON THE POEMS OF 1821.

BY THE EDITOR.

My task becomes inexpressibly painful as the year draws near that which sealed our earthly fate; and each poem and each event it records, has a real or mysterious connexion with the fatal catastrophe. I feel that I am incapable of putting on paper the history of those times. The heart of the man, abhorred of the poet, 

Who could steep and botanize upon his mother's grave, 
does not appear to me less inexplicably framed than that of one who can dissect and probe past woes, and repeat to the public ear the groans drawn from them in the throes of their agony.

The year 1821 was spent in Pisa, or at the baths of San Giuliano. We were not, as our wont had been, alone—friends had gathered round us. Nearly all are dead; and when memory recurs to the past, she wanders among tombs: the genius with all his blighting errors and mighty powers; the companion of Shelley's ocean-wanderings, and the sharer of his fate, than whom no man ever existed more gentle, generous, and fearless; and others, who found in Shelley's society, and in his great knowledge and warm sympathy, delight, instruction and solace, have joined him beyond the grave. A few survive who have felt life a desert since he left it. What misfortune can equal death! Change can convert every other into a blessing, or heal its sting—death alone has no cure; it shakes the foundations of the earth on which we tread, it destroys its beauty, it casts down our shelter, it exposes us bare to desolation; when those we love have passed into eternity, "life is the desert and the solitude," in which we are forced to linger—but never find comfort more.

There is much in the Adonais which seems now more applicable to Shelley himself, than to the young and gifted poet whom he mourned. The poetic view he takes of death, and the lofty scorn he displays towards his calumniators, are as a prophecy on his own destiny, when received among immortal names, and the poisonous breath of critics has vanished into emptiness before the fame he inherits.

Shelley's favourite taste was boating; when living near the Thames, or by the lake of Geneva, much of his life was spent on the water. On the shore of every lake, or stream, or sea, near which he dwelt, he had a boat moored. He had latterly enjoyed this pleasure again. There are no pleasure-boats on the Arno, and the shallowness of its waters except in winter time, when the stream is too turbid and impetuous for boating, rendered it difficult to get any skiff light enough to float. Shelley, however, overcame the difficulty; he, together with a friend, contrived a boat such as the huntsmen carry about with them in the Maremma, to cross the sluggish but deep streams that intersect the forests, a boat of laths and pitched canvas; it held three persons, and he was often seen on the Arno in it, to the horror of the Italians, who remonstrated on the danger, and could not understand how any one could take pleasure in an exercise that risked life. "Ma va per la vita!" they exclaimed. I little thought how true their words would prove. He once ventured with a friend, on the glassy sea of a calm day, down the Arno and round the coast, to Leghorn, which by keeping close in shore was very practicable. They returned to Pisa by the canal, when, missing the direct cut, they got entangled among weeds, and the boat upset; a wetting was all the harm done, except that the intense cold of his drenched clothes made Shelley faint. Once I went down with him to the mouth of the Arno, where the stream, then high and swift, met the tideless sea and disturbed its sluggish waters; it was a waste and dreary scene; the desert sand stretched into a point surrounded by waves that broke idly though perpetually around; it was a
scene very similar to Lido, of which he had said,—

I love all waste
And solitary places; where we taste
The pleasure of believing what we see
Is boundless, as we wish our souls to be;
And such was this wide ocean, and this shore
More barren than its billows.

Our little boat was of greater use, unaccompanied by any danger, when we removed to the baths. Some friends lived at the village of Pugnano, four miles off, and we went to and fro to see them, in our boat, by the canal; which, fed by the Serchio, was, though an artificial, a full and picturesque stream, making its way under verdant banks sheltered by trees that dipped their boughs into the murmuring waters. By day, multitudes of ephemera darted to and fro on the surface; at night, the fire-flies came out among the shrubs on the banks; the cicale at noon day kept up their hum; the aziola cooed in the quiet evening. It was a pleasant summer, bright in all but Shelley's health and constant spirits; yet he enjoyed himself greatly, and became more and more attached to the part of the country where chance appeared to cast us. Sometimes he projected taking a farm, situated on the height of one of the near hills, surrounded by chestnut and pine woods, and overlooking a wide extent of country; or of settling still further in the maritime Apennines, at Massa. Several of his slighter and unfinished poems were inspired by these scenes, and by the companions around us. It is the nature of that poetry however which overflows from the soul oftener to express sorrow and regret than joy; for it is when oppressed by the weight of life, and away from those he loves, that the poet has recourse to the solace of expression in verse.

Still Shelley's passion was the ocean; and he wished that our summers, instead of being passed among the hills near Pisa, should be spent on the shores of the sea. It was very difficult to find a spot. We shrank from Naples from a fear that the heats would disagree with Percy; Leghorn had lost its only attraction, since our friends who had resided there were returned to England; and Monte Nero being the resort of many English, we did not wish to find ourselves in the midst of a colony of chance travellers. No one then thought it possible to reside at Via Reggio, which latterly has become a summer resort. The low lands and bad air of Maremma stretch the whole length of the western shores of the Mediterranean, till broken by the rocks and hills of Spezia. It was a vague idea; but Shelley suggested an excursion to Spezia, to see whether it would be feasible to spend a summer there. The beauty of the bay enchanted him—we saw no house to suit us—but the notion took root, and many circumstances, enchained as by fatality, occurred to urge him to execute it.

He looked forward this autumn with great pleasure to the prospect of a visit from Leigh Hunt. When Shelley visited Lord Byron at Ravenna, the latter had suggested his coming out, together with the plan of a periodical work, in which they should all join. Shelley saw a prospect of good fortune for his friend, and pleasure in his society, and instantly exerted himself to have the plan executed. He did not intend himself joining in the work; partly from pride, not wishing to have the air of acquiring readers for his poetry by associating it with the compositions of more popular writers; and, also, because he might feel shackled in the free expression of his opinions, if any friends were to be compromised; by those opinions, carried even to their utmost extent, he wished to live and die, as being in his conviction not only true, but such as alone would conduce to the moral improvement and happiness of mankind. The sale of the work might, meanwhile, either really or supposedly, be injured by the free expression of his thoughts, and this evil he resolved to avoid.
POEMS WRITTEN IN MDCCCXXII.

THE ZUCCA*.  

SUMMER was dead and Autumn was expiring,  
And infant Winter laughed upon the land  
All cloudlessly and cold;—when I, desiring  
More in this world than any understand,  
Wept o'er the beauty, which, like sea retiring,  
Had left the earth bare as the wave-worn sand  
Of my poor heart, and o'er the grass and flowers  
Pale for the falsehood of the flattering hours.

Summer was dead, but I yet lived to weep  
The instability of all but weeping;  
And on the earth lulled in her winter sleep  
I woke, and envied her as she was sleeping.  
Too happy Earth! over thy face shall creep  
The wakening vernal airs, until thou, leaping  
From unremembered dreams shalt [ ] see  
No death divide thy immortality.

I loved—O no, I mean not one of ye,  
Or any earthly one, though ye are dear  
As human heart to human heart may be;—  
I loved, I know not what—but this low sphere,  
And all that it contains, contains not thee,  
Thou, whom, seen nowhere, I feel everywhere,  
Dim object of my soul's idolatry.

By Heaven and Earth, from all whose shapes thou  
flowest,  
Neither to be contained, delayed, or hidden,  
Making divine the loftiest and the lowest,  
When for a moment thou art not forbidden  
To live within the life which thou bestowest,  
And leaving noblest things, vacant and chidden,  
Cold as a corpse after the spirit's flight,  
Blank as the sun after the birth of night.

In winds, and trees, and streams, and all things  
common,  
In music, and the sweet unconscious tone  
Of animals, and voices which are human;  
Meant to express some feelings of their own;  
In the soft motions and rare smile of woman,  
In flowers and leaves, and in the fresh grass shown,  
Or dying in the autumn, I the most  
Above thee present, or lament thee lost.

* Pumpkin.

And thus I went lamenting, when I saw  
A plant upon the river's margin lie,  
Like one who loved beyond his Nature's law,  
And in despair had cast him down to die;  
Its leaves which had outlived the frost, the thaw  
Had blighted as a heart which hatred's eye  
Can blast not, but which pity kills; the dew  
Lay on its spotted leaves like tears too true.

The Heavens had wept upon it, but the Earth  
Had crushed it on her unmaternal breast  
• • • • • •

I bore it to my chamber, and I planted  
It in a vase full of the lightest mould;  
The winter beams which out of Heaven slanted  
Fell through the window panes, disrobed of cold,  
Upon its leaves and flowers; the star which panted  
In evening for the Day, whose car has rolled  
Over the horizon's wave, with looks of light  
Smiled on it from the threshold of the night.

The mitigated influences of air  
And light revived the plant, and from it grew  
Strong leaves and tendrils, and its flowers fair,  
Full as a cup with the vine's burning dew,  
O'erflowed with golden colours; an atmosphere  
Of vital warmth, infolded it anew,  
And every impulse sent to every part  
The unbeheld pulsations of its heart.

Well might the plant grow beautiful and strong,  
Even if the sun and air had smiled not on it;  
For one wept o'er it all the winter long  
Tears pure as Heaven's rain, which fell upon it  
Hour after hour; for sounds of softest song  
Mixed with the stringed melodies that won it  
To leave the gentle lips on which it slept,  
Had loosed the heart of him who sat and wept.

Had loosed his heart, and shook the leaves and  
flowers  
On which he wept, the while the savage storm  
Waked by the darkest of December's hours  
Was raving round the chamber hushed and warm;  
The birds were shivering in their leafless bowers,  
The fish were frozen in the pools, the form  
Of every summer plant was dead [ ]  
Whilst this  

January, 1822.
TO A LADY WITH A GUITAR.

Ariel to Miranda:—Take
This slave of music, for the sake
Of him, who is the slave of thee;
And teach it all the harmony
In which thou canst, and only thou,
Make the delighted spirit glow,
Till joy denies itself again,
And, too intense, is turned to pain.
For by permission and command
Of thine own Prince Ferdinand,
Poor Ariel sends this silent token
Of more than ever can be spoken;
Your guardian spirit, Ariel, who
From life to life must still pursue
Your happiness, for thus alone
Can Ariel ever find his own;
From Prospero's enchanted cell,
As the mighty verses tell,
To the throne of Naples he
Lifted o'er the trackless sea,
Flitting on, your prow before,
Like a living meteor.
When you die, the silent Moon,
In her interlunar swoon,
Is not sadder in her cell
Than deserted Ariel;
When you live again on earth,
Like an unseen Star of birth,
Ariel guides you o'er the sea
Of life from your nativity:
Many changes have been run
Since Ferdinand and you begun
Your course of love, and Ariel still
Has tracked your steps and served your will.
Now in humbler, happier lot,
This is all remembered not;
And now, alas! the poor sprite is
Imprisoned for some fault of his
In a body like a grave—
A smile to-day, a song to-morrow.

The artist who this idol wrought,
To echo all harmonious thought,
Felled a tree, while on the steep
The woods were in their winter sleep,
Rocked in that repose divine
On the wind-swept Apennine;
And dreaming, some of autumn past,
And some of April buds and showers,
And all of love; and so this tree,—
0 that such our death may be!
Died in sleep, and felt no pain,
To live in happier form again:
From which, beneath Heaven's fairest star,
The artist wrought this loved Guitar,
And taught it justly to reply,
To all who question skilfully,
In language gentle as thine own;
Whispering in enamoured tone

Sweet oracles of woods and dells,
And summer winds in sylvan cells;
For it had learnt all harmonies
Of the plains and of the skies,
Of the forests and the mountains,
And the many-voiced fountains;
The clearest echoes of the hills,
The softest notes of falling rills,
The melodies of birds and bees,
The murmuring of summer seas,
And pattering rain, and breathing dew,
And airs of evening; and it knew
That seldom-heard mysterious sound,
Which, driven on its diurnal round,
As it floats through boundless day,
Our world enkindles on its way—
All this it knows, but will not tell
To those who cannot question well
The spirit that inhabits it;
It talks according to the wit
Of its companions; and no more
Is heard than has been felt before,
By those who tempt it to betray
These secrets of an elder day.

But, sweetly as its answers will
Flatter hands of perfect skill,
It keeps its highest, holiest tone
For our beloved friend alone.

THE MAGNETIC LADY TO HER PATIENT.

"Sleep, sweet sleep! forget thy pain;
My hand is on thy brow,
My spirit on thy brain;
My pity on thy heart, poor friend;
And now, alas! the poor sprite is
Imprisoned for some fault of his
In a body like a grave—
A smile to-day, a song to-morrow.

The artist who this idol wrought,
To echo all harmonious thought,
Felled a tree, while on the steep
The woods were in their winter sleep,
Rocked in that repose divine
On the wind-swept Apennine;
And dreaming, some of autumn past,
And some of April buds and showers,
And all of love; and so this tree,—
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These secrets of an elder day.

But, sweetly as its answers will
Flatter hands of perfect skill,
It keeps its highest, holiest tone
For our beloved friend alone.

Sleep, sweet sleep! I love thee not;
But when I think that he
Who made and makes my lot
As full of flowers, as thine of weeds,
Might have been lost like thee;
And that a hand which was not mine
Might then have chased his agony
As I another's—my heart bleeds
As I another's—my heart bleeds
For thee.

Sleep, sweet sleep! I love thee not;
But when I think that he
Who made and makes my lot
As full of flowers, as thine of weeds,
Might have been lost like thee;
And that a hand which was not mine
Might then have chased his agony
As I another's—my heart bleeds
For thee.

Sleep, sleep, and with the slumber of
The dead and the unborn
Forget thy life and love;
Forget that thou must wake for ever;
Forget the world's dull scorn;
Forget lost health, and the divine
Feelings which died in youth's brief morn;
And forget me, for I can never
Be thine.
FRAGMENTS OF AN UNFINISHED DRAMA.

The following fragments are part of a Drama, undertaken for the amusement of the individuals who composed our intimate society, but left unfinished. I have preserved a sketch of the story as far as it had been shadowed in the poet's mind.

An Enchantress, living in one of the islands of the Indian Archipelago, saves the life of a Pirate, a man of savage but noble nature. She becomes enamoured of him; and he, inconstant to his mortal love, for awhile returns her passion; but at length, recalling the memory of her whom he left, and who laments his loss, he escapes from the enchanted island and returns to his lady. His mode of life makes him again go to sea, and the Enchantress seizes the opportunity to bring him, by a spirit-brewed tempest, back to her island.

Scene, before the Cavern of the Indian Enchantress.

The Enchantress comes forth.

ENCHANTRESS.

He came like a dream in the dawn of life,
He fled like a shadow before its noon;
He is gone, and my peace is turned to strife,
And I wander and wane like the weary moon.

O sweet Echo, wake,
And for my sake
Make answer the while my heart shall break!

But my heart has a music which Echo's lips,
Though tender and true, yet can answer not,
And the shadow that moves in the soul's eclipse
Can return not the kiss by his now forgot;
Sweet lips! he who hath
On my desolate path
Cast the darkness of absence, worse than death!

The Enchantress makes her spell: she is answered by a Spirit.

SPIRIT.

Within the silent centre of the earth
My mansion is; where I have lived insphered
From the beginning, and around my sleep
Have woven all the wondrous imagery
Of this dim spot, which mortals call the world;
Infinite depths of unknown elements
Massed into one impenetrable mask;
Sheets of immemorable fire, and veins
Of gold, and stone, and adamantine iron.
And as a veil in which I walk through Heaven
I have wrought mountains, seas, waves, and clouds,
And lastly light, whose interfusion dawns
In the dark space of interstellar air.

A good Spirit, who watches over the Pirate's fate, leads, in a mysterious manner, the lady of his love to the Enchanted Isle. She is accompanied by a youth, who loves her, but whose passion she returns only with a sisterly affection. The ensuing scene takes place between them on their arrival at the Isle.

INDIAN YOUTH AND LADY.

INDIAN.

And if my grief should still be dearer to me
Than all the pleasures in the world beside,
Why would you lighten it!—

LADY.

I offer only
That which I seek, some human sympathy
In this mysterious island.

INDIAN.

Oh! my friend,
My sister, my beloved! What do I say?
My brain is dizzy, and I scarce know whether
I speak to thee or her.

Peace, perturbed heart! I
I am to thee only as thou to mine,
The passing wind which heals the brow at noon,
And may strike cold into the breast at night,
Yet cannot linger where it soothes the most,
Or long soothe could it linger.

But you said
You also loved!

LADY.

Loved! Oh, I love. Methinks
This word of love is fit for all the world,
And that for gentle hearts another name
Would speak of gentler thoughts than the world owns.
I have loved.
**INDIAN.**

And thou lovest not! If so
Young as thou art, thou canst afford to weep.

**LADY.**

Oh! would that I could claim exemption
From all the bitterness of that sweet name.
I loved, I love, and when I love no more
Let joys and grief perish, and leave despair
To ring the knell of youth. He stood beside me,
The embodied vision of the brightest dream,
Which like a dawn heralds the day of life;
The shadow of his presence made my world
A paradise. All familiar things he touched,
All common words he spoke, became to me
Like forms and sounds of a diviner world.
He was as is the sun in his fierce youth,
As terrible and lovely as a tempest;
He came, and went, and left me what I am.
Alas! Why must I think how oft we two
Have sat together near the river springs,
Under the green pavilion which the willow
Spreads on the floor of the unbroken fountain,
Strewn by the nailingsthat linger there,
Over that isle paved with flowers and moss,
While the musk-rose leaves, like flakes of crimson
snow,
Showered on us, and the dove mourned in the pine,
Sad prophetess of sorrows not her own.

**INDIAN.**

Your breath is like soft music, your words are
The echoes of a voice which on my heart
Sleeps like a melody of early days.
But as you said—

**LADY.**

He was so awful, yet
So beautiful in mystery and terror,
Calming me as the loveliness of heaven
Soother the unquiet sea:— and yet not so,
For he seemed stormy, and even his actions were:
But he was not of them, nor they of him,
But as they hid his splendour from the earth.
Some said he was a man of blood and peril,
And steeped in bitter infamy to the lips.
More need was there I should be innocent,
More need that I should be most true and kind.
And much more need that there should be found one
To share remorse, and scorn, and solitude,
And all the ills that wait on those who do
The tasks of ruin in the world of life.
He fled, and I have followed him.

**INDIAN.**

Such a one
Is he who was the winter of my peace.
But, fairest stranger, when didst thou depart
From the far hills, where rise the springs of India,
How didst thou pass the intervening sea!

**MISCELLANEOUS.**

**TO ——.**

The keen stars were twinkling,
And the fair moon was rising among them,
Dear **• • •**!
The guitar was tinkling,
But the notes were not sweet till you sung them
Again.
As the moon's soft splendour
O'er the faint cold starlight of heaven
Is thrown,
So your voice most tender
To the strings without soul had then given
Its own.

The stars will awaken,
Though the moon sleep a full hour later,
To-night;
No leaf will be shaken
Whilst the dews of your melody scatter
Delight.
Though the sound overpowers,
Sing again, with your dear voice revealing
A tone
Of some world far from ours,
Where music and moonlight and feeling
Are one.

**THE INVITATION.**

Best and brightest, come away,
Fairer far than this fair day,
Which like thee to those in sorrow
Comes to bid a sweet good-morrow
To the rough year just awake
In its cradle on the brake.
The brightest hour of unborn spring,
Through the winter wandering,
Found it seems the halcyon morn,
To hoar February born;
Bending from Heaven, in azure mirth,
To hoar February born;
Bending from Heaven, in azure mirth,
It kissed the forehead of the earth,
And smiled upon the silent sea,
And bade the frozen streams be free;
And waked to music all their fountains,
And breathed upon the frozen mountains,
And like a prophetess of May,
Strewed flowers upon the barren way,
Making the wintry world appear
Like one on whom thou smilest, dear.

Away, away, from men and towns,
To the wild wood and the downs—
To the silent wilderness
Where the soul need not repress
MISCELLANEOUS.

It's music, lest it should not find
An echo in another's mind,
While the touch of Nature's art
Harmonizes heart to heart.
I leave this notice on my door
For each accustomed visitor:—
"I am gone into the fields
To take what this sweet hour yields;—
Reflection, you may come to-morrow,
Sit by the fireside of Sorrow.—
You with the unpaid bill, Despair,
You, tiresome verse-reciter, Care,
I will pay you in the grave,
Death will listen to your stave.—
Expectation too, be off!
To-day is for itself enough;
Hope in pity mock not woe
With smiles, nor follow where I go;
Long having lived on thy sweet food,
At length I find one moment good
After long pain— with all your love,
This you never told me of."

Radiant Sister of the Day,
Awake! arise! and come away!
To the wild woods and the plains,
To the pools where winter rains
Image all their roof of leaves,
Where the pine its garland weaves
Of sapless green, and ivy dun,
Round stems that never kiss the sun,
Where the lawns and pastures be
And the sandhills of the sea,
Where the melting hoar-frost wets
The daisy-star that never sets,
And wind-flowers and violets,
Which yet join not scent to hue;
Crown the pale year weak and new;
When the night is left behind
In the deep east, dim and blind,
And the bine noon is over us,
And the multitudinous
Billows murmur at our feet,
Where the earth and ocean meet,
And all things seem only one,
In the universal sun.

THE RECOLLECTION.

Now the last day of many days,
All beautiful and bright as thou,
The loveliest and the last, is dead,
Rose. Memory, and write its praise!
Up do thy wonted work! come, trace
The epitaph of glory fled,
For now the Earth has changed its face,
A frown is on the Heaven's brow.

We wandered to the Pine Forest
That skirts the Ocean's foam,
The lightest wind was in its nest,
The tempest in its home.

The whispering waves were half asleep,
The clouds were gone to play,
And on the bosom of the deep,
The smile of Heaven lay;
It seemed as if the hour were one
Sent from beyond the skies,
Which scattered from above the sun
A light of Paradise.

How calm it was!—the silence there
By such a chain was bound,
That even the busy wood-pecker
Made stiller by her sound
The inviolable quietness;
The breath of peace we drew
With its soft motion made not less
The calm that round us grew.
There seemed from the remotest seat
Of the wide mountain waste,
To the soft flower beneath our feet,
A magic circle traced,
A spirit interwoven around
To harmonies and hues beneath,
As tender as its own;
Now all the tree tops lay asleep,
Like green waves on the sea,
As still as in the silent deep
The ocean woods may be.

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As tender as its own;
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Like green waves on the sea,
As still as in the silent deep
The ocean woods may be.

We paused beside the pools that lie
Under the forest bough,
Each seemed as 'twere a little sky
Gulfed in a world below;
A firmament of purple light,
Which in the dark earth lay,
More boundless than the depth of night,
And purer than the day—
In which the lovely forests grew,
As in the upper air,
More perfect both in shape and hue
Than any spreading there.
There lay the glade and neighbouring lawn
And through the dark green wood
The white sun twinkling like the dawn
Out of a speckled cloud.
Sweet views which in our world above
Can never well be seen,
Were imaged by the water's love
Of that fair forest green.
And all was interfused beneath
With an Elysian glow,
An atmosphere without a breath,
A softer day below.
Like one beloved the scene had lent
To the dark water's breast,
Its every leaf and lineament
With more than truth expressed,
Until an envious wind crept by,
Like an unwelcome thought,
Which from the mind's too faithful eye
Blots one dear image out.
Though thou art ever fair and kind,
The forests ever green,
Less oft is peace in 'S——'s mind,
Than calm in waters seen.

February 2, 1822.

A SONG.

A widow bird aye mourning for her love
Upon a wintry bough;
The frozen wind crept on above,
The freezing stream below.

There was no leaf upon the forest bare,
No flower upon the ground,
And little motion in the air
Except the mill-wheel's sound.

---

LINES.

When the lamp is shattered,
The light in the dust lies dead—
When the cloud is scattered,
The rainbow's glory is shed.
When the lute is broken,
Sweet tones are remembered not;
When the lips have spoken,
Loved accents are soon forgot.

As music and splendour
Survive not the lamp and the lute,
The heart's echoes render
No song when the spirit is mute:
No song but sad dirges
Like the wind through a ruined cell,
Or the mournful surges
That ring the dead seaman's knell.

When hearts have once mingled,
Love first leaves the well-built nest;
The weak one is singled
To endure what it once posset.
O, Love! who bewaist
The frailty of all things here,
Why choose you the frailest
For your cradle, your home, and your bier!

Its passions will rock thee,
As the storms rock the ravens on high:
Bright reason will mock thee,
Like the sun from a wintry sky.
From thy nest every rafter
Will rot, and thine eagle home
Leave thee naked to laughter,
When leaves fall and cold winds come.

THE ISLE.

There was a little lawny islet
By anemone and violet,
Like mosaic, paven;
And its roof was flowers and leaves
Which the summer's breath enweaves,
Where nor sun nor showers nor breeze
Pierce the pines and tallest trees,
Each a gem engraven.
Girt by many an azure wave
With which the clouds and mountains part
A lake's blue chasm.

A DIRGE.

Rough wind, that moanest loud
Grief too sad for song;
Wild wind, when sullen cloud
Knells all the night long;
Sad storm, whose tears are vain
Bare woods, whose branches stain,
Deep caves and dreary main,
Wail, for the world's wrong!
CHARLES THE FIRST.
A Fragment.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

The Pageant to celebrate the arrival of the Queen.

A PURSUIVANT.
PLACE for the Marshal of the Masque!

FIRST SPEAKER.
What thinkest thou of this quaint masque, which
turns
Like morning from the shadow of the night,
The night to day, and London to a place
Of peace and joy!

SECOND SPEAKER.
And Hell to Heaven.

Eight years are gone,
And they seem hours, since in this populous street
I trod on grass made green by summer's rain,
For the red plague kept state within that palace
Where now reigns vanity—in nine years more
The roots will be refreshed with civil blood;
And thank the mercy of insulted Heaven
That sin and wrongs wound as an orphan's cry,
The patience of the great Avenger's ear.

THIRD SPEAKER (a youth).
Yet, father, 'tis a happy sight to see,
Beautiful, innocent, and unforbidden
By God or man; 'tis like the bright procession
Of skiey visions in a solemn dream
From which men wake as from a paradise,
And draw new strength to tread the thorns of life.
If God be good, wherefore should this be evil?
And if this be not evil, dost thou not draw
Unreasonable poison from the flowers
Which bloom so rarely in this barren world?
Oh, kill these bitter thoughts which make the present
Dark as the future!—

When avarice and tyranny, vigilant fear,
And open-eyed conspiracy, lie sleeping
As on Hell's threshold; and all gentle thoughts
Waken to worship him who giveth joys
With his own gift.

SECOND SPEAKER.
How young art thou in this old age of time!
How green in this grey world! Canst thou not think
Of change in that low scene, in which thou art
Not a spectator but an actor!
The day that dawns in fire will die in storms,
Even though the noon be calm. My travel's done;
Before the whirlwind wakes I shall have found
My inn of lasting rest, but thou must still
Be journeying on in this inclement air.

SECOND SPEAKER (a youth).
Is the Archbishop.

SECOND SPEAKER.
Rather say the Pope.

London will be soon his Rome: he walks
As if he trod upon the heads of men.
He looks elate, drunken with blood and gold;—
Beside him moves the Babylonian woman
Invisibly, and with her as with his shadow,
Mitted adulterer! he is joined in sin,
Which turns Heaven's milk of mercy to revenge.

GOOD LORD! rain it down upon him.
Amid her ladies walks the papist queen,
As if her nice feet scorned our English earth.
There's old Sir Henry Vane, the Earl of Pembroke,
Lord Essex, and Lord Keeper Coventry,
And others who made base their English breed
By vile participation of their honours
With papists, atheists, tyrants, and apostates.
When lawyers mask 'tis time for honest men
To strip the vizor from their purposes.

When avarice and tyranny, vigilant fear,
FOURTH SPEAKER (a pursuivant).
Give place, give place! You torch-bearers, advance to the great gate, And then attend the Marshal of the Masque Into the Royal presence.

FIFTH SPEAKER (a law student).
What think'st thou Of this quaint show of ours, my aged friend?

FIRST SPEAKER.
I will not think but that our country's wounds May yet be healed— The king is just and gracious, Though wicked counsels now pervert his will: These once cast off—

SECOND SPEAKER.
As adders cast their skins And keep their venom, so kings often change; Councils and councillors hang on one another, Hiding the loathsome [ ] Like the base patchwork of a leper's rags.

THIRD SPEAKER.
Oh, still those dissonant thoughts— List, loud music Grows on the enchanted air! And see, the torches Restlessly flashing, and the crowd divided Like waves before an admiral's prow.

ANOTHER SPEAKER.
To the Marshal of the Masque!

THIRD SPEAKER.
How glorious! See those thronging chariots Rolling like painted clouds before the wind:

SECOND SPEAKER.
Aye, there they are— Nobles, and sons of nobles, patentees, Monopolists, and stewards of this poor farm, On whose lean sheep sit the prophetic crows. Here is the pomp that strips the houseless orphan, Here is the pride that breaks the desolate heart. These are the lilies glorious as Solomon, Who toll not, neither do they spin,—unless It be the webs they catch poor rogues withal. Here is the surfeit which to them who earn The niggard wages of the earth, scarce leaves The tithe that will support them till they crawl Back to its cold hard bosom. Here is health Followed by grim diseases, glory by shame, Waste by lank famine, wealth by squalid want, And England's sin by England's punishment. And, as the effect pursues the cause foregone, Lo, giving substance to my words, behold At once the sign and the thing signified— A troop of cripples, beggars, and lean outcasts, Horsed upon stumbling shapes, carted with dung, Dragged for a day from cellars and low cabins And rotten hiding-holes, to point the moral Of this presentment, and bring up the rear Of painted pomp with misery!

SPEAKER.
'Tis but The anti-masque, and serves as discords do In sweetest music. Who would love May flowers If they succeeded not to Winter's flaw; Or day unchanged by night; or joy itself Without the touch of sorrow!

SCENE II.
A Chamber in Whitehall.

ENTER THE KING, QUEEN, LAUD, WENTWORTH, AND ARCHBISHOP.

KING.
Thanks, gentlemen. I heartily accept This token of your service: your gay masque Was performed gallantly.

QUEEN.
And, gentlemen, Call your poor Queen your debtor. Your quaint pageant Rose on me like the figures of past years, Treading their still path back to infancy, More beautiful and mild as they draw nearer The quiet cradle. I could have almost wept To think I was in Paris, where these shows Are well devised— such as I was ere yet My young heart shared with [ ] the task, The careful weight of this great monarchy. There, gentlemen, between the sovereign's pleasure And that which it regards, no clamour lifts It's proud interposition.

ARCHBISHOP.
The fool is here.

LAUD.
I crave permission of your Majesty To order that this insolent fellow be Chastised: he mocks the sacred character, Scoffs at the stake, and—

KING.
What, my Archy! He mocks and mimics all he sees and hears, Yet with a quaint and graceful licence—Prithee For this once do not as Prynne would, were he Primate of England. He lives in his own world; and, like a parrot, Hung in his gilded prison from the window
Of a queen's bower over the public way,
Blasphemes with a bird's mind:—his words, like arrows
Which know no aim beyond the archer's wit,
Strike sometimes what eludes philosophy.

QUEEN.
Go, sirrah, and repent of your offence
Ten minutes in the rain: be it your penance
To bring news how the world goes there. Poor Archy!
He weaves about himself a world of mirth
Out of this wreck of ours.

I take with patience, as my Master did,
All scoffs permitted from above.

My lord,
Pray overlook these papers. Archy's words
Had wings, but these have talons.

And the lion
That wears them must be tamed. My dearest lord,
I see the new-born courage in your eye
Armed to strike dead the spirit of the time.

Do thou persist: for, faint but in resolve,
And it were better thou hadst still remained
The slave of thine own slaves, who tear like curs
The fugitive, and flee from the pursuer;
And Opportunity, that empty wolf,
Flies at his throat who falls. Subdue thy actions,
Even to the disposition of thy purpose,
And be that tempered as the Ebro's steel;
And banish weak-eyed Mercy to the weak,
Whence she will greet thee with a gift of peace,
And not betray thee with a traitor's kiss,
As when she keeps the company of rebels,
Who think that she is fear. This do, lest we
Should fall as from a glorious pinnacle
In a bright dream, and wake as from a dream
Out of our worshipped state.

And if this suffice not,
Unleash the sword and fire, that in their thirst
They may lick up that scum of schismatics.
I laugh at those weak rebels who, desiring
What we possess, still prate of Christian peace,
As if those dreadful messengers of wrath,
Which play the part of God 'twixt right and wrong,
Should be let loose against innocent sleep
Of templ'd cities and the smiling fields,
For some poor argument of policy
Which touches our own profit or our pride,
Where indeed it was Christian charity
To turn the cheek even to the smiter's hand:
That Redeemer, whom our God
Is scorned in his immediate ministers,
They talk of peace!
Such peace as Canaan found, let Scotland now.

England, farewell! thou, who hast been my cradle,
Shalt never be my dungeon or my grave!
I held what I inherited in thee
As pawn for that inheritance of freedom
Which thou hast sold for thy despoiler's smile:—
How can I call thee England, or my country?
Does the wind hold? Hail, fleet herald
Of tempest! that wild pilot who shall guide
Hearts free as his, to realms as pure as thee.
Beyond the shot of tyranny! And thou,
Fair star, whose beam lies on the wide Atlantic,
Athwart its zones of tempest and of calm,
Bright as the path to a beloved home,
O light us to the isles of th' evening land!
Like floating Edens, cradled in the glimmer
Of sunset, through the distant mist of years
Tinged by departing Hope, they gleam! Lone regions,
Where power's poor dupes and victims yet have never
Propitiated the savage fear of kings
With purest blood of noblest hearts; whose dew
Is yet unstained with tears of those who wake
To weep each day the wrongs on which it dawns;
Whose sacred silent air owns yet no echo
Of formal blasphemies; nor impious rites
Wrest man's free worship from the God who loves
Towards the worm, who envies us his love,
Receive thou, young [ ] of Paradise,
These exiles from the old and sinful world!
THE TRIUMPH OF LIFE.

Swift as a spirit hastening to his task
Of glory and of good, the Sun sprang forth
Rejoicing in his splendour, and the mask
Of darkness fell from the awakened Earth—
The smokeless altars of the mountain snows
Flamed above crimson clouds, and at the birth
Of light, the Ocean's orison arose,
To which the birds tempered their matin lay.
All flowers in field or forest which unclose
Their trembling eyelids to the kiss of day,
Swinging the censers in the element,
With orient incense lit by the new ray
Burned slow and inexhaustibly, and sent
Theirodorous sighsup to the smiling air;
And, in succession due, did continent,
Isle, ocean, and all things that in them wear
The form and character of mortal mould,
Rise as the Sun their Father rose, to bear
Their portion of the toil, which he of old
Took as his own and then imposed on them:
But I, whom thoughts which must remain untold
Had kept as wakeful as the stars that gem
The cone of night, now they were laid asleep
Stretched my faint limbs beneath the hoary stem
Which an old chestnut flung athwart the steep
Of a green Apenine: before me fled
The night; behind me rose the day; the deep
Was at my feet, and Heaven above my head,
When a strange trance over my fancy grew
Which was not slumber, for the shade it spread
Was so transparent that the scene came through
As clear as, when a veil of light is drawn
Over evening hills, they glimmer; and I knew
That I had felt the freshness of that dawn
Bathe in the same cold dew my brow and hair,
And sate as thus upon that slope of lawn
Under the selfsame bough, and heard as there
The birds, the fountains, and the ocean hold
Sweet talk in music through the enamoured air,
And then a vision on my brain was rolled.
As in that trance of wondrous thought I lay,
This was the tenour of my waking dream:—
Methought I sate beside a public way
Thick strewn with summer dust, and a great stream
Of people there was hurrying to and fro,
Numerous as gnats upon the evening gleam,
All hastening onward, yet none seemed to know
Whither he went, or whence he came, or why
He made one of the multitude, and so
Was borne amid the crowd, as through the sky
One of the million leaves of summer's bier;
Old age and youth, manhood and infancy,
Mixed in one mighty torrent did appear:
Some flying from the thing they feared, and some
Seeking the object of another's fear;
And others as with steps towards the tomb,
Pored on the trodden worms that crawled beneath,
And others mournfully within the gloom
Of their own shadow walked and called it death;
And some fled from it as it were a ghost,
Half fainting in the affliction of vain breath:
But more, with motions which each other cross,
Pursued or spurned the shadows the clouds threw,
Or birds within the noon-day other lost,
Upon that path where flowers never grew,—
And weary with vain toil and faint for thirst,
Heard not the fountains, whose melodious dew
Out of their mossy cells forever burst;
Nor felt the breeze which from the forest told
Of grassy paths and wood, lawn-interspersed,
With over-arching elms and caverns cold,
And violet banks where sweet dreams brood, but they
Pursued their serious folly as of old.
And as I gazed, methought that in the way
The throng grew wilder, as the woods of Juno
When the south wind shakes the extinguished day,
And a cold glare intenser than the noon,
But icy cold, obscured with blinding light
The sun, as he the stars. Like the young moon.
Whence, on the sunlit limits of the night
Her white shell trembles amid crimson air,
And whilst the sleeping tempest gathers might,
Doth, as the herald of its coming, bear
The ghost of its dead mother, whose dim form
Bends in dark ether from her infant's chair,—
So came a chariot on the silent storm
Of its own rushing splendour, and a Shape
So sate within, as one whom years deform,
Beneath a dusky hood and double cape;
Crouching within the shadow of a tomb;
And o'er what seemed the head a cloud-like crape
Was bent, a dun and faint ethereal gloom
Tempering the light: upon the chariot beam
A Janus-visaged shadow did assume
The guidance of that wonder-winged team;
The shapes which drew it in thick lightnings
Were lost:— I heard alone on the air's soft
stream
The music of their ever-moving wings.
All the four faces of that charioteer
Had their eyes banded; little profit brings
Speed in the van and blindness in the rear,
Nor then avail the beams that quench the sun
Or that with banded eyes could pierce the sphere
Of all that is, has been, or will be done;
So ill was the car guided—but it past
With solemn speed majestically on.

The crowd gave way, and I arose agast,
Or seemed to rise, so mighty was the trance,
And saw, like clouds upon the thunder's blast,
The million with fierce song and maniac dance
Raging around— such seemed the jubilee
As when, to meet some conquerors advance,
Imperial Rome poured forth her living sea
From senate-house, and forum, and theatre,
When [ ] upon the free
Had bound a yoke, which soon they stooped to bear.
Nor wanted here the just similitude
Of a triumphal pageant, for where'er
The chariot rolled, a captive multitude
Was driven;— all those who had grown old in power
Or misery, — all who had their age subdued
By action or by suffering, and whose hour
Was drained to its last sand in weal or woe,
So that the trunk survived both fruit and flower;—
All those whose fame or infamy must grow
Till the great winter lay the form and name
Of this green earth with them for ever low;—
All but the sacred few who could not tame
Their spirits to the conquerors—but as soon
As they had touched the world with living flame,
Fled back like eagles to their native noon,
Or those who put aside the diadem
Of earthly thrones or gems [ ]

Were there, of Athens or Jerusalem,
Were neither 'mid the mighty captives seen,
Nor 'mid the ribald crowd that followed them,
Nor those who went before fierce and obscene.
The wild dance maddens in the van, and those
Who lead it—flock as shadows on the green,
Outspeed the chariot, and without repose
Mix with each other in tempestuous measure
To savage music, wilder as it grows,
They, tortured by their agonizing pleasure,
Convulsed and on the rapid whirlwinds spun
Of that fierce spirit whose unholy leisure
Was soothed by mischief since the world begun,—
Throw back their heads and lose their streaming hair;
And in their dance round her who dims the sun,
Maidens and youths fling their wild arms in air:
As their feet twinkle they recede, and now
Bending within each other's atmosphere
Kindle invisibly—and as they glow,
Like moths by light attracted and repelled,
Oft to their bright destruction come and go,
Till like two clouds into one vale impelled
That shake the mountains when their lightnings mingle
And die in rain—the fiery band which held
Their natures, snaps— the shock still may sing:
One falls and then another in the path
Senseless—nor is the desolation single,
Yet ere I can say where— the chariot hath
Past over them— nor other trace I find
But as of foam after the ocean's wrath
Is spent upon the desert shore;— behind,
Old men and women foully disarrayed,
Shake their grey hairs in the insulting wind,
And follow in the dance, with limbs decayed,
Seeking to reach the light which leaves them still
Farther behind and deeper in the shade.
But not the less with impotence of will
They wheel, though ghastly shadows interpose
Round them and round each other, and fulfil
Their part, and in the dust from whence they rose
Sink, and corruption veils them as they lie,
And past in these performs what [ ] in those
Struck to the heart by this sad pageantry,
Half to myself I said— And what is this!
Whose shape is that within the car! And why—
I would have added— is all here amiss!—
But a voice answered— "Life!"— I turned, and loved
(O Heaven, have mercy on such wretchedness!)
That what I thought was an old root which grew
To strange distortion out of the hill side,
Was indeed one of those deluded crew,
And that the grass, which me thought hung so wide
And white, was but his thin discoloured hair,
And that the holes it vainly sought to hide,
Were or had been eyes:— "If thou canst, forbear
To join the dance, which I had well forborne!"
Said the grim Feature (of my thought aware)
"I will unfold that which to this deep scorn
Led me and my companions, and relate
The progress of the pageants since the morn;
"If thirst of knowledge shall not then abate,
Follow it thou even to the night, but I
Am weary."—Then like one who with the weight
Of his own words is staggered, weighly
He paused; and, ere he could resume, I cried,
"First, who art thou"—"Before thy memory,
I feared, loved, hated, suffered, did and died,
And if the spark with which Heaven lit my spirit
Had been with purer sentiment supplied,
Corruption would not now thus much inherit
Of what was once Rousseau,—nor this disguise
Stained that which ought to have disdained to
wear it;
"If I have been extinguished, yet there rise
A thousand beacons from the spark I bore"—
"And who are those chained to the car?"—"The
wise,
The great, the unforgotten,—they who wore
Mitres and helms and crowns, or wreaths of light,
Signs of thought's empire over thought—their lore
Taught them not this, to know themselves; their
Could not repress the mystery within, [might
And for the morn of truth they feigned, deep night
Caught them ere evening."—"Who is he with chin
Upon his breast, and hands crost on his chain?"—
The Child of a fierce hour; he sought to win
The world, and lost all that it did contain
Of greatness, in its hope destroyed; and more
Of fame and peace than virtue's self can gain
"Without the opportunity which bore
Him on its eagle pinions to the peak
From which a thousand climbers have before
Fallen, as Napoleon fell."—I felt my cheek
After to see the shadow pass away,
Whose grasp had left the giant world so weak,
That every pigmy kicked it as it lay;
And much I grieved to think how power and will
In opposition rule our mortal day,
And why God made irreconcilable
Good and the means of good; and for despair
I half disdained mine eyes' desire to fill
there is a chasm here in the MS. which it is impossible to fill up. It appears from the context, that other shapes pass, and that Rousseau still stood beside the dreamer, as

he pointed to a company,
'Midst whom I quickly recognised the heirs
Of Caesar's crime, from him to Constantine;
The anarch chiefs, whose force and murderous snare
Had founded many a sceptre-bearing line,
And spread the plague of gold and blood abroad:
And Gregory and John, and men divine,
Who rose like shadows between man and God;
Till that eclipse, still hanging over heaven,
Was worshipped by the world o'er which they strode,

For the true sun it quenched—" Their power was
But to destroy," replied the leader:—" I [given
Am one of those who have created, even
If it be but a world of agony."—
" Whence comest thou ! and whither goest thou !
How did thy course begin !" I said, " and why !
" Mine eyes are sick of this perpetual flow
Of people, and my heart sick of one sad thought—
Speak !"— Whence am I, partly seem to know,
And how and by what paths I have been brought
To this dread pass, methinks even thou mayst
Why this should be, my mind can compass not ;
" Whither the conqueror hurries me, still less;—
But follow thou, and from spectator turn
Actor or victim in this wretchedness,
And what thou wouldst be taught I then may learn
From thee. Now listen:— In the April prime,
When all the forest tips began to burn
With kindling green, touched by the azure clime
Of the young year's dawn, I was laid asleep
Under a mountain, which from unknown time

Had yawned into a cavern, high and deep;
And from it came a gentle rivulet,
Whose water, like clear air, in its calm sweep
Bent the soft grass, and kept for ever wet
The stems of the sweet flowers, and filled the grove
With sounds, which whose ears must needs forget

All pleasure and all pain, all hate and love,
Which they had known before that hour of rest;
A sleeping mother then would dream not of
Her only child who died upon her breast
At eventide—a king would mourn no more
The crown of which his brows were dispossess

When the sun lingered o'er his ocean floor,
To gild his rival's new prosperity.
Thou wouldst forget thus vainly to deplore
" Ills, which if ills can find no cure from thee,
The thought of which no other sleep will quell,
Nor other music blot from memory,
THE TRIUMPH OF LIFE.

And still her feet, no less than the sweet tune
To which they moved, seemed as they moved to blot
The thoughts of him who gazed on them; and soon

All that was, seemed as if it had been not;
And all the gazer's mind was strewn beneath
Her feet like embers; and she, thought by thought,

Trampled its sparks into the dust of death,
As day upon the threshold of the east
Treads out the lamps of night, until the breath

Of darkness re-illumine even the least
Of heaven's living eyes! like day she came,
Making the night a dream; and ere she ceased

To move, as one between desire and shame
Suspended, I said—If, as it doth seem,
Thou comest from the realm without a name,

Into this valley of perpetual dream,
Show whence I came, and where I am, and why—
Pass not away upon the passing stream.

Arise and quench thy thirst, was her reply.
And as a Bhut lily, stricken by the wand
Of dewy morning's vital alchemy,

I rose; and, bending at her sweet command,
Touched with faint lips the cup she raised,
And suddenly my brain became as sand,

Where the first wave had more than halferased
The track of deer on desert Labrador;
Whilst the wolf, from which they fled amazed,

Leaves his stamp visibly upon the shore,
Until the second bursts;—so on my sight
Burst a new vision, never seen before,

And the fair shape waned in the coming light,
As veil by veil the silentsplendour drops
From Lucifer, amid the chrysolite

Of sun-rise, ere it tinge the mountain tops;
And as the presence of that fairest planet,
Although unseen, is felt by one who hopes

That his day's path may end, as he began it,
In that star's smile, whose light is like the scent
Of a jonquil when evening breezes fan it,

Or the soft note in which his dear lament
The Brescian shepherd breathes, or the caress
That turned his weary slumber to content;* 

So knew I in that light's severe excess
The presence of that shape which on the stream
Moved, as I moved along the wilderness

More dimly than a day-appearing dream,
The ghost of a forgotten form of sleep;
A light of heaven, whose half-extinguished beam

Through the sick day in which we wake to weep,
Glimmers, for ever sought, for ever lost;
So did that shape its obscure tenor keep

Beside my path, as silent as a ghost;
But the new Vision, and the cold bright car,
With solemn speed and stunning music, crost

The forest, and as if from some dread war
Triumphantly returning, the loud million
Fiercely extolled the fortune of her star.

A moving arch of victory, the vermilion
And green and azure plumes of Iris had
Built high over her wind-winged pavilion,

And underneath ethereal glory clad
The wilderness, and far before her flew
The tempest of the splendour, which forbade

Shadow to fall from leaf and stone; the crew
Seemed in that light, like atoms to dance
Within a sunbeam;—some upon the new

Embroidery of flowers, that did enhance
The grassy vesture of the desert, played,
Forgetful of the chariot's swift advance;

Others stood gazing, till within the shade
Of the great mountain its light left them dim;
Others outspeeded it; and others made

Circles around it, like the clouds that swim
Round the high moon in a bright sea of air;
And more did follow, with exulting hymn,

The chariot and the captives fettered there:—
But all like bubbles on an eddying flood
Fell into the same track at last, and were

Borne onward. I among the multitude
Was swept,—me, sweetest flowers delayed not long;
Me, not the shadow nor the solitude;

Me, not that falling stream's Lethean song;
Me, not the phantom of that early form,
Which moved upon its motion—but among

The thickest billows of that living storm
I plunged, and bared my bosom to the clime
Of that cold light, whose fires too soon deform.

Before the chariot had begun to climb
The opposing steep of that mysterious dell,
Behold a wonder worthy of his rhyme—

Of him who from the lowest depths of hell,
Through every paradise and through all glory,
Love led serene, and who returned to tell

The words of hate and care; the wondrous story
How all things are transfigured except Love;
(For deaf as is a sea, which wrath makes hoary,

The world can hear not the sweet notes that move
The sphere whose light is melody to lovers)
A wonder worthy of his rhyme—the grove

Grew dense with shadows to its immost covers,
The earth was grey with phantoms, and the air
Was peopled with dim forms, as when there hovers

A flock of vampire-bats before the glare
Of the tropic sun, bringing, ere evening,
Strange night upon some Indian vale;—thus were
Phantoms diffused around; and some did fling
Shadows of shadows, yet unlike themselves,
Behind them; some like eaglets on the wing
Upon the sunny streams and grassy shelves;

And others sate chattering like restless apes
On vulgar hands,* * * Some made a cradle of the ermined capes

Of kingly mantles; some across the tire
Of pontiffs rode, like demons; others played
Under the crown which girt with empire

A baby's or an idiot's brow, and made
Their nests in it. The old anatomies
Sate hatching their bare broods under the shade

Of demon wings, and laughed from their dead eyes
To re-assume the delegated power,
Arrayed in which those worms did monarchise,

Who made this earth their charnel. Others more
Humble, like falcons, sat upon the fist
Of common men, and round their heads did soar;

Or like small gnats and flies, as thick as mist
On evening marshes, thronged about the brow
Of lawyers, statesmen, priest, and theorist;—

Or others, like discoloured flakes of snow
On fairest bosoms and the sunniest hair,
Fell, and were melted by the youthful glow

Which they extinguished; and, like tears, they were
A veil to those from whose faint lids they rained
In drops of sorrow. I became aware

Of whence those forms proceeded which thus stain'd
The track in which we moved. After brief space,
From every form the beauty slowly wan'd;

From every firmest limb and fairest face
The strength and freshness fell like dust, and left
The action and the shape without the grace

Of life. The marble brow of youth was cleft
With care; and in those eyes where once hope shone,
Desire, like a lioness bereft

Of her last cub, glared ere it died; each one
Of that great crowd sent forth incessantly
These shadows, numerous as the dead leaves blown

In autumn evening from a poplar tree,
Each like himself and like each other were
At first; but some distorted seemed to be

Obscure clouds, moulded by the casual air;
And of this stuff the car's creative ray
Wrap'd all the busy phantoms that were there,

As the sun shapes the clouds; thus on the way
Mask after mask fell from the countenance
And form of all; and long before the day

Was old, the joy which waked like heaven's glance
The sleepers in the oblivious valley, died;
And some grew weary of the ghastly dance,

And fell, as I have fallen, by the way-side;—
Those soonest from whose forms most shadows past
And least of strength and beauty did abide.

Then, what is life! I cried."
Here, my dear friend, is a new book for you; I have already dedicated two To other friends, one female and one male, What you are, is a thing that I must veil; What can this be to those who praise or rail!

I never was attached to that great sect Whose doctrine is that each one should select Out of the world a mistress or a friend, And all the rest, though fair and wise, commend To cold oblivion—though it is the code Of modern morals, and the beaten road Which those poor slaves with weary footstepstread Who travel to their home among the dead, By the broad highway of the world—and so With one sad friend, and many a jealous foe, The dreariest and the longest journey go.

Free love has this, different from gold and clay, That to divide is not to take away. Like ocean, which the general north wind breaks Into ten thousand waves, and each one makes A mirror of the moon; like some great glass, Which did distort whatever form might pass, Dashed into fragments by a playful child, Which then reflects its eyes and forehead mild, Giving for one, which it could ne’er express, A thousand images of loveliness.

If I were one whom the loud world held wise, I should disdain to quote authorities In the support of this kind of love;— Why there is first the God in heaven above, * These fragments do not properly belong to the poems of 1822. They are gleanings from Shelley’s manuscript books and papers; preserved not only because they are beautiful in themselves, but as affording indications of his feelings and virtues. —

Who wrote a book called Nature, ‘tis to be Reviewed I hear in the next Quarterly; And Socrates, the Jesus Christ of Greece; And Jesus Christ himself did never cease To urge all living things to love each other, And to forgive their mutual faults, and another The Devil of disunion in their souls.

It is a sweet thing friendship, a dear balm, A happy and auspicious bird of calm, Which rides o’er life’s ever tumultuous Ocean; A God that broods o’er chaos in commotion; A flower which fresh as Lapland roses are, Lifts its bold head into Earth’s pure air, And blooms most radiantly when others die, Among rude voices, a beloved light, A solitude, a refuge, a delight.

If I had but a friend! why I have three, Even by my own confession; there may be Some more, for what I know; for ’tis my mind To call my friends all who are wise and kind, And these, Heaven knows, at best are very few, But none can ever be more dear than you.

Why should they be! my muse has lost her wings. Or like a dying swan who soars and sings I should describe you in heroic style, But as it is—are you not void of guile! A lovely soul, formed to be blessed and bless; A well of sealed and secret happiness; A lute, which those whom love has taught to play Make music on, to cheer the roughest day!
FRAGMENTS.

A gentle story of two lovers young,
Who met in innocence and died in sorrow,
And of one selfish heart, whose rancour clung
Like curses on them; are ye slow to borrow
The lore of truth from such a tale?
Or in this world's deserted vale,
Do ye not see a star of gladness
Pierce the shadows of its sadness,
When ye are cold, that love is a light sent
From heaven, which none shall quench, to cheer the innocent!

I am drunk with the honey wine
Of the moon-unfolded eglantine,
Which fairies catch in hyacinth buds:
The bats, the dormice, and the moles
Sleep in the walls or under the sward
Of the desolate castle-yard;
And when 'tis splitt on the summer earth
Or its fumes arise among the dew,
Their jocund dreams are full of mirth,
They gibber their joy in sleep; for few
Of the fairies bear those bowls so new!

And who feels discord now or sorrow?
Love is the universe to-day—
These are the slaves of dim to-morrow,
Darkening Life's labyrinth in way.

TO WILLIAM SHELLEY.

Thy little footsteps on the sands
Of a remote and lonely shore;
The twinkling of thine infant hands
Where now the worm will feed no more:
Thy mingled look of love and glee
When we returned to gaze on thee.

The world is dreary,
And I am weary
Of wandering on without thee, Mary;
A joy was erewhile
In thy voice and thy smile,
And 'tis gone, when I should be gone too, Mary.

My dearest Mary, wherefore hast thou gone,
And left me in this dreary world alone!
Thy form is here indeed—a lovely one—
But thou art fled, gone down the dreary road,
That leads to Sorrow's most obscure abode;
Thou sittest on the hearth of pale despair,
Where

VIII.

And where is truth? On tombs! for such to thee
Has been my heart—and thy dead memory
Has lain from childhood, many a changeful year—
Unchangingly preserved and buried there.

When a lover clasps his fairest,
Then be our dread sport the rarest.
Their caresses were like the chaff
In the tempest, and be our laugh
His despair—her epitaph!

When a mother clasps her child,
Watch till dusty Death has piled
His cold ashes on the clay;
She has loved it many a day—
She remains,—it fades away.

One sung of thee who left the tale untold,
Like the false dawns which perish in the bursting:
Like empty cups of wrought and deadal gold,
Which mock the lips with air, when they are thirsting.

Ye gentle visitations of calm thought—
Moods like the memories of happier earth,
Like stars in clouds by the weak winds enwrought,
But that the clouds depart and stars remain,
While they remain, and ye, alas, depart!

Rome has fallen, ye see it lying
Heap'd in undistinguished ruin:
Nature is alone undying.

How sweet it is to sit and read the tales
Of mighty poets, and to hear the while
Sweet music, which when the attention fails
Fillsthe dim pause
Wake the serpent not—lest he
Should not know the way to go,—
Let him crawl which yet lies sleeping
Through the deep grass of the meadow!
Not a bee shall hear him creeping,
Not a may-fly shall awaken,
From its cradling blue-bell shaken,
Not the starlight as he's sliding
Through the grass with silent gliding.

The fitful alternations of the rain,
When the chill wind, languid as with pain
Of its own heavy moisture, here and there
Driesthrough the grey and beamless atmosphere.
FRAGMENTS.

There is a warm and gentle atmosphere
About the form of one we love, and thus
As in a tender mist our spirits are
W rapt in the— of that which is to us
The health of life's own life.

What men gain fairly—that they should possess,
And children may inherit idleness,
From him who earns it—This is understood;
Private injustice may be general good.
But he who gains by base and armed wrong,
Or guilty fraud, or base compliances,
May be deepsoiled; even as a stolen dress
Is stript from a convicted thief, and he
Left in the nakedness of infamy.

I would not be a king—enough
Of woe it is to love;
The path to power is steep and rough,
And tempests reign above.
Would he and I were far away
Keeping flocks on Himelay!

O thou immortal deity
Whose throne is in the depth of human thought,
I do adjure thy power and thee
By all that man may be, by all that he is not,
By all that he has been and yet must be!

ON KEATS,

Who desired that on his tomb should be inscribed—
"Here lieth One whose name was writ on water!"
But ere the breath that could erase it blew,
Death, in remorse for that fell slaughter,
Death, the immortalising winter flew,
Athwart the stream, and time's monthless torrent
A scroll of crystal, blazoning the name—

He wanders, like a day-appearing dream,
Through the dim wildernesses of the mind;
Through desert woods and tracts, which seem
Like ocean, homeless, boundless, unconfined.

The rude wind is singing
The dirge of the music dead,
The cold worms are clinging
Where kisses were lately fed.

What art thou, Presumptuous, who profanest
The wreath to mighty poets only due,
Even whilst like a forgotten moon thou wanest!
Touch not those leaves which for the eternal few,
Who wander o'er the paradise of fame,
In sacred dedication ever grew—
One of the crowd thou art without a name.
Ah, friend, 'tis the false laurel that I wear;
Bright though it seem, it is not the same
As that which bound Milton's immortal hair;
Its dew is poison and the hopes that quicken
Under its chilling shade, though seeming fair,
Are flowers which die almost before they sicken.

The babe is at peace within the womb,
The corpse is at rest within the tomb,
We begin in what we end.

These are two friends whose lives were undivided;
So let their memory be, now they have glided
Under their grave; let not their bones be parted,
For their two hearts in life were single-hearted.
NOTE ON THE POEMS OF 1822.

BY THE EDITOR.

This morn thy gallant bark
Sailed on a sunny sea,
'Tis noon, and tempests dark
Have wrecked it on the lee.
Ah woe, ah woe!
By spirits of the deep
Thou'rt cradled on the billow,
To thy eternal sleep.
Thou sleep'st upon the shore
Beside the knolling surge,
And sea-nymphs evermore
Shall sadly chant thy dirge.
They come! they come,
The spirits of the deep,
While near thy sea-weed pillow
My lonely watch I keep.
From far across the sea
I hear a loud lament,
By echo's voice for thee,
From ocean's caverns sent.
O list! O list,
The spirits of the deep;
They raise a wall of sorrow,
While I for ever weep.

With this last year of the life of Shelley these Notes end. They are not what I intended them to be. I began with energy and a burning desire to impart to the world, in worthy language, the sense I have of the virtues and genius of the Beloved and the Lost; my strength has failed under the task. Recurrence to the past—full of its own deep and unforgotten joys and sorrows, contrasted with succeeding years of painful and solitary struggle, has shaken my health. Days of great suffering have followed my attempts to write, and these again produced a weakness and languor that spread their sinister influence over these notes. I dislike speaking of myself, but cannot help apologising to the dead, and to the public, for not having executed in the manner I desired the history I engaged to give of Shelley's writings*.

* I at one time feared that the correction of the press might be less exact through my illness; but, I believe that it is nearly free from error. No omissions have been made in this edition; (in the last of 1839 they were confined to certain passages of "Queen Mab"); some asterisks occur in a few pages, as they did in the volume of Posthumous Poems, either because they refer to private concerns, or because the original manuscript was left imperfect. Did any one see the papers from which I drew that volume, the wonder would be how any eye or patience were capable of extracting it from so confused a mass.

The winter of 1822 was passed in Pisa, if we might call that season winter in which autumn merged into spring, after the interval of but few days of bleaker weather. Spring sprang up early, and with extreme beauty. Shelley had conceived the idea of writing a tragedy on the subject of Charles I. It was one that he believed adapted for a drama; full of intense interest, contrasted character, and busy passion. He had recommended it long before, when he encouraged me to attempt a play. Whether the subject proved more difficult than he anticipated, or whether in fact he could not bend his mind away from the broodings and wanderings of thought, divested from human interest, which he best loved, I cannot tell; but he proceeded slowly, and threw it aside for one of the most mystical of his poems, "The Triumph of Life," on which he was employed at the last.

His passion for boating was fostered at this time by having among our friends several sailors; his favourite companion, Edward Ellerker Williams, of the 8th Light Dragoons, had begun his life interlined and broken into fragments, so that the sense could only be deciphered and joined by guesses, which might seem rather intuitive than founded on reasoning. Yet I believe no mistake was made.
in the navy, and had afterwards entered the army; he had spent several years in India, and his love for adventure and manly exercises accorded with Shelley’s taste. It was their favourite plan to build a boat such as they could manage themselves, and, living on the sea-coast, to enjoy at every hour and season the pleasure they loved best. Captain Roberts, R.N., undertook to build the boat at Genoa, where he was also occupied in building the Bolivar for Lord Byron. Ours was to be an open boat, on a model taken from one of the royal dock-yards. I have since heard that there was a defect in this model, and that it was never sea-worthy. In the month of February, Shelley and his friend went to Spezia to seek for houses for us. Only one was to be found, at all suitable; however, a trifle such as not finding a house could not stop Shelley; the one found was to serve for all. It was unfurnished; we sent our furniture by sea, and with a good deal of precipitation, arising from his impatience, made our removal. We left Pisa on the 26th of April.

The bay of Spezia is of considerable extent, and divided by a rocky promontory into a larger and smaller one. The town of Lerici is situated on the eastern point, and in the depth of the smaller bay, which bears the name of this town, is the village of Sant’ Arenzo. Our house, Casa Magni, was close to this village; the sea came up to the door, a steep hill sheltered it behind. The proprietor of the estate on which it was situated was insane; he had begun to erect a large house at the summit of the hill behind, but his malady prevented its being finished, and it was falling into ruin. He had, and this to the Italians had seemed a glaring symptom of very decided madness, rooted up the olives on the hillside, and planted forest trees; these were mostly young, but the plantation was more in English taste than I ever elsewhere saw in Italy; some fine walnut and ilex trees intermingled their dark glossy foliage, and formed groups which still haunt my memory, as then they satiated the eye, with a sense of loveliness. The scene was indeed of unimaginable beauty; the blue extent of waters, the almost land-locked bay, the near castle of Lerici, shutting it in to the east, and distant Porto Venere to the west; the varied forms of the precipitous rocks that bound in the beach, over which there was only a winding rugged foot-path towards Lerici, and none on the other side; the tideless sea leaving no sands nor shingle,—formed a picture such as one sees in Salvator Rosa’s landscapes only: sometimes the sunshine vanished when the scirocco raged,—the ponente, the wind was called on that shore. The gales and squalls, that hauled our first arrival, surrounded the bay with foam; the howling wind swept round our exposed house, and the sea roared unremittingly, so that we almost fancied ourselves on board ship. At other times sunshine and calm invested sea and sky, and the rich tints of Italian heaven bathed the scene in bright and ever-varying tints.

The natives were wilder than the place. Our near neighbours, of Sant’ Arenzo, were more like savages than any people I ever before lived among. Many a night they passed on the beach, singing or rather howling, the women dancing about among the waves that broke at their feet, the men leaning against the rocks and joining in their loud wild chorus. We could get no provisions nearer than Sarzana, at a distance of three miles and a half off, with the torrent of the Magra between; and even there the supply was very deficient. Had we been wrecked on an island of the South Seas, we could scarcely have felt ourselves further from civilisation and comfort; but where the sun shines the latter becomes an unnecessary luxury, and we had enough society among ourselves. Yet I confess housekeeping became rather a toilsome task, especially as I was suffering in my health, and could not exert myself actively.

At first the fatal boat had not arrived, and was expected with great impatience. On Monday, May 12th, it came. Williams records the long-wished-for fact in his journal: “Cloudy and threatening weather. M. Maglian called, and after dinner and while walking with him on the terrace, we discovered a strange sail coming round the point of Porto Venere, which proved at length to be Shelley’s boat. She had left Genoa on Thursday last, but had been driven back by the prevailing bad winds. A Mr. Heslop and two English seamen brought her round, and they speak most highly of her performances. She does indeed excite my surprise and admiration. Shelley and I walked to Lerici, and made a stretch off the land to try her; and I find she fetches whatever she looks at. In short, we have now a perfect plaything for the summer.”—It was thus that short-sighted mortals welcomed death, he having disguised his grim form in a pleasing mask! The time of the friends was now spent on the sea; the weather became fine, and our whole party often passed the evenings on the water, when the wind promised pleasant sailing. Shelley and Williams made longer excursions; they sailed several times to Massa; they had engaged one of the seamen who brought her round, a boy, by name Charles Vivian; and they had not the slightest apprehension of
danger. When the weather was unfavourable, they employed themselves with alterations in the rigging, and by building a boat of canvas and reeds, as light as possible, to have on board the other, for the convenience of landing in waters too shallow for the larger vessel. When Shelley was on board, he had his papers with him; and much of the "Triumph of Life" was written as he sailed or weltered on that sea which was soon to engulf him.

The heats set in, in the middle of June; the days became excessively hot, but the sea breeze cooled the air at noon, and extreme heat always put Shelley in spirits: a long drought had preceded the rain, and prayers for rain were being put up in the churches, and processions of relics for the same effect took place in every town. At this time we received letters announcing the arrival of Leigh Hunt at Pisa. Shelley was very eager to see him. I was confined to my room by severe illness, and could not move; it was agreed that Shelley and Williams should go to Leghorn in the boat. Strange that no fear of danger crossed our minds! Living on the sea-shore, the ocean became as a plaything: as a child may sport with a lighted stick, till a spark inflames a forest and spreads destruction over all, so did we fearlessly and blindly tamper with danger, and make a game of the terrors of the ocean. Our Italian neighbours even trusted themselves as far as Massa in the skiff; and the running down the line of coast to Leghorn, gave no more notion of peril than a fair-weather inland navigation would have done to those who had never seen the sea. Once, some months before, Trelawny had raised a warning voice as to the difference of our calm bay, and the open sea beyond; but Shelley and his friend, with their one sailor boy, thought themselves a match for the storms of the Mediterranean, in a boat which they looked upon as equal to all it was put to do.

On the 1st of July they left us. If ever shadow of future ill darkened the present hour, such was over my mind when they went. During the whole of our stay at Lerici, an intense presentiment of coming evil brooded over my mind, and covered this beautiful place, and genial summer, with the shadow of coming misery—I had vainly struggled with these emotions—they seemed accounted for by my illness, but at this hour of separation they recurred with renewed violence. I did not anticipate danger for them, but a vague expectation of evil shook me to agony, and I could scarcely bring myself to let them go. The day was calm and clear, and a fine breeze rising; twelve they weighed for Leghorn; they made the run of about fifty miles in seven hours and a half. The Bolivar was in port, and the regulations of the health-office not permitting them to go on shore after sunset, they borrowed cushions from the larger vessel, and slept on board their boat.

They spent a week at Pisa and Leghorn. The want of rain was severely felt in the country. The weather continued sultry and fine. I have heard that Shelley all this time was in brilliant spirits. Not long before, talking of presentiment, he had said the only one that he ever found infallible, was the certain advent of some evil fortune when he felt peculiarly joyous. Yet if ever fear whispered of coming disaster, such inaudible, but not unfelt, prognostics hovered around us. The beauty of the place seemed unearthly in its excess: the distance we were at from all signs of civilization, the sea at our feet, its murmurs or its roars for ever in our ears—all these things led the mind to brood over strange thoughts, and, lifting it from every-day life, caused it to be familiar with the unreal. A sort of spell surrounded us, and each day, as the voyagers did not return, we grew restless and disquieted, and yet, strange to say, we were not fearful of the most apparent danger.

The spell snapped, it was all over; an interval of agonising doubt—of days passed in miserable journeys to gain tidings, of hopes that took firmer root, even as they were more baseless—were changed to the certainty of the death that eclipsed all happiness for the survivors for evermore.

There was something in our fate peculiarly harrowing. The remains of those we lost were cast on shore; but by the quarantine laws of the coast, we were not permitted to have possession of them—the laws, with respect to everything cast on land by the sea, being, that such should be burned, to prevent the possibility of any remnant bringing the plague into Italy; and no representation could alter the law. At length, through the kind and unwearied exertions of Mr. Dawkins, our Chargé d'Affaires at Florence, we gained permission to receive the ashes after the bodies were consumed. Nothing could equal the zeal of Trelawny in carrying our wishes into effect. He was indefatigable in his exertions, and full of forethought and sagacity in his arrangements. It was a fearful task: he stood before us at last his hands scorched and blistered by the flames of the funeral pyre, and by touching the burnt relics...
as he placed them in the receptacles prepared for the purpose. And there, in compass of that small case, was gathered all that remained on earth of him whose genius and virtue were a crown of glory to the world — whose love had been the source of happiness, peace, and good, — to be buried with him!

The concluding stanzas of the Adonais pointed out where the remains ought to be deposited; in addition to which our beloved child lay buried in the cemetery at Rome. Thither Shelley's ashes were conveyed, and they rest beneath one of the antique weed-grown towers that recur at intervals in the circuit of the massy ancient wall of Rome. The vignette of the title page, is taken from a sketch made on the spot by Captain Roberts. He selected the hallowed place himself; there is the Sepulchre,

O, not of him, but of our joy!

And grey walls moulder round, on which Time Feeds like slow fire upon a hoary brand; And one keen pyramid, with wedge sublime, Pavilionsing the dust of him who planned This refuge for his memory, doth stand Like flame transformed to marble; and beneath A field is spread, on which a newer band Have pitched in Heaven’s smile their camp of death, Welcoming him we lose with scarce extinguished breath.

Could sorrow for the lost, and shuddering anguish at the vacancy left behind, be soothed by poetic imaginations, there was something in Shelley’s fate to mitigate pangs, which yet alas! could not be so mitigated; for hard reality brings too miserably home to the mourner, all that is lost of happiness, all of lonely unsolaced struggle that remains. Still though dreams and hues of poetry cannot blunt grief, it invests his fate with a sublime fitness, which those less nearly allied may regard with complacency. A year before, he had poured into verse all such ideas about death as give it a glory of its own. He had, as it now seems, almost anticipated his own destiny; and when the mind figures his skiff wrapped from sight by the thunderstorm, as it was last seen upon the purple sea; and then, as the cloud of the tempest passed away, no sign remained of where it had been — who but will regard as a prophecy the last stanza of the “Adonais!”

The breath, whose might I have invoked in song,
Descends on me; my spirit’s hark is driven,
Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng,
Whose sails were never to the tempest given;
The massy earth and spher’d skies are riven!
I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar;
Whilst burning through the inmost vell of Heaven,
The soul of Adonais, like a star,
Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are.

* Captain Roberts watched the vessel with his glass from the top of the light-house of Leghorn, on its homeward track. They were off Via Leggelo, at some distance from shore, when a storm was driven over the sea. It enveloped them and several larger vessels in darkness. When the cloud passed onward, Roberts looked again, and saw every other vessel sailing on the ocean except their little schooner, which had vanished. From that time he could scarcely doubt the fatal truth; yet we fancied that they might have been driven towards Elba, or Corsica, and so be saved. The observation made as to the spot where the boat disappeared, caused it to be found, through the exertions of Trelawny, for that effect. It had gone down in ten fathom water; it had not capsized, and, except such things as had floated from her, everything was found on board exactly as it had been placed when they sailed. The boat itself was uninjured. Roberts possessed himself of her, and decked her, but she proved not sea-worthy, and her shattered planks now lie rotting on the shore of one of the Ionian islands, on which she was wrecked.

Putney, May 1st, 1839.
PREFACE

TO THE VOLUME OF POSTHUMOUS POEMS,

PUBLISHED IN 1821.

In nobili tongo, vita umile e queta,
Ed in alto intelletto un puro core;
Fruttesenile in suol gloventi flore,
E in aspetto pensoso, anima lieta—PETRANCA.

It had been my wish, on presenting the public with the Posthumous Poems of Shelley, to have accompanied them by a biographical notice: as it appeared to me, that at this moment a narration of the events of my husband's life would come more gracefully from other hands than mine, I applied to Leigh Hunt. The distinguished friendship that Shelley felt for him, and the enthusiastic affection with which Leigh Hunt clings to his friend's memory, seemed to point him out as the person best calculated for such an undertaking. His absence from this country, which prevented our mutual explanation, has unfortunately rendered my scheme abortive. I do not doubt but that on some other occasion he will pay this tribute to his lost friend, and sincerely regret that the volume which I edit has not been honoured by its insertion.

The comparative solitude in which Shelley lived, was the occasion that he was personally known to few; and his fearless enthusiasm in the cause which he considered the most sacred upon earth, the improvement of the moral and physical state of mankind, was the chief reason why he, like other illustrious reformers, was pursued by hatred and calumny. No man was ever more devoted than he, to the endeavour of making those around him happy; no man ever possessed friends more unforgivably attached to him. The ungrateful world did not feel his loss, and the gap it made seemed to close as quickly over his memory as the murderous sea above his living frame. Heretofore men will lament that his transcendent powers of intellect were extinguished before they had bestowed on them their choicest treasures. To his friends his loss is irremissible: the wise, the brave, the gentle, is gone for ever! He is to them as a bright vision, whose radiant track, left behind in the memory, is worth all the realities that society can afford. Before the critics contradict me, let them appeal to any one who had ever known him: to see him was to love him; and his presence, like Ithuriel's spear, was alone sufficient to disclose the falsehood of the tale which his enemies whispered in the ear of the ignorant world.

His life was spent in the contemplation of nature, in arduous study, or in acts of kindness and affection. He was an elegant scholar and a profound metaphysician: without possessing much scientific knowledge, he was unrivalled in the justness and extent of his observations on natural objects; he knew every plant by its name, and was familiar with the history and habits of every production of the earth; he could interpret without a fault each appearance in the sky, and the varied phenomena of heaven and earth filled him with deep emotion. He made his study and reading-room of the shadowed copse, the stream, the lake, and the waterfall. Ill health and continual pain preyed upon his powers; and the solitude in which we lived, particularly on our first arrival in Italy, although congenial to his feelings, must frequently have weighed upon his spirits; those beautiful and affecting "Lines, written in dejection at Naples," were composed at such an interval; but when in health, his spirits were buoyant and youthful to an extraordinary degree.

Such was his love for nature, that every page of his poetry is associated in the minds of his friends with the loveliest scenes of the countries which he inhabited. In early life he visited the most beautiful parts of this country and Ireland. Afterwards the Alps of Switzerland became his inspirers. "Prometheus Unbound" was written among the deserted and flower-grown ruins of Rome; and when he made his home under the Pisan hills, their roofless recesses harboured him as he composed "The Witch of Atlas," "Adonais," and "Hellas." In the wild but beautiful Bay of Spezia, the winds and waves which he loved became his play-
mates. His days were chiefly spent on the water; the management of his boat, its alterations and improvements, were his principal occupation. At night, when the unclouded moon shone on the calm sea, he often went alone in his little shallop to the rocky caves that bordered it, and sitting beneath their shelter wrote "The Triumph of Life," the last of his productions. The beauty but strangeness of this lonely place, the refined pleasure which he felt in the companionship of a few selected friends, our entire sequestration from the rest of the world, all contributed to render this period of his life one of continued enjoyment. I am convinced that the two months we passed there were the happiest which he had ever known: his health even rapidly improved, and he was never better than when I last saw him, full of spirits and joy, embark for Leghorn, that he might there welcome Leigh Hunt to Italy. I was to have accompanied him, but illness confined me to my room, and thus put the seal on my misfortune. His vessel bore out of sight with a favourable wind, and I remained awaiting his return by the breakers of that sea which was about to engulf him.

He spent a week at Pisa, employed in kind offices toward his friends, and enjoying with keen delight the renewal of their intercourse. He then embarked with Williams, the chosen and beloved sharer of his pleasures and of his fate, to return to us. We waited for them in vain; the sea by its restless moaning seemed to desire to inform us of what we would not learn: — but a veil may well be drawn over such misery. The real anguish of those moments transcended all the fictions that the most glowing imagination ever portrayed: our seclusion, the savage nature of the inhabitants of the surrounding villages, and our immediate vicinity to the troubled sea, combined to imbue with strange horror our days of uncertainty. The truth was at last known,—a truth that made our loved and lovely Italy appear a tomb, its sky a pall. Every heart echoed the deep lament, and my only consolation was in the praise and earnest love that each voice bestowed and each countenance demon-
TRANSLATIONS.
TRANSLATIONS.

HYMNS OF HOMER.

HYMN TO MERCURY.

I. Sine, Muse, the son of Maia and of Jove,
The Herald-child, king of Arcadia
And all its pastoral hills, whom in sweet love
Having been interwoven, modest May
Bore Heaven's dread Supreme—an antique grove
Shadowed the cavern where the lovers lay
In the deep night, unseen by Gods or Men,
And white-armed Juno slumbered sweetly then.

II. Now, when the joy of Jove had its fulfilling,
And Heaven's tenth moon chronicled her relief,
She gave to light a babe all babes excelling,
A schemer subtle beyond all belief;
A shepherd of thin dreams, a cow-stealing,
A night-watching, and door-way laying thief,
Who 'mongst the Gods was soon about to thieve,
And other glorious actions to achieve.

III. The babe was born at the first peep of day;
He began playing on the lyre at noon,
And the same evening did he steal away
Apollo's herds;—the fourth day of the moon
On which him bore the venerable May,
From her immortal limbs he leaped full soon,
Nor long could in the sacred cradle keep,
But out to seek Apollo's herds would creep.

IV. Out of the lofty cavern wandering
He found a tortoise, and cried out—"A treasure!"
(For Mercury first made the tortoise sing)
The beast before the portal at his leisure
The flowery herbage was depasturing,
Moving his feet in a deliberate measure
Over the turf. Jove's profitable son
Eyeing him laughed, and laughing thus begun:

V. "A useful god-send are you to me now,
King of the dance, companion of the feast,
Lovely in all your nature! Welcome, you [beast,
Excellent plaything! Where, sweet mountain
Got you that speckled shell? Thus much I know,
You must come home with me and be my guest;
You will give joy to me, and I will do
All that is in my power to honour you.

VI. "Better to be at home than out of door;
So come with me, and though it has been said
That you alive defend from magic power,
I know you will sing sweetly when you're dead."
Thus having spoken, the quaint infant bore,
Lifting it from the grass on which it fed,
And grasping it in his delighted hold,
His treasured prize into the cavern old.

VII. Then scooping with a chisel of grey steel,
He bored the life and soul out of the beast—
Not swifter a swift thought of woe or weal
Darts through the tumult of a human breast
Which thronging cares annoy—not swifter wheel
The flashes of its torture and unrest
Out of the dizzy eyes—than Maia's son
All that he did devise hath feathly done.

VIII. And through the tortoise's hard strong skin
At proper distances small holes he made,
And fastened the cut stems of reeds within,
And with a piece of leather overlaid
The open space and fixed the cubits in,
Fitting the bridge to both, and stretched o'er all
Symphonic cords of sheep-gut rhythmical.
When he had wrought the lovely instrument, 
He tried the chords, and made division meet 
Preluding with the plectrum, and there went 
Up from beneath his hand a tumult sweet 
Of mighty sounds, and from his lips he sent 
A strain of unpremeditated wit 
Joyous and wild and wanton—such you may 
Hear among revellers on a holiday.

So saying, Hermes roused the oxen vast; 
O'er shadowy mountain and resounding dell, 
And flower-paven plains, great Hermes past; 
Till the black night divine, which favouring fill 
Around his steps, grew grey, and morning fast 
Wakened the world to work, and from her cell, 
Sea-strewed, the Pallantean Moon sublime 
Into her watch-tower just began to climb.

He sung how Jove and May of the bright sandal 
Dallied in love not quite legitimate; 
And his own birth, still scoffing at the scandal, 
And naming his own name, did celebrate; 
His mother's cave and servant maids he planned all 
In plastic verse, her household stuff and state, 
Perennial pot, trippet, and brazen pan— 
But singing he conceived another plan.

Seized with a sudden fancy for fresh meat, 
He in his sacred crib deposited 
The hollow lyre, and from the cavern sweet 
Rushed with great leaps up to the mountain's head, 
Revolving in his mind some subtle feat 
Of thievish craft, such as a swindler might 
Devise in the lone season of dun night.

Lo! the great Sun under the ocean's bed has 
Driven steeds and chariot—the child meanwhile strode 
O'er the Pierian mountains clothed in shadows, 
Where the immortal oxen of the God 
Are pastured in the flowering unmown meadows, 
And safely stalled in a remote abode— 
The archer Argicid, elate and proud, 
Drove fifty from the herd, lowing aloud.

He drove them wandering o'er the sandy way, 
But, being ever mindful of his craft, 
Backward and forward drove them astray, 
So that the tracks, which seemed before, were aft: 
His sandals then he threw to the ocean spray, 
And for each foot he wrought a kind of raft 
Of tamarisk, and tamarisk-like sprigs. 
And bound them in a lump with withy twigs.

And on his feet he tied these sandals light, 
The trail of whose wide leaves might not betray 
His track; and then, a self-sufficing wight, 
Like a man hastening on some distant way, 
He from Pieria's mountain bent his flight; 
But an old man perceived the infant pass 
Down green Onchestus, heaped like beds with grass.

The old man stood dressing his sunny vine: 
"Halloo! old fellow with the crooked shoulder! 
You grub those stumps! Before they will bear wine 
Methinks even you must grow a little older: 
Attend, I pray, to this advice of mine, 
As you would escape what might appal a bolder— 
Seeing, see not—and hearing, hear not—and— 
If you have understanding—understand."

We mortals let an ox grow old, and then 
Cut it up after long consideration,— 
But joyous-minded Hermes from the glen 
Drew the fat spoils to the more open station 
Of a flat smooth space, and portioned then; 
He had by lot assigned to each a ration 
Of the twelve Gods, his mind became aware 
Of all the joys which in religion are.

For the sweet savour of the roasted meat 
Tempted him, though immortal. Nathemese 
He checked his haughty will and did not eat, 
Though what it cost him words can scarce express, 
And every wish to put such morsels sweet 
Down his most sacred throat, he did repress; 
But soon within the lofty portalled stall 
He placed the fat and flesh and bones and all.
HYMN TO MERCURY.

And every trace of the fresh butchery
And cooking, the God soon made disappear,
As if it all had vanished through the sky;
He burned the hoofs and horns and head and
The insatiate fire devoured them hungrily;—
And when he saw that everything was clear,
He quenched the coals and trampled the black dust,
And in the stream his bloody sandals tossed.

Right through the temple of the spacious cave
He went with soft-light feet—as if his tread
Fell not on earth; no sound their falling gave;
Then to his cradle he crept quick,and spread
The swaddling-clothes about him; and the knave
Lay playing with the covering of the bed,
With his left hand about his knees—the right
Held his beloved tortoise-lyretight.

There he lay innocent as a new-born child,
As gossips say; but, though he was a god,
The goddess, his fair mother, unbeguiled
Knew all that he had done, being abroad;
"Whence come you, and from what adventure wild,
You cunning rogue, and where have you abode
All the long night, clothed in your impudence?
What have you done since you departed hence?
Apollo soon will pass within this gate,
And bind your tender body in a chain
Inextricably tight, and fast as fate,
Unless you can delude the God again,
Even when within his arms—ah, runagate!
"A pretty torment both for gods and men
Your lather made when he made you!"— "Dear
mother,"
Replied sly Hermes, "wherefore scold and bother?
"As if I were like other babes as old,
And understood nothing of what is what;
And cared at all to hear my mother scold.
I in my subtle brain a scheme have got, [rolled,
Which, whilst the sacred stars round Heaven are
Will profit you and me—nor shall our lot
Be as you counsel, without gifts or food,
To spend our lives in this obscure abode.

But we will leave this shadow-peopled cave,
And live among the Gods, and pass each day
In high communion, sharing what they have
Of profuse wealth and unexhausted prey
And, from the portion which my father gave
To Phoebus, I will snatch my share away,
Which if my father will not—natelesse I,
Who am the king of robbers, can but try.

"And, if Latona's son should find me out,
I'll countermine him by a deeper plan;
I'll pierce the Pythian temple-walls, though stout,
And sack the fane of everything I can—
Caldrons and tripods of great worth no doubt,
Each golden cup and polished brazen pan,
All the wrought tapestries and garments gay."—
So they together talked;—meanwhile the Day
Ethereal born, arose out of the flood
Of flowing Ocean, bearing light to men.
Apollo past toward the sacred wood,
Which from the inmost depths of its green glen
Echoes the voice of Neptune,—and there stood
That same old animal, the vine-dresser,
Who was employed hedging his vineyard there.

Latona's glorious Son began—"I pray
Tell, ancient hedger of Onchestus green,
Whether a drove of kine has past this way,
All heifers with crooked horns? for they have been
Stolen from the herd in high Pieria,
Where a black bull was fed apart, between
Two woody mountains in a neighbouring glen,
And four fierce dogs watched there, unanimous as men.

"And, what is strange, the author of this theft
Has stolen the fatted heifers every one,
But the four dogs and the black bull are left:—
Stolen they were last night at set of sun,
Of their soft beds and their sweet food bereft—
Now tell me, man born ere the world begun,
Have you seen any one pass with the cows?"—
To whom the man of overhanging brows,—
"My friend, it would require no common skill
Justly to speak of everything I see;
On various purposes of good or ill
Many pass by my vineyard,—and to me
'Tis difficult to know the invisible
Thoughts, which in all those many minds may
Thus much alone I certainly can say,—[be:—
I tilled these vines till the decline of day,

Apollo, hearing this, passed quickly on—
No winged omen could have shown more clear
That the deceiver was his father's son.
So the God wraps a purple atmosphere
Around his shoulders, and like fire is gone
To famous Pylos, seeking his kine there,
And found their track and his, yet hardly cold,
And cried—"What wonder do mine eyes behold!
Here are the footsteps of the horned herd
Turned back towards their fields of asphodel;—
But these! are not the tracks of beast or bird,
Grey wolf, or bear, or lion of the dell,
Or maimed Centaur—sand was never stirred
By man or woman thus! Inexplicable!
Who with unwearied feet could e'er impress
The sand with such enormous vestiges?

That was most strange—but this is stranger still!
Thus having said, Phoebus impetuously
Sought high Cyllene's forest-cinctured hill,
And the deep cavern where dark shadows lie,
And where the ambrosial nymph with happy will
Bore the Saturnian's love-child, Mercury—
And a delighted odour from the dew
Of the hill pastures, at his coming, flew.

And Phoebus stooped under the craggy roof
Arched over the dark cavern:— Maia's child
Perceived that he came angry, far aloof,
About the cows of which he had been beguiled,
And over him the fine and fragrant woof
Of his ambrosial swaddling-clothes he piled—
As among firebrands lies a burning spark
Covered, beneath the ashes cold and dark.

There, like an infant who had sucked his fill,
And now was newly washed and put to bed,
Awake, but courting sleep with weary will
And gathered in a lump, hands, feet, and head,
He lay, and his beloved tortoise still
He grasped and held under his shoulder-blade;
Phoebus the lovely mountain goddess knew,
Not less her subtle, swindling baby, who
Lay swathed in his sly wiles. Round every crook
Of the ample cavern, for his kine Apollo
Looked sharp; and when he saw them not, he took
The glittering key, and opened three great hollow
Recesses in the rock— where many a nook
Was filled with the sweet food immortalsswallow,
And mighty heaps of silver and of gold
Were piled within— a wonder to behold!

And white and silver robes, all overwrought
With cunning workmanship of tracery sweet—
Except among the Gods there can be naught
In the wide world to be compared with it,
Latona's offspring, after having sought
His herds in every corner, thus did greet
Great Hermes:— "Little cradled rogue, declare,
Of my illustrious heifers, where they are !

Speak quickly! or a quarrel between us
Must rise, and the event will be, that I
Shall haul you into dismal Tartarus,
In fiery gloom to dwell eternally!
Nor shall your father nor your mother loose
The bars of that black dungeon—utterly
You shall be cast out from the light of day,
To rule the ghosts of men, unblest as they.

To whom thus Hermes slyly answered:— "Screech
Of great Latona, what a speech is this!
Why come you here to ask me what is done
With the wild oxen which it seems you use!
I have not seen them, nor from any one
Have heard a word of the whole business;
If you should promise an immense reward,
I could not tell more than you now have heard.

An ox-stealer should be both tall and strong,
And I am but a little new-born thing,
Who, yet at least, can think of nothing more:
My business is to suck, and sleep, and sing
The cradle-clothes about me all day long—
Or, half asleep, hear my sweet mother sing,
And to be washed in water clean and warm,
And hushed and kissed and kept secure from harm.

Oh, let not e'er this quarrel be averred!
The astounded Gods would laugh at you, if
You should allege a story so absurd,
As that a new-born infant forth could far
Out of his home after a savage herd.
I was born yesterday— my small feet are
Too tender for the roads so hard and rough—
And if you think that this is not enough,
I swear a great oath, by my father's shape
That I stolenot your cows, and that I k'ro
Of no one else who might, or could, or did—
Whatever things cows are I do not know,
For I have only heard the name."— This said,
He winked as fast as could be, and his brow
Was wrinkled, and a whistle loud gave he,
Like one who hears some strange absurdity.

Apollo gently smiled and said:— "Aye, aye—
You cunning little rascal, you will bore
Many a rich man's house, and your array
Of thieves will lay their siege before his door:
Silent as night, in night; and many a day
In the wild glens rough shepherds will deplore
That you or yours, having an appetite,
Met with their cattle, comrade of the night,'

And this among the Gods shall be your gift—
To be considered as the lord of those
Who swindle, house-break, sheep-steal, and spy—
But now if you would not your last sleep lose,
Crawl out!"— Thus saying, Phoebus did split
The subtle infant in his swaddling-clothes,
And in his arms, according to his wont,
A scheme devised the illustrious Argiphont.

"Speak quickly! or a quarrel between us
Must rise, and the event will be, that I
Shall haul you into dismal Tartarus,
In fiery gloom to dwell eternally!
Nor shall your father nor your mother loose
The bars of that black dungeon—utterly
You shall be cast out from the light of day,
To rule the ghosts of men, unblest as they."

And sneezed and shuddered— Phoebus on the eve
Him threw, and whilst all that he had despoiled
He performed—eager though to pass,
Apollo darted from his mighty mind
Towards the subtle babe the following song:
'Do not imagine this will get you off,
HYMN TO MERCURY.

LII. "You little swaddled child of Jove and May!"
And seized him:—"By this omen I shall trace
My noble herds, and you shall lead the way."—
Cyllenian Hermes from the grassy place,
Like one in earnest haste to get away,
Rose, and with hands lifted towards his face,
Round both his ears up from his shoulders drew
His swaddling clothes, and—"What mean you to do
With me, you unkind God?"—said Mercury:
"Is it about these cows you tease me so?
I wish the race of cows were perished!—I
Stole not your cows—I do not even know
What things cows are. Alas! I well may sigh,
That, since I came into this world of woe,
I should have ever heard the name of one—but I appeal to the Saturnian's throne."

LIII. Thus Phoebus and the vagrant Mercury
Talked without coming to an explanation,
With adverse purpose. As for Phoebus, he
Sought not revenge, but only information,
And Hermes tried with lies and roguery
To cheat Apollo.—But when no evasion
Served—for the cunning one his match had found—
He paced on first over the sandy ground.
He of the Silver Bow, the child of Jove,
Followed behind, till to their heavenly Sire
Came both his children—beautiful as Love,
And from his equal balance did require
A judgment in the cause wherein they strove.
O'er odorous Olympus and its snows
A murmuring tumult as they came arose,—
And from the folded depths of the great Hill,
While Hermes and Apollo reverent stood
Before Jove's throne, the indestructible
Immortals rushed in mighty multitude;
And, whilst their seats in order due they fill,
The lofty Thunderer in a careless mood
To Phoebus said:—"Whence drive you this sweet
This herald-baby, born but yesterday?—
A most important subject, triffer, this
to lay before the Gods!"—"Nay, father, nay,
When you have understood the business,
Say not that I alone am fond of prey.
I found this little boy in a recess
Under Cyllene's mountains far away—
A manifest and most apparent thief,
A scandal-monger beyond all belief.
I never saw his like either in heaven
Or upon earth for knavery or craft:—
Out of the field my cattle yester-even,
By the low shore on which the loud sea laughed,
He right down to the river-ford had driven;
And mere astonishment would make you daft
To see the double kind of footsteps strange
He has impressed wherever he did range.
"I swear by these most gloriously-wrought portals—
(It is, you will allow, an oath of might)
Through which the multitude of the Immortals
Pass and repass for ever, day and night,
Devising schemes for the affairs of mortals—
That I am guiltless; and I will requite,
Although mine enemy be great and strong,
His cruel threat—do thou defend the young!"

So speaking, the Cyllenian Argipheus—
Winked, as if now his adversary was fitted:—
And Jupiter, according to his wont,
Laughed heartily to hear the subtle-witted
Infant give such a plausible account,
And every word a lie. But he remitted
Judgment at present—and his exhortation
Was, to compose the affair by arbitration.

And they by mighty Jupiter were hidden
To go forth with a single purpose both,
Neither the other chiding nor yet chidden:
To lead the way, and show where he had hidden
The mighty heifers.—Hermes, nothing loth,
Obeyed the Jegis-bearer's will—for he
Is able to persuade all easily.

These lovely children of Heaven's highest Lord
Hastened to Pylos and the pastures wide
And lofty stalls by the Alphean ford,
Where wealth in the mute night is multiplied
With silent growth. Whilst Hermes drove the herd
Out of the stony cavern, Phoebus spied
The hides of those the little babe had slain,
Stretched on the precipice above the plain.

"How was it possible," then Phoebus said,
"That you, a little child, born yesterday,
A thing on mother's milk and kisses fed,
Could two prodigious heifers ever slay?
E'en I myself may well hereafter dread
Your prowess, offspring of Cyllenian May,
When you grow strong and tall."— He spoke, and
Stiff with bands the infant's wrists around,
He might as well have bound the oxen wild;
The withy bands, though sturdily interknit,
Fell at the feet of the immortal child,
Loosened by some device of his quick wit.

Phoebus perceived himself again beguiled,
And stared—while Hermes sought some hole or
Looking askance and winking fast as thought,
Subduing the strong Latonian, by the might
Of winning music, to his mightier will;
His left hand held the lyre, and in his right
The plectrum struck the chord—unconquerable
Up from beneath his hand in circling flight
The gathering music rose—and sweet as Love
The penetrating notes did live and move
Within the heart of great Apollo—
Listened with all his soul, and laughed for pleasure.
Close to his side stood harping fearlessly
The unshaken lyre, and to the measure
Of the sweet lyre, there followed loud and free
His joyous voice; for he unlocked the treasure
Of his deep song, illustrating the birth
Of the bright Gods and the dark desert Earth:

And how to the Immortals every one
A portion was assigned of all that is;
But chief Mnemosyne did Maia's son
Clothe in the light of his loud melodies;
And, as each God was born or had begun,
He in their order due and fit degrees
Sung of his birth and being—and did move
Apollo to unutterable love.

These words were winged with his swift delight:
"You heifer-stealing schemer, well do you
Deserve that fifty oxen should requite
Such minstrelcies as I have heard even now.
Comrade of feasts, little contriving wight,
One of your secrets I would gladly know,
Whether the glorious power you now show forth
Was folded up within you at your birth,
Or whether mortal taught or God inspired
The power of unmeditated song!
Many divinest sounds have I admired
The Olympian Gods and mortal men among;
But such a strain of wondrous, strange, untired
And soul-awakening music, sweet and strong,
Yet did I never hear except from thee,
Offspring of May, impostor Mercury!

What Muse, what skill, what unimagined use,
What exercise of sublimest art, has given
Thy songs such power—forthose who hear may
From three, the choicest of the gifts of Heaven,
Delight, and love, and sleep, sweet sleep, whose dews
Are sweeter than the balmy tears of even:
And I, who speak this praise, am that Apollo
Whom the Olympian Muses ever follow:

And their delight is dance, and the blithe noise
Of song and everlasting poesy;
And sweet, even as desire, the liquid voice
Of pipes, that fills the clear air thrillingly;
But never did my inmost soul rejoice
In this dear work of youthful revelry,
As now I wonder at thee, son of Jove;
Thy harpings and thy song are soft as love.

Now since thou hast, although so very small,
And let this cornel javelin, keen and tall,
Witness between us what I promise here,—
That I will lead thee to the Olympian Hall,
Honoured and mighty, with thy mother dear,
And many glorious gifts in joy will give thee,
And even at the end will ne'er deceive thee."
HYMN TO MERCURY.

LXXII.

To whom thus Mercury with prudent speech:
Wisely hast thou inquired of my skill:
I envy thee no thing I know to teach
Even this day:— for both in word and will
I would be gentle with thee; thou canst reach
All things in thy wise spirit, and thy soul
Is highest in heaven among the sons of Jove,
Who loves thee in the fulness of his love.

LXXIII.

"The Counsellor Supreme has given to thee
Divinest gifts, out of the amplitude
Of his profuse exhaustless treasury;
By thee, 'tis said, the depths are understood
Of his far voice; by thee the mystery
Of all oracular fates,—and the dread mood
Of the diviner is breathed up, even I—
A child—perceive thy might and majesty—

Thou canst seek out and compass all that wit
Can find or teach;—yet since thou wilt, come, take
The lyre—be mine the glory giving it—
Strike the sweet chords, and sing aloud, and wake
Thy joyous pleasure out of many a fit
Of tranced sound—and with fleet fingers make
Thy liquid-voiced comrade talk with thee,—
I can talk measured music eloquently.

LXXIV.

"Then bear it boldly to the revel loud,
Love-wakening dance, or feast of solemn state,
A joy by night or day— for those endowed
It teaches, babbling in delightful mood,
All things which make the spirit most elate,
Soothing the mind with sweet familiar play,
Chasing the heavy shadows of dismay.

"To those who are unskilled in its sweet tongue,
Though they should question most impetuously
It hidden soul, it gossips something wrong,—
Some senseless and impertinent reply
But thou who art as wise as thou art strong,
Can'st compass all that thou desirest. I
Present thee with this music-flowing shell,
Knowing thou canst interrogate it well.

LXXV.

"And let us two henceforth together feed
On this green mountain slope and pastoral plain,
The herds in litigation— they will breed
Quickly enough to recompense our pain,
If to the bulls and cows we take good heed;—
And thou, though somewhat overfond of gain,
Grudge me not half the profit."— Having spoke,
The shell he proffered, and Apollo took.

And gave him in return the glittering lash,
Installing him as herdsman;— from the look
Of Mercury then laughed a joyous flash;
And then Apollo with the plectrum strook
The chords, and from beneath his hands a crash
Of mighty sounds rushed up, whose music shook
The soul with sweetness, and like an adept
His sweeter voice a just accordance kept.
TRANSLATIONS.

XCVI.
"Him will I not deceive, but will assist;
But he who comes relying on such birds
As chatter vainly, who would strain and twist
The purpose of the Gods with idle words,
And deems their knowledge light, he shall have mist
His road— whilst I among my other hoards
His gifts deposit. Yet, O son of May,
I have another wondrous thing to say:

There are three Fates, three virgin Sisters, who,
Rejoicing in their wind-outspeeding wings,
Their heads with flour snowed over white and new,
Sit in a vale round which Parnassus rings
Its circling skirts—from these I have learned true
Vaticinations of remotest things.
My father cared not. Whilst they search out dooms,
They sit apart and feed on honeycombs.

They, having eaten the fresh honey, grow
Drunk with divine enthusiasm, and utter
With earnest willingness the truth they know;
But, if deprived of that sweet food, they mutter
All plausible delusions;— these to you
I give;— if you enquire, they will not answer.
Delight your own soul with them;— any man
You would instruct may profit if he can.

XCVII.
"Take these and the fierce oxen, Maia's chief—
O'er many a horse and toil enduring mule,
O'er jagged-jawed lions, and the wild
White-tusked boars, o'er all, by field or sea,
Of cattle which the mighty Mother mild
Nourishes in her bosom, thou shalt rule—
Thou dost alone the veil of death uplift—
Thou givest not,—yet this is a great gift."

Thus King Apollo loved the child of May
In truth, and Jove covered them with love;
Hermes with Gods and men even from that day
Mingled, and wrought the latter much wise,
And little profit, going far astray
Through the dun night. Farewell, delightful;
Of Jove and Maia sprung,— never by me,
Nor thou, nor other songs, shall unremember'd.

TO CASTOR AND POLLUX.

Ye wild-eyed Muses, sing the Twins of Jove,
Whom the fair-anelcd Leda mixed in love
With mighty Saturn's heaven-obscuring Child,
On Taygetus, that lofty mountain wild,
Brought forth in joy, mild Pollux void of blame,
And steel-subduing Castor, heirs of fame.
These are the Powers who earth-born mortals save
And ships, whose flight is swift along the wave.
When wintry tempests o'er the savage sea
Are raging, and the sailors tremblingly
Call on the Twins of Jove with prayer and vow,
Gathered in fear upon the lofty prow,
And sacrifice with snow-white lambs, the wind
And the huge billow bursting close behind,
Even then beneath the wailing waters bear
The staggering ship—they suddenly appear,
In yellow wings rushing athwart the sky,
And baffle the blasts in mute tranquillity,
And strew the waves on the white ocean's bed,
Fair omen of the voyage; from toil and dread,
The sailors rest, rejoicing in the sight,
And plough the quiet sea in safe delight.

TO THE MOON.

Daughters of Jove, whose voice is melody,
Muses, who know and rule all minstrelsy!
Sing the wide-winged Moon. Around the earth
From her immortal head in Heaven shot forth
Far light is scattered— boundless glory spread—
Where'er she spreads her many-beaming rays.
The lampless air glows round her golden crown.

But when the Moon divine from Heaven's ey
Under the sea, her beams within abide,
Till, bathed in her bright limbs in Ocean's side,
Clothing her form in garments glittering far,
And having yoked to her immortal car
The beam-invested steeds, whose necks are bent
To a remoter sky
A western Crescent, borne impetuously.
Then is made full the circle of her light,
And as she grows, her beams more bright and bright.
Are poured from Heaven, where she is hoar
A wonder and a sign to mortal men.

The Son of Saturn with this glorious power
Mingled in love and sleep—to whom she bore
Pandeia, a bright maid of beauty rare
Among the Gods, whose lives eternal are.

Hail Queen, great Moon, white-armed Dione!
Fair-haired and favourable, thus with thee
My song beginning, by its music sweet
Shall make immortal many a glorious feat
Of demigods, with lovely lips, so well
Which minstrels, servants of the muse, tell.
Hymns of Homer.

TO THE SUN.

Offspring of Jove, Calliope, once more
To the bright Sun, thy hymn of music pour;
Whom to the child of star-clad Heaven and Earth
Euryphaessa, large-eyed nymph, brought forth;
Euryphaessa, the famed sister fair,
Of great Hyperion, who to him did bear
A race of loveliest children; the young Morn,
Whose arms are like twin roses newly born,
The fair-haired Moon, and the immortal Sun,
Who, borne by heavenly steeds his race doth run
Unconquerably, illumining the abodes
Of mortal men and the eternal gods.

Fiercely look forth his awe-inspiring eyes,
Beneath his golden helmet, whence arise
And are shot forth afar, clear beams of light;
His countenance with radiant glory bright,
Beneath his graceful locks far shines around,
And the light vest with which his limbs are bound,
Of woof ethereal, delicately twined
Glows in the stream of the uplifting wind.

His rapid steeds soon bear him to the west;
Where their steep flight his hands divine arrest,
And the fleet car with yoke of gold, which he
 Sends from bright heaven beneath the shadowy sea.

TO THE EARTH, MOTHER OF ALL.

O universal mother, who dost keep
From everlasting thy foundations deep,
Eldest of things, Great Earth, I sing of thee;
All shapes that have their dwelling in the sea,
All things that fly, or on the ground divine
Live, move, and there are nourished—these are
These from thy wealth thou dost sustain; from thee
Fair babes are born, and fruits on every tree
Hang ripe and large, revered Divinity!

The life of mortal men beneath thy sway
Is held; thy power both gives and takes away!
Happy are they whom thy mild favours nourish,
All things unstinted round them grow and flourish.
For them, endures the life-sustaining field
Its load of harvest, and their cattle yield
Large increase, and their house with wealth is filled.
Such honoured dwell in cities fair and free,
The homes of lovely women, prosperously;
Their sons exult in youth's new budding gladness,
And their fresh daughters free from care or sad-
With bloom-inwoven dance and happy song, [ness,
On the soft flowers the meadow-grass among,
Leap round them sporting—such delights by thee
Are given, rich Power, revered Divinity.

Mother of gods, thou wife of starry Heaven,
Farewell! be thou propitious, and be given
A happy life for this brief melody,
Nor thou nor other songs shall unremembered.

TO MINERVA.

I sing the glorious Power with azure eyes,
Athenian Pallas! tameless, chaste, and wise,
Trilogenia, town-preserving maid,
Revered and mighty; from his awful head
Whom Jove brought forth, in warlike armour drest.
Golden, all radiant! wonder strange possessed
The everlasting Gods that shape to see,
Shaking a javelin keen, impetuously
Rush from the crest of Ægis-bearing Jove;
Fearfully Heaven was shaken, and did move
Beneath the might of the Cerulean-eyed;
Earth dreadfully resounded, far and wide,
And lifted from its depths, the sea swelled high
In purple billows, the tide suddenly
Stood still, and great Hyperion's son long time
Checked his swift steeds, till where she stood sub-
Pallas from her immortal shoulders threw [time,
The arms divine; wise Jove rejoiced to view.
Child of the Ægis-bearer, hail to thee, [be.
Nor thine nor others' praise shall unremembered
THE CYCLOPS;

A Satyric Drama.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK OF EURIPIDES.

SILENUS.

ULYSSES.

CHORUS OF SATYRS.

THE CYCLOPS.

O Bacchus, what a world of toil, both now
And ere these limbs were overworn with age,
Have I endured for thee! First, when thou fled'st
The mountain-nymphs who nursed thee, driven afar
By the strange madness Juno sent upon thee;
Then in the battle of the sons of Earth,
When I stood foot by foot close to thy side,
No unpropitious fellow combatant,
And, driving through his shield my winged spear,
Slew vast Enceladus. Consider now,
Is it a dream of which I speak to thee!
And now I suffer more than all before.
For, when I heard that Juno had devised
A tedious voyage for you, I put to sea
With all my children quaint in search of you,
And I myself stood on the beaked prow
Leaning upon their oars, with splash and strain
Made white with foam the green and purple sea,—
And so we sought you, king. We were sailing
Near Malea, when an eastern wind arose,
And drove us to this wild Ætnian rock;
The one-eyed children of the Ocean God,
The man-destroying Cyclopes inhabit,
On this wild shore, their solitary caves;
And one of these, named Polypheme, has caught us
To be his slaves; and so, for all delight
Of Bacchic sports, sweet dance and melody,
We keep this lawless giant's wandering flocks.
My sons indeed, on far declivities,
Young things themselves, tend on the youngling
But I remain to fill the water casks,
Or sweeping the hard floor, or ministering
Some impious and abominable meal
To the fell Cyclops. I am wearyed of it!
And now I must scrape up the littered floor
With this great iron rake, so to receive
My absent master and his evening sheep

In a cave neat and clean. Even now I see
My children tending the flocks hitherward.
Ha! what is this! are your Sicinnian maids
Even now the same as when with dance and sec;
You brought young Bacchus to Athea's hall!

CHORUS OF SATYRS.

STROPHE.

Where has he of race divine
Wandered in the winding rocks?
Here the air is calm and fine
For the father of the flocks;—
Here the grass is soft and sweet,
And the river-eddies meet
In the trough beside the cave,
Bright as in their fountain wave,—
Neither here, nor on the dew
Of the lawny uplands feeding!
Oh, you come!—a stone at you
Will I throw to mend your breeding;—
Get along, you horned thing,
Wild, seditious, rambling!

EPISODE.

An Iaecid melody
To the golden Aphrodite
Will I lift, as erst did I
Seeking her and her delight
With the Menads, whose white feet
To the music glance and fleet.
Bacchus, O beloved, where,
Shaking wide thy yellow hair,
Wanderest thou alone, afar?
To the one-eyed Cyclopes, we,
Who by right thy servants are,
Minister in misery,
In these wretched goat-skins clad,
Far from thy delights and thee.

The Antistrophes is omitted
THE CYCLOPS.

SILENUS.

Be silent, sons; command the slaves to drive
The gathered flocks into the rock-roofed cave.

CHORUS.

Go! But what needs this serious haste, O father?

SILENUS.

I see a Grecian vessel on the coast,
And thence the rowers, with some general,
Approaching to this cave. About their necks
Hang empty vessels, as they wanted food,
And water-flasks.— O miserable strangers!
Whence come they, that they know not what and who
My master is, approaching in ill hour
The inhospitable roof of Polypheme,
And the Cyclopian jaw-bone, man-destroying!
Be silent, Satyrs, while I ask and hear,
Whence coming, they arrive the Aetnean hill.

ULYSSES.

Friends, can you show me some clear water spring,
The remedy of our thirst! Will any one
Furnish with food seamen in want of it?
Ha! what is this! We seem to be arrived
At the blithe court of Bacchus. I observe
This sportive band of Satyrs near the caves.
First let me greet the elder.— Hail!

SILENUS.

Hail thou, O Stranger! Tell thy country and thy race.

ULYSSES.

The Ithacan Ulysses and the king
Of Cephalonia.

SILENUS.

Oh! I know the man,
Wordy and shrewd, the son of Sisyphus.

ULYSSES.

I am the same, but do not rail upon me.—

SILENUS.

Whence sailing do you come to Sicily?

ULYSSES.

From Ilion, and from the Trojan toils.

SILENUS.

How touched you not at your paternal shore?

ULYSSES.

The strength of tempests bore me here by force.

SILENUS.

The self-same accident occurred to me.

ULYSSES.

Were you then driven here by stress of weather?

SILENUS.

Following the Pirates who had kidnapped Bacchus.

ULYSSES.

What land is this, and who inhabit it?

SILENUS.

Aetna, the loftiest peak in Sicily.

ULYSSES.

And are there walls, and towers surrounded towns?

SILENUS.

There are not.— These lone rocks are bare of men.

ULYSSES.

And who possess the land? the race of beasts?

SILENUS.

Cyclopes, who live in caverns, not in houses

ULYSSES.

Obeying whom? Or is the state popular?

SILENUS.

Shepherds: no one obeys any in aught.

ULYSSES.

How live they? do they sow the corn of Ceres?

SILENUS.

On milk and cheese, and on the flesh of sheep.

ULYSSES.

Have they the Bromian drink from the vine's stream?

SILENUS.

Ah! no; they live in an ungracious land.

ULYSSES.

And are they just to strangers— hospitable?

SILENUS.

They think the sweetest thing a stranger brings,
Is his own flesh.

ULYSSES.

What! do they eat man's flesh?

SILENUS.

No one comes here who is not eaten up.

ULYSSES.

The Cyclopes now— where is he? Not at home?

SILENUS.

Absent on Aetna, hunting with his dogs.

ULYSSES.

Know'st thou what thou must do to aid us hence?

SILENUS.

I know not: we will help you all we can.

ULYSSES.

Provide us food, of which we are in want.

SILENUS.

Here is not anything, as I said, but meat.

ULYSSES.

But meat is a sweet remedy for hunger.

SILENUS.

Cow's milk there is, and store of curdled cheese.

ULYSSES.

But how much gold will you engage to give?

SILENUS.

I bring no gold, but Bacchic juice.

SILENUS. O joy!

'Tis long since these dry lips were wet with wine.
ULYSSES.  
Maron, the son of the God, gave it me.

SILENUS.  
Whom I have nursed a baby in my arms.

ULYSSES.  
The son of Bacchus, for your clearer knowledge.

SILENUS.  
Have you it now!—or is it in the ship?

ULYSSES.  
Old man, this skin contains it, which you see.

SILENUS.  
Why this would hardly be a mouthful for me.

ULYSSES.  
Nay, twice as much as you can draw from thence.

SILENUS.  
You speak of a fair fountain, sweet to me.

ULYSSES.  
Would you first taste of the unmingled wine?

SILENUS.  
'Tis just—tasting invites the purchaser.

ULYSSES.  
Here is the cup, together with the skin.

SILENUS.  
Pour: that the draught may fill up my remembrance.

ULYSSES.  
See!

SILENUS.  
Papaiapec! what a sweet smell it has!

ULYSSES.  
You see it then—

SILENUS.  
By Jove, no! but I smell it.

ULYSSES.  
Taste, that you may not praise it in words only.

SILENUS.  
Babai! Great Bacchus calls me to dance! Joy! joy!

ULYSSES.  
Did it flow sweetly down your throat?

SILENUS.  
So that it tingled to my very nails.

ULYSSES.  
And in addition I will give you gold.

SILENUS.  
Let gold alone! only unlock the cask.

ULYSSES.  
Bring out some cheeses now, or a young goat.

SILENUS.  
That will I do, despising any master.

ULYSSES.  
Ye have taken Troy, and laid your hands on it.

SILENUS.  
And utterly destroyed the race of Priam.

ULYSSES.  
The wanton wretch! She was bewitched;— 
The many-coloured anklets and the chain
Of woven gold which girt the neck of Paris,
And so she left that good man Menelaus.
There should be no more women in the world
But such as are reserved for me alone.—See, here are sheep, and here are goats, Ulysses:—Here are unsparking cheeses of pressed milk;Take them; depart with what good speed ye may,First leaving my reward, the Bacchic dew
Of joy-inspiring grapes.

ULYSSES.  
Ah me! Ah me! What shall we do! the Cyclops is at hand! Old man, we perish! whither can we fly!

SILENUS.  
Hide yourselves quick within that hollow rock.

ULYSSES.  
'Twere perilous to fly into the net.

SILENUS.  
The cavern has recesses numberless; Hide yourselves quick.

ULYSSES.  
That will I never do
The mighty Troy would be indeed disgraced
If I should fly one man. How many times
Have I withstood with shield immoveable, Ten thousand Phrygians!—If I needs must, Yet will I die with glory;—if I live, The praise which I have gained will yet remain.

SILENUS.  
What, ho! assistance, comrades, haste, assistance!

Cyclops.  
What is this tumult? Bacchus is not here, Nor tympanies nor brazen castanets. How are my young lambs in the cavern! Mingle Their dams, or playing by their sides! And
The new cheese pressed into the bull-nose llibasteef Speak! I'll beat some of you till you rain tears—Look up, not downwards, when I speak to ye.

SILENUS.  
See! I now gape at Jupiter himself, I stare upon Orion and the stars.

Cyclops.  
Well, is the dinner fitly cooked and laid!

SILENUS.  
All ready, if your throat is ready too.

Cyclops.  
The bowls full of milk besides! O'erbrimming!
So you may drink a tunful if you will.
THE CYCLOPS.

CYCLOPS.
Is it ewe's milk, or cow's milk, or both mixed!—

SILENUS.
Both, either; only pray don't swallow me.

CYCLOPS.
By no means. —

* * * * *

What is this crowd I see beside the stalls?
Outlaws or thieves? for near my cavern home
I see my young lambs coupled two by two
With willow bands; mixed with my cheeses lie
Their implements; and this old fellow here
Has his bald head broken with stripes.

SILENUS.
Ah me!
I have been beaten till I burn with fever.

CYCLOPS.
Who laid his fist upon your head!

SILENUS.
Those men, because I would not suffer them
To steal your goods.

CYCLOPS.
Did not the rascals know
I am a God, sprung from the race of heaven?

SILENUS.
X told them so, but they bore off your things,
And ate the cheese in spite of all I said,
And carried out the Lambs — and said, moreover,
They'd pin you down with a three-cubit collar,
And pull your vitals out through your one eye.
Torture your back with stripes; then, binding you,
Throw you as ballast into the ship's hold,
And then deliver you, a slave, to move
Enormous rocks, or found a vestibule.

CYCLOPS.
In truth! Nay, haste, and place in order quickly
The cooking knives, and heap upon the hearth,
And kindle it, a great faggot of wood.—
As soon as they are slaughtered, they shall fill
My belly, broiling warm from the live coals,
Or boiled and seethed within the bubbling cauldron.
I am quite sick of the wild mountain game;
Of stags and lions I have gorged enough,
And I grow hungry for the flesh of men.

SILENUS.
II May you perish, wretch—

If I speak false!

SILENUS.
Cyclops, I swear by Neptune who begot thee,
By mighty Triton and by Nereus old,
Calypso and the glaucous ocean Nymphs,
The sacred waves and all the race of fishes—
Be these the witnesses, my dear sweet master,
My darling little Cyclops, that I never
Gave any of your stores to these false strangers.—
If I speak false may those whom most I love,
My children, perish wretchedly!

CHORUS.
There stop!
I saw him giving these things to the strangers.
If I speak false, then may my father perish,
But do not thou wrong hospitality.

CYCLOPS.
You lie! I swear that he is juster far
Than Rhadamanthus—I trust more in him.
But let me ask, whence have ye sailed, O strangers?
Who are you? and what city nourished ye?

ULYSSES.
Our race is Ithacan.—Having destroyed
The town of Troy, the tempests of the sea
Have driven us on thy land, O Polypheme.

CYCLOPS.
What, have ye shared in the unenvied spoil
Of the false Helen, near Scamander's stream?

ULYSSES.
The same, having endured a woeful toil.

CYCLOPS.
O basest expedition! Sailed ye not
From Greece to Phrygia for one woman's sake?

ULYSSES.
'Twas the Gods' work — no mortal was in fault.
But, O great offspring of the Ocean King!
We pray thee and admonish thee with freedom,
That thou dost spare thy friends who visit thee,
And place no impious food within thy jaws.

ULYSSES.
Hear, Cyclops, a plain tale on the other side.
We, wanting to buy food, came from our ship
Into the neighbourhood of your cave, and here
This old Silenus gave us in exchange
These lambs for wine, the which he took and drank,
And all by mutual compact, without force.
There is no word of truth in what he says,
For slily he was selling all your store.

SILENUS.
II! May you perish, wretch—
TRANSLATIONS.

And 'tis a bitter feast that you prepare,
Where then would any turn? Yet be persuaded;
Forego the lust of your jaw-bone; prefer
Pious humanity to wicked will;
Many have bought troo dear their evil joys.

SILENUS.
Let me advise you; do not spare a morsel
Of all his flesh. If you should eat his tongue
You would become most eloquent, 0 Cyclops.

CYCLOPS.
Wealth, my good fellow, is the wise man's God;
All other things are a pretence and boast.
What are my father's ocean promontories,
The sacred rocks whereon he dwells, to me?
Stranger, I laugh to scorn Jove's thunderbolt,
I know not that his strength is more than mine.
As to the rest I care not.—When he pours
Rain from above, I have a close pavilion
Under this rock, in which I lie supine,
Feasting on a roast calf or some wild beast,
And drinking pans of milk, and gloriously
Emulating the thunder of high heaven.
And when the Thracian wind pours down the snow,
I wrap my body in the skins of beasts,
Kindle a fire, and bid the snow whirl on.
The earth by force, whether it will or no,
Bringing forth grass, fattens my flocks and herds,
Which, to what other God but to myself
And this great belly, first of deities,
Should I be bound to sacrifice? I well know
The wise man's only Jupiter is this,
To eat and drink during his little day,
And give himself no care. And as for those
Who complicate with laws the life of man,
I freely give them tears for their reward.
I will not cheat my soul of its delight,
Or hesitate in dining upon you:
And that I may be quit of all demands,
These are my hospitable gifts;— fierce fire
And yon ancestral cauldron, which o'er-bubbling
Shall finely cook your miserable flesh.
Creep in!—

ULYSSES.
Ay, ay! I have escaped the Trojan toils,
I have escaped the sea, and now I fall
Under the cruel grasp of one impious man.
O Pallas, mistress, Goddess, sprung from Jove,
Now, now, assist me! Mightier toils than Troy
Are these;— I totter on the chasms of peril;
And thou who inhabitest the thrones
Of the bright stars, look, hospitable Jove,
Upon this outrage of thy deity,
Otherwise be considered as no God.

CHORUS (alone).
For your gaping gulf and your gullet wide
The ravine is ready on every side;
The limbs of the strangers are cooked and done,
There is boiled meat, and roast meat, and meat
from the coal,
You may chop it, and tear it, and gnash it for fun,
A hairy goat's skin contains the whole,
Let me but escape, and ferry me o'er
The stream of your wrath to a safer shore.

The Cyclops Ætnean is cruel and bold,
He murders the strangers
That sit on his hearth,
And dreads no avengers
To rise from the earth.
He roasts the men before they are cold,
He snatches them broiling from the coal,
And from the cauldron pulls them whole,
And minces their flesh and graws their bone
With his cursed teeth, till all be gone.

Farewell, foul pavilion!
Farewell, rites of dread!
The Cyclops vermillion,
With slaughter unloving,
Now feasts on the dead,
In the flesh of strangers joying!

ULYSSES.
O Jupiter! I saw within the cave
Horrible things; deeds to be feigned in words,
But not believed as being done.

CHORUS.
What! sawest thou the impious Polypheme
Feasting upon your loved companions now?

ULYSSES.
Selecting two, the plumpest of the crowd,
He grasped them in his hands.—

CHORUS.
Unhappy us!

ULYSSES.
Soon as we came into this craggy place,
Kindling a fire, he cast on the broad hearth
The knotty limbs of an enormous oat,
Three waggon-loads at least, and then he strewed
Upon the ground, beside the red fire light,
His couch of pine leaves; and he milked the ewe,
And pouring forth the white milk, filled a basin
Three cubits wide and four in depth, as much
As would contain four amphorae, and bound
With ivy wreaths; then placed upon the fire
A brazen pot to boil, and make red hot
The points of spits, not sharpened with the sickle,
But with a fruit-tree bough, and with the jaws
Of axes for Ætnean slaughters.

And when this God-abandoned cook of hell
Had made all ready, he seized two of us,
And killed them in a kind of measured manner,
For he flung one against the brazen rivets
Of the huge cauldron, and seized the other
By the foot's tendon, and knocked out his brains
Upon the sharp edge of the craggy stone;
Then peeled his flesh with a great cooking knife,
And put him down to roast. The other's limb
He chopped into the cauldron to be boiled.
And I, with the tears raining from my eyes,
Stood near the Cyclops, ministering to him;
The rest, in the recesses of the cave,
Cling to the rock like bats, bloodless with fear.
When he was filled with my companions' flesh,
He threw himself upon the ground, and sent
A loathsome exhalation from his maw.
Then a divine thought came to me. I filled
The cup of Maron, and I offered him

* I confess I do not understand this.—Note of the Author.
THE CYCLOPS.

To taste, and said:— "Child of the Ocean-God, Behold what drink the vines of Greece produce, The exultation and the joy of Bacchus." He, satiated with his unnatural food, Received it, and at one draught drank it off, And, taking my hand, praised me:— "Thou hast given A sweet draught after a sweet meal, dear guest." And I, perceiving that it pleased him, filled Another cup, well knowing that the wine Would wound him soon and take a sure revenge. And the charm fascinated him, and I Plied him cup after cup, until the drink Had warmed his entrails, and he sang aloud In concert with my wailing fellow-seamen A hideous discord—and the cavern rung. I have stolen out, so that if you will You may achieve my safety and your own. But say, do you desire, or not, to fly This uncompanionable man, and dwell, As was your wont, among the Grecian nympha, Within the fanes of your beloved God? Your father there within agrees to it, But he is weak and overcome with wine, And caught as if with birdlime by the cup, He claps his wings and crows in doating joy. You who are young escape with me, and find Bacchus your ancient friend; unsuited he To this rude Cyclops.

CHORUS. O my dearest friend, That I could see that day, and leave for ever The impious Cyclops.

ULYSSES. Listen then what a punishment I have For this fell monster, how secure a flight From your hard servitude.

CHORUS. Oh sweeter far Than is the music of an Asian lyre Would be the news of Polyphemus destroyed.

ULYSSES. Delighted with the Bacchic drink, he goes To call his brother Cyclops—who inhabit A village upon Ætna not far off.

CHORUS. Oh sweeter far Than is the music of an Asian lyre Would be the news of Polyphemus destroyed.

ULYSSES. I understand: catching him when alone, You think by some measure to desparch him, Or thrust him from the precipice.

CHORUS. O no; Nothing of that kind; my device is subtle.

ULYSSES. How then? I heard of old that thou wert wise.

ULYSSES. I will dissuade him from this plan, by saying It were unwise to give the Cyclopes' This precious drink, which if enjoyed alone Would make life sweeter for a longer time. When vanquished by the Bacchic power, he sleeps,

There is a trunk of olive-wood within, Whose point, having made sharp with this good sword, I will conceal in fire, and when I see It is alight, will fix it, burning yet, Within the socket of the Cyclops' eye, And melt it out with fire—as when a man Turns by its handle a great auger round, Fitting the frame-work of a ship with beams, So will I in the Cyclops' fiery eye Turn round the brand, and dry the pupil up.

CHORUS. Joy! I am mad with joy at your device.

ULYSSES. And then with you, my friends, and the old man, We'll load the hollow depth of our black ship, And row with double strokes from this dread shore.

CHORUS. May I, as in libations to a God, Share in the blinding him with the red brand! I would have some communion in his death.

ULYSSES. Doubtless; the brand is a great brand to hold.

CHORUS. Oh! I would lift a hundred waggons-loads, If like a wasp's nest I could scoop the eye out Of the detested Cyclops.

ULYSSES. Silence now! Ye know the closedevice—and when I call, Look ye obey the masters of the craft. I will not save myself and leave behind My comrades in the cave: I might escape, Having got clear from that obscure recess, But twere unjust to leave in jeopardy The dear companions who sailed here with me.

CHORUS. Come! who is first, that with his hand Will urge down the burning brand Through the lids, and quench and pierce The Cyclops' eye so fiery fierce! SEMI-CHORUS I. Song within. Listen! listen! he is coming, A most hideous discord humming, Drunken, museless, awkward, yelling, Far along his rocky dwelling; Let us with some comic spell Teach the yet unteachable. By all means he must be blinded, If my counsel be but minded.

SEMI-CHORUS II. Happy those made odorous With the dew which sweet grapes weep, To the village hastening thus, Seek the vines that soothe to sleep, Having first embraced thy friend, There in luxury without end, With the strings of yellow hair, Of thy voluptuous leman fair, Shalt sit playing on a bed!— Speak, what door is opened!
Ha! ha! ha! I'm full of wine,
Heavy with the joy divine,
With the young feast oversated,
Like a merchant's vessel freighted
To the water's edge, my crop
Is laden to the gullet's top.
The fresh meadow grass of spring
Tempts me forth, thus wandering
To my brothers on the mountains,
Who shall share the wine's sweet fountains.
Bring the cask, O stranger, bring!

CHORUS.
One with eyes the fairest
Cometh from his dwelling;
Some one loveth thee, rarest,
Bright beyond my telling.
In thy grace thou shinest
Like some nymph divinest,
In her caverns dewy;
All delights pursue thee,
Soon pied flowers, sweet-breathing,
Shall thy head be wreathing.

ULYSSES.
Listen, O Cyclops, for I am well skilled
In Bacchus, whom I gave thee oft to drink.

CYCLOPS.
What sort of God is Bacchus then accounted!

ULYSSES.
The greatest among men for joy of life.

CYCLOPS.
I gulp'd him down with very great delight.

ULYSSES.
This is a God who never injures men.

CYCLOPS.
How does the God like living in a skin?

ULYSSES.
He is content wherever he is put.

CYCLOPS.
Gods should not have their body in a skin.

ULYSSES.
If he give joy, what is his skin to you!

CYCLOPS.
I hate the skin, but love the wine within.

ULYSSES.
Stay here; now drink, and make your spirit glad.

CYCLOPS.
Should I not share this liquor with my brothers?

ULYSSES.
Keep it yourself, and be more honoured so.

CYCLOPS.
I were more useful, giving to my friends.

ULYSSES.
But village mirth breeds contests, broils, and blows.

CYCLOPS.
When I am drunk none shall lay hands on me.—

ULYSSES.
A drunken man is better within doors.

CYCLOPS.
He is a fool, who drinking loves not mirth.

ULYSSES.
But he is wise, who drunk, remains at home.

CYCLOPS.
What shall I do, Silenus! Shall I stay?

SILENUS.
Stay—for what need have you of pot companions?

CYCLOPS.
Indeed this place is closely carpeted
With flowers and grass.

SILENUS.
And in the sun-warm noon
'Tis sweet to drink. Lie down beside me now,
Placing your mighty sides upon the ground.

CYCLOPS.
What do you put the cup behind me for?

SILENUS.
That no one here may touch it.

CYCLOPS.
You want to drink;—here place it in the midst.
And thou, O stranger, tell how art thou called?

ULYSSES.
My name is Nobody. What favour now
Shall I receive to praise you at your hands?

CYCLOPS.
I'll feast on you the last of your companions.

ULYSSES.
You grant your guest a fair reward, O Cyclops.

CYCLOPS.
Ha! what is this! Stealing the wine, you rogue!

SILENUS.
It was this stranger kissing me, because
I looked so beautiful.

CYCLOPS.
You shall repent
For kissing the coy wine that loves you not.

SILENUS.
By Jupiter! you said that I am fair.

CYCLOPS.
Pour out, and only give me the cup full.

SILENUS.
How is it mixed? Let me observe.

CYCLOPS.
Thou wily traitor!

SILENUS.
But the wine is sweet.
Aye, you will roar if you are caught in drinking.

CYCLOPS.
See now, my lip is clean and all my beard.
SILENUS.
Now put your elbow right, and drink again.
As you see me drink—*

CYCLOPS.
How now!

SILENUS.
Ye Gods, what a delicious gulp!

CYCLOPS.
Guest, take it—you pour out the wine for me.

ULTYSES.
The wine is well accustomed to my hand.

CYCLOPS.
Pour out the wine!

ULTYSES.
I pour; only be silent.

CYCLOPS.
Silence is a hard task to him who drinks.

ULTYSES.
Take it and drink it off; leave not a dreg.
Oh, that the drinker died with his own draught!

CYCLOPS.
Papa! the vine must be a sapient plant.

ULTYSES.
If you drink much after a mighty feast,
Moistening your thirsty maw, you will sleep well;
If you leave aught, Bacchus will dry you up.

CYCLOPS.
Ho! ho! I can scarce rise. What pure delight!
The heavens and earth appear to whirl about
Confusedly. I see the throne of Jove
And the dear congregation of the Gods.
Now if the Graces tempted me to kiss,
I would not, for the loveliest of them all
I would not leave this Ganymede.

SILENUS.
I am the Ganymede of Jove.

ULTYSES.
As by Jove you are; I bore you off from Dardanus.

ULTYSES and the CHORUS.
ULTYSES.
Come, boys of Bacchus, children of high race,
This man within is folded up in sleep,
And soon will vomit flesh from his fell maw;
The brand under the shed thrusts out its smoke,
No preparation needs, but to burn out
The monster’s eye—but bear yourselves like

ULTYSES.
We will have courage like the saurian rock.
All things are ready for you here; go in,
Before our father shall perceive the noise.

ULTYSES.
Vulcan, Aetnean king! burn out with fire
The shining eye of this thy neighbouring monster!
And thou, O Sleep, bursing of gloomy night,
Descend unmindful on this God-hated beast,
And suffer not Ulysses and his comrades,
Returning from their famous Trojan toils,
To perish by this man, who cares not either
For God or mortal; or I needs must think
That Chance is a supreme divinity,
And things divine are subject to her power.

CHORUS.
Soon a crab the throat will seize
Of him who feeds upon his guest,
Fire will burn his lamp-like eyes
In revenge of such a feast!
A great oak stump now is lying
In the ashes yet undying.
Come, Maron, come!
Raging let him fix the doom,
Let him tear the eyelid up,
Of the Cyclops—that his cup
May be evil!
Oh, I long to dance and revel
With sweet Bryonian, long desired,
In loved ivy-wreaths attired;
Leaving this abandoned home—
Will the moment ever come?

ULTYSES.
Be silent, ye wild things! Nay, hold your peace,
And keep your lips quite close; dare not to breathe,
Or spit, or e’en wink, lest ye wake the monster,
Until his eye be tortured out with fire.

CHORUS.
Nay, we are silent, and we chaw the air.

ULTYSES.
Come now, and lend a hand to the great stake
Within—it is delightfully red hot.

CHORUS.
What, sprained notwithstanding here?
I know nothow.

ULTYSES.
Cowardly dogs! ye will not aid me, then!
"With pitying my own back and my back-bone,
And with not wishing all my teeth knocked out!
This cowardice comes of itself—but stay,
I know a famous Orphic incantation
To make the brand stick of its own accord
Into the skull of this one-eyed son of Earth.

ULTYSES.
Of old I knew ye thus by nature; now
I know ye better—I will use the aid
Of my own comrades—yet though weak of hand
Speak cheerfully, that so ye may awaken
The courage of my friends with your blithe words.

CHORUS.
This I will do with peril of my life,
And blind you with my exhortations, Cyclops.

Hasten and thrust,
And parch up to dust,
The eye of the beast,
Who feeds on his guest.
Burn and blind
The Αἰαῖμα hind!
Scoop and draw,
But beware lest he claw
Your limbs near his maw.

CHORUS.
Ah me! my eye-sight is parched up to cinders.

What a sweet pean! sing me that again!

CHORUS.
Ah me! indeed, what woe has fallen upon me!
But, wretched nothings, think ye not to flee
Out of this rock; I, standing at the outlet,
Will bar the way, and catch you as you pass.

CHORUS.
What are you roaring out, Cyclops?

For you are wicked.

And besides miserable.

What, did you fall into the fire when drunk?

'twas Nobody destroyed me.

Why then no one

Can be to blame.

Who blinded me.

Why then, you are not blind!

I wish you were as blind as I am.

Nay,

It cannot be that no one made you blind.

You jeer me; where, I ask, is Nobody?

No where, O Cyclops.

It was that stranger ruined me:—the wretch
First gave me wine, and then burnt out my eye,
For wine is strong and hard to struggle with,
Have they escaped, or are they yet within?"
SPIRIT OF PLATO.
FROM THE GREEK.

Eagle! why soarsst thou above that tomb!
To what sublime and star-y-paven home
Floatest thou!
I am the image of swift Plato's spirit,
Ascending heaven— Athens does inherit
His corpse below.

FROM THE GREEK.

A man who was about to hang himself,
Finding a purse, then threw away his rope;
The owner coming to reclaim his self,
The halter found and used it. So is Hope
Changed for Despair—one laid upon the shelf,
We take the other. Under heaven's high cope
Fortune is God—all you endure and do
Depends on circumstance as much as you.

FILOSI PLATO.

I
Thou wert the morning Btara among the living,
Ere thy fair light had fled;—
Now, having died, thou art as Hesperus, giving
New splendour to the dead.

TO STELLA.
FROM PLATO.

Pan loved his neighbour Echo—but that child
Of Earth and Air pined for the Satyr leaping;
The Satyr loved with wasting madness wild
The bright nymph Lyda—and so the three went
weeping.
As Pan loved Echo, Echo loved the Satyr;
The Satyr, Lyda—and thus love consumed
them.—
And thus to each—which was a woeful matter—
To bear what they inflicted, justice doomed them;
For, inasmuch as each might hate the lover,
Each, loving, so was hated.— Ye that love not
Be warned—in thought turn this example over,
That, when ye love, the like return ye prove not.

SONNET FROM THE ITALIAN OF DANTE.

DANTE ALIGHIERI TO GUIDO CAVALCANTI.

Guido, I would that Lappo, thou, and I,
Led by some strong enchantment, might ascend
A magic ship, whose charmed sails should fly
With winds at will where'er our thoughts might
So that no change, nor any evil chance,— [wend,
Should mar our joyous voyage; but it might be,
That even satiety should still enhance
Between our hearts their strict community;
And that the bounteous wizard then would place
Vanna and Bice and my gentle love,
Companions of our wandering, and would grace
With passionate talk, wherever we might rove,
Our time, and each were as content and free
As I believe that thou and I should be.
SCENES

FROM

THE "MAGICO PRODIGIOSO" OF CALDERON.

Cyprian as a Student; Clarin and Moscon as poor Scholars, with books.

Cyprian.
In the sweet solitude of this calm place,
This intricate wild wilderness of trees
And flowers and undergrowth of odorous plants,
Leave me; the books you brought out of the house
To me are ever best society.
And whilst with glorious festival and song
Antioch now celebrates the consecration
Of a proud temple to great Jupiter,
And bears his image in loud jubilee
To its new shrine, I would consume what still
Lives of the dying day, in studious thought,
Far from the throng and turmoil. You, my friends,
Go and enjoy the festival; it will
Be worth the labour, and return for me
When the sun seeks its grave among the billows,
Which among dim grey clouds on the horizon
Dance like white plumes upon a hearse;—and here
I shall expect you.

Moscon.
I cannot bring my mind,
Great as my haste to see the festival
Certainly is, to leave you, Sir, without
Just saying some three or four hundred words.
How is it possible that on a day
Of such festivity, you can bring your mind
To come forth to a solitary country
With three or four old books, and turn your back
On all this mirth?

CYPRIAN.
My master's in the right;
There is not anything more tiresome
Than a procession day, with troops of men,
And dances, and all that.

Moscon.
From first to last,
Cardin, you are a temporizing flatterer;
You praise not what you feel, but what he does;—
Toad-eater!

Carpin.
You lie—under a mistake—
For this is the most civil sort of lie
That can be given to a man's face. I now
Say what I think.

CYPRIAN.
Enough, you foolish fellows,
Puffed up with your own doting ignorance,
You always take the two sides of one question.
Now go, and as I said, return for me
When night falls, veiling in its shadows wide
This glorious fabric of the universe.

Moscon.
How happens it, although you can maintain
The folly of enjoying festivals,
That yet you go there?

Carpin.
Nay, the consequence
Is clear:—who ever did what he advises
Others to do?

Moscon.
Would that my feet were wings.
So would I fly to Livia.

Carpin.
Enter the Devil, as a fine Gentleman.

Demom.
Search even as thou wilt,
But thou shalt never find what I can hide.

Carpin.
What noise is that among the boughs! Whom are!
What art thou?

Demom.
'Tis a foreign gentleman.
Even from this morning I have lost my way.
In this wild place, and my poor horse, at last
Quite overcome, has stretched himself upon
The enamelled tapestry of this mossy mountain,
And feeds and rests at the same time. I was
Upon my way to Antioch upon business
Of some importance, but wrapped up in cares
(Who is exempt from this inheritance?)
I parted from my company, and lost
My way, and lost my servants and my comrades.

CYPRIAN.
'Tis singular, that, even within the sight
Of the high towers of Antioch, you could lose
Your way. Of all the avenues and green paths
Of this wild wood there is not one but leads,
As to its centre, to the walls of Antioch;
Take which you will you cannot miss your road.

DEMON.
And such is ignorance! Even in the sight
Of knowledge it can draw no profit from it.
But, as it still is early, and as I
Have no acquaintances in Antioch,
Being a stranger there, I will even wait
The few surviving hours of the day,
Until the night shall conquer it. I see,
Both by your dress and by the books in which
You find delight and company, that you
Are a great student;—for my part, I feel
Much sympathy with such pursuits.

CYPRIAN.
Have you
Studied much?—
DEMON.
No;— and yet I know enough
Not to be wholly ignorant.

CYPRIAN.
Pray, Sir,
What science may you know!—
DEMON.
Many.

CYPRIAN.
Alas!
Much pains must we expend on one alone,
And even then attain it not;—but you
Have the presumption to assert that you
Know many without study.

DEMON.
And with truth.
For, in the country whence I come, sciences
Require no learning,—they are known.

CYPRIAN.
Oh, would
I were of that bright country! for in this
The more we study, we the more discover
Our ignorance.

DEMON.
It is so true, that I
Had so much arrogance to oppose
The chair of the most high Professorship,
And obtained many votes, and though I lost,
The attempt was still more glorious than the failure
Could be dishonourable: if you believe not,

Let us refer it to dispute respecting
That which you know best, and although I
Know not the opinion you maintain, and though
It be the true one, I will take the contrary.

CYPRIAN.
The offer gives me pleasure. I am now
Debating with myself upon a passage
Of Plinius, and my mind is racked with doubt
To understand and know who is the God
Of whom he speaks.

DEMON.
It is a passage, if
I recollect it right, couched in these words:
"God is one supreme goodness, one pure essence,
One substance, and one sense, all sight, all hands."

CYPRIAN.
'Tis true.

DEMON.
What difficulty find you here?

CYPRIAN.
I do not recognize among the Gods
The God defined by Plinius: if he must
Be supreme goodness, even Jupiter
Is not supremely good; because we see
His deeds are evil, and his attributes
Tainted with mortal weakness. In what manner
Can supreme goodness be consistent with
The passions of humanity?

DEMON.
The wisdom
Of the old world masked with the names of Gods
The attributes of Nature and of Man;
A sort of popular philosophy.

CYPRIAN.
This reply will not satisfy me, for
Such awe is due to the high name of God,
That ill should never be imputed. Then,
Examining the question with more care,
It follows, that the gods should always will
That which is best, were they supremely good.
How then does one will one thing—one another?
And you may not say that I allege
Poetical or philosophic learning:—
Consider the ambiguous responses
Of their oracular statues; from two shrines
Two armies shall obtain the assurance of
One victory. Is it not indisputable
That two contending wills can never lead
To the same end! And, being opposite,
If one be good is not the other evil?
Evil in God is inconceivable;
But supreme goodness falls among the gods
Without their union.

DEMON.
I deny your major.
These responses are means towards some end
Unfathomed by our intellectual beam.
They are the work of providence, and more
The battle's loss may profit those who lose,
Than victory advantage those who win.

CYPRIAN.
That I admit, and yet that God should not
(Falsehood is incompatible with deity)
Assure the victory, it would be enough
To have permitted the defeat; if God
Be all sight,—God, who beheld the truth,
Would not have given assurance of an end
Never to be accomplished; thus, although
The Deity may according to his attributes
Be well distinguished into persons, yet,
Even in the minutest circumstance,
His essence must be one.

Dæmon.
To attain the end,
The affections of the actors in the scene
Must have been thus influenced by his voice.

Cyprian.
But for a purpose thus subordinate
He might have employed genii, good or evil,—
A sort of spirits called so by the learned,
Who roam about inspiring good or evil,
And from whose influence and existence we
May well infer our immortality:—
Thus God might easily, without descending
To a gross falsehood in his proper person,
Have moved the affections by this mediation
To the just point.

Dæmon.
These trifling contradictions
Do not suffice to impugn the unity
Of the high gods; in things of great importance
They still appear unanimous; consider
That glorious fabric—man, his workmanship,
Is stamped with one conception.

Cyprian.
Who made man
Must have, methinks, the advantage of the others.
If they are equal, might they not have risen
In opposition to the work, and being
All hands, according to our author here,
Have still destroyed even as the other made!
If equal in their power, and only unequal
In opportunity, which of the two
Will remain conqueror?

Dæmon.
On impossible
And false hypothesis, there can be built
No argument. Say, what do you infer
From this!

Cyprian.
That there must be a mighty God
Of supreme goodness and of highest grace,
All sight, all hands, all truth, infallible,
Without an equal and without a rival;
The cause of all things and the effect of nothing,
One power, one will, one substance, and one essence.
And in whatever persons, one or two,
His attributes may be distinguished, one
Sovereign power, one solitary essence,
One cause of all cause.

Dæmon.
How can I impugn
So clear a consequence?

Cyprian.
Do you regret
My victory!
SCENES FROM CALDERON.

LELIO.

Cyprian,

Although my high respect towards your person
Holds now my sword suspended, thou canst not
Restore it to the slumber of its scabbard.
Thou knowest more of science than the duel;
For when two men of honour take the field,
No counsel nor respect can make them friends,
But one must die in the pursuit.

PLORO.

I pray
That you depart hence with your people,
And leave us to finish what we have begun
Without advantage.

CYPRIAN.

Though you may imagine
That I know little of the laws of duel,
Which vanity and valour instituted,
You are in error. By my birth I am
Held no less than yourselves to know the limits
Of honour and of infamy, nor has study
Quenched the free spirit which first ordered them;
And thus to me, as to one well experienced
In the false quicksands of the sea of honour,
You may refer the merit of the case;
And if I should perceive in your relation
That either has the right to satisfaction
From the other, I give you my word of honour
To leave you.

LELIO.

Under this condition then
I will relate the cause, and you will cede
And must confess the impossibility
Of compromise; for the same lady is
Beloved by Floro and myself.

PLORO.

It seems
Much to me that the light of day should look
Upon that idol of my heart—but he—
Leave us to fight, according to thy word.

CYPRIAN.

Permit one question further: is the lady
Impossible to hope or not?

LELIO.

She is
So excellent, that if the light of day
Should excite Floro’s jealousy, it were
Without just cause, for even the light of day
Troubles to gaze on her.

CYPRIAN.

Would you for your
Part marry her?

FLORO.

Such is my confidence.

CYPRIAN.

And you?

LELIO.

O, would that I could lift my hope
So high! for though she is extremely poor,
Her virtue is her dowry.

CYPRIAN.

And if you both
Would marry her, is it not weak and vain,
Culpable and unworthy, thus beforehand
To slar her honour? What would the world say
If one should slay the other, and if she
Should afterwards espouse the murderer?

[The rivals agree to refer their quarrel to Cyprian;
who in consequence visits Jurnina, and becomes
enamoured of her: she disdains him, and he retires
to a solitary sea-shore.

SCENE II.

CYPRIAN.

O memory! permit it not
That the tyrant of my thought
Be another soul that still
Holds dominion o’er the will;
That would refuse, but can no more,
To bend, to tremble, and adore.
Vain idolatry!—I saw,
And gazing became blind with error;
Weak ambition, which the awe
Of her presence bound to terror!
So beautiful she was—and I,
Between my love and jealousy,
Am so convulsed with hope and fear,
Unworthy as it may appear;—
So bitter is the life I live,
That, hear me, Hell! I now would give
To thy most detested spirit
My soul, for ever to inherit,
To suffer punishment and pine,
So this woman may be mine.
Hearst thou, Hell! dost thou reject it?
My soul is offered!

Damon (unseen).

I accept it.

[Tempst, with thunder and lightning.

CYPRIAN.

What is this! ye heavens, for ever pure,
At once intensely radiant and obscure!
Athwart the ethereal halls
The lightning’s arrow and the thunder-balls
The day affright,
As from the horizon round,
Burst with earthquake sound,
In mighty torrents the electric fountains:—
Clouds quench the sun, and thunder smoke
Strangles the air, and fire eclipses heaven.
Philosophy, thou canst not even
Compel their causes underneath thy yoke,
From yonder clouds even to the waves below
The fragments of a single ruin choke
Imagination’s flight;
For, on flakes of surge, like feathers light,
The ashes of the desolation cast
Upon the gloomy blast,
Tell of the footsteps of the storm.
And nearer see the melancholy form
Of a great ship, the outcast of the sea,
Drives miserably!
And it must fly the pity of the port,
Or perish, and its last and sole resort
Is its own raging enemy.

\*\*
The terror of the thrilling cry
Was a fatal prophecy
Of coming death, who hovers now
Upon that shattered prow,
That they who die not may be dying still.

And not alone the insane elements
Are populous with wild portents,
But that sad ship is as a miracle
Of sudden ruin, for it drives so fast
It seems as if it had arrayed its form
With the headlong storm.

It strikes— I almost feel the shock,—
It stumbles on a jagged rock,—
Sparkles of blood on the white foam are cast.

A tempest—All exclam within

We are all lost!

DEMON (within).
Now from this plank will I
Pass to the land, and thus fulfil my scheme.

CYPRIAN.
As in contempt of the elemental rage
A man comes forth in safety, while the ship's
Great form is in a watery eclipse
Obliterated from the Ocean's page,
And round its wreck the huge sea-monsters sit,
A horrid conclave, and the whistling wave
Is heaped over its carcase, like a grave.

The Demon enters as escaped from the sea.

DEMON (aside).
It was essential to my purposes
To wake a tumult on the sapphire ocean,
That in this unknown form I might at length
Wipe out the blot of the discomfiture
Sustained upon the mountain, and assail
With a new war the soul of Cyprian,
Forging the instruments of his destruction
Even from his love and from his wisdom. — 0
Beloved earth, dear mother, in thy bosom
I seek a refuge from the monster who
Precipitates itself upon me.

CYPRIAN.
Friend,
Collect thyself; and be the memory
Of thy late suffering, and thy greatest sorrow
But as a shadow of the past,—for nothing
Beneath the circle of the moon but flows
And changes, and can never know repose.

DEMON.
And who art thou, before whose feet my fate
Has prostrated me?

CYPRIAN.
One who, moved with pity,
Would soothe its stings.

DEMON.
Oh! that can never be!
No solace can my lasting sorrows find.

CYPRIAN.
Wherefore?

DEMON.
Because my happiness is lost.
Yet I lament what has long ceased to be
The object of desire or memory,
And my life is not life.

CYPRIAN.
Now, since the fury
Of this earthquakeing hurricane is still,
And the crystalline heaven has reassumed
Its windless calm so quickly, that it seems
As if its heavy wrath had been awakened
Only to overwhelm that vessel,—speak,
Who art thou, and whence comest thou?

DEMON.
Far more
My coming hither cost than thou hast seen,
Or I can tell. Among my misadventures
This shipwreck is the least. wilt thou hear?

CYPRIAN.
Speak.

DEMON.
Since thou desirest, I will then unveil
Myself to thee;—for in myself I am
A world of happiness and misery;
This I have lost, and that I must lament
For ever. In my attributes I stood
So high and so heroically great,
In lineage so supreme, and with a genius
Which penetrated with a glance the world
Beneath my feet, that won by my high merit
A king—whom I may call the King of kings,
Because all others tremble in their pride
Before the terrors of his countenance,
In his high palace roofed with brightest gems
Of living light—call them the stars of Heaven—
Named me his counsellor. But the high praise
Stung me with pride and envy, and I rose
In mighty competition, to ascend
His seat, and place my foot triumphantly
Upon his subject thrones. Chastised, I know
The depth to which ambition falls; too mad
Was the attempt, and yet more mad were now
Repentance of the irrevocable deed:—
Therefore I chose this ruin with the glory
Of not to be subdued, before the shame
Of reconciling me with him who reigns
By coward cession.—Nor was I alone,
Nor am I now, nor shall I be alone;
And there was hope, and there may still be hope.
For many suffrages among his vassals
Hailed me their lord and king, and many still
Are mine, and many more perchance shall be.
Thus vanquished, though in fact victorious,
I left his seat of empire, from mine eye
Shooting forth poisonous lightning, while my words
With inauspicious thunderings shook Heaven;
Proclaiming vengeance, public as my wrong,
And imprecating on his prostrate slaves
Rapine and death, and outrage. Then I sailed
Over the mighty fabric of the world,
A pirate ambushed in its pathless sands,
A lynx crouched watchfully among its caves
And craggy shores; and I have wandered over
The expanse of these wide wildernesses
In this great ship, whose bulk is now dissolved
In the light breathings of the invisible wind,
And which the sea has made a dustless ruin.
Seeking ever a mountain, through whose forae
I seek a man, whom I must now compel
To keep his word with me. I came arrayed
In tempest, and, although my power could well
Bride the forest winds in their career,
For other causes I forbore to soothe Their fury to Favonian gentleness; I could and would not: (thus I wake in him (Aside A love of magic art.) Let not this tempest, Nor the succeeding calm excite thy wonder; For by my art the sun would turn as pale As his weak sister with unwonted fear; And in my wisdom are the orbs of Heaven Written as in a record. I have pierced The flaming circles of their wondrous spheres, And know them as thou knowest every corner Of this dim spot. Let it not seem to thee That I boast vainly; wouldst thou that I work A charm over this waste and savage wood, This Babylon of crags and aged trees, Filling its leafy covert with a horror Thrilling and strange! I am the friendless guest Of these wild oaks and pines— and as from thee I have received the hospitality Of this rude place, I offer thee the fruit Of years of toil in recompense; whate'er Thine wildest dream presented to thy thought As object of desire, that shall be thine.

And thenceforth shall so firm an amity Twixt thou and me be, that neither fortune, The monstrous phantom which pursues success, That careful miser, that free prodigal, Who ever alternates with changeful hand Evil and good, reproach and fame; nor Time, That loadstar of the ages, to whose beam The winged years speed o'er the intervals Of their unequal revolutions; nor Heaven itself, whose beautiful bright stars Rule and adorn the world, can ever make The least division between thee and me, Since now I find a refuge in thy favour.

SCENE III.
The Demon tempt Justin, who it a Christian.

Demon. Abyss of Hell! I call on thee, Thou wild misrule of thine own anarchy! From thy prison-house set free The spirits of voluptuous death, That with their mighty breath They may destroy a world of virgin thoughts; Let her chaste mind with fanciesthick as motes Be peopled from thy shadowy deep, Till her guiltless phantasy Full to overflowing be! And, with sweetest harmony, Let birds, and flowers, and leaves, and all things move To love, only to love. Let nothing meet her eyes But signs of Love's soft victories; Let nothing meet her ear But sounds of Love's sweet sorrow; So that from faith no succour may she borrow, But, guided by my spirit blind And in a magic snare entwined, She may now seek Cyprian. Begin, while I in silence bind My voice, when thy sweet song thou hast begun.

A Voice Within.

What is the glory far above All else in human life!

All. Love! love!

[While these words are sung, the Demon goes out at one door, and Justin enters at another.

The First Voice.

There is no form in which the fire Of love its traces has impressed not. Man lives far more in love's desire Than by life's breath soon possessed not. If all that lives must love or die, All shapes on earth, or seas, or sky, With one consent to Heaven cry That the glory far above All else in life is—

All. Love! O love!

Justin.

Thou melancholy thought, which art So flattering and so sweet, to thee When did I give the liberty Thus to afflict my heart! Thou melancholy thought, which art So flattering and so sweet, to thee What is the cause of this new power Which doth my fevered being move, Momently raging more and more! What subtle pain is kindled now Which from my heart doth overflow Into my senses!—

All. Love! O love!

Justin.

'Tis that enamoured nightingale Who gives me the reply: He ever tells the same soft tale Of passion and of constancy To his mate, who, rapt and fond, Sitting sits, a bough beyond. Be silent, Nightingale!— No more Make me think, in hearing thee Thus tenderly thy love deplore, If a bird can feel his so, What a man would feel for me. And, voluptuous vine, O thou Who seekest most when least pursuing,— To the trunk thou interlacest Art the verdure which embracest, And the weight which is its ruin,— No more, with green embraces, vine, Make me think on what thou lovest,— For whilst thou thus thy boughs entwine, I fear lest thou shouldst teach me, sophist, How arms might be entangled too

Light-enchanted sunflower, thou Who gazest ever true and tender On the sun's revolving splendour, Follow not his faithless glance With thy faded countenance, Nor teach my beating heart to fear, If leaves can mourn without a tear, How eyes must weep! O Nightingale, Cease from thy enamoured tale,—

A A 2
Leafy vine, unwreath thy bower,
Restless sunflower, cease to move,—
Or tell me all, what poisonous power
Ye use against me.—

All.
Love! love! love!

Justina.
It cannot be! Whom have I ever loved!
Trophies of my oblivion and disdain,
Floro and Lelio did I not reject!—
And Cyprian!—

[She becomes troubled at the name of Cyprian.

Did I not require him
With such severity, that he has fled
Where none has ever heard of him again!—
Alas! I now begin to fear that this
May be the occasion whence desire grows bold,
As if there were no danger. From the moment
That I pronounced to my own listening heart,
Cyprian is absent, O miserable me!
I know not what I feel! [More calmly.

It must be pity
To think that such a man, whom all the world
Admired, should be forgot by all the world,
And I the cause. [Calmly.

And yet if it were pity,
Floro and Lelio might have equal share,
For they are both imprisoned for my sake. [Calmly.

Alas! what reasonings are these! It is
Enough I pity him, and that, in vain,
Without this ceremonious subtlety.
And woe is me! I know not where to find him now,
Even should I seek him through this wide world.

Enter Demon.

Demon.
Follow, and I will lead thee where he is.

Justina.
And who art thou, who hast found entrance hither,
Into my chamber through the doors and locks!
Art thou a monstrous shadow which my madness
Has formed in the idle air? [Calmly.

No. I am one
Called by the thought which tyrannises thee
From his eternal dwelling; who this day
Is pledged to bear thee unto Cyprian.

Justina.
So shall thy promise fail. This agony
Of passion which afflicts my heart and soul
May sweep imagination in its storm;
The will is firm.

Demon.
Already half is done
In the imagination of an act.
The sin incurred, the pleasure then remains;
Let not the will stop half way on the road.

Justina.
I will not be discouraged, nor despair,
Although I thought it, and although 'tis true
That thought is but a prelude to the deed:—
Thought is not in my power, but action is:
I will not move my foot to follow thee.
Enter Lisander and Livia.

Lisander.
O my daughter; what?

Livia.
What?

Justina.
Saw you
A man go forth from my apartment now?
I scarce sustain myself!

Lisander.
A man here!

Justina.
Have you not seen him?

Livia.
No, lady.

Justina.
I saw him.

Lisander.
Tis impossible; the doors
Which led to this apartment were all locked.

Livia (aside).
I dare say it was Moscon whom she saw,
For he was locked up in my room.

Lisander.
It must
Have been some image of thy phantasy.
Such melancholy as thou feedest is
Skilful in forming such in the vain air
Out of the motes and atoms of the day

Livia.
My master's in the right.

Justina.
Oh, would it were
Delusion! but I fear some greater ill.
I feel as if out of my bleeding bosom
My heart was torn in fragments; aye,
Some mortal spell is wrought against my frame;
So potent was the charm, that had not God
Shielded my humble innocence from wrong,
I should have sought my sorrow and my shame
With willing steps.—Livia, quick, bring my cloak,
For I must seek refuge from these extremes
Even in the temple of the highest God
Which secretly the faithful worship.

Livia.
Here.

Justina (putting on her cloak).
In this, as in a shroud of snow, may I
Quench the consuming fire in which I burn,
Wasting away!

Lisander.
And I will go with thee.

Livia.
When I once see them safe out of the house,
I shall breathe freely.

Justina.
So do I confide
In thy just favour, Heaven!

Lisander.
Let us go.

Justina.
Thine is the cause, great God! Turn, for my sake
And for thine own, mercifully to me!
TRANSLATIONS.

SCENES FROM THE FAUST OF GOETHE.

PROLOGUE IN HEAVEN.

The Lord and the Host of Heaven.

Enter Three Archangels.

RAPHAEL.
The sun makes music as of old
Amid the rival spheres of Heaven,
On its predestined circle rolled
With thunder speed: the Angels even
Draw strength from gazing on its glance,
Though none its meaning fathom may;—
The world’s unwithered countenance
Is bright as at creation’s day.

GABRIEL.
And swift and swift, with rapid lightness,
The adorned Earth spins silently,
Alternating Elysian brightness
With deep and dreadful night; the sea
Foams in broad billows from the deep
Up to the rocks; and rocks and ocean,
Onward, with spheres which never sleep,
Are hurried in eternal motion.

MICHAEL.
And tempests in contention roar
From land to sea, from sea to land;
And, raging, weave a chain of power
Which girds the earth as with a band.
A flashing desolation there
Flames before the thunder’s way;
But thy servants, Lord, revere
The gentle changes of thy day.

CHORUS OF THE THREE.
The Angels draw strength from thy glance,
Though no one comprehend thee may;—
Thy world’s unwithered countenance
Is bright as on creation’s day.*

RAPHAEL.
The sun sounds, according to ancient custom,
In the song of emulation of his brother-spheres,
And its fore-written circle
Futurs with a step of thunder.
Its countenance gives the Angels strength,
Though no one can fathom it.
The incredible high works
Are excellent as at the first day.*

MORPHISTOPHELES.

As thou, O Lord, once more art kind enough
To interest thyself in our affairs—
And ask, “How goes it with yon there?”
And as indulgently at other times
Thou seest me here once more among thy bosom;
Though I should scandalize this company,
You will excuse me if I do not speak
In the high style which they think fashionable:
My pathos certainly would make you laugh.
Had you not long since given over laughing.
Nothing know I to say of suns and worlds;
I observe only how men plague themselves—
The little god o’ the world keeps the same step.
As wonderful as on creation’s day:—
A little better would he live, hadst thou
Not given him a glimpse of Heaven’s light
Which he calls reason, and employs it only
To live more beastily than any beast.

GABRIEL.
And swift, and inconceivably swift
The adornment of earth winds itself round,
And exchanges Paradise-clearness
With deep dreadful night.
The sea foams in broad waves
From its deep bottom up to the rocks,
And rocks and sea are torn on together
In the eternal swift course of the spheres.

MICHAEL.
And storms roar in emulation
From sea to land, from land to sea;
And make, raging, a chain
Of deepest operation round about.
There flames a flashing destruction
Before the path of the thunderbolt.
But thy servants, Lord, revere
The gentle alternations of thy day.

CHORUS.
Thy countenance gives the Angels strength,
Though none can comprehend thee:
And all thy lofty works
Are excellent as at the first day.

* Such is the literal translation of this astonishing Chorus.
It is impossible to represent in another language the notes
of the oration; even the voluble strength and beauty
of the ideas escape in the crucible of translation, and the
reader is surprised to find a caput mortuum.—(Author’s)

Note.
SCENES FROM FAUST.

With reverence to your Lordship be it spoken, He's like one of those long-legged grasshoppers Who sits and jumps about, and sings for ever The same old song t' the grass. There let him lie, Burying his nose in every heap of dung.

THE LORD.
Have you no more to say! Do you come here Always to scold, and cavil, and complain! Seem nothing ever right to you on earth!

MEPHISTOPHELES.
No, Lord; I find all there, as ever, had at best. Even I am sorry for man's days of sorrow; I could myself almost give up the pleasure Of plaguing the poor things.

THE LORD.
Knowest thou Faust!

MEPHISTOPHELES.
The Doctor!

THE LORD.
Ay; my servant Faust.

MEPHISTOPHELES.
In truth He serves you in a fashion quite his own, And the fool's meat and drink are not of earth. His aspirations bear him on so far That he is half aware of his own folly, For he demands from Heaven its fairest star, And from the earth the highest joy it bears; Yet all things far, and all things near, are vain To calm the deep emotionsof his breast.

THE LORD.
Though he now serves me in a cloud of error, I will soon lead him forth to the clear day. When trees look green, full well the gardener knows That fruits and bloomswill deck the coming year.

MEPHISTOPHELES.
What will you bet!— now I am sure of winning— Only observe you give me full permission To lead him softlyon my path.

THE LORD.
As long As he shall live upon the earth, so long Is nothing unto thee forbidden.— Man Must err till he has ceased to struggle.

MEPHISTOPHELES.
Thanks. And that is all I ask; for willingly I never make acquaintance with the dead. The full fresh cheeks of youth are food for me, And if a corpse knocks, I am not at home. For I am like a cat—I like to play A little with the mouse before I cat it.

THE LORD.
Well, well, it is permitted thee. Draw thou His spirit from its springs: as thou find'st power, Seize him and lead him on thy downward path; And stand ashamed when failure teaches thee That a good man, even in his darkest longings, Is well aware of the right way.

MEPHISTOPHELES.
Well and good. I am not in much doubt about my bet,

And, if I lose, then 'tis your turn to crow; Enjoy your triumph then with a full breast. Ay; dust shall he devour, and that with pleasure, Like my old paramour, the famous Snake.

THE LORD.
Pray come here when it suits you; for I never Had much dislike for people of your sort. And, among all the Spirits who rebelled, The knave was ever the least tedious to me. The active spirit of man soon sleeps, and soon He seeks unbroken quiet; therefore I Have given him the Devil for a companion, Who may provoke him to some sort of work, And must create for ever.— But ye, pure Children of God, enjoy eternal beauty;— Let that which ever operates and lives Clasp you within the limits of its love; And seize with sweet and melancholy thoughts The floating phantoms of its loneliness.

Heaven cloes; the Archangels exult.

MEPHISTOPHELES.
From time to time I visit the old fellow, And I take care to keep on good terms with him. Civil enough is this same God Almighty, To talk so freely with the Devil himself.

SCENE.

MAY-DAY NIGHT.

The Hartz Mountain, a desolate Country.

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Would you not like a broomstick? As for me I wish I had a good stout ram to ride; For we are still far from the appointed place.

FAUST.

This knotted staff is help enough for me, Whilst I feel fresh upon my legs. What good Is there in making so a pleasant way! To creep along the labyrinths of the vales, And climb those rocks, where ever-babbling springs Precipitate themselves in waterfalls, In the true sport that seasons such a path. Already Spring kindles the birchen spray, And the hoar pines already feel her breath: Shall she not work also within our limbs?

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Nothing of such an influence do I feel. My body is all wintry, and I wish The flowers upon our path were frost and snow. But see, how melancholy rises now, Dimly uplifting her belated beam, The blank unwelcome round of the red moon, And gives so bad a light, that every step One stumbles gainst some crag. With your permis- I'll call an Ignis-fatuus to our aid: [sion I see one yonder burning jollily. Halloo, my friend! may I request that you Would favour us with your bright company! Why should you blaze away there to no purpose! Pray be so good as light us up this way.
IGNIS-FATUUS.
With reverence be it spoken, I will try
To overcome the lightness of my nature;
Our course, you know, is generally zig-zag.

MEPHISTOPHELES.
Ha, ha! your worship thinks you have to deal
With men. Go straight on in the Devil’s name,
Or I shall puff your flickering life out.

IGNIS-FATUUS.
Well, I see you are the master of the house;
I will accommodate myself to you.
Only consider that to-night this mountain
Is all-enchanted, and if Jack-a-lantern
Shows you his way, though you should miss your own,
You ought not to be too exact with him.

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES, AND IGNIS-FATUUS IN ALTERNATE CHORUS.

The limits of the sphere of dream,
The bounds of true and false, are past.
Lead us on, thou wandering Gleam,
Lead us onward, far and fast,
To the wide, the desert waste.

But see, how swift advance and shift
Trees behind trees, row by row,—
How, clift by clift, rocks bend and lift
Their frowning foreheads as we go.
The giant-snouted crags, ho! ho!
How they snort, and how they blow!

Through the mossy sods and stones,
Stream and streamlet hurry down,
A rushing throng! A sound of song
Beneath the vault of Heaven is blown!
Sweet notes of love, the speaking tones
Of this bright day, sent down to say
That Paradise on Earth is known,
Resound around, beneath, above;
All we hope and all we love
Finds a voice in this blithe strain,
Which wakens hill and wood and rill,
And vibrates far o'er field and vale,
And which Echo, like the tale
Of old times, repeats again.

To-whoo! to-whoo! near, nearer now
The sound of song, the rushing throng!
Are the screech, the lapwing, and the jay,
All awake as if 'twere day!
See, with long legs and belly wide,
A salamander in the brake!
Every root is like a snake,
And along the loose hillside,
With strange contortions through the night,
Curts, to seize or to affright;
And animated, strong, and many,
They dart forth polysp-antenne,
To blister with their poison spume
The wanderer. Through the dazzling gloom
The many-coloured mice that thread
The dewy turf beneath our tread,
In troops each other's motions cross,
Through the heath and through the mists;
And in legions intertwined,
The fire-flies sit, and swarm, and throng,
Till all the mountain depths are spangled.

Tell me, shall we go or stay?
Shall we onward! Come along!
Everything around is swept!
Forward, onward, far away!
Trees and masses intercept
The sight, and wipe on every side
Are puffed up and multiplied.

MEPHISTOPHELES.
Now vigorously seize my skirt, and gain
This pinnacle of isolated crag.
One may observe with wonder from this point
How Mammon glows among the mountains.

FAUST.

Ay—

And strangely through the solid depth below
A melancholy light, like the red dawn,
Shoots from the lowest gorge of the abyss
Of mountains, lighting hitherward; there, rise
Pillars of smoke; here, clouds float gently by;
Here the light burns soft as the kindled air,
Or the illumined dust of golden flowers;
And now it glides like tender colours spreading;
And now bursts forth in fountains from the earth;
And now it winds one torrent of broad light,
Through the far valley with a hundred veins;
And now once more within that narrow corner
Masses itself into intensest splendour.
And near us see sparks spring out of the ground,
Like golden sand scattered upon the darkness;
The pinacles of that black wall of mountains
That hems us in are kindled.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Rare, in faith!

Does not Sir Mammon gloriously illuminate
His palace for this festival— it is
A pleasure which you had not known before.
I spy the boisterous guests already.

FAUST.

How

The children of the wind rage in the air!
With what fierce strokes they fall upon my neck!

MEPHISTOPHELES.

Cling tightly to the old ribs of the crag.
Beware! for if with them thou warrest
In their fierce flight towards the wilderness,
Their breath will sweep thee into dust, and drag
Thy body to a grave in the abyss.

A cloud thickens the night.

Hark! how the tempest crashes through the forest!

The owls fly out in strange affright;
The columns of the evergreen palaces
Are split and shattered;
The roots crack, and stretch, and groan;
And ruinously overthrown,
The trunks are crushed and shattered
By the fierce blast's unconquerable stress.
Over each other crack and crash they all
In terrible and intertangled fall;
And through the ruins of the shaken mountain
The airs hiss and howl—

It is not the voice of the fountain,
Nor the wolf in his midnight prow.
SCENES FROM FAUST.

Dost thou not hear!
Strange accents are ringing
Aloft, afar, anear;
The witches are singing!
The torrent of a raging wizard's song
Streams the whole mountain along.

CHORUS OF WITCHES.
The stubble is yellow, the corn is green,
Now to the Brocken the witches go;
The mighty multitude here may be seen
Gathering, wizard and witch, below.
Sir Urean is sitting aloft in the air;
Hey over stock! and hey over stone!
'Twixt witches and incubi, what shall be done!
Tell it who dare! tell it who dare!

A VOICE.
Upon a sow-swine, whose farrows were nine,
Old Baubo rideth alone.

CHORUS.
Honour her to whom honour is due,
Old mother Baubo, honour to you!
An able sow with old Baubo upon her,
Is worthy of glory, and worthy of honour!
The legion of witches is coming behind,
Darkening the night and outspeeding the wind—

A VOICE.
Which way comest thou?

A VOICE.
Over Ilsenstein;
The owl was awake in the white moon-shine;
I saw her at rest in her downy nest,
And she stared at me with her broad bright eye.

VOICES.
And you may now as well take your course on to Hell,
Since you ride by so fast on the headlong blast.

A VOICE.
She dropt poison upon me as I past.
Here are the wounds—

CHORUS OF WITCHES.
The way is wide, the way is long,
But what is that for a Bedlam throng?
Stick with the prong, and scratch with the broom.
The child in the cradle lies strangled at home,
And the mother is clapping her hands—

SEMI-CHORUS OF WIZARDS I.
We glide in
Like snails when the women are all away;
And from a house once given over to sin
Woman has a thousand steps to stay.

SEMI-CHORUS II.
A thousand steps must a woman take,
Where a man but a single spring will make.

VOICES ABOVE.
Come with us, come with us, from FelmEEE.

VOICES BELOW.
With what joy would we fly through the upper sky
We are washed, we are 'nointed, stark naked are we!
But our toil and our pain are for ever in vain.

BOTH CHORUSES.
The wind is still, the stars are fled,
The melancholy moon is dead;
The magic notes, like spark on spark,
Drizzle, whistling through the dark.
Come away!

VOICES BELOW.
Stay, oh stay!

VOICES ABOVE.
Out of the crannies of the rocks
Who calls?

VOICES BELOW.
Oh, let me join your flocks!
I, three hundred years have striven
To catch your skirt and mount to Heaven,—
And still in vain. Oh, might I be
With company akin to me?

BOTH CHORUSES.
Some on a ram and some on a prong,
On poles and on broomsticks we flutter along;
Forlorn is the wight who can rise not to-night.

A HALF WITCH BELOW.
I have been tripping this many an hour:
Are the others already so far before?
No quiet at home, and no peace abroad!
And less methinks is found by the road.

CHORUS OF WITCHES.
Come onward, away! arous thee, arous!
A witch to be strong must anoint—anoint—
Then every trough will be boated enough;
With a rag for a sail we can sweep through the sky,
Who flies not to-night, when means he to fly!

BOTH CHORUSES.
We cling to the skirt, and we strike on the ground;
Witch-legions thicken around and around;
Wizard-swarms cover the heath all over.

MEPHISTOPHELES.
What thronging, dashing, raging, rustling!
What whispering, babbling, hissing, bustling!
What glimmering, spurtling, stinking, burning!
As Heaven and earth were overturning.
There is a true witch element about us;
Take hold on me, or we shall be divided:—Where are you?

FAUST (from a distance).
Here!

MEPHISTOPHELES.
What!
I must exert my authority in the house.
Place for young Voland! Pray make way, good people.
Take hold on me, doctor, and with one step
Let us escape from this unpleasant crowd:
They are too mad for people of my sort.
Just there shines a peculiar kind of light—
Something attracts me in those bushes.—Come This way; we shall slip down there in a minute.

FAUST.
Spirit of Contradiction! Well, lead on—
'Twere a wise feat indeed to wander out
Into the Brocken upon May-day night,
And then to isolate oneself in scorn,
Disgusted with the humours of the time.
Mephistopheles.

See yonder, round a many-coloured flame
A merry-club is huddled all together:
Even with such little people as sit there
One would not be alone.

Faust.

Would that I were
Up yonder in the glow and whirling smoke
Where the blind million rush impetuously
To meet the evil ones; there might I solve
Many a riddle that torments me!

Mephistopheles.

Many a riddle there is tied anew
Inextricably. Let the great world rage!
We will stay here safe in the quiet dwellings.
'Tis an old custom. Men have ever built
Their own small world in the great world of all.
I see young witches naked there, and old ones
Wisely attired with greater decency.
He guided now by me, and you shall buy
A pound of pleasure with a dram of trouble.
I hear them tune their instruments—one must
Get used to this damned scraping. Come, I'll
Lead you
Among them; and what there you do and see,
As a fresh compact 'twixt us two shall be.

How say you now! this space is wide enough—
Look forth, you cannot see the end of it—
A hundred bonfires burn in rows, and they
Who throng around them seem innumerable:
Dancing and drinking, jabbering, making love,
And cooking, are at work. Now tell me, friend,
What is there better in the world than this?

Faust.

In introducing us, do you assume
The character of wizard or of devil?

Mephistopheles.

In truth, I generally go about
In strict incognito; and yet one likes
To wear one's orders upon gala days.
I have no ribbon at my knee; but here
At home the cloven foot is honourable.
See you that snail there?—she comes creeping up,
And with her feeling eyes hath smelt out some
thing:
I could not, if I would, mask myself here.
Come now we'll go about from fire to fire:
I'll be the pimp, and you shall be the lover.

[To some old women, who are sitting round a heap of pimpering coals.

Old gentlewomen, what do you do out here?
You ought to be with the young rioters
Right in the thickest of the revelry—
But every one is best content at home.

General.

Who dare confide in right or a just claim?
So much as I had done for them! and now—
With women and the people 'tis the same,
Youth will stand foremost ever,—age may go
To the dark grave unhonoured.

Minister.

Now-a-days
People assert their rights; they go too far;
But, as for me, the good old times I praise.
Then we were all in all: 'twas something worth
One's while to be in place and wear a star;
That was indeed the golden age on earth.

Parsifal.

We too are active, and we did and do
What we ought not perhaps; and yet we now
Will seize, whilst all things are whirled round and round,
A spoke of Fortune's wheel, and keep our ground.

Author.

Who now can taste a treatise of deep sense
And ponderous volume! 'Tis impertinence
To write what none will read, therefore will I
To please the young and thoughtless people try.

Mephistopheles.

(Who at once appears to here*

I find the people ripe for the last day,
Since I last came up to the wizard mountain;
And as my little cask runs turbid now,
So is the world drained to the dregs.

Pedlar-Witch.

Look here, Gentlemen; do not hurry on so fast,
And lose the chance of a good pennyworth.
I have a pack full of the choicest wares
Of every sort, and yet in all my bundle
Is nothing like what may be found on earth
Nothing that in a moment will make rich
Men and the world with fine malicious mischief—
There is no dagger drunk with blood; no bowl
From which consuming poison may be drained
By innocent and healthy lips; no jewel,
The price of an abandoned maiden's shame;
No sword which cuts the bond it cannot loose,
Or stabs the wearer's enemy in the back;
No—

Mephistopheles.

Gossip, you know little of these times.
What has been, has been; what is done, is past.
They shape themselves into the innovations
They breed, and innovation drags us with it.
The torrent of the crowd sweeps over us;
You think to impel, and are yourself impelled.

Faust.

Who is that yonder?

Mephistopheles.

Mark her well. It is

Lilith.

Faust.

Who?

Mephistopheles.

Lilith, the first wife of Adam.
Beware of her fair hair, for she excels
All women in the magic of her looks;
And when she winds them round a young man's neck,
She will not ever set him free again.
SCENES FROM FAUST.

FAUST.
There sit a girl and an old woman—they
Seem to be tired with pleasure and with play.

MEPHISTOPHELES.
There is no rest to-night for any one:
When one dance ends another is begun;
Come, let us to it. We shall have rare fun.

[FAUST dances and sings with a Girl, and MEPHISTOPHELES with an old Woman.

PROCTO-PHANTASMIST.
What is this cursed multitude about!
Have we not long since proved to demonstration
That ghosts move not on ordinary feet!
But these are dancing just like men and women.

THE GIRL.
What does he want then at our ball?

FAUST.
Oh! he
Is far above us all in his conceit:
Whilst we enjoy, he reasons of enjoyment;
And any step which in our dance we tread,
If it be left out of his reckoning,
Is not to be considered as a step.

MEPHISTOPHELES.
That was all right, my friend:
Be it enough that the mouse was not grey.
Do not disturb your hour of happiness
With close consideration of such trifles.

FAUST.
Sweat thou not a pale—
Fair girl, standing alone, far, far away!
She drags herself now forward with slow steps;
And seems as if she moved with shackled feet:
I cannot overcome the thought that she
Is like poor Margaret.

MEPHISTOPHELES.
Let it be—pass on—
No good can come of it—it is not well
To meet it—it is an enchanted phantom,
A lifeless idol; with its numbing look,
It freezes up the blood of man; and they
Who meet its ghastly stare are turned to stone,
Like those who saw Medusa.

FAUST.
O, too true!
Her eyes are like the eyes of a fresh corpse
Which no beloved hand has closed. Alas!
That is the breast which Margaret yielded to me—
Those are the lovely limbs which I enjoyed!

MEPHISTOPHELES.
It is all magic, poor deluded fool!
She looks to every one like his first love.

FAUST.
Oh what delight! what woe! I cannot turn
My looks from her sweet piteous countenance.
How strangely does a single blood-red line,
Not broader than the sharp edge of a knife,
Adorn her lovely neck!

MEPHISTOPHELES.
Ay, she can carry
Her head under her arm upon occasion;
Perseus has cut it off for her. Those pleasures
End in delusion.—Gain this rising ground,
It is as airy here as in a—
And if I am not mightily deceived,
I see a theatre.—What may this mean?

ATTENDANT.
Quite a new piece, the last of seven, for 'tis
The custom now to represent that number.
'Tis written by a Dilettante, and
The actors who perform are Dilettanti;
Excuse me, gentlemen; but I must vanish.
I am a Dilettante curtain-lifter.
ESSAYS,

LETTERS FROM ABROAD,

Translations and Fragments.

BY PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

EDITED BY MRS. SHELLEY.

"The Poet, it is true, is the son of his time; but pity for him if he is its pupil, or even its favourite! Let some beneficent deity snatch him when a suckling from the breast of his mother, and nurse him with the milk of a better time: that he may ripen to his full stature beneath a distant Grecian sky. And having grown to manhood, let him return, a foreign shape, into his century; not however to delight it by his presence, but dreadful like the son of Agamemnon, to purify it."—Schiller.
This volume has long been due to the public; it forms an important portion of all that was left by Shelley, whence those who did not know him may form a juster estimate of his virtues and his genius than has hitherto been done.

We find, in the verse of a poet, "the record of the best and happiest moments of the best and happiest minds."* But this is not enough—we desire to know the man. We desire to learn how much of the sensibility and imagination that animates his poetry was founded on heartfelt passion, and purity, and elevation of character; whether the pathos and the fire emanated from transitory inspiration and a power of weaving words touchingly; or whether the poet acknowledged the might of his art in his inmost soul; and whether his nerves thrilled to the touch of generous emotion. Led by such curiosity, how many volumes have been filled with the life of the Scottish plough-boy and the English peer; we welcome with delight every fact which proves that the patriotism and tenderness expressed in the songs of Burns, sprung from a noble and gentle heart; and we pore over each letter that we expect will testify that the melancholy and the unbridled passion that darkens Byron's verse, flowed from a soul devoted by a keen susceptibility to intensest love, and indignant broodings over the injuries done and suffered by man. Let the lovers of Shelley's poetry—of his aspirations for a brotherhood of love, his tender bewailings springing from a too sensitive spirit—his sympathy with woe, his adoration of beauty, as expressed in his poetry; turn to these pages to gather proof of sincerity, and to become acquainted with the form that such gentle sympathies and lofty aspirations worn in private life.

The first piece in this volume, "A Defence of Poetry," is the only entirely finished prose work Shelley left. In this we find the reverence with which he regarded his art. We discern his power of close reasoning, and the unity of his views of human nature. The language is imaginative but not flowery; the periods have an intonation full of majesty and grace; and the harmony of the style being united to melodious thought, a music results, that swells upon the ear, and fills the mind with delight. It is a work whence a young poet, and one suffering from wrong or neglect, may learn to regard his pursuit and himself with that respect, without which his genius will get clogged in the mire of the earth: it will elevate him into those pure regions, where there is neither pain from the stings of insects, nor pleasure in the fruition of a gross appetite for praise. He will learn to rest his dearest boast on the dignity of the art he cultivates.

* "A Defence of Poetry."
and become aware that his best claim on the applause of mankind, results from his being one
more in the holy brotherhood, whose vocation it is to divest life of its material grossness and
stooping tendencies, and to animate it with that power of turning all things to the beautiful and
good, which is the spirit of poetry.

The fragments* that follow form an introduction to "The Banquet" or "Symposium"
of Plato—and that noble piece of writing follows; which for the first time introduces the
Athenian to the English reader in a style worthy of him. No prose author in the history of
mankind has exerted so much influence over the world as Plato. From him the Fathers and
commentators of early Christianity derived many of their most abstruse notions and spiritual
ideas. His name is familiar to our lips, and he is regarded even by the unlearned as the possessor
of the highest imaginative faculty ever displayed by man—the creator of much of the purity of
sentiment which in another guise was adopted by the founders of chivalry—the man who
endowed Socrates with a large portion of that reputation for wisdom and virtue, which surrounds
him evermore with an imperishable halo of glory.

With all this, how little is really known of Plato! The translation we have is so harsh
and un-English in its style, as universally to repel. There are excellent abstracts of some of
his dialogues in a periodical publication called the "Monthly Repository;" and the mere
English reader must feel deeply obliged to the learned translator. But these abstracts are
defective from their very form of abridgment; and, though I am averse to speak disparagingly
of pages from which I have derived so much pleasure and knowledge, they want the radiance
and delicacy of language with which the ideas are invested in the original, and are dry and stiff
compared with the soaring poetry, the grace, subtlety, and infinite variety of Plato. They want,
also, the dramatic vivacity, and the touch of nature, that vivifies the pages of the Athenian.
These are all found here. Shelley commands language splendid and melodious as Plato, and
renders faithfully the elegance and the gaiety which make the Symposium as amusing as it is
sublime. The whole mechanism of the drama, for such in some sort it is,—the enthusiasm of
Apollodorus, the sententiousness of Eryximachus, the wit of Aristophanes, the rapt and golden
elegance of Agathon, the subtle dialectics and grandeur of aim of Socrates, the drunken outbreak
of Alcibiades,—are given with grace and animation. The picture presented reminds us of that
talent which, in a less degree, we may suppose to have dignified the orgies of the last generation
of free-spirited wits,—Burke, Fox, Sheridan, and Curran. It has something of licence,—
too much indeed, and perforce omitted; but of coarseness, that worst sin against our nature, it
has nothing.

Shelley's own definition of Love follows; and reveals the secrets of the most impassioned,
and yet the purest and softest heart that ever yearned for sympathy, and was ready to give its
own, in lavish measure, in return. "The Coliseum" is a continuation to a great degree of the
same subject. Shelley had something of the idea of a story in this. The stranger was a Greek,—
nurtured from infancy exclusively in the literature of his progenitors,—and brought up as a child
of Pericles might have been; and to heighten the resemblance, Shelley conceived the idea
of a woman, whom he named Diotima, who was his instructress and guide. In speaking of his
plan, this was the sort of development he sketched; but no word more was written than appears
in these pages.

"The Assassins" was composed many years before. The style is less chaste; but it is

* Small portions of these and other essays were published by Captain Medwin in a newspaper. Generally speaking,
his extracts are incorrect and incomplete. I must except the Essay on Love, and Remarks on some of the Scenes
In the Gallery of Florence, however, as they appeared there, from the blame of these defects.
warmed by the fire of youth. I do not know what story he had in view. The Assassins were known in the eleventh century as a horde of Mahometans living among the recesses of Lebanon,— ruled over by the Old Man of the Mountain; under whose direction various murders were committed on the Crusaders, which caused the name of the people who perpetrated them to be adopted in all European languages, to designate the crime which gave them notoriety. Shelley's old favourite, the Wandering Jew, appears in the latter chapters, and, with his wild and fearful introduction into the domestic circle of a peaceful family of the Assassins, the fragment concludes. It was never touched afterwards. There is great beauty in the sketch as it stands; it breathes that spirit of domestic peace and general brotherhood founded on love, which was developed afterwards in the "Prometheus Unbound."

The fragment of his "Essay on the Punishment of Death" bears the value which the voice of a philosopher and a poet, reasoning in favour of humanity and refinement, must possess. It alleges all the arguments that an imaginative man, who can vividly figure the feelings of his fellow-creatures, can alone conceive;* and it brings them home to the calm reasoner with the logic of truth. In the milder season that since Shelley's time has dawned upon England, our legislators each day approximate nearer to his views of justice; this piece, fragment as it is, may suggest to some among them motives for carrying his beneficent views into practice.

How powerful—how almost appalling, in its vivid reality of representation, is the essay on "Life!" Shelley was a disciple of the Immaterial Philosophy of Berkeley. This theory gave unity and grandeur to his ideas, while it opened a wide field for his imagination. The creation, such as it was perceived by his mind—a unit in immensity, was slight and narrow compared with the interminable forms of thought that might exist beyond, to be perceived perhaps hereafter by his own mind; or which are perceptible to other minds that fill the universe, not of space in the material sense, but of infinity in the immaterial one. Such ideas are, in some degree, developed in his poem entitled "Heaven:" and when he makes one of the interlocutors exclaim,

"Peace! the abyss is wreathed in scorn
Of thy presumption, atom-born."

he expresses his despair of being able to conceive, far less express, all of variety, majesty, and beauty, which is veiled from our imperfect senses in the unknown realm, the mystery of which his poetic vision sought in vain to penetrate.

The "Essay on a Future State" is also unhappily a fragment. Shelley observes, on one occasion, "a man is not a being of reason only, but of imaginations and affections." In this portion of his Essay he gives us only that view of a future state which is to be derived from reasoning and analogy. It is not to be supposed that a mind so full of vast ideas concerning the universe, endowed with such subtle discrimination with regard to the various modes in which this does or may appear to our eyes, with a lively fancy and ardent and expansive feelings, should be content with a mere logical view of that which even in religion is a mystery and a wonder. I cannot pretend to supply the deficiency, nor say what Shelley's views were—they were vague, certainly; yet as certainly regarded the country beyond the grave as one by no means foreign to our interests and hopes. Considering his individual mind as a unit divided from a mighty whole, to which it was united by restless sympathies and an eager desire for knowledge, he assuredly believed that hereafter, as now, he would form a portion of that

* "A man, to be greatly good, must imagine intensely and comprehensively: he must put himself in the place of another and of many others; the pains and pleasures of his species must become his own."—A Defence of Poetry.
whole—and a portion less imperfect, less suffering, than the shackles inseparable from humanity impose on all who live beneath the moon. To me, death appears to be the gate of life; but my hopes of a hereafter would be pale and drooping, did I not expect to find that most perfect and beloved specimen of humanity on the other shore; and my belief is, that spiritual improvement in this life prepares the way to a higher existence. Traces of such a faith are found in several passages of Shelley's works. In one of the letters he says, "The destiny of man can scarcely be so degraded, that he was born only to die." And again, in a journal, I find these feelings recorded, with regard to a danger we incurred together at sea:—"I had time in that moment to reflect and even to reason on death; it was rather a thing of discomfort and disappointment than terror to me. We should never be separated; but in death we might not know and feel our union as now. I hope—but my hopes are not unmixed with fear for what will befall this instemable spirit when we appear to die." A mystic ideality tinged these speculations in Shelley's mind; certain stanzas in the poem of "The Sensitive Plant" express, in some degree, the almost inexpressible idea, not that we die into another state, when this state is no longer, from some reason, unapparent as well as apparent, accordant with our being—but that those who rise above the ordinary nature of man, fade from before our imperfect organs; they remain, in their "love, beauty, and delight," in a world congenial to them—we, clogged by "error, ignorance, and strife," see them not, till we are fitted by purification and improvement for their higher state. For myself, no religious doctrine, nor philosophical precept, can shake the faith that a mind so original, so delicately and beautifully moulded, as Shelley's, so endowed with wondrous powers and eagle-eyed genius—so good, so pure—would never be shattered and dispersed by the Creator; but that the qualities and consciousness that formed him, are not only indestructible in themselves, but in the form under which they were united here, and that to become worthy of him is to assure the bliss of a reunion.

The fragments of metaphysics will be highly prized by a metaphysician. Such a one is aware how difficult it is to strip bare the internal nature of man, to divest it of prejudice, of the mistakes engendered by familiarity, and by language, which has become one with certain ideas, and those very ideas erroneous. Had not Shelley deserted metaphysics for poetry in his youth, and had he not been lost to us early, so that all his vaster projects were wrecked with him in the waves, he would have presented the world with a complete theory of mind; a theory to which Berkeley, Coleridge, and Kant, would have contributed; but more simple, unimpugnable, and entire, than the systems of these writers. His nerves, indeed, were so susceptible, that these intense meditations on his own nature, thrilled him with pain. Thought kindled imagination and awoke sensation, and rendered him dizzy from too great keenness of emotion;
aIl awe and tremor possessed him, and he fled to the voice and presence of one he loved to believe the mysterious agitation that shook him.*

He at one time meditated a popular essay on morals; to show how virtue resulted from the nature of man, and that to fulfil its laws was to abide by that principle from the fulfilment of which happiness is to spring. The few pages here given are all that he left on this subject.

The fragment marked as second in these "Speculations on Morals" is remarkable for its subtlety and truth. I found it on a single leaf, disjoined from any other subject.—It gives the true key to the history of man; and above all, to those rules of conduct whence mutual happiness has its source and security.

This concludes the essays and fragments of Shelley. I do not give them as the whole that he left, but as the most interesting portion. A Treatise on Political Reform and other fragments remain, to be published when his works assume a complete shape.

I do not know why Shelley selected the "Ion" of Plato to translate. Probably because he thought it characteristic; that it unfolded peculiar ideas, and those Platonic, with regard to poetry; and gave insight into portions of Athenian manners, pursuits, and views, which would have been otherwise lost to us. We find manifestation here of the exceeding partiality felt by the Greeks, for every exhibition of eloquence. It testifies that love of interchanging and enlarging ideas by conversation, which in modern society, through our domestic system of life, is too often narrowed to petty objects, and which, from their fashion of conversing in streets and in public places, became a passion far more intense than with us. Among those who ministered exclusively to this taste, were the rhapsodists; and among rhapsodists, Ion himself tells us, he was the most eminent of his day; that he was a man of enthusiastic and poetical temperament, and abundantly gifted with the power of arranging his thoughts in glowing and fascinating language, his success proves. But he was singularly deficient in reason. When Socrates presses on him the question of, whether he as a rhapsodist is as well versed in nautical, hippodromic, and other arts, as sailors, charioteers, and various artisans? he gives up the point with the most foolish inanity. One would fancy that practice in his pursuit would have caused him to reply, that though he was neither mariner nor horseman, nor practically skilled in any other of the pursuits in question, yet that he had consulted men versed in them; and enriching his mind with the knowledge afforded by adepts in all arts, he was better qualified by study and by his gift of language and enthusiasm to explain these, as they form a portion of Homer's poetry, than any individual whose knowledge was limited to one subject only. But Ion had no such scientific view of his profession. He gives up point after point, till, as Socrates observes, he most absurdly strives at victory, under the form of an expert leader of armies. In this, as in all the other of Plato's writings, we are perpetually referred, with regard to the enthusiastic and ideal portion of our intellect, to something above and beyond our sphere, the inspiration of the God—the influence exercised over the human mind, either through the direct agency of the deities, or our own half-blind memory of divine knowledge acquired by the soul in its antenatal state. Shelley left Ion imperfect—I thought it better that it should appear as a whole—but at the same time have marked with brackets the passages that have been added; the rest appears exactly as Shelley left it.

Respect for the name of Plato as well as that of Shelley, and reliance on the curiosity

* See p. 62.
that the English reader must feel with regard to the sealed book of the Ancient Wonder,
caus'd me to include in this volume the fragment of "Menexenus," and passages from
"The Republic." In the first we have another admirable specimen of Socratic irony. In
the latter the opinions and views of Plato enounced in "The Republic," which appeared
remarkable to Shelley, are preserved, with the addition, in some instances, of his own brief
observations on them.

The rest of the volume is chiefly composed of letters. "The Journal of a Six Weeks' Tour,"
and "Letters from Geneva," were published many years ago by Shelley himself. The Journal
is singular, from the circumstance that it was not written for publication, and was deemed
too trivial for such by its author. Shelley caused it to be printed, and added to it his own
letters, which contain some of the most beautiful descriptions ever written. The Letters
from Italy, which are addressed to the same gentleman as the recipient of the Letters from
Geneva, are in a similar spirit of observation and remark. The reader can only regret that
they are so few, and that one or two are missing. The eminent German writer, Jean Paul
Richter, says, that "to describe any scene well, the poet must make the bosom of a man
his camera obscura, and look at it through this." Shelley pursues this method in all his
descriptions; he always, as he says himself, looks beyond the actual object, for an internal
meaning, typified, illustrated, or caused by the external appearance. Adoring beauty, he
endeavoured to define it; he was convinced that the canons of taste, if known, are irre-
fragable; and that these are to be sought in the most admirable works of art; he therefore
studied intently, and with anxious scrutiny, the parts in detail, and their harmony as a
whole, to discover what tends to form a beautiful or sublime work.

The loss of our beloved child at Rome, which drove us northward in trembling fear for
the one soon after born, and the climate of Florence disagreeing so exceedingly with Shelley,
he ceased at Pisa to be conversant with paintings and sculpture; a circumstance he deplores
in one of his letters, and in many points of view to be greatly regretted.

His letters to Mr. and Mrs. Giaborne, and to Mr. Reveley, the son of the latter by a former
marriage, display that helpful and generous benevolence and friendship which was Shelley's
characteristic. He set on foot the project of a steam-boat to ply between Marseilles and Leghorn,
for their benefit, as far as pecuniary profit might accrue; at the same time that he took a fervent
interest in the undertaking, for its own sake. It was not puerile vanity, but a nobler feeling of
honest pride, that made him enjoy the idea of being the first to introduce steam navigation into
the Gulf of Lyons, and to glory in the consciousness of being in this manner useful to his fellow-
creatures. Unfortunately, he was condemned to experience a failure. The prospects and views
of our friends drew them to England, and the boat and the engine were abandoned. Shelley
was deeply disappointed; yet it will be seen how generously he exculpates our friend to
themselves, and relieves them from the remorse they might naturally feel for having thus wasted
his money and disappointed his desires. It will be remembered that Shelley addressed a poetical
letter to Mrs. Giaborne, when that lady was absent in England; and I have mentioned, and in
some measure described her, in my notes to the poems. "Mrs. Giaborne had been a friend of
my father in her younger days. She was a lady of great accomplishments, and charming from
her frank affectionate nature. She had a most intense love of knowledge, a delicate and
trembling sensibility, and preserved freshness of mind after a life of considerable adversity. As
a favourite friend of my father, we had sought her with eagerness, and the most open and cordial
friendship subsisted between us."
The letters to Leigh Hunt have already been published. They are monuments of the friendship which he felt for the man to whom he dedicated his tragedy of "The Cenci," in terms of warm and just eulogium. I have obtained but few to other friends. He had, indeed, not more than one or two other correspondents. I have added such letters as, during our brief separations in Italy, were addressed to myself; precious relics of love, kindness, gentleness, and wisdom. I have but one fault to find with them, or with Shelley, in my union with him. His inexpressible tenderness of disposition made him delight in giving pleasure, and, urged by this feeling, he praised too much. Nor were his endeavours to exalt his correspondent in her own eyes founded on this feeling only. He had never read "Wilhelm Meister," but I have heard him say that he regulated his conduct towards his friends by a maxim which I found afterwards in the pages of Goethe—"When we take people merely as they are, we make them worse; when we treat them as if they were what they should be, we improve them as far as they can be improved." This rule may perhaps admit of dispute, and it may be argued that truth and frankness produce better fruits than the most generous deceit. But when we consider the difficulty of keeping our best virtues free from self-blindness and self-love, and recollect the intolerance and fault-finding that usually blots social intercourse; and compare such with the degree of forbearance and imaginative sympathy, so to speak, which such a system necessitates, we must think highly of the generosity and self-abnegation of the man who regulated his conduct undeviatingly by it.

Can anything be more beautiful than these letters? They are adorned by simplicity, tenderness, and generosity, combined with manly views, and acute observation. His practical opinions may be found here. His indignant detestation of political oppression did not prevent him from deprecating the smallest approach to similar crimes on the part of his own party; and he abjured revenge and retaliation, while he strenuously advocated reform. He felt assured that there would be a change for the better in our institutions; he feared bloodshed, he feared the ruin of many. Wedded as he was to the cause of public good, he would have hailed the changes that since his time have so signally ameliorated our institutions and opinions, each acting on the other, and which still, we may hope, are proceeding towards the establishment of that liberty and toleration which he worshipped. "The thing to fear," he observes, "will be, that the change should proceed too fast—it must be gradual to be secure."

I do not conceal that I am far from satisfied with the tone in which the criticisms on Shelley are written. Some among these writers praise the poetry with enthusiasm, and even discrimination; but none understand the man. I hope this volume will set him in a juster point of view. If it be alleged in praise of Goethe that he was an artist as well as a poet; that his principles of composition, his theories of wisdom and virtue, and the ends of existence, rested on a noble and secure basis; not less does that praise belong to Shelley. His Defence of Poetry is alone sufficient to prove that his views were, in every respect, defined and complete; his faith in good continued firm, and his respect for his fellow-creatures was unimpaired by the wrongs he suffered. Every word of his letters displays that modesty, that forbearance, and mingled meekness and resolution that, in my mind, form the perfection of man. "Gentle, brave, and generous," he describes the Poet in Alastor: such he was himself, beyond any man I have ever known. To these admirable qualities were added, his genius. He had but one defect—which was his leaving his life incomplete by an early death. O that the serener hopes of maturity, the happier contentment of mid-life, had descended on his dear head, to-calm the turbulence of youthful impetuosity—that he had lived to see his country advance towards freedom, and to enrich the world with his own virtues and genius in their completion of experience and power!
I think that such things might have been, and of my own share in such good and happiness; the pang occasioned by his loss can never pass away—and I gain resignation only by believing that he was spared much suffering, and that he has passed into a sphere of being, better adapted to his inexpressible tenderness, his generous sympathies, and his richly gifted mind. That, free from the physical pain to which he was a martyr, and unshackled by the fleshly bars and imperfect senses which hedged him in on earth, he enjoys beauty, and good, and love there, where those to whom he was united on earth by various ties of affection, sympathy, and admiration, may hope to join him.

Putney, December, 1830.
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ESSAYS, &c.
"That thou, O my Brother, impart to me truly how it stands with thee in that inner man of thine; what lively images of things past thy memory has painted there; what hopes, what thoughts, affections, knowledge, do now dwell there. For this, and no other object that I can see, was the gift of hearing and speech bestowed on us two.—Thomas Carlyle.
A DEFENCE OF POETRY.

PART I.

According to one mode of regarding those two classes of mental action, which are called reason and imagination, the former may be considered as mind contemplating the relations borne by one thought to another, however produced; and the latter, as mind acting upon those thoughts so as to colour them with its own light, and composing from them, as from elements, other thoughts, each containing within itself the principle of its own integrity. The one is the τὸ νοεῖν, or the principle of synthesis, and has for its objects those forms which are common to universal nature and existence itself; the other is the τὸ λογιζομαι, or principle of analysis, and its action regards the relations of things, simply as relations; considering thoughts, not in their integral unity, but as the algebraical representations which conduct to certain general results. Reason is the enumeration of quantities already known; imagination is the perception of the value of those quantities, both separately and as a whole. Reason respects the differences, and imagination the similitudes of things. Reason is to imagination as the instrument to the agent, as the body to the spirit, as the shadow to the substance.

Poetry, in a general sense, may be defined to be "the expression of the imagination;" and poetry is connotate with the origin of man. Man is an instrument over which a series of external and internal impressions are driven, like the alternations of an ever-changing wind over an Αἰολικος lyre, which move it by their motion to ever-changing melody. But there is a principle within the human being, and perhaps within all sentient beings, which acts otherwise than in the lyre, and produces not melody, alone, but harmony, by an internal adjustment of the sounds or motions thus excited to the impressions which excite them. It is as if the lyre could accommodate its chords to the motions of that which strikes them, in a determined proportion of sound; even as the musician can accommodate his voice to the sound of the lyre. A child at play by itself will express its delight by its voice and motions; and every inflexion of tone and every gesture will bear exact relation to a corresponding antitype in the pleasurable impressions which awakened it; it will be the reflected image of that impression; and as the lyre trembles and sounds after the wind has died away, so the child seeks, by prolonging in its voice and motions the duration of the effect, to prolong also a consciousness of the cause. In relation to the objects which delight a child, these expressions are, what poetry is to higher objects. The savage (for the savage is to ages what the child is to years) expresses the emotions produced in him by surrounding objects in a similar manner; and language and gesture, together with plastic or pictorial imitation, become the image of the combined effect of those objects, and of his apprehension of them. Man in society, with all his passions and his pleasures, next becomes the object of the passions and pleasures of man; an additional class of emotions produces an augmented treasure of expressions; and language, gesture, and the imitative arts, become at once the representation and the medium, the pencil and the picture, the chisel and the statue, the chord and the harmony. The social sympathies, or those laws from which, as from its elements, society results, begin to develop themselves from the moment that two human beings coexist; the
A DEFENCE OF POETRY.

future is contained within the present, as the plant within the seed; and equality, diversity, unity, contrast, mutual dependance, become the principles alone capable of affording the motives according to which the will of a social being is determined to action, inasmuch as he is social; and constitute pleasure in sensation, virtue in sentiment, beauty in art, truth in reasoning, and love in the interchange of kind. Hence men, even in the infancy of society, observe a certain order in their words and actions, distinct from that of the objects and the impressions represented by them, all expression being subject to the laws of that from which it proceeds. But let us dismiss these more general considerations which might involve an inquiry into the principles of society itself, and restrict our view to the manner in which the imagination is expressed upon its forms.

In the youth of the world, men dance and sing and imitate natural objects, observing in these actions, as in all others, a certain rhythm or order. And, although all men observe a similar, they observe not the same order, in the motions of the dance, in the melody of the song, in the combinations of language, in the series of their imitations of natural objects. For there is a certain order or rhythm belonging to each of these classes of mimetic representation, from which the hearer and the spectator receive an intenser and purer pleasure than from any other: the sense of an approximation to this order has been called taste by modern writers. Every man in the infancy of art, observes an order which approximates more or less closely to that from which this highest delight results: but the diversity is not sufficiently marked, as that its gradation should be sensible, except in those instances where the predominance of this faculty of approximation to the beautiful (for so we may be permitted to name the relation between this highest pleasure and its cause) is very great. Those in whom it exists in excess are poets, in their own minds, communicates itself to others, and gathers a sort of reduplication from that community. Their language is vitally metaphorical; that is, it marks the before unapprehended relations of things and perpetuates their apprehension, until the words which represent them, become, through time, signs for portions or classes of thoughts instead of pictures of integral thoughts; and then if no new poets should arise to create afresh the associations which have been thus disorganised, language will be dead to all the nobler purposes of human intercourse. These similitudes or relations are finely said by Lord Bacon to be "the same footsteps of nature impressed upon the various subjects of the world"—and he considers the faculty which perceives them as the storehouse of axioms common to all knowledge. In the infancy of society every author is necessarily a poet, because language itself is poetry; and to be a poet is to apprehend the true and the beautiful, in a word, the good which exists in the relations, subsisting, first between existence and perception, and secondly between perception and expression. Every original language near to its source is in itself the chaos of a cyclic poem: the copiousness of lexicography and the distinctions of grammar are the works of a later age, and are merely the catalogue and the form of the creations of poetry.

But poets, or those who imagine and express this indestructible order, are not only the authors of language and of music, of the dance, and architecture, and stationary, and painting; they are the inventors of laws, and the founders of civil society, and the inventors of the arts of life, and the teachers, who draw into a certain pro-pinquity with the beautiful and the true, that partial apprehension of the agencies of the invisible world which is called religion. Hence all original religions are allegorical, or susceptible of allegory, and, like Janus, have a double face of false and true. Poets, according to the circumstances of the age and nation in which they appeared, were called, in the earlier epochs of the world, legislators, or prophets: a poet essentially comprises and unites both these characters. For he not only beholds intensely the present as it is, and discovers those laws according to which present things ought to be ordered, but he beholds the future in the present, and his thoughts are the germs of the flower and the fruit of latest time. Not that I assert poets to be prophets in the gross sense of the word, or that they can foretell the form as surely as they foreknow the spirit of events: such is the pretense of superstition, which would make poetry an attribute of prophecy, rather than prophecy an attribute of poetry. A poet participates in the eternal, the infinite, and the one; as far as relates to his conceptions, time and place and number are not. The grammatical forms which express the moods of time, and the difference of persons, and the distinction of place, are convertible with respect to the highest poetry without injuring it as poetry; and the choruses of Æschylus, and the book of Job, and Dante's Paradise, would afford, more
than any other writings, examples of this fact, if the limits of this essay did not forbid citation. The creations of sculpture, painting, and music, are illustrations still more decisive.

Language, colour, form, and religious and civil habits of action, are all the instruments and materials of poetry; they may be called poetry by that figure of speech which considers the effect as a synonyme of the cause. But poetry in a more restricted sense expresses those arrangements of language, and especially metrical language, which are created by that imperial faculty, whose throne is curtained within the invisible nature of man. And this springs from the nature itself of language, which is a more direct representation of the actions and passions of our internal being, and is susceptible of more various and delicate combinations, than colour, form, or motion, and is more plastic and obedient to the control of that faculty of which it is the creation. For language is arbitrarily produced by the imagination, and has relation to thoughts alone; but all other materials, instruments, and conditions of art, have relations among each other, which limit and interpose between conception and expression. The former is as a mirror which reflects, the latter as a cloud which enfeebles, the light of which both are mediums of communication. Hence the fame of sculptors, painters, and musicians, although the intrinsic powers of the great masters of these arts may yield in no degree to that of those who have employed language as the hieroglyphic of their thoughts, has never equalled that of poets in the restricted sense of the term; as two performers of equal skill will produce unequal effects from a guitar and a harp. The fame of legislators and founders of religions, so long as their institutions last, alone seems to exceed that of poets in the restricted sense; but it can scarcely be a question, whether, if we deduct the celebrity which their periods, but with little success. Lord Bacon was a poet. His language has a sweet and majestic rhythm, which satisfies the sense, no less than the almost superhuman wisdom of his philosophy satisfies the intellect; it is a strain which distends, and then bursts the circumference of the reader's mind, and pours itself forth together with it into the universal element with which it has perpetual sympathy. All the authors of revolutions in opinion are not only necessarily poets as they are inventors, nor even as their words unveil the permanent analogy of things by images which participate in the life of truth; but as their periods are harmonious and rhythmical, and contain in themselves the elements of verse; being the echo...
of the eternal music. Nor are those supreme poets, who have employed traditional forms of rhythm or account of the form and action of their subjects, less capable of perceiving and teaching the truth of things, than those who have omitted that form. Shakspeare, Dante, and Milton (to confine ourselves to modern writers) are philosophers of the very loftiest power.

A poem is the very image of life expressed in its eternal truth. There is this difference between a story and a poem, that a story is a catalogue of detached facts, which have no other connexion than time, place, circumstance, cause and effect; the other is the creation of actions according to the unchangeable forms of human nature, as existing in the mind of the Creator, which is itself the image of all other minds. The one is partial, and applies only to a definite period of time, and a certain combination of events which can never again recur; the other is universal, and contains within itself the germ of a relation to whatever motives or actions have place in the possible varieties of human nature. Time, which destroys the beauty and the use of the detached facts, which have no other connexion than that which should be beautiful: poetry is a mirror which makes beautiful that which is distorted.

A singlesentence may be considered as a whole, without the composition as a whole being a poem. A single sentence may be considered as a whole, though it may be found in the midst of a series of unassimilated portions; a single word even may be a spark of inextinguishable thought. And thus all the great historians, Herodotus, Plutarch, Livy, were poets; and although the plan of those writers, especially that of Livy, restrained them from developing this faculty in its highest degree, they made copious and ample amends for their subject, by filling all the interstices of their subjects with living images.

Having determined what is poetry, and who are poets, let us proceed to estimate its effects upon society.

Poetry is ever accompanied with pleasure: all spirits on which it falls open themselves to receive the wisdom which is mingled with its delight. In the infancy of the world, neither poets themselves nor their auditors were fully aware of the excellence of poetry: for it acts in a divine and unapprehended manner, beyond and above consciousness; and it is reserved for future genera-

A DEFENCE OF POETRY.

tions to contemplate and measure the mighty cause and effect in all the strength and splendour of their union. Even in modern times, no living poet ever arrived at the fulness of his fame; the jury which sits in judgment upon a poet, belonging as he does to all time, must be composed of his peers: it must be impaneled by Time from the selectest of the wise of many generations. A poet is a nightingale, who sits in darkness and sings to cheer its own solitude with sweet sounds; his auditors are as men entranced by the melody of an unseen musician, who feel that they are moved and softened, yet know not whence or why. The poems of Homer and his contemporaries were the delight of infant Greece; they were the elements of that social system which is the column upon which all succeeding civilization has reposed. Homer embodied the ideal perfection of his age in human character; nor can we doubt that those who read his verses were awakened to an ambition of becoming like to Achilles, Hector, and Ulysses: the truth and beauty of friendship, patriotism, and persevering devotion to an object, were unveiled to the depths in these immortal creations: the sentiments of the auditors must have been refined and enlarged by a sympathy with such great and lovely impersonations, until from admiring they imitated, and from imitation they identified themselves with the objects of their admiration. Nor let it be objected, that these characters are remote from moral perfection, and that they can by no means be considered as edifying patterns for general imitation. Every epoch, under names more or less specious, has deified its peculiar errors: Revenge is the naked idol of the worship of a semi-barbarous age; and Self-deceit is the veiled image of unknown evil, before which luxury and satiety lie prostrate. But a poet considers the vices of his contemporaries as the temporary dress in which his creations must be arrayed, and which cover without concealing the eternal proportions of their beauty. An epic or dramatic personage is understood to wear them around his soul, as he may the ancient armour or the modern uniform around his body; whilst it is easy to conceive a dress more graceful than either. The beauty of the internal nature cannot be so far concealed by its accidental vesture, but that the spirit of its form shall communicate itself to the very disguise, and indicate the shape it hides from the manner in which it is worn. A majestic form and graceful motions will express themselves through the most barbarous and tasteless costume. Few poets of the highest class have chosen to exhibit the beauty of their conceptions in its naked truth and splendour; and it is doubtful whether the alloy of
costume, habit, &c., be not necessary to temper
this planetary music for mortal ears.

The whole objection, however, of the immorality
of poetry rests upon a misconception of the manner
in which poetry acts to produce the moral improve-
ment of man. Ethical science arranges the ele-
ments which poetry has created, and propounds
schemes and proposes examples of civil and do-
mestic life: nor is it for want of admirable doc-
trines that men hate, and despise, and censure,
and deceive, and subjugate one another. But
poetry acts in another and diviner manner. It
awakens and enlarges the mind itself by rendering
it the receptacle of a thousand unapprehended
combinations of thought. Poetry lifts the veil from
the hidden beauty of the world, and makes fami-
 liar objects be as if they were not familiar; it
reproduces all that it represents, and the impres-
sions clothed in its Elysian light stand thence-
forward in the minds of those who have once con-
templated them, as memorials of that gentle and
exalted content which extends itself over all
time, in his poetical creations, which participate
in the dictates of the beautiful and the true, as
during the century which preceded the death of
Socrates. Of no other epoch in the history of our
species have we records and fragments stamped
so visibly with the image of the divinity in man.
But it is poetry alone, in form, in action, or in
language, which has rendered this epoch memorable
above all others, and the storehouse of examples
to everlasting time. For written poetry existed
at that epoch simultaneously with the other arts,
and it is an idle inquiry to demand which gave and
which received the light, which all, as from a com-
mon focus, have scattered over the darkest periods
of succeeding time. We know no more of cause
and effect than a constant conjunction of events:
poetry is ever found to co-exist with whatever other
arts except with the beautiful which exists in thought, action,
or person, not our own. A man, to be greatly
good, must imagine intensely and comprehensively;
he must put himself in the place of another and of
many others; the pains and pleasures of his spe-
cies must become his own. The great instrument
of moral good is the imagination; and poetry ad-
ministers to the effect by acting upon the cause.
Poetry enlarges the circumference of the imagina-
tion by replenishing it with thoughts of ever new
delight, which have the power of attracting and
assimilating to their own nature all other thoughts,
and which form new intervals and interstices whose
void for ever craves fresh food. Poetry strength-
ens the faculty which is the organ of the moral
nature of man, in the same manner as exercise
strengthens a limb. A poet therefore would do
ill to embody his own conceptions of right and
wrong, which are usually those of his place and
time, in his poetical creations, which participate
in neither. By this assumption of the inferior office
of interpreting the effect, in which perhaps after
all he might acquit himself but imperfectly, he
would resign a glory in a participation in the
cause. There was little danger that Homer, or
any of the eternal poets, should have so far mis-
understood themselves as to have abdicated this
throne of their widest dominion. Those in whom
the poetical faculty, though great, is less intense,
as Euripides, Lucan, Tasso, Spenser, have fre-
quently affected a moral aim, and the effect of
their poetry is diminished in exact proportion to
the degree in which they compel us to advert to
this purpose.

Homer and the cyclic poets were followed at a
certain interval by the dramatic and lyrical poets
of Athens, who flourished contemporaneously with
all that is most perfect in the kindred expressions
of the poetical faculty; architecture, painting,
music, the dance, sculpture, philosophy, and we
may add, the forms of civil life. For although the
scheme of Athenian society was deformed by many
imperfections which the poetry existing in chivalry
and Christianity has erased from the habits and
institutions of modern Europe; yet never at any
other period has so much energy, beauty, and virtue,
been developed; never was blind strength and
stubborn form so disciplined and rendered subject
to the will of man, or that will less repugnant to
the dictates of the beautiful and the true, as
during the century which preceded the death of
Socrates. Of no other epoch in the history of our
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which received the light, which all, as from a com-
mon focus, have scattered over the darkest periods
of succeeding time. We know no more of cause
and effect than a constant conjunction of events:
poetry is ever found to co-exist with whatever other
arts contribute to the happiness and perfection of
man. I appeal to what has already been esta-
dlished to distinguish between the cause and the
effect.

It was at the period here adverted to, that the
drama had its birth; and however a succeeding
writer may have equalled or surpassed those few
great specimens of the Athenian drama which have
been preserved to us, it is indisputable that the
art itself never was understood or practised accord-
ing to the true philosophy of it, as at Athens. For
the Athenians employed language, action, music,
painting, the dance, and religious institutions,
to produce a common effect in the representation
of the highest idealisms of passion and of power;
each division in the art was made perfect in its
kind by artists of the most consummate skill, and
was disciplined into a beautiful proportion and
unity one towards the other. On the modern
stage a few only of the elements capable of express-
ing the image of the poet's conception are em-
ployed at once. We have tragedy without music
and dancing; and music and dancing without the highest impersonations of which they are the fit accompaniment, and both without religion and solemnity. Religious institution has indeed been usually banished from the stage. Our system of divesting the actor's face of a mask, on which the many expressions appropriated to his dramatic character might be moulded into one permanent and unchanging expression, is favourable only to a partial and inharmonious effect; it is fit for nothing but a monologue, where all the attention may be directed to some great master of ideal mimicry. The modern practice of blending comedy with tragedy, though liable to great abuse in point of practice, is undoubtedly an extension of the dramatic circle; but the comedy should be as in King Lear, universal, ideal, and sublime. It is perhaps the intervention of this principle which determines the balance in favour of King Lear against the OEdipus Tyrannus or the Agamemnon, or, if you will, the trilogies with which they are connected; unless the intense power of the choral poetry, especially that of the latter, should be considered as restoring the equilibrium. King Lear, if it can sustain this comparison, may be judged to be the most perfect specimen of the dramatic art existing in the world; in spite of the narrow conditions to which the poet was subjected by the ignorance of the philosophy of the drama which has prevailed in modern Europe. Calderon, in his religious Autoes, has attempted to fulfil some of the high conditions of dramatic representation neglected by Shakspere; such as the establishing a relation between the drama and religion, and the accommodating them to music and dancing; but he omits the observation of conditions still more important, and more is lost than gained by the substitution of the rigidly-defined and ever-repeated idealisms of a distorted superstition for the living impersonations of the truth of human passion.

But I digress.—The connexion of scenic exhibitions with the improvement or corruption of the manners of men, has been universally recognised: in other words, the presence or absence of poetry in its most perfect and universal form, has been found to be connected with good and evil in conduct or habit. The corruption which has been imputed to the drama as an effect, begins, when the poetry employed in its constitution ends: I appeal to the history of manners whether the periods of the growth of the one and the decline of the other have not corresponded with an exactness equal to any example of moral cause and effect.

The drama at Athens, or wherever else it may have approached to its perfection, ever coexisted with the moral and intellectual greatness of the age. The tragedies of the Athenian poets are as mirrors in which the spectator beholds himself, under a thin disguise of circumstance, stript of all but that ideal perfection and energy which every one feels to be the internal type of all that he loves, admires, and would become. The imagination is enlarged by a sympathy with pains and passions so mighty, that they distend in their conception the capacity of that by which they are conceived; the good affections are strengthened by pity, indignation, terror and sorrow; and an exalted calm is prolonged from the satisety of this high exercise of them into the tumult of familiar life: even crime is disarmed of half its horror and all its contagion by being represented as the fatal consequence of the unfathomable agencies of nature; error is thus divested of its wilfulness; men can no longer cherish it as the creation of their choice.

In a drama of the highest order there is little food for censure or hatred; it teaches rather self-knowledge and self-respect. Neither the eye nor the mind can see itself, unless reflected upon that which it resembles. The drama, so long as it continues to express poetry, is as a prismatic and many-sided mirror, which collects the brightest rays of human nature and divides and reproduces them from the simplicity of these elementary forms, and touches them with majesty and beauty, and multiplies all that it reflects, and endows it with the power of propagating its like wherever it may fall.

But in periods of the decay of social life, the drama sympathises with that decay. Tragedy becomes a cold imitation of the form of the great masterpieces of antiquity, divested of all harmonious accompaniment of the kindred arts; and often the very form misunderstood, or a weak attempt to teach certain doctrines, which the writer considers as moral truths; and which are usually no more than specious flatteries of some gross vice or weakness, with which the author, in common with his auditors, are infected. Hence what has been called the classical and domestic drama. Addi-son's "Cato" is a specimen of the one; and would it were not superfluous to cite examples of the other! To such purposes poetry cannot be made subservient. Poetry is a sword of lightning, ever unsheathed, which consumes the scabbard that even crime is disarmed of half its horror and all its contagion by being represented as the fatal consequence of the unfathomable agencies of nature; error is thus divested of its wilfulness; men can no longer cherish it as the creation of their choice.

But in periods of the decay of social life, the drama sympathises with that decay. Tragedy becomes a cold imitation of the form of the great masterpieces of antiquity, divested of all harmonious accompaniment of the kindred arts; and often the very form misunderstood, or a weak attempt to teach certain doctrines, which the writer considers as moral truths; and which are usually no more than specious flatteries of some gross vice or weakness, with which the author, in common with his auditors, are infected. Hence what has been called the classical and domestic drama. Addi-son's "Cato" is a specimen of the one; and would it were not superfluous to cite examples of the other! To such purposes poetry cannot be made subservient. Poetry is a sword of lightning, ever unsheathed, which consumes the scabbard that would contain it. And thus we observe that all dramatic writings of this nature are unimaginative in a singular degree; they affect sentiment and passion, which, divested of imagination, are other names for caprice and appetite. The period in our own history of the grossest degradation of the drama is the reign of Charles II., when all forms in which poetry had been accustomed to be expressed became hymns to the triumph of kingl
power over liberty and virtue. Milton stood alone illuminating an age unworthy of him. At such periods the calculating principle pervades all the forms of dramatic exhibition, and poetry ceases to be expressed upon them. Comedy loses its ideal universality: wit succeeds to humour; we laugh from self-complacency and triumph, instead of pleasure; malignity, sarcasm, and contempt, succeed to sympathetic merriment; we hardly laugh, but we smile. Obscenity, which is ever blasphemy against the divine beauty in life, becomes, from the very veil which it assumes, more active if less disgusting: it is a monster for which the corruption of society ever brings forth new food, which it devours in secret.

The drama being that form under which a greater number of modes of expression of poetry are susceptible of being combined than any other, the connexion of poetry and social good is more observable in the drama than in whatever other form. And it is indisputable that the highest perfection of human society has ever corresponded with the highest dramatic excellence; and that the corruption or the extinction of the drama in a nation where it has once flourished, is a mark of a corruption of manners, and an extinction of the energies which sustain the soul of social life. But, as Machiavelli says of political institutions, that life may be preserved and renewed, if men should arise capable of bringing back the drama to its principles. And this is true with respect to poetry in its most extended sense: all language, institution and form, require not only to be produced but to be sustained: the office and character of a poet participates in the divine nature as regards providence, no less than as regards creation.

Civil war, the spoils of Asia, and the fatal predominance first of the Macedonian, and then of the Roman arms, were so many symbols of the extinction or suspension of the creative faculty in Greece. The bucolic writers, who found patronage under the lettered tyrants of Sicily and Egypt, were the latest representatives of its most glorious reign. Their poetry is intensely melodious; like the odour of the tuberose, it overcomes and sickens the spirit with excess of sweetness; whilst the poetry of the preceding age was as a meadow-gale of June, which mingles the fragrance of all the flowers of the field, and adds a quickening and harmonising spirit of its own which endows the sense with a power of sustaining its extreme delight. The bucolic and erotic delicacy in written poetry is correlative with that softness in statuary, music, and the kindred arts, and even in manners and institutions, which distinguished the epoch to which I now refer. Nor is it the poetical faculty itself, or any misapplication of it, to which this want of harmony is to be imputed. An equal sensibility to the influence of the senses and the affections is to be found in the writings of Homer and Sophocles: the former, especially, has clothed sensual and pathetic images with irresistible attractions. Their superiority over these succeeding writers consists in the presence of those thoughts which belong to the inner faculties of our nature, not in the absence of those which are connected with the external: their incomparable perfection consists in a harmony of the union of all. It is not what the erotic poets have, but what they have not, in which their perfection consists. It is not inasmuch as they were poets, but inasmuch as they were not poets, that they can be considered with any plausibility as connected with the corruption of their age. Had that corruption availed so as to extinguish in them the sensibility to pleasure, passion, and natural scenery, which is imputed to them as an imperfection, the last triumph of evil would have been achieved. For the end of social corruption is to destroy all sensibility to pleasure; and, therefore, it is corruption. It begins at the imagination and the intellect as at the core, and distributes itself thence as a paralysing venom, through the affections into the very appetites, until all become a torpid mass in which hardly sense survives. At the approach of such a period, poetry ever addresses itself to those faculties which are the last to be destroyed, and its voice is heard, like the footsteps of Astrea, departing from the world. Poetry ever communicates all the pleasure which men are capable of receiving: it is ever still the light of life; the source of whatever of beautiful or generous or true can have place in an evil time. It will readily be confessed that those among the luxurious citizens of Syracuse and Alexandria, who were delighted with the poems of Theocritus, were less cold, cruel, and sensual than the remnant of their tribe. But corruption must utterly have destroyed the fabric of human society before poetry can ever cease. The sacred links of that chain have never been entirely disjoined, which descending through the minds of many men is attached to those great minds, whence as from a magnet the invisible effluence is sent forth, which at once connects, animates, and sustains the life of all. It is the faculty which contains within itself the seeds at once of its own and of social renovation. And let us not circumscribe the effects of the bucolic and erotic poetry within the limits of the sensibility of those to whom it was addressed. They may have perceived the beauty of those immortal compositions, simply as fragments and isolated portions; those who are more finely organised, or
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born in a happier age, may recognise them as episodes to that great poem, which all poets, like the co-operating thoughts of one great mind, have built up since the beginning of the world.

The same revolutions within a narrower sphere had place in ancient Rome; but the actions and forms of its social life never seem to have been perfectly saturated with the poetical element. The Romans appear to have considered the Greeks as the selectest treasuries of the selectest forms of manners and of nature, and to have abstained from creating in measured language, sculpture, music, or architecture, any thing which might bear a particular relation to their own condition, whilst it should bear a general one to the universal constitution of the world. But we judge from partial evidence, and we judge perhaps partially. Ennius, Varro, Pacuvius, and Accius, all great poets, have been lost. Lucretius is in the highest, and Virgil in a very high sense, a creator. The chosen delicacy of expressions of the latter, are as a mist of light which conceal from us the intense and exceeding truth of his conceptions of nature. Livy is instinct with poetry. Yet Horace, Catullus, Ovid, ing truth of his conceptions of nature. Livy is

Greece. The institutions also, and the religion of Rome, were less poetical than those of Greece, as the shadow is less vividthan the substance. Hence poetry in Rome, seemed to follow, rather than accompany, the perfection of political and domestic society. The true poetry of Rome lived in its institutions; for whatever of beautiful, true, and majestic, they contained, could have sprung only from the faculty which creates the order in which they consist. The life of Camillus, the death of Regulus; the expectation of the senators, in their godlike state, of the victorious Gauls; the refusal of the republic to make peace with Hannibal, after the battle of Cannae, were not the consequences of a refined calculation of the probable personal advantage to result from such a rhythm and order in the shows of life, to those who were at once the poets and the actors of these immortal dramas. The imagination beholding the beauty of this order, created it out of itself according to its own idea; the consequence was empire, and the reward everlasting fame. These things are not the less poetry, quia carent ratio sacra. They are the episodes of that cyclic poem written by Time upon the memories of men. The Past, like an inspired rhapsodist, fills the theatre of everlasting generations with their harmony.

At length the ancient system of religion and manners had fulfilled the circle of its revolutions. And the world would have fallen into utter anarchy and darkness, but that there were found poets among the authors of the Christian and chivalric systems of manners and religion, who created forms of opinion and action never before conceived; which, copied into the imaginations of men, became as generals to the bewildered armies of their thoughts. It is foreign to the present purpose to touch upon the evil produced by these systems: except that we protest, on the ground of the principles already established, that no portion of it can be attributed to the poetry they contain.

It is probable that the poetry of Moses, Job, David, Solomon, and Isaiah, had produced a great effect upon the mind of Jesus and his disciples. The scattered fragments preserved to us by the biographers of this extraordinary person, are all instinct with the most vivid poetry. But his doctrines seem to have been quickly distorted. At a certain period after the prevalence of a system of opinions founded upon those promulgated by him, the three forms into which Plato had distributed the faculties of mind underwent a sort of apotheosis, and became the object of the worship of the civilised world. Here it is to be confessed that "Light seems to thicken," and

"The crow makes wing to the rooky wood,
Good things of day begin to drop and drowse,
And night's black agents to their preys do course."

But mark how beautiful an order has sprung from the dust and blood of this fierce chaos! how the world, as from a resurrection, balancing itself on the golden wings of knowledge and of hope, has reasumed its yet unwearied flight into the heavens of time. Listen to the music, unheard by outward ears, which is as a ceaseless and invisible wind, nourishing its everlasting course with strength and swiftness.

The poetry in the doctrines of Jesus Christ, and the mythology and institutions of the Celtic conquerors of the Roman empire, outlived the darkness and the convulsions connected with their growth and victory, and blended themselves in a new fabric of manners and opinion. It is an error to impute the ignorance of the dark ages to the Christian doctrines or the predominance of the Celtic nations. Whatever of evil their agencies may have contained sprung from the extinction of the poetical principle, connected with the progress of despotism and superstition. Men, from causes too intricate to be here discussed, had become insensible and selfish: their own will had become feeble, and yet they were its slaves, and thence the slaves of the will of others: lust, fear, avarice, cruelty, and fraud, characterised a race amongst whom no one was to be found capable of creating in form, language, or institution. The moral
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Anomalies of such a state of society are not justly to be charged upon any class of events immediately connected with them, and those events are most entitled to our approbation which could dissolve it most expeditiously. It is unfortunate for those who cannot distinguish words from thoughts, that many of these anomalies have been incorporated into our popular religion.

It was not until the eleventh century that the effects of the poetry of the Christian and chivalric systems began to manifest themselves. The principle of equality had been discovered and applied by Plato in his Republic, as the theoretical rule of the mode in which the materials of pleasure and of power produced by the common skill and labour of human beings ought to be distributed among them. The limitations of this rule were asserted by him to be determined only by the sensibility of each, or the utility to result to all. Plato, following the doctrines of Timæus and Pythagoras, taught also a moral and intellectual system of doctrine, comprehending at once the past, the present, and the future condition of man. Jesus Christ divulged the sacred and eternal truths contained in these views to mankind, and Christianity, in its abstract purity, became the exoteric expression of the esoteric doctrines of the poetry and wisdom of antiquity. The incorporation of the Celtic nations with the exhausted population of the south, impressed upon it the figure of the poetry existing in their mythology and institutions. The result was a sum of the action and reaction of all the causes included in it; for it may be assumed as a maxim that no nation or religion can supersede any other without incorporating into itself a portion of that which it supersedes. The abolition of personal and domestic slavery, and the emancipation of women from a great part of the degrading restraints of antiquity, were among the consequences of these events.

The abolition of personal slavery is the basis of the highest political hope that it can enter into the mind of man to conceive. The freedom of women produced the poetry of sexual love. Love became a religion, the idols of whose worship were ever present. It was as if the statues of Apollo and the Muses had been endowed with life and motion, and had walked forth among their worshippers; so that earth became peopled by the inhabitants of a diviner world. The familiar appearance and proceedings of life became wonderful and heavenly, and a paradise was created as out of the wrecks of Eden. And as this creation itself is poetry, so its creators were poets; and language was the instrument of their art: "Galeotto fu il libro, e chi lo scrisse." The Provencal Trouveurs, or inventors, preceded Petrarch, whose verses are as spells, which unseal the inmost enchanted fountains of the delight which is in the grief of love. It is impossible to feel them without becoming a portion of that beauty which we contemplate: it were superfluous to explain how the gentleness and the elevation of mind connected with these sacred emotions can render men more amiable, more generous and wise, and lift them out of the dull vapours of the little world of self. Dante understood the secret things of love even more than Petrarch. His Vita Nuova is an inexhaustible fountain of purity of sentiment and language: it is the idealised history of that period, and those intervals of his life which were dedicated to love. His apotheosis of Beatrice in Paradise, and the gradations of his own love and her loveliness, by which as by steps he seems himself to have ascended to the throne of the Supreme Cause, is the most glorious imagination of modern poetry. The acutest critics have justly reversed the judgment of the vulgar, and the order of the great acts of the "Divine Drama," in the measure of the admiration which they accord to the Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise. The latter is a perpetual hymn of everlasting love. Love, which found a worthy poet in Plato alone of all the ancients, has been celebrated by a chorus of the greatest writers of the renovated world; and the music has penetrated the caverns of society, and its echoes still drown the dissonance of arms and superstition. At successive intervals, Ariosto, Tasso, Shakespeare, Spenser, Calderon, Rousseau, and the great writers of our own age, have celebrated the dominion of love, planting as it were trophies in the human mind of that sublimest victory over sensuality and force. The true relation borne to each other by the sexes into which human kind is distributed, has become less misunderstood; and if the error which confounded diversity with inequality of the powers of the two sexes has been partially recognised in the opinions and institutions of modern Europe, we owe this great benefit to the worship of which chivalry was the law, and poets the prophets.

The poetry of Dante may be considered as the bridge thrown over the stream of time, which unites the modern and ancient world. The distorted notions of invisible things which Dante and his rival Milton have idealised, are merely the mask and the mantle in which these great poets walk through eternity enveloped and disguised. It is a difficult question to determine how far they were conscious of the distinction which must have subsisted in their minds between their own creeds and that of the people. Dante at least appears to wish to mark the full extent of it by placing
Ripheus, whom Virgil calls justissimus unus, in Paradise, and observing a most heretical caprice in his distribution of rewards and punishments. And Milton's poem contains within itself a philosophical refutation of that system, of which, by a strange and natural antithesis, it has been a chief popular support. Nothing can exceed the energy and magnificence of the character of Satan as expressed in "Paradise Lost." It is a mistake to suppose that he could ever have been intended for the popular personification of evil. Implacable hate, patient cunning, and a sleepless refinement of device to inflict the extremest anguish on an enemy, these things are evil; and, although venial in a slave, are not to be forgiven in a tyrant; although redeemed by much that ennobles his defeat in one subdued, are marked by all that dishonours his conquest in the victor. Milton's Devil as a moral being is as far superior to his God, as one who perseveres in some purpose which he has conceived to be excellent in spite of adversity and torture, is to one who in the cold security of undoubted triumph inflicts the most horrible revenge upon his enemy, not from any mistaken notion of inducing him to repent of a perseverance in enmity, but with the alleged design of exasperating him to deserve new torments. Milton has so far violated the popular creed (if this shall be judged to be a violation) as to have alleged no superiority of moral virtue to his God over his Devil. And this bold neglect of a direct moral purpose is the most decisive proof of the supremacy of Milton's genius. He mingled as it were the elements of human nature as colours upon a single pallet, and arranged them in the composition of his great picture according to the laws of epic truth; that is, according to the laws of that principle by which a series of actions, flowing with the waters of wisdom and delight; and many yet lie covered in the ashes of their birth, and pregnant with a lightning which has yet found no conductor. All high poetry is infinite; it is as the first acorn, which contained all oakspotentially. Veil after veil may be undrawn, and the inmost naked beauty of the meaning never exposed. A great poem is a fountain for ever over-flowing with the waters of wisdom and delight; and after one person and one age has exhausted all its divine influence which their peculiar relations enable them to share, another and yet another succeeds, and new relations are ever developed, the source of an unforeseen and an unconceived delight.

The age immediately succeeding to that of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, was characterized by a revival of painting, sculpture, and architecture. Chaucer caught the sacred inspiration, and the superstructure of English literature is based upon the materials of Italian invention.

But let us not be betrayed from a defence into a critical history of poetry and its influence on society. Be it enough to have pointed out the

Dante and Milton were both deeply penetrated with the ancient religion of the civilized world; and its spirit exists in their poetry probably in the same proportion as its forms survived in the un-reformed worship of modern Europe. The one preceded and the other followed the Reformation at almost equal intervals. Dante was the first religious reformer, and Luther surpassed him rather in the rudeness and acrimony, than in the boldness of his censures of papal usurpation. Dante was the first awakener of enthranced Europe; he created a language, in itself music and persuasion, out of a chaos of inharmonious barbarism. He was the congregator of those great spirits who presided over the resurrection of learning; the Lucifer of that starry flock which in the thirteenth century shone forth from republican Italy, as from a heaven, into the darkness of the benighted world. His very words are instinct with spirit; each is as a spark, a burning atom of inextinguishable thought; and many yet lie covered in the ashes of their birth, and pregnant with a lightning which has yet found no conductor. All high poetry is infinite; it is as the first acorn, which contained all oaks potentially. Veil after veil may be undrawn, and the inmost naked beauty of the meaning never exposed. A great poem is a fountain for ever over-flowing with the waters of wisdom and delight; and after one person and one age has exhausted all its divine influence which their peculiar relations enable them to share, another and yet another succeeds, and new relations are ever developed, the source of an unforeseen and an unconceived delight.

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But let us not be betrayed from a defence into a critical history of poetry and its influence on society. Be it enough to have pointed out the
effects of poets, in the large and true sense of the word, upon their own and all succeeding times.

But poets have been challenged to resign the civic crown to reasoners and mechanists, on another plea. It is admitted that the exercise of the imagination is most delightful, but it is alleged, that that of reason is more useful. Let us examine as the grounds of this distinction, what is here meant by utility. Pleasure or good, in a general sense, is that which the consciousness of a sensitive and intelligent being seeks, and in which, when found, it acquiesces. There are two kinds of pleasure, one durable, universal and permanent; the other transitory and particular. Utility may either express the means of producing the former or the latter. In the former sense, whatever strengthens and purifies the affections, enlarges the imagination, and adds spirit to sense, is useful. But a narrower meaning may be assigned to the word utility, confining it to express that which is inseparable from the sweetest melody. The pleasure that is in sorrow is sweeter than the pleasure of pleasure itself. And hence the saying, "It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of mirth." Not that this highest species of pleasure is necessarily linked with pain. The delight of love and friendship, the ecstasy of the admiration of nature, the joy of the perception of eternal truths, charactered upon the imaginations of men. Whilst the mechanist abridges, and the civic crown to reasoners and mechanists, on another sense of the word utility, confining it to express that which is inseparable from the sweetest melody. The pleasure that is in sorrow is sweeter than the pleasure of pleasure itself. And hence the saying, "It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of mirth." Not that this highest species of pleasure is necessarily linked with pain. The delight of love and friendship, the ecstasy of the admiration of nature, the joy of the perception of eternal truths charactered upon the imaginations of men. Whilst the mechanist abridges, and the political economist combines labour, let them be-ware that their speculations, for want of correspondence with those first principles which belong to the imagination, do not tend, as they have in modern England, to exasperate at once the extremes of luxury and want. They have exemplified the saying, "To him that hath, more shall be given; and from him that hath not, the little that he hath shall be taken away." The rich have become richer, and the poor have become poorer; and the vessel of the state is driven between the Scylla and Charybdis of anarchy and despotism. Such are the effects which must ever flow from an unmitigated exercise of the calculating faculty. It is difficult to define pleasure in its highest sense; the definition involving a number of apparent paradoxes. For, from an inexplicable defect of harmony in the constitution of human nature, the pain of the inferior is frequently connected with the pleasures of the superior portions of our being. Sorrow, terror, anguish, despair itself, are often the chosen expressions of an approximation to the highest good. Our sympathy in tragic fiction depends on this principle; tragedy delights by affording a shadow of the pleasure which exists in pain. This is the source also of the melancholy which is inseparable from the sweetest melody. The pleasure that is in sorrow is sweeter than the pleasure of pleasure itself. And hence the saying, "It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of mirth." Not that this highest species of pleasure is necessarily linked with pain. The delight of love and friendship, the ecstasy of the admiration of nature, the joy of the perception of eternal truths, charactered upon the imaginations of men. Whilst the mechanist abridges, and the political economist combines labour, let them be-ware that their speculations, for want of correspondence with those first principles which belong to the imagination, do not tend, as they have in modern England, to exasperate at once the extremes of luxury and want. They have exemplified the saying, "To him that hath, more shall be given; and from him that hath not, the little that he hath shall be taken away." The rich have become richer, and the poor have become poorer; and the vessel of the state is driven between the Scylla and Charybdis of anarchy and despotism. Such are the effects which must ever flow from an unmitigated exercise of the calculating faculty. It is difficult to define pleasure in its highest sense; the definition involving a number of apparent paradoxes. For, from an inexplicable defect of

A DEFENCE OF POETRY.
wisdom, than we know how to reduce into prac- 
tice; we have more scientific and economical 
knowledge than can be accommodated to the just 
distribution of the produce which it multiplies. 
The poetry in these systems of thought, is con- 
cealed by the accumulation of facts and calculat- 
ing processes. There is no want of knowledge 
respecting what is wisest and best in morals, 
government, and political economy, or at least, 
what is wiser and better than what men now 
practise and endure. But we let "I dare not 
wait upon I would, like the poor cat in the 
adage." We want the creative faculty to imagine 
that which we know; we want the generous 
impulse to act that which we imagine; we want 
the poetry of life: our calculations have outrun 
conception; we have eaten more than we can 
digest. The cultivation of those sciences which 
have enlarged the limits of the empire of man 
over the external world, has, for want of the 
poetical faculty, proportionally circumscribed 
those of the internal world; and man, having enslaved 
the elements, remains himself a slave. To what 
but a cultivation of the mechanical arts in a 
degree disproportioned to the presence of the 
creative faculty, which is the basis of all know- ledge, and power and pleasure; by the other it 
engenders in the mind a desire to reproduce and 
reproduce the materialsof external life exceed 
the quantity of the power of assimilating them to 
the internal laws of human nature. The body 
has then become too unwieldy for that which 
animates it.

Poetry is indeed something divine. It is at 
least the centre and circumference of knowledge; 
it comprehends all science, and that 
which all science must be referred. It is at 
the same time the root and blossom of all other 
systems of thought; it is that from which all 
flow, and that which adorns all; and that 

which, if blighted, denies the fruit and the seed, 
and withholds from the barren world the nourish- ment and the succession of the scions of the tree of 
life. It is the perfect and consummate surface 
and bloom of all things; it is as the colour and 
the colour of the rose to the texture of the 
structures which compose it, as the form and splen- dour of unfaded beauty to the secrets of anatomy 
and corruption. What were virtue, love, patriot- 
ism, friendship—what were the scenery of this 
beautiful universe which we inhabit; what were 
our consolations on this side of the grave—and 
what were our aspirations beyond it, if poetry 
did not ascend to bring light and fire from those 
eternal regions where the owl-winged faculty of 
calculation dare not ever soar! Poetry is not 
like reasoning, a power to be exerted according to 
the determination of the will. A man cannot say, 
"I will compose poetry." The greatest poet even 
cannot say it; for the mind in creation is as a 
fading coal, which some invisible influence, like an 
inconstant wind, awakens to transitory brightness; 
this power arises from within, like the colour of a 
flower which fades and changes as it is developed,
and the conscious portions of our natures are 
unprophetic either of its approach or its depar- ture. Could this influence be durable in its 
original purity and force, it is impossible to 
predict the greatness of the results; but when com- position begins, inspiration is already on the de- 
cline, and the most glorious poetry that has ever 
been communicated to the world is probably a 
feeble shadow of the original conceptions of the 
poet. I appeal to the greatest poets of the present 
day, whether it is not an error to assert that the 
finest passages of poetry are produced by labour 
and study. The toll and the delay recommended 
by critics, can be justly interpreted to mean no 
more than a careful observation of the inspired 
moments, and an artificial connexion of the spaces 
between their suggestions by the intertexture of 
conventional expressions; a necessity only im- 
ploed by the limitedness of the poetical faculty 
itself; for Milton conceived the Paradise Lost as a 
whole before he executed it in portions. We 
have his own authority also for the muse having 
"dictated" to him the "unpremeditated song." 
And let this be an answer to those who would 
allow the fifty-six various readings of the first 
line of the Orlando Furioso. Compositions so 
produced are to poetry what mosaic is to painting. 
This instinct and intuition of the poetical faculty 
is still more observable in the plastic and pictorial 
arts; a great statue or picture grows under the 
power of the artist as a child in the mother's 
womb; and the very mind which directs the
Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds. We are aware of evanescent visitations of thought and feeling sometimes associated with place or person, sometimes regarding our own mind alone, and always arising unforeseen and departing unbidden, but elevating and delightful beyond all expression: so that even in the desire and the regret they leave, there cannot but be pleasure, participating as it does in the nature of its object. It is as it were the interpenetration of a diviner nature through our own; but its footsteps are like those of a wind over the sea, which the coming calm erases, and whose traces remain only, as on the wrinkled sand which paves it. These and corresponding conditions of being are experienced principally by those of the most delicate sensibility and the most enlarged imagination; and the state of mind produced by them is at war with every base desire. The enthusiasm of virtue, love, patriotism, and friendship, is essentially linked with such emotions; and whilst they last, self appears as what it is, an atom to a universe. Poets are not only subject to these experiences as spirits of the most refined organisation, but they can colour all that they combine with the evanescent hues of this ethereal world; a word, a trait in the representation of a scene or a passion, will touch the enchanted chord, and reanimate, in the sleeping, the cold, the buried image of the past. Poetry thus makes immortal all that is best and most beautiful in the world; it arrests the vanishing apparitions which haunt the interlusions of life, and veiling them, or in language or in form, sends them forth among mankind, bearing sweet news of kindred joy to those with whom their sisters abide—abide, because there is no portal of expression from the caverns of the spirit which they inhabit into the universe of things. Poetry redeems from decay the visitations of the divinity in man.

Poetry turns all things to loveliness; it exalts the beauty of that which is most beautiful, and it adds beauty to that which is most deformed; it marries exultation and horror, grief and pleasure, eternity and change; it subdues to union under its light yoke, all irreconcilable things. It transmutes all that it touches, and every form moving within the radiance of its presence is changed by wondrous sympathy to an incarnation of the spirit which it breathes: its secret alchemy turns to potable gold the poisonous waters which flow from death through life; it strips the veil of familiarity from the world, and lays bare the naked and sleeping beauty, which is the spirit of its forms.

All things exist as they are perceived; at least in relation to the percipient. "The mind is its own place, and of itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven." But poetry defeats the curse which binds us to be subjected to the accident of surrounding impressions. And whether it spreads its own figured curtain, or withdraws life's dark veil from before the scene of things, it equally creates for us a being within our being. It makes us the inhabitants of a world to which the familiar world is a chaos. It reproduces the common universe of which we are portions and percipients, and it purges from our inward sight the film of familiarity which obscures from us the wonder of our being. It compels us to feel that which we perceive, and to imagine that which we know. It creates anew the universe, after it has been annihilated in our minds by the recurrence of impressions blunted by reiteration. It justifies the bold and true words of Tasso: Non merita nome di creatore, se non Iddio ed il Poeta.

A poet, as he is the author to others of the highest wisdom, pleasure, virtue and glory, so he ought personally to be the happiest, the best, the wisest, and the most illustrious of men. As to his glory, let time be challenged to declare whether the fame of any other institution of human life be comparable to that of a poet. That he is the wisest, the happiest, and the best, inasmuch as he is a poet, is equally incontrovertible: the greatest poets have been men of the most spotless virtue, or the most consummate prudence, and, if we would look into the interior of their lives, the most fortunate of men: and the exceptions, as they regard those who possessed the poetic faculty in a high yet inferior degree, will be found on consideration to confine rather than destroy the rule. Let us for a moment stoop to the arbitration of popular breath, and usurping and uniting in our own persons the incompatible characters of accuser, witness, judge and executioner, let us decide without trial, testimony, or form, that certain motives of those who are "there sitting where we dare not soar," are reprehensible. Let us assume that Homer was a drunkard, that Virgil was a flatterer, that Horace was a coward, that Tasso was a madman, that Lord Bacon was a peculator, that Raphael was a libertine, that Spenser was a poet laureate. It is inconsistent with this division of our subject to cite living poets, but posterity has done ample justice to the great names now referred to. Their errors have been weighed and found to
have been dust in the balance; if their sins "were as scarlet, they are now white as snow:" they have been washed in the blood of the mediator and redeemer, Time. Observe in what a ludicrous chaos the imputations of real or fictitious crime have been confused in the contemporary calumnies against poetry and poets; consider how little is, as it appears—or appears, as it is; look to your own motives, and judge not, lest ye be judged.

Poetry, as has been said, differs in this respect from logic, that it is not subject to the control of the active powers of the mind, and that its birth and recurrence have no necessary connexion with the consciousness or will. It is presumptuous to determine that these are the necessary conditions of all mental causation, when mental effects are experienced unsusceptible of being referred to them. The frequent recurrence of the poetical power, it is obvious to suppose, may produce in the mind a habit of order and harmony correlatived with its own nature and with its effects upon other minds. But in the intervals of inspiration, and they may be frequent without being durable, a poet becomes a man, and is abandoned to the sudden reflux of the influences under which others habitually live. But as he is more delicately organised than other men, and sensible to pain and pleasure, both his own and that of others, in a degree unknown to them, he will avoid the one and pursue the other with an ardour proportioned to this difference. And he renders himself obnoxious to calumny, when he neglects to observe the circumstances under which these objects of universal pursuit and flight have disguised themselves in one another's garments.

But there is nothing necessarily evil in this error, and thus cruelty, envy, revenge, avarice, and the passions purely evil, have never formed any portion of the popular imputations on the lives of poets.

I have thought it most favourable to the cause of truth to set down these remarks according to the order in which they were suggested to my mind, by a consideration of the subject itself, instead of observing the formality of a polemical reply; but, if the view which they contain be just, they will be found to involve a refutation of the arguers against poetry, so far at least as regards the first division of the subject. I can readily conjecture what should have moved the gait of some learned and intelligent writers who quarrel with certain versifiers; I confess myself, like them, unwilling to be stunned by the Thesoids of the hoarse Codri of the day. Bavius and Mavvius undoubtedly are, as they ever were, insufferable persons. But it longs to a philosophical critic to distinguish rather than confound.

The first part of these remarks has related to poetry in its elements and principles; and it has been shown, as well as the narrow limits assigned them would permit, that what is called poetry, in a restricted sense, has a common source with all other forms of order and of beauty, according to which the materials of human life are susceptible of being arranged, and which is poetry in an universal sense.

The second part will have for its object an application of these principles to the present state of the cultivation of poetry, and a defence of the attempt to idealize the modern forms of manners and opinions, and compel them into a subordination to the imaginative and creative faculty. For the literature of England, an energetic development of which has ever preceded or accompanied a great and free development of the national will, has arisen as it were from a new birth. In spite of the lost-thoughted envy which would undervalue contemporary merit, our own will be a memorable age in intellectual achievements, and we live among such philosophers and poets as surpass beyond comparison any who have appeared since the last national struggle for civil and religious liberty. The most unfailing herald, companion, and follower of the awakening of a great people to work a beneficial change in opinion or institution, is poetry. At such periods there is an accumulation of the power of communicating and receiving intense and impassioned conceptions respecting man and nature. The persons in whom this power resides, may often, as far as regards many portions of their nature, have little apparent correspondence with that spirit of good of which they are the ministers. But even whilst they deny and abjure, they are yet compelled to serve, the power which is seated on the throne of their own soul. It is impossible to read the compositions of the most celebrated writers of the present day without being startled with the electric life which burns within their words. They measure the circumference and sound the depths of human nature with a comprehensive and all-penetrating spirit, and they are themselves perhaps the most sincerely astonished at its manifestations; for it is less their spirit than the spirit of the age. Poets are the hierophants of an unapprehended inspiration; the mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present; the words which express what they understand not; the trumpets which sing to battle, and feel not what they inspire; the influence which is moved not, but moves. Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.
ESSAY

ON THE LITERATURE, THE ARTS, AND THE MANNERS OF THE ATHENIANS.

A Fragment.*

The period which intervened between the birth of Pericles and the death of Aristotle, is undoubtedly, whether considered in itself, or with reference to the effects which it has produced upon the subsequent destinies of civilised man, the most memorable in the history of the world. What was the combination of moral and political circumstances which produced so unparalleled a progress during that period in literature and the arts;—why that progress, so rapid and so sustained, so soon received a check, and became retrograde,—are problems left to the wonder and conjecture of posterity. The wrecks and fragments of those subtle and profound minds, like the ruins of a fine statue, obscurely suggest to us the grandeur and perfection of the whole. Their very language—a type of the understandings of which it was the creation and the image—in variety, in simplicity, in flexibility, and in copiousness, excels every other language of the western world. Their sculptures are such as we, in our presumption, assume to be the models of ideal truth and beauty, and to which no artist of modern times can produce forms in any degree comparable. Their paintings, according to Pliny and Pausanias, were full of delicacy and harmony; and some even were powerfully pathetic, so as to awaken, like tender music or tragic poetry, the most overwhelming emotions. We are accustomed to conceive the painters of the sixteenth century, as those who have brought their art to the highest perfection, probably because none of the ancient paintings have been preserved. For all the inventive arts maintain, as it were, a sympathetic connexion between each other, being no more than various expressions of one internal power, modified by different circumstances, either of an individual, or of society; and the paintings of that period would probably bear the same relation as is confessedly borne by the sculptures to all succeeding ones. Of their music we know little; but the effects which it is said to have produced,

* Shelley named this Essay, "A Discourse on the Manners of the Ancients, relative to the subject of Love." It was intended to be a commentary on the Symposium, or Banquet of Plato, but it breaks off at the moment when the main subject is about to be discussed.
compositions of great minds bore throughout the sustained stamp of their greatness. In the poetry of succeeding ages the expectations are often exalted on Icarean wings, and fall, too much disappointed to give a memory and a name to the oblivious pool in which they fell.

In physical knowledge Aristotle and Theophrastus had already—no doubt assisted by the labours of those of their predecessors whom they criticised—made advances worthy of the maturity of science. The astonishing invention of geometry, that series of discoveries which have enabled man to command the elements and foresee future events, before the subjects of his ignorant wonder, and which have opened as it were the doors of the mysteries of nature, had already been brought to great perfection. Metaphysics, the science of man’s intimate nature, and logic, or the grammar and elementary principles of that science, received from the latter philosophers of the Periclean age a firm basis. All our more exact philosophy is built upon the labours of these great men, and many of the words which we employ in metaphysical distinctions were invented by them to give accuracy and system to their reasonings. The science of morals, or the voluntary conduct of men in relation to themselves or others, dates from this epoch. How inexpressibly bolder and more pure were the doctrines of those great men, in comparison with the timid maxims which prevail in the writings of the most esteemed modern moralists. They were such as Phocion, and Epaminondas, and Timoleon, who formed themselves on their influence, were to the wretched heroes of our own age.

Their political and religious institutions are more difficult to bring into comparison with those of other times. A summary idea may be formed of the worth of any political and religious system, by observing the comparative degree of happiness and of intellect produced under its influence. And whilst many institutions and opinions, which in ancient Greece were obstacles to the improvement of the human race, have been abolished among modern nations, how many pernicious superstitions and new contrivances of mischief, and unheard-of complications of public mischief, have not been invented among them by the ever-watchful spirit of avarice and tyranny.

The modern nations of the civilised world owe the progress which they have made—as well in those physical sciences in which they have already excelled their masters, as in the moral and intellectual inquiries, in which, with all the advantage of the experience of the latter, it can scarcely be said that they have yet equalled them,—to what is called the revival of learning; that is, the study of the writers of the age which preceded and immediately followed the government of Pericles, or of subsequent writers, who were, so to speak, the rivers flowing from those immortal fountains. And though there seems to be a principle in the modern world, which, should circumstances analogous to those which modelled the intellectual resources of the age to which we refer, into so harmonious a proportion, again arise, would arrest and perpetrate them, and consign their results to a more equal, extensive, and lasting improvement of the condition of man—though justice and the true meaning of human society are, if not more accurately, more generally understood; though perhaps men know more, and therefore are more, as a mass, yet this principle has never been called into action, and requires indeed a universal and almost appalling change in the system of existing things. The study of modern history is the study of kings, financiers, statesmen, and priests. The history of ancient Greece is the study of legislators, philosophers, and poets; it is the history of men, compared with the history of titles. What the Greeks were, was a reality, not a promise. And what we are and hope to be, is derived, as it were, from the influence and inspiration of these glorious generations.

Whatever tends to afford a further illustration of the manners and opinions of those to whom we owe so much, and who were perhaps, on the whole, the most perfect specimens of humanity, of whom we have authentic record, were infinitely valuable. Let us see their errors, their weaknesses, their daily actions, their familiar conversation, and catch the tone of their society. When we discover how far the most admirable community ever framed, was removed from that perfection to which human society is impelled by some active power within each bosom, to aspire, how great ought to be our hopes, how resolute our struggles. For the Greeks of the Periclean age were widely different from us. It is to be lamented that no modern writer has hitherto dared to show them precisely as they were. Barthélemy cannot be denied the praise of industry and system; but he never forgets that he is a Christian and a Frenchman. Wieland, in his delightful novels, makes indeed a very tolerable Pagan, but cherishes too many political prejudices, and refrains from diminishing the interest of his romances by painting sentiments in which no European of modern times can possibly sympathise. There is no book which shows the Greeks precisely as they were; they seem all written for children, with the caution that no practice or sentiment, highly inconsistent with our present manners, should be mentioned, lest those manners
are many to whom the Greek language is inaccessible, who ought not to be excluded by this prudery from possessing an exact and comprehensive conception of the history of man; for there is no knowledge concerning what man has been and may be, from partaking of which a person can depart, without becoming in some degree more philosophical, tolerant, and just.

One of the chief distinctions between the manners of ancient Greece and modern Europe, consisted in the regulations and the sentiments respecting sexual intercourse. Whether this difference arises from some imperfect influence of the doctrines of Jesus Christ, who allegesthe absolute and unconditional equality of all human beings, or from the institutions of chivalry, or from a certain fundamental difference of physical nature existing in the Celts, or from a combination of all or any of these causes, acting on each other, is a question worthy of voluminous investigation. The fact is, that the modern Europeans have in this circumstance, and in the abolition of slavery, made an improvement the most decisive in the regulation of human society; and all the virtue and the wisdom of the Periclean age arose under other institutions, in spite of the diminution which personal slavery and the inferiority of women, recognised by law and opinion, must have produced in the delicacy, the strength, the comprehensiveness, and the accuracy of their conceptions, in moral, political, and metaphysical science, and perhaps in every other art and science.

The women, thus degraded, became such as it was expected they would become. They possessed, except with extraordinary exceptions, the habits and the qualities of slaves. They were probably not extremely beautiful; at least there was no such disproportion in the attractions of the external form between the female and male sex among the Greeks, as exists among the modern Europeans. They were certainly devoid of that moral and intellectual loveliness with which the acquisition of knowledge and the cultivation of sentiment animates, as with another life of overpowering grace, the lineaments and the gestures of every form which they inhabit. Their eyes could not have been deep and intricate from the workings of the mind, and could have entangled no heart in soul-enwoven labyrinths.

Let it not be imagined that because the Greeks were deprived of its legitimate object, they were incapable of sentimental love; and that this passion is the mere child of chivalry and the literature of modern times. This object, or its archetype, forever exists in the mind, which selects among those who resemble it, that which most resembles it; and instinctively fills up the interstices of the imperfect image, in the same manner as the imagination moulds and completes the shapes in clouds, or in the fire, into the resemblances of whatever form, animal, building, &c., happens to be present to it.

Man is in his wildest state a social being: a certain degree of civilisation and refinement ever produces the want of sympathies still more intimate and complete; and the gratification of the senses is no longer all that is sought in sexual connexion. It soon becomes a very small part of that profound and complicated sentiment, which we call love, which is rather the universal thirst for a communion not merely of the senses, but of our whole nature, intellectual, imaginative and sensitive; and which, when individualised, becomes an imperious necessity, only to be satisfied by the complete or partial, actual or supposed, fulfilment of its claims. This want grows more powerful in proportion to the development which our nature receives from civilisation; for man never ceases to be a social being. The sexual impulse, which is only one, and often a small part of those claims, serves, from its obvious and external nature, as a kind of type or expression of the rest, a common basis, an acknowledged and visible link. Still it is a claim which even derives a strength not of its own from the accessory circumstances which surround it, and one which our nature thirsts to satisfy. To estimate this, observe the degree of intensity and durability of the love of the male towards the female in animals and savages; and acknowledge all the duration and intensity observable in the love of civilised beings beyond that of savages to be produced from other causes. In the susceptibility of the external senses there is probably no important difference.

Among the ancient Greeks the male sex, one half of the human race, received the highest cultivation and refinement; whilst the other, so far as intellect is concerned, were educated as slaves, and were raised but few degrees in all that related to moral or intellectual excellence above the condition of savages. The gradations in the society of man present us with a slow improvement in this respect. The Roman women held a higher consideration in society, and were esteemed almost as the equal partners with their husbands in the regulation of domestic economy and the education of their children. The practices and customs of modern Europe are essentially different from and incomparably less pernicious than either, however remote from what an enlightened mind cannot fail to desire as the future destiny of human beings.
ON THE SYMPOSIUM,
OR PREFACE TO THE BANQUET OF PLATO.

A Fragment.

The dialogue entitled "The Banquet," was selected by the translator as the most beautiful and perfect among all the works of Plato. He despair of having communicated to the English language any portion of the surpassing graces of the composition, or having done more than present an imperfect shadow of the language and the sentiment of this astonishing production.

Plato is eminently the greatest among the Greek philosophers, and from, or, rather, perhaps through him, his master Socrates, have proceeded those emanations of moral and metaphysical knowledge, on which a long series and an incalculable variety of popular superstitions have sheltered their absurdities from the slow contempt of mankind. Plato exhibits the rare union of close and subtle logic, with the Pythian enthusiasm of poetry, melted by the splendour and harmony of his periods into one irresistible stream of musical impressions, which hurry the persuasions onward, as in a breathless career. His language is that of an immortal spirit, rather than a man. Lord Bacon is, perhaps, the only writer, who, in these particulars, can be compared with him: his imitator, Cicero, sinks in the comparison into an ape mocking the gestures of a man. His views into the nature of mind and existence are often obscure, only because they are profound; and though his theories respecting the government of the world, and the elementary laws of moral action, are not always correct, yet there is scarcely any of his treatises which do not, however stained by puerile sophisms, contain the most remarkable intuitions into all that can be the subject of the human mind. His excellence consists especially in intuition, and it is this faculty which raises him far above Aristotle, whose genius, though vivid and various, is obscure in comparison with that of Plato.

The dialogue entitled the "Banquet," is called Eperiplos, or a Discussion upon Love, and is supposed to have taken place at the house of Agathon, at one of a series of festivals given by that poet, on the occasion of his gaining the prize of tragedy at the Dionysiacs. The account of the debate on this occasion is supposed to have been given by Apollodorus, a pupil of Socrates, many years after it had taken place, to a companion who was curious to hear it. This Apollodorus appears, both from the style in which he is represented in this piece, as well as from a passage in the Platon, to have been a person of an impassioned and enthusiastic disposition; to borrow an image from the Italian painters, he seems to have been the St. John of the Socratic group. The drama (for so the lively distinction of character and the various and well-wrought circumstances of the story almost entitle it to be called) begins by Socrates persuading Aristodemus to sup at Agathon's, uninvited. The whole of this introduction affords the most lively conception of refined Athenian manners.

[UNFINISHED.]
Apollocodon. I think that the subject of your inquiries is still fresh in my memory; for yesterday, as I chanced to be returning home from Phaleros, one of my acquaintance, seeing me before him, called out to me from a distance, jokingly, "Apollocodon, you Phalerian, will you not wait a minute!"— I waited for him, and as soon as he overtook me, "I have just been looking for you, Apollodorus," he said, "for I wish to hear what those discussions were on Love, which took place at the party, when Agathon, Socrates, Alcibiades, and some others, met at supper. Some one who heard it from Phoenix, the son of Philip, told me that you could give a full account, but he could relate nothing distinctly himself. Relate to me, then, I entreat you, all the circumstances. I know you are a faithful reporter of the discussions of your friends; but, first tell me, were you present at the party or not?"

"Your informant," I replied, "seems to have given you no very clear idea of what you wish to hear, if he thinks that these discussions took place so lately as that I could have been of the party."— "Indeed I thought so," replied he.— "For how," said I, "O Glauco! could I have been present I Do you not know that Agathon has been absent from the city many years! But, since I began to converse with Socrates, and to observe each day all his words and actions, three years are scarcely past. Before this time I wandered about wherever it might chance, thinking that I did something, but being, in truth, a most miserable wretch, not less than you are now, who believe that you ought to do anything rather than practise the love of wisdom."— "Do not cavil," interrupted Glauco, "but tell me, when did this party take place!"

"Whilst we were yet children," I replied, "when Agathon first gained the prize of Tragedy, and the day after that on which he and the chorus made sacrifices in celebration of their success."— "A long time ago, it seems. But who told you all the circumstances of the discussion! Did you hear them from Socrates himself!" — "No, by Jupiter! But from the same person from whom Phoenix had his information, one Aristodemus, a Cydathenian, — a little man who always went about without sandals. He was present at this feast, being, I believe, more than any of his contemporaries, a lover and admirer of Socrates. I have questioned Socrates concerning some of the circumstances of this narration, who confirms all that I have heard from Aristodemus."— "Why, then," said Glauco, "why not relate them, as we walk, to me! The road to the city is every way convenient, both for those who listen and those who speak."

Thus as we walked, I gave him some account of those discussions concerning Love; since, as I said before, I remember them with sufficient accuracy. If I am required to relate them also to you, that shall willingly be done; for, whenever either I myself talk of philosophy, or listen to others talking of it, in addition to the improvement which I conceive there arises from such conversation, I am delighted beyond measure; but whenever I hear your discussions about money men and great proprietors, I am weighed down with grief, and pity you, who, doing nothing, believe that you are doing something. Perhaps you think that I am a miserable wretch; and, indeed, I believe that you think truly. I do not think, but well know, that you are miserable.

Companion. You are always the same, Apollodorus— always saying some ill of yourself and others. Indeed, you seem to me to think every one miserable except Socrates, beginning with yourself. I do not know what could have entitled you to the surname of the "Madman," for, I am sure, you are consistent enough, for ever inveighing with bitterness against yourself and all others, except Socrates.

Apollocodon. My dear friend, it is manifest that I am out of my wits from this alone—that I have such opinions as you describe concerning myself and you.

Companion. It is not worth while, Apollocodon, to dispute now about these things; but do what I
entreat you, and relate to us what were these discussions.

Apolodorus. They were such as I will proceed to tell you. But let me attempt to relate them in the order which Aristodemus observed in relating them to me. He said that he met Socrates washed, and, contrary to his usual custom, sandalled, and having inquired whither he went so gaily dressed, Socrates replied, "I am going to sup at Agathon's; yesterday I avoided it, disliking the crowd, which would attend at the prize sacrifices then celebrated; to-day I promised to be there, and I made myself so gay, because one ought to be beautiful to approach one who is beautiful. But you, Aristodemus, what think you of coming uninvited to supper?" "I will do," he replied, "as you command." "Follow then, that we may, by changing its application, disarm that proverb, which says, To the feast of the good, the good come uninvited. Homer, indeed, seems not only to destroy, but to outrage the proverb; for, describing Agamemnon as excellent in battle, and Menelaus but a faint-hearted warrior, he represents Menelaus as coming uninvited to the feast of one better and braver than himself."—Aristodemus hearing this, said, "I also am in some danger, Socrates, not as you say, but according to Homer, of approaching like an unworthy inferior the banquet of one more wise and excellent than myself. Will you not, then, make some excuse for me! for, I shall not confess that I came uninvited, but shall say that I was invited by you."—"As we walk together," said Socrates, "we will consider together what excuse to make—but let us go."

Thus discoursing, they proceeded. But as they walked, Socrates, engaged in some deep contemplation, slackened his pace, and, observing Aristodemus waiting for him, he desired him to go on before. When Aristodemus arrived at Agathon's house he found the door open, and it occurred, somewhat comically, that a slave met him at the vestibule, and conducted him where he found the guests already reclined. As soon as Agathon saw him, "You arrive just in time to sup with us, Aristodemus," he said; "if you have any other purpose in your visit, defer it to a better opportunity. I was looking for you yesterday, to invite you to be of our party; I could not find you anywhere. But how is it that you do not bring Socrates with you?"

But he turning round, and not seeing Socrates behind him, said to Agathon, "I just came hither in his company, being invited by him to sup with you."—"You did well," replied Agathon, "to come; but where is Socrates?"—"He just now came hither behind me; I myself wonder where he can be."—"Go and look, boy," said Agathon, "and bring Socrates in; meanwhile, you, Aristodemus, recline there near Eryximachus." And he bade a slave wash his feet that he might recline. Another slave, meanwhile, brought word that Socrates had retired into a neighbouring vestibule, where he stood, and, in spite of his message, refused to come in.—"What absurdity you talk!" cried Agathon; "call him, and do not leave him till he comes."—"Let him alone, by all means," said Aristodemus; "it is customary with him sometimes to retire in this way and stand wherever it may chance. He will come presently, I do not doubt; do not disturb him."—"Well, be it as you will," said Agathon; "as it is, you boys, bring supper for the rest; put before us what you will, for I resolved that there should be no master of the feast. Consider me and these my friends, as guests, whom you have invited to supper, and serve them so that we may commend you."

After this they began supper, but Socrates did not come in. Agathon ordered him to be called, but Aristodemus perpetually forbade it. At last he came in, much about the middle of supper, not having delayed so long as was his custom. Agathon (who happened to be reclining at the end of the table, and alone) said, as he entered, "Come hither, Socrates, and sit down by me; so that by the mere touch of one so wise as you are, I may enjoy the fruit of your meditations in the vestibule; for, I well know, you would not have departed till you had discovered and secured it."

Socrates, having sate down as he was desired, replied, "It would be well, Agathon, if wisdom were of such a nature, as that when we touched each other, it would overflow of its own accord, from him who possesses much to him who possesses little; like the water in the two chalices, which will flow through a flock of wool from the fuller into the emptier, until both are equal. If wisdom had this property, I should esteem myself most fortunate in reclining near to you. I should thus soon be filled, I think, with the most beautiful and various wisdom. Mine, indeed, is something obscure, and doubtful, and dreamlike. But yours is radiant, and has been crowned with simplest reward; for though you are yet so young, it shone forth from you, and became so manifest yesterday, that more than thirty thousand Greeks can bear testimony to its excellence and loveliness."—"You are laughing at me, Socrates," said Agathon; "but you and I will decide this controversy about wisdom by and by, taking Bacchus for our judge. At present turn to your supper."

After Socrates and the rest had finished supper, and had reclined back on their couches, and the
libations had been poured forth, and they had sung hymns to the god, and all other rites which are customary had been performed, they turned to drinking. Then Pausanias made this kind of proposal. "Come, my friends," said he, "in what manner will it be pleasantest for us to drink? I must confess to you that, in reality, I am not very well from the wine we drank last night and I have need of some intermission. I suspect that most of you are in the same condition, for you were here yesterday. Now, consider how we shall drink most easily and comfortably."

"'Tis a good proposal, Pausanias," said Aristophanes, "to contrive, in some way or other, to place moderation in our cups. I was one of those who were drenched last night."-Eryximachus, the son of Acumenius, hearing this, said: "I am of your opinion; I only wish to know one thing—whether Agathon is in the humour for hard drinking?"—"Not at all," replied Agathon; "I confess that I am not able to drink much this evening."—"It is an excellent thing for us," replied Eryximachus,—"I mean myself, Aristodemus, Phaedrus, and these others—if you, who are such invincible drinkers, now refuse to drink. I ought to except Socrates, for he is capable of drinking everything or nothing; and whatever we shall determine will equally suit him. Since, then, no one present has any desire to drink much wine, I shall perhaps give less offence if I declare the nature of drunkenness. The science of medicine teaches us that drunkenness is very pernicious; nor would I choose to drink so immoderately myself, or counsel another to do so, especially if he had been drunk the night before."—"Yes," said Phaedrus, the Myrinusian, interrupting him, "I have been accustomed to confide in you, especially in your directions concerning medicine; and I would now willingly do so, if the rest will do the same." All then agreed that they would drink at this present banquet not for drunkenness but for pleasure.

"Since, then," said Eryximachus, "it is decided that no one shall be compelled to drink more than he pleases, I think that we may as well send away the flute-player to play to herself; or, if she likes, to the women within. Let us devote the present occasion to conversation between ourselves, and if you wish, I will propose to you what shall be the subject of our discussion." All present desired and entreated that he would explain. — "The exordium of my speech," said Eryximachus, "will be in the style of the Menalippe of Euripides, for the story which I am about to tell belongs not to me, but to Phaedrus. Phaedrus has often indignantly complained to me, saying—'Is it not strange, Eryximachus, that there are innumerable hymns and odes composed for the other gods, but that not one of the many poets who spring up in the world has ever composed a verse in honour of Love, who is such and so great a god! Nor any one of those accomplished sophists, who, like the famous Prodicus, have celebrated the praise of Hercules and others, have ever celebrated that of Love; but what is more astonishing, I have lately met with the book of some philosopher, in which salt is extolled on account of its utility, and many other things of the same nature are in like manner extolled with elaborate praise. That so much serious thought is expended on such trifles, and that no man has dared to this day to frame a hymn in honour of Love, who being so great a deity, is thus neglected, may well be sufficient to excite my indignation.'"

"There seemed to me some justice in these complaints of Phaedrus; I propose, therefore, at the same time, for the sake of giving pleasure to Phaedrus, and that we may on the present occasion do something well and befitting us, that this God should receive from those who are now present the honour which is most due to him. If you agree to my proposal, an excellent discussion might arise on the subject. Every one ought, according to my plan, to praise Love with as much eloquence as he can. Let Phaedrus begin first, both because he reclines the first in order, and because he is the father of the discussion."

"No one will vote against you, Eryximachus," said Socrates, "for how can I oppose your proposal, who am ready to confess that I know nothing on any subject but love? Or how can Agathon, or Pausanias, or even Aristophanes, whose life is one perpetual ministration to Venus and Bacchus? Or how can any other whom I see here! Though we who sit last are scarcely on an equality with you; for if those who speak before us shall have exhausted the subject with their eloquence and reasonings, our discourses will be superfluous. But in the name of Good Fortune, let Phaedrus begin and praise Love." The whole party agreed to what Socrates said, and entreated Phaedrus to begin.

What each then said on this subject, Aristodemus did not entirely recollect, nor do I recollect all that he related to me; but only the speeches of those who said what was most worthy of remembrance. First, then, Phaedrus began thus:

"Love is a mighty deity, and the object of admiration, both to Gods and men, for many and for various claims; but especially on account of his origin. For that he is to be honoured as one of the most ancient of the gods, this may serve as a testimony, that Love has no parents, nor is there
any poet or other person who has ever affirmed that there are such. Hesiod says, that first ‘Chaos was produced; then the broad-bosomed Earth, to be a secure foundation for all things; then Love.’ He says, that after Chaos these two were produced, the Earth and Love. Parmenides, speaking of generation, says:—’But he created Love before any of the gods.’ Acurileus agrees with Hesiod. Love, therefore, is universally acknowledged to be among the oldest of things. And in addition to this, Love is the author of our greatest advantages; for I cannot imagine a greater happiness and advantage to one who is in the flower of youth than an amiable lover, or to a lover than an amiable object of his love. For neither birth, nor wealth, nor honours, can awaken in the minds of men the principles which should guide those who from their youth aspire to an honourable and excellent life, as Love awakens them. I speak of the fear of shame, which deters them from that which is disgraceful; and the love of glory which incites to honourable deeds. For it is not possible that a state or private person should accomplish, without these incitements, anything beautiful or great. I assert, then, that should one who loves be discovered in any dishonourable action, or tamely enduring insult through cowardice, he would feel more anguish and shame if observed by the object of his passion, than if he were observed by his father or his companions, or any other person. In like manner, among warmly attached friends, a man is especially grieved to be discovered by his friend in any dishonourable act. If then, by any contrivance, a state or army could be composed of friends bound by strong attachment, it is beyond calculation how excellently they would administer their affairs, refraining from any thing base, contending with each other for the acquirement of fame, and exhibiting such valour in battle as that, though few in numbers, they might subdue all mankind. For should one friend desert the ranks or cast away his arms in the presence of the other, he would suffer far acuter shame from that one person’s regard, than from the regard of all other men. A thousand times would he prefer to die, rather than desert the object of his attachment, and not succour him in danger.

‘There is none so worthless whom Love cannot impel, as it were, by a divine inspiration, towards virtue, even so that he may through this inspiration become equal to one who might naturally be more excellent; and, in truth, as Homer says: The God breathes vigour into certain heroes— so Love breathes into those who love, the spirit which is produced from himself. Not only men, but even women who love, are those alone who willingly expose themselves to die for others. Alcestis, the daughter of Pelias, affords to the Greeks a remarkable example of this opinion; she alone being willing to die for her husband, and so surpassing his parents in the affection with which love inspired her towards him, as to make them appear, in the comparison with her, strangers to their own child, and related to him merely in name; and so lovely and admirable did this action appear, not only to men, but even to the Gods, that, although they conceded the prerogative of bringing back the spirit from death to few among the many who then performed excellent and honourable deeds, yet, delighted with this action, they redeemed her soul from the infernal regions: so highly do the Gods honour zeal and devotion in love. They sent back indeed Orpheus, the son of Oeagrus, from Hell, with his purpose unfulfilled, and, showing him only the spectre of her for whom he came, refused to render up herself. For Orpheus seemed to them, not as Alcestis, to have dared die for the sake of her whom he loved, and thus to secure to himself a perpetual intercourse with her in the regions to which she had preceded him, but like a cowardly musician, to have contrived to descend alive into Hell; and, indeed, they appointed as a punishment for his cowardice, that he should be put to death by women.

‘For otherwise did they regard Achilles, the son of Thetis, whom they sent to inhabit the islands of the blessed. For Achilles, though informed by his mother that his own death would ensue upon his killing Hector, but that if he refrained from it he might return home and die in old age, yet preferred revenging and honouring his beloved Patroclus; not to die for him merely, but to disdain and reject that life which he had ceased to share. Therefore the Greeks honoured Achilles beyond all other men, because he thus preferred his friend to all things else.

‘On this account have the Gods rewarded Achilles more amply than Alcestis; permitting his spirit to inhabit the islands of the blessed. Hence do I assert that Love is the most ancient and venerable of deities, and most powerful to endow mortals with the possession of happiness and virtue, both whilst they live and after they die.’

Thus Aristodemus reported the discourse of Phaedrus; and after Phaedrus, he said that some others spoke, whose discourses he did not well remember. When they had ceased, Panassius began thus:—

‘Simply to praise Love, O Phaedrus, seems to me too bounded a scope for our discourse. If
Love were one, it would be well. But since Love is not one, I will endeavour to distinguish which is the Love whom it becomes us to prize, and having thus discriminated one from the other, will attempt to render him who is the subject of our discourse the honour due to his divinity. We all know that Venus is never without Love; and if Venus were one, Love would be one; but since there are two Venuses, of necessity also must there be two Loves. For assuredly are there two Venuses; one, the eldest, the daughter of Uranus, born and Pandemian companions of these goddesses. Sivity must there be two Loves, the Uranian the other younger, the daughter of Jupiter and Dione, whom we call the Pandemian; of necessity must there also be two Loves, the Uranian and Pandemian companions of these goddesses. It is becoming to praise all the Gods, but the attributes which fall to the lot of each may be distinguished and selected. For any particular action whatever, in itself is neither good nor evil; what we are now doing—drinking, singing, talking, none of these things are good in themselves, but the mode in which they are done stamps them with its own nature; and that which is done well, is good, and that which is done ill, is evil. Thus, not all love, nor every mode of love is beautiful, or worthy of commendation, but that alone which excites us to love worthily. The Love, therefore, which attends upon Venus Pandemos is, in truth, common to the vulgar, and presides over transient and fortuitous connexions, and is worshipped by the least excellent of mankind. The votaries of this deity seek the body rather than the soul, and the ignorant rather than the wise, disdaining all that is honourable and lovely, and considering how they shall best satisfy their sensual necessities. This Love is derived from the younger goddess, who partakes in her nature both of male and female. But the attendant on the other, the Uranian, whose nature is entirely masculine, is the Love who inspires us with affection, and exempts us from all wantonness and libertinism. Those who are inspired by this divinity seek the affections of those who are endowed by nature with greater excellence and vigour both of body and mind. And it is easy to distinguish those who especially exist under the influence of this power, by their choosing in early youth as the objects of their love those in whom the intellectual faculties have begun to develop. For those who begin to love in this manner, seem to me to be preparing to pass their whole life together in a community of good and evil, and not ever lightly deceiving those who love them, to be faithless to their vows. There ought to be a law that none should love the very young; so much serious affection as this deity enkindles, should not be doubtfully bestowed; for the body and mind of those so young are yet unformed, and it is difficult to foretell what will be their future tendencies and power. The good voluntarily impose this law upon themselves, and those vulgar lovers ought to be compelled to the same observance, as we deter them with all the power of the laws from the love of free matrons. For these are the persons whose shameful actions embolden those who observe their importunity and intemperance, to assert, that it is dishonourable to serve and gratify the objects of our love. But no one who does this gracefully and according to law, can justly be liable to the imputation of blame.

"Not only friendship, but philosophy and the practice of the gymnastic exercises, are represented as dishonourable by the tyrannical governments under which the barbarians live. For I imagine it would little conduce to the benefit of the governors, that the governed should be disciplined to lofty thoughts and to the unity and communion of stedfast friendship, of which admirable effects the tyrants of our own country have also learned that Love is the author. For the love of Harmodius and Aristogiton, strengthened into a firm friendship, dissolved the tyranny. Wherever, therefore, it is declared dishonourable in any case to serve and benefit friends, that law is a mark of the depravity of the legislator, the avarice and tyranny of the rulers, and the cowardice of those who are ruled. Wherever it is simply declared to be honourable without distinction of cases, such a declaration denotes dulness and want of subtlety of mind in the authors of the regulation. Here the degrees of praise or blame to be attributed by law are far better regulated; but it is yet difficult to determine the cases to which they should refer.

"It is evident, however, for one in whom passion is enkindled, it is more honourable to love openly than secretly; and most honourable to love the most excellent and virtuous, even if they should be less beautiful than others. It is honourable for the lover to exhort and sustain the object of his love in virtuous conduct. It is considered honourable to attain the love of those whom we seek, and the contrary shameful; and to facilitate this attainment, opinion has given to the lover the permission of acquiring favour by the most extraordinary devices, which if a person should practise for any purpose besides this, he would incur the severest reproof of philosophy. For if any one desirous of accumulating money, or ambitious of procuring power, or seeking any other advantage, should, like a lover, seeking to acquire the favour of his beloved, employ prayers and entreaties in his
necessity, and swear such oaths as lovers swear, and sleep before the threshold, and offer to subject himself to such slavery as no slave even would endure; he would be frustrated of the attainment of what he sought, both by his enemies and friends; these reviling him for his flattery, those sharply admonishing him, and taking to themselves the shame of his servility. But there is a certain grace in a lover who does all these things, so that he alone may do them without dishonour. It is commonly said that the Gods accord pardon to the lover alone if he should break his oath, and that there is no oath by Venus. Thus, as our law declares, both Gods and men have given to lovers all possible indulgence.

"The affair, however, I imagine, stands thus: As I have before said, love cannot be considered in itself as either honourable or dishonourable: if it is honourably pursued, it is honourable; if dishonourably, dishonourable: it is dishonourable basely to serve and gratify a worthless person; it is honourable honourably to serve a person of virtue. That Pandemic lover who loves rather the body than the soul, is worthless, nor can be constant and consistent, since he has placed his affection on that which has no stability. For as soon as the flower of the form, which was the sole object of his desire, has faded, then he departs and is seen no more; bound by no faith nor shame of his many promises and persuasions. But he who is the lover of virtuous manners is constant during life, since he has placed himself in harmony and desire with that which is consistent with itself. These two classes of persons we ought to distinguish with careful examination, so that we may serve and converse with the one and avoid the other; determining, by that inquiry, by what desire we approve the character of the object. It is considered as dishonourable to be inspired with love of wealth and power, or terrified through injuries of what he sought, both by his enemies and friends; these reviling him for his flattery, those sharply admonishing him, and taking to themselves the shame of his servility. But there is a certain grace in a lover who does all these things, so that he alone may do them without dishonour. It is commonly said that the Gods accord pardon to the lover alone if he should break his oath, and that there is no oath by Venus. Thus, as our law declares, both Gods and men have given to lovers all possible indulgence.

"On the same principle, if any one seeks the friendship of another, believing him to be virtuous, for the sake of becoming better through such intercourse and affection, and is deceived, his first turning out to be worthless, and far from the possession of virtue; yet it is honourable to have been so deceived. For such a one seems to have submitted to a kind of servitude, because he would endure anything for the sake of becoming more virtuous and wise; a disposition of mind eminently beautiful."

"This is that Love who attends on the Uranian deity, and is Uranian; the author of innumerable benefits both to the state and to individuals, and by the necessity of whose influence those who love are disciplined into the zeal of virtue. All other loves are the attendants on Venus Pandemos. So much, although unpromised, is what I have to deliver on the subject of love, O Phaedra."

Pausanias having ceased (for so the learned teach me to denote the changes of the discourse), Aristeodemus said that it came to the turn of Aristocles to speak; but it happened that, from repulsion or some other cause, he had an hiccup which prevented him; so he turned to Eryximachus, the physician, who was reclining close beside him, and said—"Eryximachus, it is but fair that you should cure my hiccup, or speak instead of me until it is over."—"I will do both," said Eryximachus: "I will speak in your turn, and you, when your hiccup has ceased, shall speak in mine. Mean-
while, if you hold your breath some time, it will subside. If not, gargle your throat with water; and if it still continue, take something to stimulate your nostrils, and sneeze; do this once or twice, and even though it should be very violent it will cease."—"Whilst you speak," said Aristophanes, "I will follow your directions."—Eryximachus then began:—

"Since Pausanias, beginning his discourse excellently, placed no fit completion and development to it, I think it necessary to attempt to fill up what he has left unfinished. He has reasoned well in defining love as of a double nature. The science of medicine, to which I have addicted myself, seems to teach me that the love which impels towards those who are beautiful, does not subsist only in the souls of men, but in the bodies also of those of all other living beings which are produced upon earth, and, in a word, in all things which are. So wonderful and mighty is this divinity, and so widely is his influence extended over all divine and human things! For the honour of my profession, I will begin by adducing a proof from medicine. The nature of the body contains within itself this double love. For that which is healthy and that which is diseased in a body differ and are unlike; that which is unlike, loves and desires that which is unlike. Love, therefore, is different in a sane and in a diseased body. Pausanias has asserted rightly that it is honourable to gratify those things in the body which are good and healthy, and in this consists the skill of the physician; whilst those which are bad and diseased, ought to be treated with no indulgence. The science of medicine, in a word, is a knowledge of the love affairs of the body, as they bear relation to repletion and evacuation; and he is the most skilful physician who can trace those operations of the good and evil love, can make the one change places with the other, and attract love into those parts from which he is absent, or expel him from those which he ought not to occupy. He ought to make those things which are most inimical, friendly, and excite them to mutual love. But those things are most inimical, which are most opposite to each other; cold to heat, bitterness to sweetness, dryness to moisture. Our progenitor, Æsculapius, as the poets inform us, (and indeed I believe them,) through the skill which he possessed to inspire love and concord in these contending principles, established the science of medicine.

"The gymnastic arts and agriculture, no less than medicine, are exercised under the dominion of this God. Music, as any one may perceive, who yields a very slight attention to the subject, originates from the same source; which Hörn-
they bring maturity and health to men, and to all
the other animals and plants. But when the evil
and injurious love assumes the dominion of the
seasons of the year, destruction is spread widely
abroad. Then pestilence is accustomed to arise,
and many other blights and diseases fall upon ani-
mals and plants: and hoar frosts, and hail, and
mildew on the corn, are produced from that exces-
sive and disorderly love, with which each season
of the year is impelled towards the other; the
motions of which and the knowledge of the stars,
is called astronomy. All sacrifices, and all those
things in which divination is concerned, (for these
things are the links by which is maintained an in-
tercourse and communion between the Gods and
men,) are nothing else than the science of preser-
vation and right government of Love. For im-
piety is accustomed to spring up, so soon as any
one ceases to serve the more honourable Love,
and worship him by the sacrifice of good actions;
but submissive himself to the influences of the other,
in relation to his duties towards his parents, and
the Gods, and the living, and the dead. It is the
object of divination to distinguish and remedy the
effects of these opposite loves; and divination is
therefore the author of the friendship of Gods and
men, because it affords the knowledge of what in
matters of love is lawful or unlawful to men.

"Thus every species of love possesses collect-
ively a various and vast, or rather universal power.
But love which incites to the acquirement of its
objects according to virtue and wisdom, possesses
the most exclusive dominion, and prepares for his wor-
shipers the highest happiness through the mutual
intercourse of social kindness which it promotes
among them, and through the benevolence which
he attracts to them from the Gods, our superiors.

Probably in thus praising Love, I have unwill-
ingly omitted many things; but it is your busi-
ness, O Aristophanes, to fill up all that I have left
incomplete; or, if you have imagined any other
mode of honouring the divinity; for I observe
your hiccup is over."

"Yes," said Aristophanes, "but not before I
applied the sneezing. I wonder why the harmoni-
ous construction of our body should require such
noisy operations as sneezing; for it ceased the
moment I sneezed."— "Do you not observe what
you do, my good Aristophanes?" said Eryximac-
chus; "you are going to speak, and you predispose
us to laughter, and compel me to watch for the
first ridiculous idea which you may start in your
discourse, when you might have spoken in peace."

— "Let me uneasy what I have said, then," replied
Aristophanes, laughing. "Do not watch me, I en-
treat you; though I am not afraid of saying what
is laughable, (since that would be all gain, and quite
in the accustomed spirit of my muse,) but lest I
should say what is ridiculous."— "Do you think to
throw your dart, and escape with impunity, Ari-
stophanes? Attend, and what you may be careful
you maintain; then, perhaps, if it pleases me, I
may dismiss you without question."

"Indeed, "Eryximachus," proceeded Aristo-
phanes, "I have designed that my discourse should
be very different from yours and that of Pausanias.
It seems to me that mankind are by no means
penetrated with a conception of the power of Love,
or they would have built sumptuous temples and
altars, and have established magnificent rites of
sacrifice in his honour; he deserves worship and
homage more than all the other Gods, and he has
yet received none. For Love is of all the Gods
the most friendly to mortals; and the physics of
those wounds, whose cure would be the greatest
happiness which could be conferred upon the
human race. I will endeavour to unfold to you
his true power, and you can relate what I declare
to others.

"You ought first to know the nature of ma-
and the adventures he has gone through; for his
nature was anciently far different from that which
it is at present. First, then, human beings were
formerly not divided into two sexes, male and
female; there was also a third, common to both
the others, the name of which remains, though the
sex itself has disappeared. The androgynous sex,
both in appearance and in name, was common to
male and female; its name alone remains, which
labours under a reproach."

"At the period to which I refer, the form of
every human being was round, the back and its
sides being circularly joined, and each had four
arms and so many legs; two faces fixed upon a
round neck, exactly like each other; one head
between the two faces; four ears, and every thing
else as from such proportions it is easy to conjec-
ture. Man walked upright as now, in what en-
vironment he pleased; but when he wished to go
fast he made use of all his eight limbs, and pro-
cceeded in a rapid motion by rolling circularly
round,—like tumblers, who, with their legs in the
air, tumble round and round. We account for the
production of three sexes by supposing that, at the
beginning, the male was produced from the sea,
the female from the earth; and that sex which
participated in both sexes, from the moon, by rea-
son of the androgynous nature of the moon.
They were round, and their mode of proceding
was round, from the similarity which must needs
subsist between them and their parent.

"They were strong also, and had aspiring
thoughts. They it was who levied war against the Gods; and what Homer writes concerning Epiphanides and Otus, that they sought to ascend heaven and dethrone the Gods, in reality relates to this primitive people. Jupiter and the other Gods debated what was to be done in this emergency. For neither could they prevail on themselves to destroy them, as they had the giants, with thunder, so that the race should be abolished; for in that case they would be deprived of the honours of the sacrifices which they were in the custom of receiving from them; nor could they permit a continuance of their insolence and impiety. Jupiter, with some difficulty having desired silence, at length spoke. 'I think,' said he, 'I have contrived a method by which we may, by rendering the human race more feeble, quell the insolence which they exercise, without proceeding to their utter destruction. I will cut each of them in half; and so they will at once be weaker and more useful on account of their numbers. They shall walk upright on two legs. If they show any more insolence, and will not keep quiet, I will cut them up in half again, so they shall go about hopping on one leg.'

"So saying, he cut human beings in half, as people cut eggs before they salt them, or as I have seen eggs cut with hairs. He ordered Apollo to take each one as he cut him, and turn his face and half his neck towards the operation, so that by contemplating it he might become more cautious and humble; and then, to cure him, Apollo turned the face round, and drawing the skin upon what we now call the belly, like a contracted pouch, and leaving one opening, that which is called the navel, tied it in the middle. He then smoothed many other wrinkles, and moulded the breast with much such an instrument as the leather-cutters use to smooth the skins upon the block. He left only a few wrinkles in the belly, near the navel, to serve as a record of its former adventure. Immediately after this division, as each desired to possess the other half of himself, these divided people threw their arms around and embraced each other, seeking to grow together; and from this resolution to do nothing without the other half, they died of hunger and weakness: when one half died and the other was left alive, that which was thus left sought the other and folded it to its bosom; whether that half were an entire woman (for we now call it a woman) or a man; and thus they perished. But Jupiter, pitying them, thought of another contrivance. * * * In this manner is generation now produced, by the union of male and female; so that from the embrace of a man and woman the race is propagated.

"From this period, mutual love has naturally existed between human beings; that reconciler and bond of union of their original nature, which seeks to make two, one, and to heal the divided nature of man. Every one of us is thus the half of what may be properly termed a man, and like a pselta cut in two, is the imperfect portion of an entire whole, perpetually necessitated to seek the half belonging to him.

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"Such as I have described is ever an affectionate lover and a faithful friend, delighting in that which is in conformity with his own nature. Whenever, therefore, any such as I have described are impetuously struck, through the sentiment of their former union, with love and desire and the want of community, they are unwilling to be divided even for a moment. These are they who devote their whole lives to each other, with a vain and inexpressible longing to obtain from each other something they know not what; for it is not merely the sensual delights of their intercourse for the sake of which they dedicate themselves to each other with such serious affection; but the soul of each manifestly thirsts for, from the other, something which there are no words to describe, and divides that which it seeks, and traces obscurely the footsteps of its obscure desire. If Vulcan should say to persons thus affected, 'My good people, what is it that you want with one another?' And if, while they were hesitating what to answer, he should proceed to ask, 'Do you not desire the closest union and singleness to exist between you, so that you may never be divided night or day? If so, I will melt you together, and make you grow into one, so that both in life and death ye may be undivided. Consider, is this what you desire? Will it content you if you become that which I propose?' We all know that no one would refuse such an offer, but would at once feel that this was what he had ever sought; and intimately to mix and melt and to be melted together with his beloved, so that one should be made out of two.

"The cause of this desire is, that according to our original nature, we were once entire. The desire and the pursuit of integrity and union is that which we all love. First, as I said, we were entire, but now we have been dwindled through our own weakness, as the Arcadians by the Lacedemonians. There is reason to fear, if we are guilty of any additional impiety towards the Gods, that we may be cut in two again, and may go about like those figures painted on the columns, divided through the middle of our nostrils, as thin as a pin. On which account every man ought to be exorted to pay due reverence to the Gods, that we may escape so severe a punishment, and obtain those
the prize of tragedy."— "What then, Socrates, of so great an assembly as that which decreed you calmly reciting your compositions in the presence of a few wise is more awful than that of a multitude of others, to one who rightly balances the value of their suffrages!"— "I should judge indeed, Agathon," answered Socrates, "in thinking you capable of any rude and unrefined conception, for I well know that if you meet with any whom you consider wise, you esteem such alone of more value than all others. But we are far from being entitled to this distinction, for we were also of that assembly, and to be numbered among the rest. But should you meet with any who are really wise, you would be careful to say nothing in their presence which you thought they would not approve—is it not so?"— "Certainly," replied Agathon. — "You would not then exercise the same caution in the presence of the multitude in which they were included!"— "My dear Agathon," said Phaedrus, interrupting him, "if you answer all the questions of Socrates, they will never have an end; he will urge them without conscience so long as he can get any person, especially one who is so beautiful, to dispute with him. I own it delights me to hear Socrates discuss; but at present, I must see that Love is not defrauded of the praise, which it is my province to exact from each of you. Pay the God his due, and then reason between yourselves if you will." — "Your admonition is just, Phaedrus," replied Agathon, "nor need any reasoning I hold with Socrates impede me: we shall find many future opportunities for discussion. I will begin my discourse then; first having defined what ought to be the subject of it. All who have already spoken seem to me not so much to have praised Love, as to have facilitated mankind on the many advantages of which that deity is the cause; what he is, the author of these great benefits, none have yet declared. There is one mode alone of celebration which would comprehend the whole topic, namely, first to declare what are those benefits, and then what he is who is the author of those benefits, which are the subject of our discourse. Love ought first to be praised, and then his gifts declared. I assert, then, that although all the Gods are immortally happy, Love, if I dare trust my voice to express so awful a truth, is the happiest, and most excellent, and the most beautiful. That he is the most beautiful is evident; first, O Phaedrus, from this circumstance, that he is the youngest of the Gods; and, secondly, from his fleetness, and from his repugnance to all that is old; for he escapes with the swiftness of wings from old age; a thing in itself sufficiently swift, since it overtakes us sooner than there is need; and which Love, who delights in the intercourses of the young, hates, and in no manner can be induced to enter into community with. The ancient proverb, which says that like is attracted by like, applies to the attributes of Love. I con-
cede many things to you, O Phaedrus, but this I do not concede, that Love is more ancient than Saturn and Jupiter. I assert that he is not only the youngest of the Gods, but invested with everlasting youth. Those ancient deeds among the Gods recorded by Hesiod and Parmenides, if their relations are to be considered as true, were produced not by Love, but by Necessity. For if Love had been then in Heaven, those violent and sanguinary crimes never would have taken place; but there would ever have subsisted that affection and peace, in which the Gods now live, under the influence of Love.

"He is young, therefore, and being young is tender and soft. There were need of some poet like Homer to celebrate the delicacy and tenderness of Love. For Homer says, that the goddess Calamity is delicate, and that her feet are tender. 'Her feet are soft,' he says, 'for she treads not upon the ground, but makes her path upon the heads of men.' He gives as an evidence of her tenderness, that she walks not upon that which is hard, but that which is soft. The same evidence is sufficient to make manifest the tenderness of Love. For Love walks not upon the earth, nor over the heads of men, which are not indeed very hard, but that which is soft. The same evidence is sufficient to make manifest the tenderness of Love. For Love walks not upon the earth, nor over the heads of men, which are not indeed very soft; but he dwells within, and treads on the softest of existing things, having established his habitation within the souls and inmost nature of Gods and men; not indeed in all souls—for wherever he chances to find a hard and rugged disposition, there he will not inhabit, but only where it is most soft and tender. Of needs must he be the most delicate of all things, who touches lightly with his feet, only the softest parts of those things which are the softest of all.

"He is then the youngest and the most delicate of all divinities; and in addition to this, he is, as it were, the most moist and liquid. For if he were otherwise, he could not, as he does, fold himself around everything, and secretly flow out and into every soul. His loveliness, that which Love possesses far beyond all other things, is a manifestation of the liquid and flowing symmetry of his form; for between deformity and Love there is eternal contrast and repugnance. His life is spent among flowers, and this accounts for the immortal fairness of his skin; for the winged Love rests not in his flight on any form, or within any soul the flower of whose loveliness is faded, but there remains most willingly where is the odour and radiance of blossoms, yet unwithered. Concerning the beauty of the God, let this be sufficient, though many things must remain unsaid. Let us next consider the virtue and power of Love.

"What is most admirable in Love is, that he neither inflicts nor endures injury in his relations either with Gods or men. Nor if he suffers any thing does he suffer it through violence, nor doing anything does he act it with violence, for Love is never even touched with violence. Every one willingly administers everything to Love; and that which every one voluntarily concedes to another, the laws, which are the kings of the republic, decree that it is just for him to possess. In addition to justice, Love participates in the highest temperance; for if temperance is defined to be the being superior to and holding under dominion pleasures and desires; then Love, than whom no pleasure is more powerful, and who is thus more powerful than all persuasions and delights, must be excellently temperate. In power and valour Mars cannot contend with Love: the love of Venus possesses Mars; the possessor is always superior to the possessed, and he who subdued the most powerful must of necessity be the most powerful of all.

"The justice and temperance and valour of the God have been thus declared;—there remains to exhibit his wisdom. And first, that, like Eryximachus, I may honour my own profession, the God is a wise poet; so wise that he can even make a poet one who was not before: for every one, even if before he were ever so undisciplined, becomes a poet as soon as he is touched by Love; a sufficient proof that Love is a great poet, and well skilled in that science according to the discipline of music. For what any one possesses not, or knows not, that can he neither give nor teach another. And who will deny that the divine poetry, by which all living things are produced upon the earth, is not harmonized by the wisdom of Love? Is it not evident that Love was the author of all the arts of life with which we are acquainted, and that he whose teacher has been Love, becomes eminent and illustrious, whilst he who knows not Love, remains for ever unregarded and obscure! Apollo invented medicine, and divination, and archery, under the guidance of desire and Love; so that Apollo was the disciple of Love. Through him the Muses discovered the arts of literature, and Vulcan that of moulding brass, and Minerva the loom, and Jupiter the mystery of the dominion which he now exercises over Gods and men. So were the Gods taught and disciplined by the love of that which is beautiful; for there is no love towards deformity.

"At the origin of things, as I have before said, many fearful deeds are reported to have been done among the Gods, on account of the dominion of Necessity. But so soon as this deity sprang forth from the desire which forever tends in the universe towards that which is lovely, then all blessings descended upon all living things, human and divine.
Love seems to me, O Phaedrus, a divinity the most beautiful and the best of all, and the author to all others of the excellences with which his own nature is endowed. Nor can I restrain the poetic enthusiasm which takes possession of my discourse, and bids me declare that Love is the divinity who creates peace among men, and calm upon the sea, the windless silence of storms, repose and sleep in sadness. Love divests us of all alienation from each other, and fills our vacant hearts with overflowing sympathy; he gathers us together in such social meetings as we now delight to celebrate, our guardian and our guide in dances, and sacrifices, and feasts. Yes, Love who showers benignity upon the world, and before whose presence all harsh passions flee and perish; the author of all soft affections; the destroyer of all ungentle thoughts; merciful, mild; the object of the admiration of the wise, and the delight of gods; possessed by the fortunate, and desired by the unhappy, therefore unhappy because they possess him not; the father of grace, and delicacy, and gentleness, and delight, and persuasion, and desire; the cherisher of all that is good, theabolisher of all evil; our most excellent pilot, defence, saviour and guardian in labour and in fear, in desire and in reason; the ornament and governor of all things human and divine; the best, the loveliest; in whose footsteps everyone ought to follow, celebrating him excellently in song, and bearing each his part in that divinest harmony which Love sings to all things which live and are, soothing the troubled minds of Gods and men. This, O Phaedrus, is what I have to offer in praise of the divinity; partly composed, indeed, of thoughtless and playful fancies, and partly of such serious ones, as I could well command."

No sooner had Agathon ceased, than a loud murmur of applause arose from all present; so becomingly had the fair youth spoken, both in praise of the God, and in extenuation of himself. Then Socrates, addressing Eryximachus, said, "Was not it fear reasonable, son of Acumenus! Did I not divine what has, in fact, happened,—that Agathon’s discourse would be so wonderfully beautiful, as to pre-occupy all interest in what I should say?"—"You, indeed, divined well so far, O Socrates," said Eryximachus, "that Agathon would speak eloquently, but not that, therefore, you would be reduced to any difficulty."—"How, my good friend, can I or any one else be otherwise than reduced to difficulty, who speak after a discourse so various and so eloquent, and which otherwise had been sufficiently wonderful, if, at the conclusion, the splendour of the sentences, and the choice election of the expressions, had not struck all the hearers with astonishment; so that I, who well know that I can never say anything nearly so beautiful as this, would, if there had been any escape, have run away for shame. The story of Gorgias came into my mind, and I was afraid lest in reality I should suffer what Homer describes; and lest Agathon, scanning my discourse with the head of the eloquent Gorgias, should turn me to stone for speechlessness. I immediately perceived how ridiculously I had engaged myself with you to assume a part in rendering praise to Love, and had boasted that I was well skilled in s inventory matters, being so ignorant of the manner in which it is becoming to render him honour, as I now perceive myself to be. I, in my simplicity, imagined that the truth ought to be spoken concerning each of the topics of our praise, and that it would be sufficient, choosing those which are the most honourable to the God, to place them in as luminous an arrangement as we could. I had, therefore, great hopes that I should speak satisfactorily, being well aware that I was acquainted with the true foundations of the praise which we have engaged to render. But since, as it appears, our purpose has been, not to render Love his due honour, but to accumulate the most beautiful and the greatest attributes of his divinity, whether they are true to belong to it or not, and that the proposed question is not how Love ought to be praised, but how we should praise him most eloquently, my attempt must of necessity fail. It is on this account, I imagine, that in your discourses you have attributed everything to Love, and have described him to be the author of such and so great effects as, to those who are ignorant of his true nature, my exhibit him as the most beautiful and the best of all things. Not, indeed, to those who know the truth. Such praise has a splendid and imposing effect, but as I am unacquainted with the art of rendering it, my mind, which could not foresee what would be required of me, absolves me from that which my tongue promised. Farewell then, for such praise I can never render."—"But if you desire, I will speak what I feel to be true; and that I may not expose myself to ridicule, I entreat you to consider that I speak without entering into competition with those who have preceded me. Consider, then, Phaedrus, whether you will exact from me such a discourse, containing the mere truth with respect to Love, and composed of such unpremeditated expressions as may chance to offer themselves to my mind."—Phaedrus and the rest bade him speak in the manner which he judged most befitting.—"Permit me, then, O Phaedrus, to ask Agathon a few questions, so that, confirmed by his agreement
with me, I may proceed."—"Willingly," replied Phædrus, "ask."—Then Socrates thus began:

"I applaud, dear Agathon, the beginning of your discourse, where you say, we ought first to define and declare what Love is, and then his works. This rule I particularly approve. But, come, since you have given us a discourse of such beauty and majesty concerning Love, you are able, I doubt not, to explain this question, whether Love is the love of something or nothing! I do not ask you of what parents Love is; for the beauty and majesty concerning Love, you are able, to define and declare what Love is, and then his works. This rule I particularly approve. But, if I were asking you to describe which a father is, I should ask, not whether a father was the love of any one, but whether a father was the father of any one or not; you would undoubtedly reply, that a father was the father of a son or daughter; would you not?"—"Assuredly."—"You would define a mother in the same manner?"—"Without doubt."—

"Yet bear with me, and answer a few more questions, for I would learn from you which I wish to know. If I should inquire, in addition, is not a brother, through the very nature of his relation, the brother of some one?"—"Certainly."—"Of a brother or sister is he not?"—"Without question."—

"Try to explain to me then the nature of Love; Love is the love of something or nothing!"—"Of something, certainly."—

"Observe and remember this concession. Tell me yet farther, whether Love desires that of which it is the Love or not?"—"It desires it, assuredly."—

"Whether possessing that which it desires and loves, or not possessing it, does it desire and love?"—"Not possessing it, I should imagine."—"Observe now, whether it does not appear, that, of necessity, desire desires that which it wants and does not possess, and no longer desires that which it no longer wants: this appears to me, Agathon, of which it has need!"—"Nothing."—"Now, remember of those things you said in your discourse, that Love was the love—if you wish I will remind you. I think you said something of this kind, that all the affairs of the gods were admirably disposed through the love of the things which are beautiful; for there was no love of things deformed; did you not say so!"—"I confess that I did."—"You said what was most likely to be true, my friend; and if the matter be so, the love of beauty must be one thing, and the love of deformity another."—

"It is conceded, then, that Love loves that which he wants but possesses not!"—"Yes, certainly."—"But Love wants and does not possess beauty!"—"Indeed it must necessarily follow."—

"What, then! call you that beautiful which has need of beauty and possesses not?"—"Assuredly no."—"Do you still assert, then, that Love is beautiful, if all that we have said be true?"—"Indeed, Socrates," said Agathon, "I am in danger of being convicted of ignorance, with respect to all that I then spoke."—"You spoke most eloquently, my dear Agathon; but bear with my questions yet a moment. You admit that things which are good are also beautiful?"—"No doubt."—"If Love, then, be in want of beautiful things, and things which are good are beautiful, he must be in want of things which are good!"—"I cannot refute your arguments, Socrates."—"You cannot refute truth, my dear Agathon: to refute Socrates is nothing difficult.
"But I will dismiss these questionings. At present let me endeavour, to the best of my power, to repeat to you, on the basis of the points which have been agreed upon between me and Agathon, a discourse concerning Love, which I formerly heard from the prophetess Diotima, who was profoundly skilled in this and many other doctrines, and who, ten years before the pestilence, procured to the Athenians, through their sacrifices, a delay of the disease; for it was she who taught me the science of things relating to Love.

"As you well remarked, Agathon, we ought to declare who and what is Love, and then his works. It is easiest to relate them in the same order, as the foreign prophetess observed when, questioning me, she related them. For I said to her much the same things that Agathon has just said to me—that Love was a great deity, and that he was beautiful; and she refuted me with the same reasons as I have employed to refute Agathon, compelling me to infer that he was neither beautiful nor good, as I said.—‘What then,’ I objected, ‘O Diotima, is Love ugly and evil!’—‘Good words, I entreat you,’ said Diotima; ‘do you think that every thing which is not beautiful, must of necessity be ugly?’—‘Certainly.’—And every thing that is not wise, ignorant! Do you not perceive that there is something between ignorance and wisdom?—‘What is that?’—To have a right opinion or conjecture. Observe, that this kind of opinion, for which no reason can be rendered, cannot be called knowledge; for how can that be called knowledge, which is without evidence or reason?—‘You have confessed that Love is neither beautiful nor good, infer, therefore, that he is deformed or evil, but rather something intermediate.’

―But,’ I said, ‘love is confessed by all to be a great God.’—‘Do you mean, when you say all, all those who know, or those who know not, what they say?’—‘All collectively.’—And how can that be, Socrates!’ said she laughing; ‘how can he be acknowledged to be a great God, by those who assert that he is not even a God at all?—‘And who are they?’ I said.—‘You for one, and I for another.’—‘How can you say that, Diotima?’—‘Easily,’ she replied, ‘and with truth; for tell me, do you not own that all the Gods are beautiful and happy? or will you presume to maintain that any God is otherwise!’—‘By Jupiter, not I!’—‘Do you not call those alone happy who possess all things that are beautiful and good!’—Certainly.—‘You have confessed that Love, through his desire for things beautiful and good, possesses not those materials of happiness.‘—‘Indeed such was my concession.’—‘But how can we conceive a God to be without the possession of what is beautiful and good!’—‘In no manner I confess.’—‘Observe, then, that you do not consider Love to be a God!’—‘What, then,’ I said, ‘is Love a mortal?’—‘By no means.’—‘But what, then!’—‘Like those things which I have before instanced, he is neither mortal nor immortal, but something intermediate.’—‘What is that, O Diotima?’—‘A great daemon, Socrates; and every thing demoniacal holds an intermediate place between what is divine and what is mortal.’

‘What is his power and nature?’ I inquired.—‘He interprets and makes a communication between divine and human things, conveying the prayers and sacrifices of men to the Gods, and communicating the commands and directions concerning the mode of worship most pleasing to them, from Gods to men. He fills up that intermediate space between these two classes of beings, so as to bind together, by his own power, the whole universe of things. Through him subsist all divination, and the science of sacred things as it relates to sacrifices, and expiations, and disenchantments, and prophecy, and magic. The divine nature cannot immediately communicate with what is human, but all that intercourse and converse which is conceded to the Gods to men, both whilst they sleep and when they wake, subsists through the intervention of Love; and he who is wise in the science of this intercourse is supremely happy, and participates in the demoniacal nature; whilst he who is wise in any other science or art, remains a mere ordinary slave. These demons are, indeed, many and various, and one of them is Love.

‘Who are the parents of Love?’ I inquired.—‘The history of what you ask,’ replied Diotima, ‘is somewhat long; nevertheless I will explain it to you. On the birth of Venus the Gods celebrated a great feast, and among them came Plenty, the son of Metis. After supper, Poverty, observing the profusion, came to beg, and stood beside the door. Plenty being drunk with nectar, for wine was not yet invented, went out into Jupiter’s garden, and fell into a deep sleep. Poverty wishing to have a child by Plenty, on account of her low estate, lay down by him, and from his embraces conceived Love. Love is, therefore, the follower and servant of Venus, because he was conceived at her birth, and because by nature he is a lover of all that is beautiful, and Venus was beautiful. And since..."
Love is the child of Poverty and Plenty, his nature and fortune participate in that of his parents. He is for ever poor, and so far from being delicate and beautiful, as mankind imagine, he is squalid and withered; he flies low along the ground, and is homeless and unsheltered; he sleeps without covering before the doors, and in the unsheltered streets; possessing thus far his mother's nature, that he is ever the companion of Want. But, inasmuch as he when he is fortunate and successful, he will at one time flourish, and then die away, and then, according to his father's nature, again revive. All that he acquires perpetually flows away from him, so that Love is never either rich or poor, and holding for ever an intermediate state between ignorance and wisdom. The case stands thus:—no God philosophizes or desires to become wise, for he is wise; nor, if there exist any other being who is wise, does he philosophize. Nor do the ignorant philosophize, for they desire not to become wise; for this is the evil of ignorance, that he who has neither intelligence, nor virtue, nor delicacy of sentiment, imagines that he possesses all those things sufficiently. He seeks not, therefore, that possession, of whose want he is not aware.'—

Who, then, O Diotima,' I enquired, 'are philosophers, if they are neither the ignorant nor the wise? It is evident, even to a child, that they are those intermediate persons, among whom is Love. For Wisdom is one of the most beautiful of all things; Love is that which thirsts for the beautiful, so that Love is of necessity a philosopher, philosophy being an intermediate state between ignorance and wisdom. His parentage accounts for his condition, being the child of a wise and well-provided father, and of a mother both ignorant and poor.

Such is the demoniacal nature, my dear Socrates; nor do I wonder at your error concerning Love, for you thought, as I conjecture from what you say, that Love was not the lover but the beloved, and thence, well concluded that he must be supremely beautiful; for that which is the object of Love must indeed be fair, and delicate, and perfect, and most happy; but Love inherits, as I have declared, a totally opposite nature.'—

Your words have persuasion in them, O stranger,' I said; 'be it as you say. But this Love, what advantages does he afford to men?—' I will proceed to explain it to you, Socrates. Love being such and so produced as I have described, is, indeed, as you say, the love of things which are beautiful. But if any one should ask us, saying; O Socrates and Diotima, why is Love the love of beautiful things? Or, in plainer words, what does the lover of that which is beautiful, love in the object of his love, and seek from it?— He seeks,' I said, interrupting her, 'the property and possession of it.'— 'But that,' she replied, 'might still be met with another question, What has he, who possesses that which is beautiful?—' Indeed, I cannot immediately reply.'— But if, changing the beautiful for good, any one should enquire,—I ask, O Socrates, what is that which he who loves that which is good, loves in the object of his love?—' To be in his possession,' I replied.—'And what has he, who has the possession of good?— This question is of easier solution: he is happy.'—'Those who are happy, then, are happy through the possession; and it is useless to enquire what he desires, who desires to be happy; the question seems to have a complete reply. But do you think that this wish and this love are common to all men, and that all desire, that that which is good should be forever present to them?—'Certainly, common to all.'— Why do we not say then, Socrates, that every one loves if, indeed, all love perpetually the same thing! But we say that some love, and some do not.'—'Indeed I wonder why it is so.'— 'Wonder not,' said Diotima, 'for we select a particular species of love, and apply to it distinctively the appellation of that which is universal.'—

"Give me an example of such a select application."—'Poetry; which is a general name signifying every cause whereby anything proceeds from that which is not, into that which is; so that the exercise of every inventive art is poetry, and all such artists poets. Yet they are not called poets, but distinguished by other names; and one portion or species of poetry, that which has relation to music and rhythm, is divided from all others, and known by the name belonging to all. For this is alone properly called poetry, and those who exercise the art of this species of poetry, poets. So, with respect to Love. Love is indeed universally all that earnest desire for the possession of happiness and that which is good; the greatest and the subllest love, and which inhabits the heart of every living being; but those who seek this object through the acquirement of wealth, or the exercise of the gymnastic arts, or philosophy, are not said to love, nor are called lovers; one species alone is called love, and those alone are said to be lovers, and to love, who seek the attainment of the universal desire through
one species of love, which is peculiarly distinguished by the name belonging to the whole. If it is asserted by some, that they love, who are seeking the lost half of their divided being. But I assert, that Love is neither the love of the half nor of the whole, unless, my friend, it meets with that which is good; since men willingly cut off their own hands and feet, if they think that they are the cause of evil to them. Nor do they cherish and embrace that which may belong to themselves, merely because it is their own; unless, indeed, any one should choose to say, that that which is good is attached to his own nature and is his own, whilst that which is evil is foreign and accidental; but love nothing but that which is good. Does it not appear so to you!— 'Assuredly.'— 'Can we then simply affirm that men love that which is good!'— 'Without doubt.'— 'What, then, must we not add, that, in addition to loving that which is good, they love that it should be present to themselves?'— 'Indeed that must be added.'— And not merely that it should be present, but that it should ever be present!'— 'This also must be added.'

" 'Love, then, is collectively the desire in men that good should be for ever present to them.'— 'Most true.'— 'Since this is the general definition of Love, can you explain in what mode of attaining its object, and in what species of actions, does Love peculiarly consist!'— 'If I knew what you ask, O Diotima, I should not have so much wondered at your wisdom, nor have sought you out for the purpose of deriving improvement from your instructions.'— 'I will tell you,' she replied: 'Love is the desire of generation in the beautiful, both with their future progeny, and when we arrive at a certain age, our nature impels us to bring forth and propagate. This nature is unable to produce in that which is deformed, but it can produce in that which is beautiful. The intercourse of the male and female in generation, a divine work, through pregnancy and production, is, as it were, something immortal in mortality. These things cannot take place in that which is incongruous; for that which is deformed is incongruous, but that which is beautiful is congruous with what is immortal and divine. Beauty is, therefore, the fate, and the Juno Lucina to generation. Wherefore, whenever that which is pregnant with the generative principle, approaches that which is beautiful, it becomes transported with delight, and is poured forth in overflowing pleasure, and propagates. But when it approaches that which is deformed, it is contracted by sadness, and being repelled and checked, it does not produce, but retains unwillingly that with which it is pregnant. Wherefore, to one pregnant, and, as it were, already bursting with the load of his desire, the impulse towards that which is beautiful is intense, on account of the great pain of retaining that which he has conceived. Love, then, O Socrates, is not as you imagine the love of the beautiful. — 'What, then!'— Of generation and production in the beautiful.'— 'Why then of generation!'— Generation is something eternal and immortal in mortality. It necessarily, from what has been confessed, follows, that we must desire immortality together with what is good, since Love is the desire that good be for ever present to us. Of necessity Love must also be the desire of immortality.'

"Diotima taught me all this doctrine in the discourse we had together concerning Love; and in addition, she enquired, 'What do you think, Socrates, is the cause of this love and desire! Do you not perceive how all animals, both those of the earth and of the air, are affected when they desire the propagation of their species, affected even so weakness and disease by the impulse of their love; first, longing to be mixed with each other, and then seeking nourishment for their offspring, so that the feeblest are ready to contend with the strongest in obedience to this law, and to die for the sake of their young, or to waste away with hunger, and do or suffer anything so that they may not want nourishment. It might be said that human beings do these things through reason, but can you explain why other animals are thus affected through love!'— 'I confessed that I did not know.'— 'Do you imagine yourself,' said she, 'to be skilful in the science of Love, if you are ignorant of these things!'— 'As I said before, O Diotima, I come to you, well knowing how much I am in need of a teacher. But explain to me, I entreat you, the cause of these things, and of the other things relating to Love.'— 'If,' said Diotima, 'you believe that Love is of the same nature as we have mutually agreed upon, wonder not that such are its effects. For the mortal nature seeks, so far as it is able, to become deathless and eternal. But it can only accomplish this desire by generation, which for ever leaves another new in place of the old. For, although each human being be severally said to live, and be the same from youth to old age, yet, that which is called the same, never contains within itself the same things, but always is becoming new by the loss and change of that which it possessed before: both the hair, and the flesh, and the bones, and the entire body.
And not only does this change take place in the body, but also with respect to the soul. Manners, morals, opinions, desires, pleasures, sorrows, fears; none of these ever remain unchanged in the same persons; but some die away, and others are produced. And, what is yet more strange is, that not only does some knowledge spring up, and produced. And, what is yet more strange is, that object of our thoughts suffer the same revolution. That which is called meditation, or the exercise of memory, is the science of the escape or departure of knowledge; for, forgetfulness is the going out of memory; and meditation, calling up a new memory in the place of that which has departed, preserves knowledge; so that, though for ever displaced and restored, it seems to be the same. In this manner every thing mortal is preserved: not that it is constant and eternal, like that which is divine; but that in the place of what has grown old and is departed, it leaves another new like that which it was itself. By this contrivance, O Socrates, does what is mortal, the body and all other things, partake of immortality; that which is immortal, is immortal in another manner. Wonder not, then, if every thing by nature preserves which was produced from itself, for this earnest love is a tendency towards eternity.

Having heard this discourse, I was astonished, and asked, 'Can these things be true, O wisest Diotima?' And she, like an accomplished sophist, said, 'Know well, O Socrates, that if you only regard that love of glory which inspires men, you will wonder at your own unskilfulness in not having discovered all that I now declare. Observe with how vehement a desire they are affected to become illustrious and to prolong their glory into immortal time, to attain which object, far more ardently than for the sake of their children, all men are ready to engage in many dangers, and expend their fortunes, and submit to any labours and incur any death. Do you believe that Alcestis would have died in the place of Admetus, or Achilles for the revenge of Patroclus, or Codrus for the kingdom of his posterity, if they had not believed that the immortal memory of their actions, which we now cherish, would have remained after their death? Far otherwise; all such deeds are done for the sake of ever-living virtue, and this immortal glory which they have obtained; and inasmuch as any one is of an excellent nature, so much the more is he impelled to attain this reward. For they love what is immortal.

Those whose bodies alone are pregnant with this principle of immortality are attracted by women, seeking through the production of children what they imagine to be happiness and immortality and an enduring remembrance; but they whose souls are far more pregnant than their bodies, conceive and produce that which is more suitable to the soul. What is suitable to the soul? Intelligence, and every other power and excellence of the mind; of which all poets, and all other artists who are creative and inventive, are the authors. The greatest and most admirable wisdom is that which regulates the government of families and states, and which is called moderation and justice. Whoseover, therefore, from his youth feels his soul pregnant with the conception of these excellences, is divine; and when due time arrives, desires to bring forth; and wandering about, he seeks the beautiful in which he may propagate what he has conceived; for there is no generation in that which is deformed; he embraces those bodies which are beautiful rather than those which are deformed, in obedience to the principle which is within him, which is ever seeking to perpetuate itself. And if he meets, in conjunction with loveliness of form, a beautiful, generous and gentle soul, he embraces both at once, and immediately undertakes to educate this object of his love, and is inspired with an overflowing persuasion to declare what is virtue, and what he ought to be who would attain to its possession, and what are the duties which it exacts. For, by the intercourse with, and as it were, the very touch of that which is beautiful, he brings forth and produces what he had formerly conceived; and nourishes and educates that which is thus produced together with the object of his love, whose image, whether absent or present, is never divided from his mind. So that those who are thus united are linked by a nobler community and a firmer love, as being the common parents of a lovelier and more enduring progeny than the parents of other children. And every one who considers what posterity Homer and Hesiod, and the other great poets, have left behind them, the sources of their own immortal memory and renown, or what children of his soul Lycurgus has appointed to be the guardians, not only of Lacedaemon, but of all Greece; or what an illustrious progeny of laws Solon has produced, and how many admirable achievements, both among the Greeks and Barbarians, men have left as the pledges of that love which subsisted between them and the beautiful, would choose rather to be the parent of such children as those in a human shape. For divine honours have often been rendered to them on account of such children, but on account of those in human shape, never.

Your own meditation, O Socrates, might perhaps have initiated you in all these things which I have already taught you on the subject of
Love. But those perfect and sublime ends, to which these are only the means, I know not that you would have been competent to discover. I will declare them, therefore, and will render them as intelligible as possible: do you meanwhile strain all your attention to trace the obscure depth of the subject. He who aspires to love rightly, ought from his earliest youth to seek an intercourse with beautiful forms, and first to make a single form the object of his love, and therein to generate intellectual excellences. He ought, then, to consider that beauty in whatever form it resides is the brother of that beauty which subsists in another form; and if he ought to pursue that which is beautiful in form, it would be absurd to imagine that beauty is not one and the same thing in all forms, and would therefore remit much of his ardent preference towards one, through his perception of the multitude of claims upon his love. In addition, he would consider the beauty which is in souls more excellent than that which is in form. So that one endowed with an admirable soul, even though the flower of the form were withered, would suffice him as the object of his love and care, and the companion with whom he might seek and produce such conclusions as tend to the improvement of youth; so that it might be led to observe the beauty and the conformity which there is in the observation of its duties and the laws, and to esteem little the mere beauty of the outward form. He would then conduct his pupil to science, so that he might look upon the loveliness of wisdom; and that contemplating thus the universal beauty, no longer would he unworthily and meanly enslave himself to the attractions of one form in love, nor one subject of discipline or science, but would turn towards the wide ocean of intellectual beauty, and from the sight of the lovely and majestic forms which it contains, would abundantly bring forth his conceptions in philosophy; until, strengthened and confirmed, he should at length steadily contemplate one science, which is the science of this universal beauty.

"Attempt, I entreat you, to mark what I say with as keen an observation as you can. He who has been disciplined to this point in Love, by contemplating beautiful objects gradually, and in their order, now arriving at the end of all that concerns Love, on a sudden beholds a beauty wonderful in its nature. This is it, O Socrates, for the sake of which all the former labours were endured. It is eternal, unproduced, indestructible; neither subject to increase nor decay: not, like other things, partly beautiful and partly deformed; not at one time beautiful and at another time not; not beautiful in relation to one thing and deformed in relation to another; not here beautiful and there deformed; not beautiful in the estimation of one person and deformed in that of another; nor can this supreme beauty be figured to the imagination like a beautiful face, or beautiful hands, or any portion of the body, nor like any discourse, nor any science. Nor does it subsist in any other that lives or is, either in earth, or in heaven, or in any other place; but it is eternally uniform and consistent, and monoedic with itself. All other things are beautiful through a participation of it, with this condition, that although they are subject to production and decay, it never becomes more or less, or endures any change. When any one, ascending from a correct system of Love, begins to contemplate this supreme beauty, he already touches the consummation of his labour. For such as discipline themselves upon this system, or are conducted by another beginning to ascend through these transient objects which are beautiful, towards that which is beauty itself, proceeding as on steps from the love of one form to that of two, and from that of two, to that of all forms which are beautiful; and from beautiful forms to beautiful habits and institutions, and from institutions to beautiful doctrines; until, from the meditation of many doctrines, they arrive at that which is nothing else than the doctrine of the supreme beauty itself, in the knowledge and contemplation of which at length they repose.

"Such a life as this, my dear Socrates," exclaimed the stranger Prophetess, "spent in the contemplation of the beautiful, is the life for men to live; which if you chance ever to experience, you will esteem far beyond gold and rich garments, and even those lovely persons whom yea and many others now gaze on with astonishment, and are prepared neither to eat nor drink so that you may behold and live for ever with these objects of your love! What then shall we imagine to be the aspect of the supreme beauty itself, simple, pure, uncontaminated with the intermixture of human flesh and colours, and all other idle and unreal shapes attendant on mortality; the divine, the original, the supreme, the monoedic beautiful itself? What must be the life of him who dwells with and gazes on that which it becomes us all to seek? Think you not that to him alone is accorded the prerogative of bringing forth, not images and shadows of virtue, for he is in contact not with a shadow but with reality; with virtue itself, in the production and nourishment of which he becomes dear to the Gods, and if such a privilege is conceded to any human being, himself immortal."
"Such, O Phaedrus, and my other friends, was what Diotima said. And being persuaded by her words, I have since occupied myself in attempting to persuade others, that it is not easy to find a better assistant than Love in seeking to communicate immortality to our human natures. Wherefore I exhort every one to honour Love; I hold in honour, and chiefly, exercise myself in amatory matters, and exhort others to do so; and now and ever do I praise the power and excellence of Love, in the best manner that I can. Let this discourse, if it pleases you, Phaedrus, be considered as an encomium of Love; or call it by what other name you will."

The whole assembly praised his discourse, and Aristophanes was on the point of making some remarks on the allusion made by Socrates to him in a part of his discourse, when suddenly they heard the voice of Alcibiades in the vestibule, and a clamour as of revellers, attended by a flute-player. — "Go, boys," said Agathon, "and see who is there: if they are any of our friends, call them in; if not, say that we have already done drinking." — A minute afterwards, they heard a loud knocking at the door of the vestibule, and a clamour as of revellers, attended by a flute-player. — "Where is Agathon! Lead me to Agathon!" — The flute-player, and some of his companions, then led him in, and placed him against the door-post, crowned with a thick crown of ivy and violets, and having a quantity of fillets on his head. — "My friends," he cried out, "hail! I am excessively drunk already, but I'll drink with you, if you will. If not, we will go away after having crowned Agathon, for which purpose I came. I assure you that I could not come yesterday, but I am now here with these fillets round my temples, that from my own head I may crown his who, with your leave, is the most beautiful and wisest of men. Are you laughing at me because I am drunk? Ay, I know what I say is true, whether you laugh or not. But tell me at once, whether I shall come in, or no. Will you drink with me?"

Agathon and the whole party desired him to come in, and recline among them; so he came in, led by his companions. He then unbound his fillets that he might crown Agathon, and though Socrates was just before his eyes, he did not see him, but sat down by Agathon, between Socrates and him, for Socrates moved out of the way to make room for him. When he sat down, he embraced Agathon and crowned him; and Agathon desired the slaves to undo his sandals, that he might make a third, and recline on the same couch. "By all means," said Alcibiades, "but what third companion have we here?" And at the same time turning round and seeing Socrates, he leaped up and cried out: — "O Hercules! what have we here? You, Socrates, lying in ambush for me wherever I go! and meeting me just as you always do, when I least expected to see you! And, now, what are you come here for? Why have you chosen to recline exactly in this place, and not near Aristophanes, or any one else who is, or wishes to be ridiculous, but have contrived to take your place beside the most delightful person of the whole party?" — "Agathon," said Socrates, "see if you cannot defend me. I declare my friendship for this man is a bad business: from the moment that I first began to know him I have never been permitted to converse with, or so much as to look upon any one else. If I do, he is so jealous and suspicious that he does the most extravagant things, and hardly refrains from beating me. I entreat you to prevent him from doing anything of that kind at present. Procure a reconciliation: or, if he perseveres in attempting any violence, I entreat you to defend me." — "Indeed," said Alcibiades, "I will not be reconciled to you; I shall find another opportunity to punish you for this. But now," said he, addressing Agathon, "lend me some of those fillets, that I may crown the wonderful head of this fellow, lest I incur the blame, that having crowned you, I neglected to crown him who conquers all men with his discourses, not yesterday alone as you did, but ever."

Saying this he took the fillets, and having bound the head of Socrates, and again having reclined, said: "Come, my friends, you seem to be sober enough. You must not flinch, but drink, for that was your agreement with me before I came in. I choose as president, until you have drunk enough — myself. Come, Agathon, if you have got a great goblet, fetch it out. But no matter, that wine-cooler will do; bring it, boy!" And observing that it held more than eight cups, he first drank it off, and then ordered it to be filled for Socrates, and said: — "Observe, my friends, I cannot invent any scheme against Socrates, for he will drink as much as any one desires him, and not be in the least drunk." Socrates, after the boy had filled up, drank it off; and Eryximachus said: — "Shall we then have no conversation or singing over our cups, but drink down stupidly, just as if we were thirsty?" And Alcibiades said: — "Ah, Eryximachus, I did not see you before; hail, you excellent son of a wise and excellent father!" — "Hail to you also," replied Eryximachus, "but what shall we do!" — "Whatever you command, for we ought to submit to your directions; a physician is worth a hundred common men. Command us as you please." — "Listen then," said Eryximachus.
"before you came in, each of us had agreed to deliver as eloquent a discourse as he could in praise of Love, beginning at the right hand; all the rest of us have fulfilled our engagement; you have not spoken, and yet have drunk with us: you ought to bear your part in the discussion; and having done so, command what you please to Socrates, who shall have the privilege of doing so to his right-hand neighbour, and so on to the others."—

"Indeed, there appears some justice in your proposal, Eryximachus, though it is rather unfair to induce a drunken man to set his discourse in competition with that of those who are sober. And, besides, did Socrates really persuade you that what he just said about me was true, or do you not know that matters are in fact exactly the reverse of his representation? For I seriously believe that, should I praise in his presence, be he god or man, any other beside himself, he would not keep his hands off me. But I assure you, Socrates, I will praise no one beside yourself, in your presence."

"Do so, then," said Eryximachus; "praise Socrates if you please."—"What!" said Alcibiades, "shall I attack him, and punish him before you all!"—"What have you got into your head now," said Socrates; "are you going to expose me to ridicule, and to misrepresent me? Or what are you going to do?"—"I will only speak the truth; will you permit me on this condition?"—"I not only permit, but exhort you to say all the truth you know," replied Socrates. "I obey you willingly," said Alcibiades; "and if I advance anything untrue, do you, if you please, interrupt me, and convict me of misrepresentation, for I would never willingly speak falsely. And bear with me if I do not relate things in their order; but just as I remember them, for it is not easy for a man in my present condition to enumerate systematically all your singularities.

"I will begin the praise of Socrates by comparing him to a certain statue. Perhaps he will think that this statue is introduced for the sake of ridicule, but I assure you that it is necessary for the illustration of truth. I assert, then, that Socrates is exactly like those Silenuses that sit in the sculptors' shops, and which are carved holding flutes or pipes, but which, when divided into two, are found to contain within them the images of the gods. I assert that Socrates is like the satyr Marsyas. That your form and appearance are like those satyrs, I think that even you will not venture to deny; and how like you are to them in all other things, now hear. Are you not scornful and petulant? If you deny this, I will bring witnesses. Are you not a piper, and far more wonderful a one than he? For Marsyas, and whoever now pipes the music that he taught; for that music which is of heaven, and described as being taught by Marsyas, enchants men through the power of the mouth. For if any musician, be he skilful or not, awakens this music, it alone enables him to retain the minds of men, and from the divinity of its nature makes evident those who are in want of the gods and initiation. You differ only from Marsyas in this circumstance, that you effect without instruments, by mere words, all that he can do. For when we hear Pericles, or any other accomplished orator, deliver a discourse, no one, as it were, cares any thing about it. But when any one hears you, or even your words related by another, though ever so rude and unskilful a speaker, be that person a woman, man or child, we are struck and retained, as it were, by the discourse clinging to our mind.

"If I was not afraid that I am a great deal too drunk, I would confirm to you by an oath the strange effects which I assure you I have suffered from his words, and suffer still; for when I hear him speak, my heart leaps up far more than the hearts of those who celebrate the Corybantic mysteries; my tears are poured out as he talks, a thing I have seen happen to many others beside myself. I have heard Pericles and other excellent orators, and have been pleased with their discourses, but I suffered nothing of this kind; nor was my soul ever on those occasions disturbed and filled with self-reproach, as if it were slavishly laid prostrate. But this Marsyas here has often affected me in the way I describe, until the life which I lead seems hardly worth living. Do not deny it, Socrates; for I well know that if even now I chose to listen to you, I could not resist, but should again suffer the same effects. For, my friends, be forces me to confess that while I myself am still in want of many things, I neglect my own necessities, and attend to those of the Athenians. I stop my ears, therefore, as from the Syrens, and flee away as fast as possible, that I may not sit down beside him and grow old in listening to his talk. For this man has reduced me to feel the sentiment of shame, which I imagine no one would readily believe was in me; he alone inspires me with remorse and awe. For I feel in his presence my incapacity of refuting what he says, or of refusing to do that which he directs; but when I depart from him, the glory which the multitude confers overwhelms me. I escape, therefore, and hide myself from him, and when I see him I am overwhelmed with humiliation, because I have neglected to do what I have confessed to him ought to be done; and often and often have I wished that he were no longer to be seen among men. But if that were to happen, I well know that I should suffer far greater pain;"
that where I can turn, or what I can do with this man, I know not. All this have I and many others suffered from the pippings of this satyr.

"And observe, how like he is to what I said, and what a wonderful power he possesses. Know that there is not one of you who is aware of the real nature of Socrates; but since I have begun, I will make him plain to you. You observe how passionately Socrates affects the intimacy of those who are beautiful, and how ignorant he professes himself to be; appearances in themselves excessively Silenic. This, my friends, is the external form with which, like one of the sculptured Sileni, he has clothed himself; for if you open him, you will find within admirable temperance and wisdom. For he cares not for mere beauty, but despises more than any one can imagine all external possessions, whether it be beauty or wealth, or glory, or any other thing for which the multitude felicitates the possessor. He esteems these things and us who honour them, as nothing, and lives among men, making all the objects of their admiration the playthings of his irony. But I know not if any one of you have ever seen the divine images which are within, when he has been opened and is serious. I have seen them, and they are so supremely beautiful, so golden, so divine, and wonderful, that every thing which Socrates commands surely ought to be obeyed, even like the voice of a God.

"At one time we were fellow-soldiers, and had our mess together in the camp before Potidæa. Socrates there overcame not only me, but every one beside, in endurance of toils: when, as often happens in a campaign, we were reduced to few provisions, there were none who could sustain hunger like Socrates; and when we had plenty, he alone seemed to enjoy our military fare. He never drank much willingly, but when he was compelled, he conquered all even in that to which he was least accustomed; and what is most astonishing, no person ever saw Socrates drunk either then or at any other time. In the depth of winter (and the winters there are excessively rigid), he sustained calmly incredible hardships: and amongst other things, whilst the frost was intolerably severe, and no one went out of their tents, or if they went out, wrap themselves up carefully, and put fleeces under their feet, and bound their legs with hairy skins, Socrates went out only with the same cloak on that he usually wore, and walked barefoot upon the ice; more easily, indeed, than those who had sandalled themselves so delicately: so that the soldiers thought that he did it to mock their want of fortitude. It would indeed be worth while to commemorate all that this brave man did and endured in that expedition. In one instance he was seen early in the morning, standing in one place wrapt in meditation; and as he seemed not to be able to unravel the subject of his thoughts, he still continued to stand as enquiring and discussing within himself, and when noon came, the soldiers observed him, and said to one another—'Socrates has been standing there thinking, ever since the morning.' At last some Ionians came to the spot, and having supped, as it was summer, bringing their blankets, they lay down to sleep in the cool; they observed that Socrates continued to stand there the whole night until morning, and that, when the sun rose, he saluted it with a prayer and departed.

"I ought not to omit what Socrates is in battle. For in that battle after which the generals decreed to me the prize of courage, Socrates alone of all men was theaviour of my life, standing by me when I had fallen and was wounded, and preserving both myself and my arms from the hands of the enemy. On that occasion I entreated the generals to decree the prize, as it was most due, to him. And this, O Socrates, you cannot deny, that while the generals, wishing to conciliate a person of my rank, desired to give me the prize, you were far more earnestly desirous than the generals that this glory should be attributed not to yourself, but me.

"But to see Socrates when our army was defeated and scattered in flight at Delius, was a spectacle worthy to behold. On that occasion I was among the cavalry, and he on foot, heavily armed. After the total rout of our troops, he and Laches retreated together; I came up by chance, and seeing them, bade them be of good cheer, for that I would not leave them. As I was on horseback, and therefore less occupied by a regard of my own situation, I could better observe than at Potidæa the beautiful spectacle exhibited by Socrates on this emergency. How superior was he to Laches in presence of mind and courage! Your representation of him on the stage, O Aristophanes, was not wholly unlike his real self on this occasion, for he walked and darted his regards around with a majestic composure, looking tranquilly both on his friends and enemies; so that it was evident to everyone, even from afar, that whoever should venture to attack him would encounter a desperate resistance. He and his companion thus departed in safety; for those who are scattered in flight are pursued and killed, whilst men hesitate to touch those who exhibit such a countenance as that of Socrates even in defeat.

"Many other and most wonderful qualities could
well be praised in Socrates; but such as these might singly be attributed to others. But that which is unparalleled in Socrates, is, that he is unlike, and above comparison, with all other men, whether those who have lived in ancient times, or those who exist now. For it may be conjectured, that Brasidas and many others are such as was Achilles. Pericles deserves comparison with Nestor and Antenor; and other excellent persons of various times may, with probability, be drawn into comparison with each other. But to such a singular man as this, both himself and his discourses being so uncommon, no one, should he seek, would find a parallel among the present or the past generations of mankind; unless they should say that he resembled those with whom I lately compared him, for, assuredly, he and his discourses are like nothing but the Sileni and the Satyrs. At first I forgot to make you observe how like his discourses are to those Satyrs when they are opened, for, if any one will listen to the talk of Socrates, it will appear to him at first extremely ridiculous; the phrases and expressions which he employs, fold around his exterior the skin, as it were, of a rude and wanton Satyr. He is always talking about great market-asses, and brass-founders, and leather-cutters, and skin-dressers; and this is his perpetual custom, so that any dull and unobservant person might easily laugh at his discourse. But if any one should see it opened, as it were, and get within the sense of his words, he would then find that they alone of all that enters into the mind of man to utter, had a profound and persuasive meaning, and that they were most divine; and that they presented to the mind innumerable images of every excellence, and that they tended towards objects of the highest moment, or rather towards all, that he who seeks the possession of what is supremely beautiful and good, need regard as essential to the accomplishment of his ambition.

"These are the things, my friends, for which I praise Socrates."

Alcibiades having said this, the whole party burst into a laugh at his frankness, and Socrates said, "You seem to be sober enough, Alcibiades, else you would not have made such a circuit of words, only to hide the main design for which you made this long speech, and which, as it were carelessly, you just throw in at the last; now, as if you had not said all this for the mere purpose of dividing me and Agathon! You think that I ought to be your friend, and to care for no one else. I have found you out; it is evident enough for what design you invented all this Satyrical and Silensic drama. But, my dear Agathon, do not let his device succeed. I entreat you to permit no one to throw discord between us."

"No doubt," said Agathon, "he sat down between us only that he might divide us; but this shall not assist his scheme, for I will come and sit near you."

"Do so," said Socrates, "come, there is room for you by me."

"Oh, Jupiter!" exclaimed Alcibiades, "what I endure from that man! He thinks to subdue every way; but, at least, I pray you, let Agathon remain between us."

"Impossible," said Socrates, "you have just praised me; I ought to praise him sitting at my right hand. If Agathon is placed beside you, will he not praise me before I praise him? Now, my dear friend, allow the young man to receive what praise I can give him. I have a great desire to pronounce his encomium."

"Quick, quick, Alcibiades," said Agathon, "I cannot stay here, I must change my place, or Socrates will not praise me."

"Agathon then arose to take his place near Socrates."

He had no sooner reclined than there came in a number of revellers—for some one who had gone out had left the door open—and took their places on the vacant couches, and everything became full of confusion; and no order being observed, every one was obliged to drink a great quantity of wine. Eryximachus, and Phsedrus, and some others, said Aristodemus went home to bed; that, for his part, he went to sleep on his couch, and slept long and soundly—the nights were then long—until the cock crew in the morning. When he awoke he found that some were still fast asleep, and others had gone home, and that Aristophanes, Agathon, and Socrates had alone stood it out, and were still drinking out of a great goblet which they passed round and round. Socrates was disputing between them. The beginning of their discussion Aristodemus said that he did not recollect, because he was asleep; but it was terminated by Socrates forcing them to confess, that the same person is able to compose both tragedy and comedy, and that the foundations of the tragic and comic arts were essentially the same. They, rather convicted than convinced, went to sleep. Aristophanes first awoke, and then, it being broad daylight, Agathon. Socrates, having put them to sleep, went away, Aristodemus following him, and coming to the Lyceum he washed himself, as he would have done anywhere else, and after having spent the day there in his accustomed manner, went home in the evening.
ON LOVE.

What is love? Ask him who lives, what is life! ask him who adores, what is God!

I know not the internal constitution of other men, nor even thine, whom I now address. I see that in some external attributes they resemble me, but when, misled by that appearance, I have thought to appeal to something in common, and unbear the faintest soul to them, I have found my language misunderstood, like one in a distant and savage land. The more opportunities they have afforded me for experience, the wider has appeared the interval between us, and to a greater distance have the points of sympathy been withdrawn. With a spirit ill fitted to sustain such proof, trembling and feeble through its tenderness, I have everywhere sought sympathy, and have found only repulse and disappointment.

Thou demandest what is love! It is that powerful attraction towards all that we conceive, or fear, or hope beyond ourselves, when we find within our own thoughts the chasm of an insufficient void, and seek to awaken in all things that are, a community with what we experience within ourselves. If we reason, we would be understood; if we imagine, we would that the airy children of our brain were born anew within another's; if we feel, we would that another's nerves should vibrate to our own, that the beams of their eyes should kindle at once and mix and melt into our own, that lips of motionless ice should not reply to lips quivering and burning with the heart's best blood.

This is Love. This is the bond and the sanction which connects not only man with man, but with every thing which exists. We are born into the world, and there is something within us which, from the instant that we live, more and more thirsts after its likeness. It is probably in correspondence with this law that the infant drains milk from the bosom of its mother; this propensity develops itself with the development of our nature. We dimly see within our intellectual nature a miniature as it were of our entire self, yet deprived of all that we condemn or despise, the ideal prototype of every thing excellent or lovely that we are capable of conceiving as belonging to the nature of man. Not only the portrait of our external being, but an assemblage of the minutest particles of which our nature is composed; a mirror whose surface reflects only the forms of purity and brightness; a soul within our soul that describes a circle around its proper paradise, which pain, and sorrow, and evil dare not overspread. To this we eagerly refer all sensations, thirsting that they should resemble or correspond with it. The discovery of its antitype; the meeting with an understanding capable of clearly estimating our own; an imagination which should enter into and seize upon the subtle and delicate peculiarities which we have delighted to cherish and unfold in secret; with a frame whose nerves, like the chords of two exquisite lyres, strung to the accompaniment of one delightful voice, vibrate with the vibrations of our own; and of a combination of all these in such proportion as the type within demands; this is the invisible and unattainable point to which Love tends; and to attain which, it urges forth the powers of man to arrest the faintest shadow of that, without the possession of which there is no rest nor repose to the heart over which it rules.

Hence in solitude, or in that deserted state when we are surrounded by human beings, and yet they sympathise not with us, we love the flowers, the grass, and the waters, and the sky. In the motion of the very leaves of spring, in the blue air, there is then found a secret correspondence with our heart. There is eloquence in the tongueless wind, and a melody in the flowing brooks and the rustling of the reeds beside them, which by their inconceivable relation to something within the soul, awaken the spirits to a dance of breathless rapture, and bring tears of mysterious tenderness to the eyes, like the enthusiasm of patriotic success, or the voice of one beloved singing to you alone. Sterne says that, if he were in a desert, he would love some cypress. So soon as this want or power is dead, man becomes the living sepulchre of himself, and what yet survives is the mere husk of what once he was.

* These words are ineffectual and metaphorical. Most words are so—No help!
At the hour of noon, on the feast of the Passover, an old man, accompanied by a girl, apparently his daughter, entered the Coliseum at Rome. They immediately passed through the Arena, and seeking a solitary chasm among the arches of the southern part of the ruin, selected a fallen column for their seat, and clasping each other's hands, sat in silent contemplation of the scene. But the eyes of the girl were fixed upon her father's lips, and his countenance, sublime and sweet, but motionless as some Praxitelean image of the greatest of poets, filled the silent air with smiles, not reflected from external forms.

It was the great feast of the Resurrection, and the whole native population of Rome, together with all the foreigners who flock from all parts of the earth to contemplate its celebration, were assembled round the Vatican. The most awful religion of the world went forth surrounded by emblazonry of mortal greatness, and mankind had assembled to wonder at and worship the creations of their own power. No straggler was to be met within the streets and grassy lanes which led to the Coliseum. The father and daughter had sought this spot immediately on their arrival.

A figure, only visible at Rome in night or solitude, and then only to be seen amid the desolate temples of the Forum, or gliding among the weed-grown galleries of the Coliseum, crossed their path. His form, which, though emaciated, displayed the elementary outlines of exquisite grace, was enveloped in an ancient chlamys, which half concealed his face; his snow-white feet were fitted with ivory sandals, delicately sculptured in the likeness of two female figures, whose wings met upon the heel, and whose eager and half-divided lips seemed quivering to meet. It was a face, once seen, never to be forgotten. The mouth and the moulding of the chin resembled the eager and impassioned tenderness of the statues of Antinous; but instead of the effeminate sullenness of the eye, and the narrow smoothness of the forehead, shone an expression of profound and piercing thought; the brow was clear and open, and his eyes deep, like two wells of crystalline water which reflect the all-beholding heavens. Over all was spread a timid expression of womanish tenderness and hesitation, which contrasted, yet intermingled strangely, with the abstracted and fearless character that predominated in his form and gestures.

He avoided, in an extraordinary degree, all communication with the Italians, whose language he seemed scarcely to understand, but was occasionally seen to converse with some accomplished foreigner, whose gestures and appearance might attract him amid his solemn haunts. He spoke Latin, and especially Greek, with fluency, and with a peculiar but sweet accent; he had apparently acquired a knowledge of the northern languages of Europe. There was no circumstance connected with him that gave the least intimation of his country, his origin, or his occupation. His dress was strange, but splendid and solemn. He was forever alone. The literati of Rome thought him a curiosity, but there was something in his manner unintelligible but impressive, which awed their obtrusions into distance and silence. The countrymen, whose path he rarely crossed, returning by starlight from their market at Campo Vaccino, called him, with that strange mixture of religious and historical ideas so common in Italy, Il Discepolo di Bruto.

Such was the figure which interrupted the contemplations, if they were so engaged, of the strangers, by addressing them in the clear, and exact, but unidiomatic phrases of their native language:—"Strangers, you are two; behold the third in this great city, to whom alone the spectacle of these mighty ruins is more delightful than the mockeries of a superstition which destroyed them."

"I see nothing," said the old man.
"What do you here, then?"
"I listen to the sweet singing of the birds, and the sound of my daughter's breathing composes me like the soft murmur of water—and I feel the sun-warm wind—and this is pleasant to me."
"Wretched old man, know you not that these are the ruins of the Coliseum!"
"Alas! stranger," said the girl, in a voice like mournful music, "speak not so—he is blind."—

The stranger's eyes were suddenly filled with tears, and the lines of his countenance became relaxed. "Blind!" he exclaimed, in a tone of suffering, which was more than an apology; and seated himself apart on a flight of shattered and
mossy stairs which wound up among the labyrinths of the ruin.

"My sweet Helen," said the old man, "you did not tell me that this was the Coliseum!"

"How should I tell you, dearest father, what I knew not? I was on the point of enquiring the way to that building, when we entered this circle of ruins, and, until the stranger accosted us, I remained silent, subdued by the greatness of what I see."

"It is your custom, sweetest child, to describe to me the objects that give you delight. You array them in the soft radiance of your words, and whilst you speak I only feel the infirmity which holds me in such dear dependence, as a blessing. Why have you been silent now?"

"I know not—first the wonder and pleasure of the sight, then the words of the stranger, and then thinking on what he had said, and how he had looked—and now, beloved father, your own words."

"Well, tell me now, what do you see?"

"I see a great circle of arches built upon arches, and shattered stones lie around, that once made a part of the solid wall. In the crevices, and on the vaulted roofs, grow a multitude of shrubs, the wild olive and the myrtle—and intricate brambles, and entangled weeds and plants I never saw before. The stones are immensely massive, and they jut out one from the other. There are terrible rifts in the wall, and broad windows through which you see the blue heaven. There seems to be more than a thousand arches, some ruined, some entire, and they are all immensely high and wide. Some are shattered, and stand forth in great heaps, and the underwood is tufted on their crumbling summits. Around us lie enormous columns, shattered and shapeless—and fragments of capitals and cornice, fretted with delicate sculptures."

"It is open to the blue sky!" said the old man.

"Yes. We see the liquid depth of heaven above through the rifts and the windows; and the flowers, and the weeds, and the grass and creeping moss, are nourished by its unfurbidden rain. The blue sky is above—the wide, bright, blue sky—it flows through the great rents on high, and through the bare boughs of the marble rooted fig-tree, and through the leaves and flowers of the weeds, even to the dark arcades beneath. I see—I feel its clear and piercing beams fill the universe, and impregnate the joy-inspiring wind with life and light, and casting the veil of its splendour over all things—even me. Yes, and through the highest rift the noonday waning moon is hanging, as it were, out of the solid sky, and this shows that the atmosphere has all the clearness which it rejoices me that you feel."

"What else see you?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing!"

"Only the bright-green mossy ground, speckled by tufts of dewy clover-grass that run into the interstices of the shattered arches, and round the isolated pinnacles of the ruin."

"Like the lawny dells of soft short grass which wind among the pine forests and precipices in the Alps of Savoy!"

"Indeed, father, your eye has a vision more serene than mine."

"And the great wrecked arches, the shattered masses of precipitous ruin, overgrown with the younglings of the forest, and more like chasms rent by an earthquake among the mountains, than like the vestige of what was human workmanship—what are they?"

"Things awe-inspiring and wonderful."

"Are they not caverns such as the untamed elephant might choose, amid the Indian wilderness, wherein to hide her cubs; such as, were the sea to overflow the earth, the mightiest monsters of the deep would change into their spacious chambers?"

"Father, your words image forth what I would have expressed, but, alas! I could not."

"I hear the rustling of leaves, and the sound of waters,—but it does not rain,—like the fast drops of a fountain among woods."

"It falls from among the heaps of ruin over our heads—it is, I suppose, the water collected in the rifts by the showers."

"A nursling of man's art, abandoned by his care, and transformed by the enchantment of Nature into a likeness of her own creations, and destined to partake their immortality! Changed into a mountain cloven with woody dells, which overhang its labyrinthine glades, and shattered into toppling precipices. Even the clouds, intercepted by its cragggy summit, feed its eternal fountains with their rain. By the column on which I sit, I should judge that it had once been crowned by a temple or a theatre, and that on sacred days the multitude wound up its craggy path to spectacle or the sacrifice—It was such itself! Helen, what sound of wings is that!"

* Nor does a recollection of the use to which it may have been destined interfere with these emotions. Time has thrown its purple shadow athwart this scene, and no more is visible than the broad and everlasting character of human strength and genius, that pledge of all that is to be admirable and lovely in ages yet to come. Solemn temples, where the senate of the world assembled, palaces, triumphal arches, and cloud-surrounded columns, loaded with the sculptured annals of conquest and domination—what actions and deliberations have they been destined to enclose and commemorate? Superstitious rites, which in their mildest form, outrage reason, and obscure the moral sense of mankind; schemes for wide-extended murder,
"It is the wild pigeons returning to their young. Do you not hear the murmur of those that are brooding in their nests!"

"Ay, it is the language of their happiness. They are as happy as we are, child, but in a different manner. They know not the sensations which this ruin excites within us. Yet it is pleasure to them to inhabit it; and the succession of its forms as they pass, is connected with associations in their minds, sacred to them, as these to us. The internal nature of each being is surrounded by a circle, not to be surmounted by his fellows; and it is this repulsion which constitutes the misfortune of the condition of life. But there is a circle which comprehends, as well as one which mutually excludes, all things which feel. And, with respect to man, his public and his private happiness consist in diminishing the circumference which includes those resembling himself, until they become one with him, and he with them. It is because we enter into the meditations, designs and destinies of something beyond ourselves, that the contemplation of the ruins of human power excites an elevating sense of awfulness and beauty. It is therefore that the ocean, the glacier, the cataract, the tempest, the volcano, have each a spirit which animates the extremities of our frame with tingling joy. It is therefore that the singing of birds, and the motion of leaves, the sensation of the odorous wind around, is sweet. And this is Love. This is the religion of eternity, whose votaries have been exiled from among the multitude of man.

"thou which interpenetratest all things, and without which this glorious world were a blind and formless chaos, Love, Author of Good, God, King, Father! Friend of these thy worshippers! Two solitary hearts invoke thee, may they be divided never! If the contentions of mankind have been their misery; if to give and seek that happiness which thou art, has been their choice and destiny; if, in the contemplation of these majestic records of the power of their kind, they see the shadow and devastation, and misrule, and servitude; and, lastly, these schemes brought to their tremendous consummations, and a human being returning in the midst of festival and solemn joy, with thousands and thousands of his enslaved and desolated species chained behind his chariot, exhibiting, as titles to renown, the labour of ages, and the admired creations of genius, overthrown by the brutal force, which was placed as a sword within his hand, and,—contemplation fearful and abhorred!—be himself a being capable of the gentlest and best emotions, inspired with the persuasion that he has done a virtuous deed! We do not forget these things. * * and the prophecy of that which thou mayst have decreed that he should become; if the justice, the liberty, the loveliness, the truth, which are thy footsteps, have been sought by them, divide them not! It is thine to unite, to eternize; to make outlive the limits of the grave those who have left among the living, memorials of thee. When this frame shall be senseless dust, may the hopes, and the desires, and the delights which animate it now, never be extinguished in my child; even as, if she were borne into the tomb, my memory would be the written monument of all her nameless excellences!"

The old man's countenance and gestures, radiant with the inspiration of his words, sunk, as he ceased, into more of its accustomed calmness, for he heard his daughter's sobs, and remembered that he had spoken of death.—"My father, how can I outlive you!" said Helen.

"Do not let us talk of death," said the old man, suddenly changing his tone. "Heraclitus, indeed, died at my age, and if I had so sour a disposition, there might be some danger. But Democritus reached a hundred and twenty, by the mere dist of a joyous and unconquerable mind. He only died at last, because he had no gentle and beloved ministering spirit, like my Helen, for whom it would have been his delight to live. You remember his gay old sister requested him to put off starring himself to death until she had returned from the festival of Ceres; alleging, that it would spoil her holiday if he refused to comply, as it was not permitted to appear in the procession immediately after the death of a relation; and how good-spiritedly the sage acceded to her request."

The old man could not see his daughter's grateful smile, but he felt the pressure of her hand by which it was expressed.—"In truth," be continued, "that mystery, death, is a change which neither for ourselves nor for others is the just object of hope or fear. We know not if it be good or evil, we only know, it is. The old, the young, may alike die; no time, no place, no age, no foresight, exempts us from death, and the chance of death. We have no knowledge, if death be a state of sensation, of any precaution that can make those sensations fortunate, if the existing series of events shall not produce that effect. Think not of death, or think of it as something common to us all. It has happened," said he, with a deep and suffering voice, "that men have buried their children."

"Alas! then, dearest father, how I pity you.
Let us speak no more." The old man could not see his daughter's grateful smile, but he felt the pressure of her hand by which it was expressed.—"In truth," be continued, "that mystery, death, is a change which neither for ourselves nor for others is the just object of hope or fear. We know not if it be good or evil, we only know, it is. The old, the young, may alike die; no time, no place, no age, no foresight, exempts us from death, and the chance of death. We have no knowledge, if death be a state of sensation, of any precaution that can make those sensations fortunate, if the existing series of events shall not produce that effect. Think not of death, or think of it as something common to us all. It has happened," said he, with a deep and suffering voice, "that men have buried their children.

"Alas! then, dearest father, how I pity you.
Let us speak no more."

They arose to depart from the Coliseum, but the figure which had first accosted them interposed itself!—"Lady," he said, "if grief be an expiation
of error, I have grieved deeply for the words which
I spoke to your companion. The men who an-
ciently inhabited this spot, and those from whom
they learned their wisdom, respected infirmity and
age. If I have rashly violated that venerable form,
as once majestic and defenceless, may I be for-
given!

"It gives me pain to see how much your mistake
afflicts you," she said; "if you can forget, doubt
not that we forgive.

"You thought me one of those who are blind in
spirit," said the old man, "and who deserve, if any
human being can deserve, contempt and blame.
Assuredly, contemplating this monument as I do,
though in the mirror of my daughter's mind, I am
filled with astonishment and delight; the spirit of
departed generations seems to animate my limbs,
and circulate through all the fibres of my frame.
Stranger, if I have expressed what you have ever
felt, let us know each other more."

THE ASSASSINS.

A Fragment of a Romance.

CHAPTER I.

JERUSALEM, goaded on to resistance by the incess-
ant usurpations and insolence of Rome, leagued
together its discordant factions to rebel against
the common enemy and tyrant. Inferior to their
foe in all but the unconquerable hope of liberty,
they surrounded their city with fortifications of
uncommon strength, and placed in array before
the temple a band rendered desperate by patriotism
and religion. Even the women preferred to die,
rather than survive the ruin of their country.
When the Roman army approached the walls of
the sacred city, its preparations, its discipline, and
its numbers, evinced the conviction of its leader,
that he had no common barbarians to subdue. At
the approach of the Roman army, the strangers
withdrew from the city.

Among the multitudes which from every nation
of the East had assembled at Jerusalem, was a little
congregation of Christians. They were remark-
able neither for their numbers nor their importance.
They contained among them neither philosophers
nor poets. Acknowledging no laws but those of
God, they modelled their conduct towards their
fellow-men by the conclusions of their individual
judgment on the practical application of those
laws. And it was apparent from the simplicity
and severity of their manners, that this contempt
for human institutions had produced among them
a character superior in singleness and sincere self-
apprehension to the slavery of pagan customs and
the gross delusions of antiquated superstition.
Many of their opinions considerably resembled
those of the sect afterwards known by the name of
Gnostics. They esteemed the human understanding
to be the paramount rule of human conduct; they
maintained that the obscurest religious truth re-
quired for its complete elucidation no more than the
strenuous application of the energies of mind. It ap-
ppeared impossible to them that any doctrine could
be subversive of social happiness which is not capa-
ble of being confuted by arguments derived from
the nature of existing things. With the devoutest
submission to the law of Christ, they united an
intrepid spirit of inquiry as to the correctest mode
of acting in particular instances of conduct that
occur among men. Assuming the doctrines of the
Messiah concerning benevolence and justice for
the regulation of their actions, they could not be
persuaded to acknowledge that there was apparent
in the divine code any prescribed rule whereby, for
its own sake, one action rather than another, as
fulfilling the will of their great Master, should be
preferred.

The contempt with which the magistracy and
priesthood regarded this obscure community of
speculators, had hitherto protected them from persecution. But they had arrived at that precise degree of eminence and prosperity which is peculiarly obnoxious to the hostility of the rich and powerful. The moment of their departure from Jerusalem was the crisis of their future destiny. Had they continued to seek a precarious refuge in a city of the Roman empire, this persecution would not have delayed to impress a new character on their opinions and their conduct; narrow views, and the illiberality of sectarian patriotism, would not have failed speedily to obliterate the magnificence and beauty of their wild and wonderful condition.

Attached from principle to peace, despising and hating the pleasures and the customs of the degenerate mass of mankind, this unostentatious community of good and happy men fled to the solitudes of Lebanon. To Arabians and enthusiasts the solemnity and grandeur of these desolate recesses possessed peculiar attractions. It well accorded with the justice of their conceptions on the relative duties of man towards his fellow in society, that they should labour in unconstrained equality to dispossess the wolf and the tiger of their empire, and establish on its ruins the dominion of intelligence and virtue. No longer would the worshippers of the God of Nature be indebted to a hundred hands to erect mass of mankind, this unostentatious community of good and happy men fled to the solitudes of Lebanon. To Arabians and enthusiasts the solemnity and grandeur of these desolate recesses possessed peculiar attractions. It well accorded with the justice of their conceptions on the relative duties of man towards his fellow in society, that they should labour in unconstrained equality to dispossess the wolf and the tiger of their empire, and establish on its ruins the dominion of intelligence and virtue. No longer would the worshippers of the God of Nature be indebted to a hundred hands to establish on its ruins the dominion of intelligence and virtue. No longer would the worshippers of the God of Nature be indebted to a hundred hands for the accommodation of their simple wants. No longer would the poison of a diseased civilisation possess the wolf and the tiger of their empire, and establish on its ruins the dominion of intelligence and virtue.

Rome was now the shadow of her former self. The light of her grandeur and loveliness had passed away. The latest and the noblest of her poets and historians had foretold in agony her approaching slavery and degradation. The ruins of the human mind, more awful and portentous than the desolation of the most solemn temples, threw a shade of gloom upon her golden palaces which the brutal vulgar could not see, but which the mighty felt with inward trepidation and despair. The ruins of Jerusalem lay defenceless and uninhabited upon the burning sands; none visited, but in the depth of solemn awe, this accursed and solitary spot. Tradition says that there was seen to linger among the scorched and shattered fragments of the temple, one being, whom he that saw dared not to call man, with clasped hands, immovable eyes, and a visage horribly serene. Not on the will of the capricious multitude, nor the constant fluctuations of the many and the weak, depends the change of empires and religions. These are the mere insensible elements from which a subtler intelligence moulis its enduring statuary. They that direct the changes of this mortal scene breathe the decrees of their dominion from a throne of darkness and of tempest. The power of man is great.

After many days of wandering, the Assassins pitched their tents in the valley of Bethzatanai. For ages had this fertile valley lain concealed from the adventurous search of man, among mountains of everlasting snow. The men of elder days had inhabited this spot. Piles of monumental marble and fragments of columns that in their integrity almost seemed the work of some intelligence more sportive and fantastic than the gross conceptions of mortality, lay in heaps beside the lake, and were visible beneath its transparent waves. The flowering orange-tree, the balsam, and innumerable odoriferous shrubs, grew wild in the desolated portals. The fountain tanks had overflowed; and, amid the luxuriant vegetation of their margins, the yellow snake held its unmolested dwelling. Hither came the tiger and the bear to contend for those once domestic animals which had forgotten the secure servitude of their ancestors. No sound, when the famished beast of prey had retreated in despair from the awful desolation of this place, at whose completion he had assisted, but the shrill cry of the stork, and the flapping of his heavy wings from the capital of the solitary column, and the screams of the hungry vulture baffled of its only victim. The lore of ancient wisdom was sculptured in mystic characters on the rocks. The human spirit and the human hand had been busy here to accomplish its profoundest miracles. It was a temple dedicated to the God of knowledge and of truth. The palaces of the Caliphs and the Caesars might easily surpass these ruins in magnitude and sumptuousness: but they were the design of tyrants and the work of slaves. Piercing genius and consummate prudence had planned and executed Bethzatanai. There was deep and important meaning in every lineament of its fantastic sculpture. The unimitatable legend, once so beautiful and perfect, so full of poetry and history, spoke, even in destruction, volumes of mysterious import, and obscure significance.

But in the season of its utmost prosperity and magnificence, art might not aspire to vie with nature in the valley of Bethzatanai. All that was wonderful and lovely was collected in this deep seclusion. The fluctuating elements seemed to have been
rendered everlastingly permanent in forms of wonder and delight. The mountains of Lebanon had been divided to their base to form this happy valley; on every side their icy summits darted their white pinacles into the clear blue sky, imaging, in their grotesque outline, minarets, and ruined domes, and columns worn with time. Far below, the silver clouds rolled their bright volumes in many beautiful shapes, and fed the eternal springs that, spanning the dark chasms like a thousand radiant rainbows, leaped into the quiet vale, then, lingering in many a dark glade among the groves of cypress and of palm, lost themselves in the lake. The herbage was perpetually verdant, and clothed the darkest recesses of the caverns and the woods.

Nature, undisturbed, had become an enchantress in these solitudes: she had collected here all that was wonderful and divine from the armoury of her omnipotence. The very winds breathed health and renovation, and the joyousness of youthful courage. Fountains of crystalline water played perpetually among the aromatic flowers, and mingled a freshness with their odour. The pine boughs became instruments of exquisite contrivance, among which every varying breeze waked music of new and more delightful melody. Meteoric shapes, more effulgent than the moonlight, hung on the wandering clouds, and mixed in discordant dance around the spiral fountains. Blue vapours assumed strange lineaments under the rocks and among the ruins, lingering like ghosts with slow and solemn step. Through a dark chasm to the east, in the long perspective of a portal glittering with the unnumbered riches of the subterranean world, shone the broad moon, pouring in one yellow and unbroken stream her horizontal beams. The sere leaves fell and choked the sluggish brooks; the chilling fogs hung diamonds on every spray; and in the dark cold evening the howling winds made melancholy music in the trees. Far above, shone the bright throne of winter, clear, cold, and dazzling. Sometimes there was seen the snow-flakes to fall before the sinking orb of the beamless sun, like a shower of fiery sulphur. The cataracts, arrested in their course, seemed, with their transparent columns, to support the dark-browed rocks. Sometimes the icy whirlwind scooped the powdery snow aloft, to mingle with the hissing meteors, and scatter spangles through the rare and rayless atmosphere.

Such strange scenes of chaotic confusion and harrowing sublimity, surrounding and shutting in the vale, added to the delights of its secure and voluptuous tranquility. No spectator could have refused to believe that some spirit of great intellig- ence and power had hallowed these wild and beautiful solitudes to a deep and solemn mystery.

The immediate effect of such a scene, suddenly presented to the contemplation of mortal eyes, is seldom the subject of authentic record. The coldest slave of custom cannot fail to recollect some few moments in which the breath of spring or the crowding clouds of sunset, with the pale moon shining through their fleecy skirts, or the song of some lonely bird perched on the only tree of an unfrequented heath, has awakened the touch of nature. And they were Arabsians who entered the valley of Bethzatanai; men who idolized nature and the God of nature; to whom love and lofty thoughts, and the apprehensions of an uncorrupted spirit, were sustenance and life. Thus securely excluded from an abhorred world, all thought of its judgment was cancelled by the rapidity of their fervid imaginations. They ceased to acknowledge, or deigned not to advert to, the distinctions with which the majority of base and vulgar minds control the longings and struggles of the soul towards its place of rest. A new and sacred fire was kindled in their hearts and sparkled in their eyes. Every gesture, every feature, the minutest action, was modelled to beneficence and beauty by the holy inspiration that had descended on their searching spirits. The epidemic transport communicated itself through every heart with the rapidity of a blast from heaven. They were already disembodied spirits; they were already the inhabitants of paradise. To live, to breathe, to move, was itself a sensation of immeasurable transport. Every new contemplation of the condition of his nature brought to the happy enthusiast an added measure of delight, and impelled to every organ, where mind is united with external things, a keener and more exquisite perception of all that they contain of lovely and divine. To love, to be beloved, suddenly became an insatiable famine of his nature, which the wide circle of the universe, comprehending beings of such inexhaustible variety and stupendous magnitude of excellence, appeared too narrow and confined to satiate.

Alas, that these visitings of the spirit of life should fluctuate and pass away! That the moments when the human mind is commensurate with all that it can conceive of excellent and powerful, should not endure with its existence and survive its
The earth was filled with discord, tumult, and ruin, before the sepulchre of the Eternal God. The ing tumult, possessed and cultivated their fertile valley. The gradual operation of their peculiar condition had matured and perfected the singularity and excellence of their character. That cause, which had ceased to act as an immediate and overpowering excitement, became the unperceived law of their lives, and sustenance of their natures. Their religious tenets had also undergone a change, corresponding with the exalted condition of their moral being. The gratitude which they owed to the benignant Spirit by which their limited intelligences had not only been created but redeemed, was less frequently adverted to, became less the topic of comment or contemplation; not, therefore, did it cease to be their presiding guardian, the guide of their inmost thoughts, the tribunal of appeal for the minutest particulars of their conduct. They learned to identify this mysterious benefactor with the delight that is bred among the solitary rocks, and has its dwelling alike in the changing colours of the clouds and the inmost recesses of the caverns. Their future also no longer existed, but in the blissful tranquillity of the present. Time was measured and created by the vices and the miseries of men, between whom and the happy nation of the Assassins, there was no analogy nor comparison. Already had their eternal peace commenced. The darkness had passed away from the open gates of death.

The practical results produced by their faith and condition upon their external conduct were singular and memorable. Excluded from the great and various community of mankind, these solitudes became to them a sacred hermitage, in which all formed, as it were, one being, divided against itself by no contending will or factious passions. Every impulse conspired to one end, and tended to a single object. Each devoted his powers to the happiness of the other. Their republic was the scene of the perpetual contentions of benevolence; not the heartless and assumed kindness of commercial man, but the genuine virtue that has a legitimate superscription in every feature of the countenance, and every motion of the frame. The perverseness and calamities of those who dwelt beyond the mountains that encircled their undisturbed possessions, were unknown and unimagined. Little embarrassed by the complexities of civilised society, they knew not to conceive any happiness that can be satiated without participation, or that thirsts not to reproduce and perpetually generate itself. The path of virtue and felicity was plain and unimpeded. They clearly acknowledged, in every case, that conduct to be entitled to preference which would obviously produce the greatest pleasure. They could not conceive an instance in which it would be their duty to hesitate, in causing, at whatever expense, the greatest and most unmixed delight.

Hence arose a peculiarity which only failed to germinate in uncommon and momentous consequences, because the Assassins had retired from the intercourse of mankind, over whom other motives and principles of conduct than justice and benevolence prevail. It would be a difficult matter for men of such a sincere and simple faith, to estimate the final results of their intentions, among the corrupt and slavish multitude. They would be perplexed also in their choice of the means, whereby their intentions might be fulfilled. To produce
immediate pain or disorder for the sake of future benefit, is consonant, indeed, with the purest religion and philosophy, but never fails to excite invincible repugnance in the feelings of the many. Against their predilections and distastes an Assassin, accidentally the inhabitant of a civilised community, would wage unremitting hostility from principle. He would find himself compelled to adopt means which they would abhor, for the sake of an object which they could not conceive that he should propose to himself. Secure and self-enshrined in the magnificence and pre-eminence of his conceptions, spotless as the light of heaven, he would be the victim among men of calumny and persecution. Incapable of distinguishing his motives, they would rank him among the vilest and most atrocious criminals. Great, beyond all comparison with them, they would despise him in the presumption of their ignorance. Because his spirit burned with an unquenchable passion for their welfare, they would lead him, like his illustrious master, amidst scoffs, and mockery, and insult, to the remuneration of an ignominious death.

Who hesitates to destroy a venomous serpent that has crept near his sleeping friend, except the man who selfishly dreads lest the malignant reptile should turn his fury on himself? And if the poisoner has assumed a human shape, if the bane be distinguished only from the viper’s venom by the excess and extent of its devastation, will the saviour and avenger here retract and pause entrenched behind the superstition of the indefeasible divinity of man? Is the human form, then, the mere badge of a prerogative for unlicensed wickedness and mischief? Can the power derived from the weakness of the oppressed, or the ignorance of the deceived, confer the right in security to tyrannise and defraud?

The subject of regular governments, and the disciple of established superstition, dares not to ask this question. For the sake of the eventual benefit, he endures what he esteems a transitory evil, and the moral degradation of man disquiets not his patience. But the religion of an Assassin imposes other virtues than endurance, when his fellow-men groan under tyranny, or have become so bestial and abject that they cannot feel their chains. An Assassin believes that man is eminently man, and only then enjoys the prerogatives of his privileged condition, when his affections and his judgment pay tribute to the God of Nature. The perverse, and vile, and vicious—what were they? Shapes of some unholy vision, moulded by the spirit of Evil, which the sword of the merciful destroyer should sweep from this beautiful world. Dreamy nothings; phantasm of misery and mis-

The persevance, and vile, and vicious—what were they? Shapes of some unholy vision, moulded by the spirit of Evil, which the sword of the merciful destroyer should sweep from this beautiful world. Dreamy nothings; phantasm of misery and mis-

chief, that hold their death-like state on glittering thrones, and in the loathsome dens of poverty. No Assassin would submissively temporize with vice, and in cold charity become a pander to falsehood and desolation. His path through the wilderness of civilised society would be marked with the blood of the oppressor and the ruin. The wretch, whom nations tremblingly adore, would expiate in his throttling grasp a thousand licensed and venerable crimes.

How many holy liars and parasites, in solemn guise, would his saviour arm drag from their luxurious couches, and plunge in the cold charcoal, that the green and many-legged monsters of the slimy grave might eat off at their leisure the lineaments of rooted malignity and detested cunning. The respectable man—the smooth, smiling, polished villain, whom all the city honours; whose very trade is lies and murder; who buys his daily bread with the blood and tears of men, would feed the ravens with his limbs. The Assassin would cater nobly for the eyeless worms of earth, and the carrion fowls of heaven.

Yet here, religion and human love had imbued the manners of those solitary people with inexpressible gentleness and benignity. Courage and active virtue, and the indignation against vice, which becomes a hurrying and irresistible passion, slept like the imprisoned earthquake, or the lightning shafts that hang in the golden clouds of evening. They were innocent, but they were capable of more than innocence; for the great principles of their faith were perpetually acknowledged and admired to; nor had they forgotten, in this uninterrupted quiet, the author of their felicity.

Four centuries had thus worn away without producing an event. Men had died, and natural tears had been shed upon their graves, in sorrow that improves the heart. Those who had been united by love had gone to death together, leaving to their friends the bequest of a most sacred grief, and of a sadness that is allied to pleasure. Babes that hung upon their mothers’ breasts had become men; men had died; and many a wild luxuriant weed that overtopped the habitations of the vale, had twined its roots around their disregarded bones. Their tranquil state was like a summer sea, whose gentle undulations disturb not the reflected stars, and break not the long still line of the rainbow hues of sunrise.

CHAPTER III.

Where all is thus calm, the slightest circumstance is recorded and remembered. Before the sixth century had expired one incident occurred,
remarkable and strange. A young man, named Albedir, wandering in the woods, was startled by the screaming of a bird of prey, and, looking up, saw blood fall, drop by drop, from among the intertwined boughs of a cedar. Having climbed the tree, he beheld a terrible and dißmaying spectacle. A naked human body was impaled on the broken branch. It was maimed and mangled horribly; every limb bent and bruised into frightful distortion, and exhibiting a breathing image of the most sickening mockery of life. A monstrous snake had seized its prey from among the mountains—and above hovered a hungry vulture. From amidst this mass of desolated humanity, two eyes, black and inexpressibly brilliant, shone with an unearthly lustre. Beneath the blood-stained eye-brows their steady rays manifested the serenity of an immortal power, the collected energy of a deathless mind, spell-secured from dissolution. A bitter smile of mingled abhorrence and scorn distorted his wounded lip—he appeared calmly to observe and measure all around—self-possession had not deserted the shattered mass of life.

The youth approached the bough on which the breathing corpse was hung. As he approached, the serpent reluctantly unwreathed his glittering coils, and crept towards his dark and loathsome cave. The vulture, impatient of his meal, fled to the mountain, that re-echoed with his hoarse screams. The cedar branches creaked with their agitating weight, faintly, as the dismal wind arose. All else was deadly silent.

At length a voice issued from the mangled man. It rattled in hoarse murmurs from his throat and lungs—his words were the conclusion of some strange mysterious soliloquy. They were broken, and without apparent connection, completing wide intervals of inexpressible conceptions.

"The great tyrant is baffled, even in success. Joy! joy! to his tortured foe! Triumph to the worm whom he tramples under his feet! Ha! His suicidal hand might dare as well abolish the mighty frame of things! Delight and exultation sit before the closed gates of death!—I fear not to dwell beneath their black and ghastly shadow. Here thy power may not avail! Thou createst—

'tis mine to ruin and destroy. —I was thy slave— I am thy equal, and thy foe.—Thousands tremble before thy throne, who, at my voice, shall dare to pluck the golden crown from thine unholy head?" He ceased. The silence of noon swallowed up his words. Albedir clung tighter to the tree—he dared not for dißmay remove his eyes. He remained mute in the perturbation of deep and creeping horror.

"Albedir!" said the same voice, "Albedir! in the name of God, approach. He that suffered me to fall, watches thee;—the gentle and merciful spirits of sweet human love, delight not in agony and horror. For pity's sake approach, in the name of thy good God, approach, Albedir!" The tones were mild and clear as the responses of Eolian music. They floated to Albedir's ear like the warm breath of June that lingers in the lawny groves, subduing all to softness. Tears of tender affection started into his eyes. It was as the voice of a beloved friend. The partner of his childhood, the brother of his soul, seemed to call for aid, and pathetically to remonstrate with delay. He resisted not the magic impulse, but advanced towards the spot, and tenderly attempted to remove the wounded man. He cautiously descended the tree with his wretched burthen, and deposited it on the ground.

A period of strange silence intervened. Awe and cold horror were slowly succeeding to the softer sensations of tumultuous pity, when again he heard the silver modulations of the same enchanting voice. "Weep not for me, Albedir! What wretch so utterly lost, but might inhale peace and renovation from this paradise! I am wounded, and in pain; but having found a refuge in this seclusion, and a friend in you, I am worthier than envy than compassion. Bear me to your cottage secretly: I would not disturb your gentle partner by my appearance. She must love me more dearly than a brother. I must be the playmate of your children; already I regard them with a father's love. My arrival must not be regarded as a thing of mystery and wonder. What, indeed, but that men are prone to error and exaggeration, is less inexplicable, than that a stranger, wandering on Lebanon, fell from the rocks into the vale! Albedir," he continued, and his deepening voice assumed awful solemnity, "in return for the affection with which I cherish thee and thine, thou owest this submission."

Albedir implicitly submitted; not even a thought had power to refuse its deference. He reassumed his burthen, and proceeded towards the cottage. He watched until Khalcd should be absent, and conveyed the stranger into an apartment appropriated for the reception of those who occasionally visited their habitation. He desired that the door should be securely fastened, and that he might not be visited until the morning of the following day.

Albedir waited with impatience for the return of Khalcd. The unaccustomed weight of even so transitory a secret, hung on his ingenuous and unpractised nature, like a blighting, clinging curse. The stranger's accents had lulled him to a trance of wild and delightful imagination. Hopes, so visionary and aerial, that they had assumed so
denomination, had spread themselves over his intel-lectual frame, and, phantoms as they were, had modelled his being to their shape. Still his mind was not exempt from the visitings of disquietude and perturbation. It was a troubled stream of thought, over whose fluctuating waves unsearchable fate seemed to preside, guiding its unforeseen alternations with an inexorable hand. Albedir paced earnestly the garden of his cottage, revolving every circumstance attendant on the incident of the day. He re-imaged with intense thought the minutest recollections of the scene. In vain—he was the slave of suggestions not to be controlled. Ast-onishment, horror, and awe—tumultuous sympathy, and a mysterious elevation of soul, hurried away all activity of judgment, and overwhelmed, with stunning force, every attempt at deliberation or inquiry.

His reveries were interrupted at length by the return of Khaled. She entered the cottage, that scene of undisturbed repose, in the confidence that change might as soon overwhelm the eternal world, as disturb this inviolable sanctuary. She started to behold Albedir. Without preface or remark, he recounted with eager haste the occurrences of the day. Khaled's tranquil spirit could hardly keep pace with the breathless rapidity of his narration. She was bewildered with staggering wonder even to hear his confused tones, and behold his agitated countenance.

CHAPTER IV.

On the following morning Albedir arose at sunrise, and visited the stranger. He found him already risen, and employed in adorning the lattice of his chamber with flowers from the garden. There was something in his attitude and occupation singularly expressive of his entire familiarity with the scene. Albedir's habituation seemed to have been his accustomed home. He addressed his host in a tone of gay and affectionate welcome, such as never fails to communicate by sympathy the feelings from which it flows.

"My friend," said he, "the balm of the dew of our vale is sweet; or is this garden the favoured spot where the winds conspire to scatter the best odours they can find? Come, lend me your arm awhile; I feel very weak." He motioned to walk forth, but, as if unable to proceed, rested on the seat beside the door. For a few moments they were silent, if the interchange of cheerful and happy looks is to be called silence. At last he observed a spade that rested against the wall.

"You have only one spade, brother," said he; "you have only one, I suppose, of any of the instruments of tillage. Your garden ground, too, occupies a certain space which it will be necessary to enlarge. This must be quickly remedied. I cannot earn my supper of to-night, nor of to-morrow; but thenceforward, I do not mean to eat the bread of idleness. I know that you would willingly perform the additional labour which my nourishment would require; I know, also, that you would feel a degree of pleasure in the fatigue arising from this employment, but I shall contest with you such pleasures as these, and such pleasures as these alone." His eyes were somewhat wan, and the tone of his voice languid as he spoke.

As they were thus engaged, Khaled came towards them. The stranger beckoned to her to sit beside him, and taking her hands within his own, looked attentively on her mild countenance. Khaled inquired if he had been refreshed by sleep. He replied by a laugh of careless and inoffensive glee; and placing one of her hands within Albedir's, said, "If this be sleep, here in this odorous vale, where these sweet smiles encompass us, and the voices of those who love are heard—if these be the visions of sleep, sister, those who lie down in misery shall arise lighter than the butterflies. I came from amid the tumult of a world, how different from this! I am unexpectedly among you, in the midst of a scene such as my imagination never dared to promise. I must remain here—I must not depart." Khaled, recovering from the admiration and astonishment caused by the stranger's words and manner, assured him of the happiness which she should feel in such an addition to her society. Albedir, too, who had been more deeply impressed than Khaled by the event of his arrival, earnestly re-assured him of the ardour of the affection with which he had inspired them. The stranger smiled gently to hear the unaccustomed fervour of sincerity which animated their address, and was rising to retire, when Khaled said, "You have not yet seen our children, Maimuna and Abdallah. They are by the water-side, playing with their favourite snake. We have only to cross yonder little wood, and wind down a path cut in the rock that overhangs the lake, and we shall find them beside a recess which the shore makes there, and which a chasm, as it were, among the rocks and woods, encloses. Do you think you could walk there?"—"To see your children, Khaled! I think I could, with the assistance of Albedir's arm, and yours."—So they went through the wood of ancient cypress, intermingled with the brightness of many-tinted blooms, which gleamed like stars through its romantic glens. They crossed the green meadow, and entered among the broken chasms, beautiful as they were in their investiture.
of odoriferous shrubs. They came at last, after pursuing a path which wound through the intricacies of a little wilderness, to the borders of the lake. They stood on the rock which overhung it, from which there was a prospect of all the miracles of nature and of art which encircled and adorned its shores. The stranger gazed upon it with a countenance unchanged by any emotion, but, as it were, thoughtfully and contemplatingly. As he gazed, Khaled ardently pressed his hand, and said, in a low yet eager voice, "Look, look, lo there!" He turned towards her, but her eyes were not on him. She looked below—her lips were parted by the feelings which possessed her soul—her breath came and went regularly but audibly. She leaned over the precipice, and her dark hair hanging beside her face, gave relief to its fine lineaments, animated by such love as exceeds utterance. The stranger followed her eyes, and saw that her children were in the glen below; then raising his eyes, exchanged with her affectionate looks of congratulation and delight. The boy was apparently eight years old, the girl about two years younger. The beauty of their form and countenance was something so divine and strange, as overwhelmed the senses of the beholder like a delightful dream, with insupportable ravishment. They were arrayed in a loose robe of linen, through which the exquisite proportions of their form appeared. Unconscious that they were observed, they did not relinquish the occupation in which they were engaged. They had constructed a little boat of the bark of trees, and had given it sails of interwoven feathers, and launched it on the water. They sat beside a white flat stone, on which a small snake lay coiled, and when their work was finished, they arose and called to the snake in melodious tones, so that it understood their language. For it unwound its shining circles and crept to the boat, into which no sooner had it entered, than the girl loosened the band which held it to the shore, and it sailed away. Then they ran round and round the little creek, clapping their hands, and melodiously pouring out wild sounds, which the snake seemed to answer by the restless glancing of his neck. At last a breath of wind came from the shore, and the boat changed its course, and was about to leave the creek, which the snake perceived and leaped into the water, and came to the little children's feet. The girl sang to it, and it leaped into her bosom, and she crossed her fair hands over it, as if to cherish it there. Then the boy answered with a song, and it glided from beneath her hands and crept towards him. While they were thus employed, Maimuna looked up, and seeing her parents on the cliff, ran to meet them up the steep path that wound around it; and Abdallah, leaving his snake, followed joyfully.

ON THE PUNISHMENT OF DEATH.

The first law which it becomes a Reformer to propose and support, at the approach of a period of great political change, is the abolition of the punishment of death.

It is sufficiently clear that revenge, retaliation, atonement, expiation, are rules and motives, so far from deserving a place in any enlightened system of political life, that they are the chief sources of a prodigious class of miseries in the domestic circles of society. It is clear that however the spirit of legislation may appear to frame institutions upon more philosophical maxims, it has hitherto, in those cases which are termed criminal, done little more than palliate the spirit, by gratifying a portion of it; and afforded a compromise between that which is best;—the inflicting of no evil upon a sensitive being, without a decisively beneficial result in which he should at least participate;—and that which is worst;—that he should be put to torture for the amusement of those whom he may have injured, or may seem to have injured.

Omitting these remoter considerations, let us inquire what Death is; that punishment which is applied as a measure of transgressions of indefinite shades of distinction, so soon as they shall have passed that degree and colour of enormity, with which it is supposed no inferior infliction is commensurate.

And first, whether death is good or evil, a punishment or a reward, or whether it be wholly indifferent, no man can take upon himself to assert. That that within us which thinks and feels, continues to think and feel after the dissolution of the body, has been the almost universal opinion of mankind, and the accurate philosophy of what I may be permitted to term the modern Academy,
by showing the prodigious depth and extent of our ignorance respecting the causes and nature of sensation, renders probable the affirmative of a proposition, the negative of which is so difficult to conceive, and the popular arguments against which, derived from what is called the atomic system, are proved to be applicable only to the relation which one object bears to another, as apprehended by the mind, and not to existence itself, or the nature of that essence which is the medium and receptacle of objects.

The popular system of religion suggests the idea that the mind, after death, will be painfully or pleasurably affected according to its determinations during life. However ridiculous and pernicious we must admit the vulgar accessories of this creed to be, there is a certain analogy, not wholly absurd, between the consequences resulting to an individual during life from the virtuous or vicious, prudent or imprudent, conduct of his external actions, to those consequences which are conjectured to ensue from the discipline and order of his internal thoughts, as affecting his condition in a future state. They omit, indeed, to calculate upon the accidents of disease, and temperament, and organisation, and circumstance, together with the multitude of independent agencies which affect the opinions, the conduct, and the happiness of individuals, and produce determinations of the will, and modify the judgment, so as to produce effects the most opposite in natures considerably similar. These are those operations in the order of the whole of nature, tending, as we are prone to believe, to some definite mighty end, to which the agencies of our peculiar nature are subordinate; nor is there any reason to suppose, that in a future state they should become suddenly exempt from that subordination. The philosopher is unable to determine whether our existence in a previous state has affected our present condition, and abstains from deciding whether our present condition will affect us in that which may be future. That, if we continue to exist, the manner of our existence will be such as no inferences nor conjectures, afforded by a consideration of our earthly experience, can elucidate, is sufficiently obvious. The opinion that the vital principle within us, in whatever mode it may continue to exist, must lose that consciousness of definite and individual being which now characterises it, and become a unit in the vast sum of action and of thought which dispenses and animates the universe, and is called God, seems to belong to that class of opinion which has been designated as indifferent.

To compel a person to know all that can be known by the dead, concerning that which the living fear, hope, or forget; to plunge him into the pleasure or pain which there awaits him; to punish or reward him in a manner and in a degree incalculable and incomprehensible by us; to disoblig him at once from all that intertexture of good and evil with which Nature seems to have clothed every form of individual existence, is to inflict on him the doom of death.

A certain degree of pain and terror usually accompany the infliction of death. This degree is infinitely varied by the infinite variety in the temperaments and opinions of the sufferers. As a measure of punishment, strictly so considered, and as an exhibition, which, by its known effects on the sensibility of the sufferer, is intended to intimidate the spectators from incurring a similar liability, it is singularly inadequate.

Firstly,—Persons of energetic character, in whom, as in men who suffer for political crimes, there is a large mixture of enterprise, and fortune, and disinterestedness, and the elements, though misguided and disarranged, by which the strength and happiness of a nation might have been cemented, die in such a manner, as to make death appear not evil, but good. The death of what is called a traitor, that is, a person who, from whatever motive, would abolish the government of the day, is as often a triumphant exhibition of suffering virtue, as the warning of a culprit. The multitude, instead of departing with a panic-stricken approbation of the laws which exhibited such a spectacle, are inspired with pity, admiration and sympathy; and the most generous among them feel an emulation to be the authors of such flattering emotions, as they experience stirring in their bosoms. Impressed by what they see and feel, they make no distinction between the motives which incited the criminals to the actions for which they suffer, or the heroic courage with which they turned into good that which their judges awarded to them as evil, or the purpose itself of those actions, though that purpose may happen to be eminently pernicious. The laws in this case lose that sympathy, which it ought to be their chief object to secure, and in a participation of which consists their chief strength in maintaining those sanctions by which the parts of the social union are bound together, so as to produce, as nearly as possible, the ends for which it is instituted.

Secondly,—Persons of energetic character, in communities not modelled with philosophical skill to turn all the energies which they contain to the purposes of common good, are prone also to fall into the temptation of undertaking, and are peculiarly fitted for despising the perils attendant upon consummating, the most enormous crimes. Murder,
rapes, extensive schemes of plunder, are the actions of persons belonging to this class; and death is the penalty of conviction. But the coarseness of organisation, peculiar to men capable of committing acts wholly selfish, is usually found to be associated with a proportionate insensibility to fear or pain. Their sufferings communicate to those of the spectators, who may be liable to the commission of similar crimes, a sense of the lightness of that event, when closely examined, which, at a distance, as uneducated persons are accustomed to do, probably they regarded with horror. But a great majority of the spectators are so bound up in the interests and the habits of social union that no temptation would be sufficiently strong to induce them to a commission of the enormities to which this penalty is assigned. The more powerful, and the richer among them,—and a numerous class of little tradesmen are richer and more powerful than those who are employed by them, and the employer, in general, bears this relation to the employed,—regard their own wrongs as, in some degree, avenged, and their own rights secured by this punishment, inflicted as the penalty of whatever crime. In cases of murder or mutilation, this feeling is almost universal. In those, therefore, whom this exhibition docs not produce feelings more directly at war with the genuine purposes of political society. It excites those emotions which it is the chief object of civilization to extinguish for ever, and in the extinction of which alone there can be any hope of better institutions than those under which men now mismanage each other. Men feel that their revenge is gratified, and that their security is established for ever, and in the extinction of the mind over-shooting the mark at which it aims, we owe all that is eminently base or excellent in human nature; in providing for the mitigation or the extinction of which, consists the true art of the legislator.

Nothing is more clear than that the infliction of punishment in general, in a degree which the reformation and the restraint of those who transgress the laws does not render indispensable, and none more than death, confirms all the inhuman and unsocial impulses of men. It is almost a proverbial remark, that those nations in which the penal code has been particularly mild, have been distinguished from all others by the rarity of crime. But the example is to be admitted to be equivocal. A more decisive argument is afforded by a consideration of the universal connection of ferocity of manners, and a contempt of social ties, with the contempt of human life. Governments which derive their institutions from the existence of circumstances of barbarism and violence, with some rare exceptions perhaps, are bloody in proportion as they are despotic, and form the manners of their subjects to a sympathy with their own spirit.

The spectators who feel no abhorrence as a public execution, but rather a self-appellation superiority, and a sense of gratified indignation, are surely excited to the most insidious emotions. The first reflection of such a one is the sense of his own internal and actual worth, as preferable to that of the victim, whom circumstances have distinguished from all others by the rarity of crimes. The second is probably they regarded with horror. Men feel that their revenge is gratified, and that their security is established for ever, and in the extinction of the mind over-shooting the mark at which it aims, we owe all that is eminently base or excellent in human nature; in providing for the mitigation or the extinction of which, consists the true art of the legislator.

The passion of revenge is originally nothing more than an habitual perception of the ideas of the sufferings of the person who infects an injury, as connected, as they are in a savage state, or in such portions of society as are yet undisципled to civilisation, with security that that injury will not be repeated in future. This feeling, engrailed upon superstitition and confirmed by habit, at last loses sight of the only object for which it may be supposed to have been implanted, and becomes a passion and a duty to be pursued and fulfilled, even to the destruction of those ends to which it originally tended. The other passions, both good and evil, Avarice, Remorse, Love, Patriotism, present a similar appearance; and to this principle of the mind over-shooting the mark as which it aims, we owe all that is eminently base or excellent in human nature; in providing for the mitigation or the extinction of which, consists the true art of the legislator.

* The savage and the illiterate are but faintly aware of the distinction between the future and the past; they make actions belonging to periods so distinct, the subjects of similar feelings; they live only in the present, or in the past, as it is present. It is in this that the philosopher excels one of the many; it is this which distinguishes the doctrine of philosophic necessity from fatalism; and that determination of the will, by which it is the active source of future events, from that liberty or indifference, by which the abstract liability of irremediable actions is attached, according to the notions of the vulgar.

This is the source of the erroneous excesses of Revenge and Revenge; the one extending itself over the future, and the other over the past; provinces in which their suggestions can only be the sources of evil. The purpose of a resolution to act more wisely and virtuously in future, and the sense of a necessity of caution in suppressing an enemy, are the sources from which the erroneous superstitions implied in the words cited have arisen.
ON LIFE.

Life and the world, or whatever we call that which we are and feel, is an astonishing thing. The mist of familiarity obscures from us the wonder of our being. We are struck with admiration at some of its transient modifications, but it is itself the great miracle. What are changes of empire, the wreck of dynasties, with the opinions which supported them; what is the birth and the extinction of religious and of political systems to life? What are the revolutions of the globe which we inhabit, and the operations of the elements of which it is composed, compared with life? What is the universe of stars, and suns, of which this inhabited earth is one, and their motions, and their destiny, compared with life? Life, the great miracle, we admire not, because it is so miraculous. It is well that we are thus shielded by the familiarity of what is so certain and so unfathomable, from an astonishment which would otherwise absorb and overawe the functions of that which is its object.

If any artist, I do not say had executed, but had merely conceived in his mind the system of the sun, and the stars, and planets, they not existing, and had painted to us in words, or upon canvas, the spectacle now afforded by the nightly cope of heaven, and illustrated by it the wisdom of astronomy, great would be our admiration. Or had he imagined the scenery of this earth, the mountains, the seas, and the rivers; the grass, and the flowers, and the variety of the forms and masses of the leaves of the woods, and the colours which attend the setting and the rising sun, and the hues of the atmosphere, turbid or serene, these things not before existing, truly we should have been astonished, and it would not have been a vain boast to have said of such a man, "Non merita nome di creatore, sennon iddio ed il Poeta." But now these things are looked on with little wonder, and to be conscious of them with intense delight is esteemed to be the distinguishing mark of a refined and extraordinary person. The multitude of men care not for them. It is thus with Life—that which includes all.

What is life? Thoughts and feelings arise, with or without our will, and we employ words to express them. We are born, and our birth is unremembered, and our infancy remembered but in fragments; we live on, and in living we lose the apprehension of life. How vain is it to think that words can penetrate the mystery of our being! Rightly used they may make evident our ignorance to ourselves, and this is much. For what are we! Whence do we come! and whither do we go! Is birth the commencement, is death the conclusion of our being! What is birth and death! The most refined abstractions of logic conduct to a view of life, which, though startling to the apprehension, is, in fact, that which the habitual sense of its repeated combinations has extinguished in us. It strips, as it were, the painted curtain from this scene of things. I confess that I am one of those who am unable to refuse my assent to the conclusions of those philosophers who assert that nothing exists but as it is perceived.

It is a decision against which all our persuasions struggle, and we must be long convicted before we can be convinced that the solid universe of external things is "such stuff as dreams are made of." The shocking absurdities of the popular philosophy of mind and matter, its fatal consequences in morals, and their violent dogmatism concerning the source of all things, had early conducted me to materialism. This materialism is a seducing system to young and superficial minds. It allows its disciples to talk, and dispenses them from thinking. But I was discontented with such a view of things as it afforded; man is a being of high aspirations, "looking both before and after," whose "thoughts wander through eternity," disclaiming alliance with transience and decay; incapable of imagining to himself annihilation; existing but in the future and the past; being, not what he is, but what he has been and shall be. Whatever may be his true and final destination, there is a spirit within him at enmity with nothingness and dissolution. This is the character of all life and being. Each is at once the centre and the circumference; the point
to which all things are referred, and the line in which all things are contained. Such contemplations as those, materialism and the popular philosophy of mind and matter alike forbid; they are only consistent with the intellectual system.

It is absurd to enter into a long recapitulation of arguments sufficiently familiar to those inquiring minds, whom alone a writer on abstruse subjects can be conceived to address. Perhaps the most clear and vigorous statement of the intellectual system is to be found in Sir William Drummond's 'Academical Questions.' After such an exposition, it would be idle to translate into other words what could only lose its energy and fitness by the change. Examined point by point, and word by word, the most discriminating intellects have been able to discern no train of thoughts in the process of reasoning, which does not conduct inevitably to the conclusion which has been stated.

What follows from the admission? It establishes no new truth, it gives us no additional insight into our hidden nature, neither its action nor itself. Philosophy, impatient as it may be to build, has much work yet remaining, as pioneer for the overgrowth of ages. It makes one step towards this object; it destroys error, and the roots of error. It leaves, what it is too often the duty of the reformer in political and ethical questions to leave, a vacancy. It reduces the mind to that standing, not for themselves, but for others, in their capacity of suggesting one thought which shall lead to a train of thoughts. Our whole life is thus an education of error.

Let us recollect our sensations as children. What a distinct and intense apprehension had we of the world and of ourselves! Many of the circumstances of social life were then important to us which are no longer so. But that is not the point of comparison on which I mean to insist. We less habitually distinguished all that we saw and felt, from ourselves. They seemed to us as acts which precede, or accompany, or follow an unusually intense and vivid apprehension of life. As men grow up this power commonly decays, and they become mechanical and habitual agents. Thus feelings and then reasonings are the combined result of a multitude of entangled thoughts, and of a series of what are called impressions, planted by reiteration.

The view of life presented by the most refined deductions of the intellectual philosophy, is that of unity. Nothing exists but as it is perceived. The difference is merely nominal between those two classes of thought, which are vulgarly distinguished by the names of ideas and of external objects. Pursuing the same thread of reasoning, the existence of distinct individual minds, similar to that which is employed in now questioning its own nature, is likewise found to be a delusion. The words I, you, they, are not signs of any actual difference subsisting between the assemblage of thoughts thus indicated, but are merely marks employed to denote the different modifications of the one mind.

Let it not be supposed that this doctrine conducts to the monstrous presumption that I, the person who now write and think, am that one mind. I am but a portion of it. The words I and you, and they, are grammatical devices invented simply for arrangement, and totally devoid of the intense and exclusive sense usually attached to them. It is difficult to find terms adequate to express so subtle a conception as that to which the Intellectual Philosophy has conducted us. We are on that verge where words abandon us, and what wonder if we grow dizzy to look down the dark abyss of how little we know.

The relations of things remain unchanged, by whatever system. By the word things is to be understood any object of thought, that is any thought upon which any other thought is employed, with an apprehension of distinction. The relations of these remain unchanged; and such is the material of our knowledge.

What is the cause of life? that is, how was it produced, or what agencies distinct from life have acted or act upon life? All recorded generations of mankind have wearily busied themselves in inventing answers to this question; and the result has been,—Religion. Yet, that the basis of all things cannot be, as the popular philosophy alleges, mind, is sufficiently evident. Mind, as far as we have any experience of its properties, and beyond that experience how vain is argument! cannot create, it can only perceive. It is said also to be the cause. But cause is only a word expressing a certain state of the human mind with regard to the manner in which two thoughts are apprehended to be related to each other. If any one desires to
know how unsatisfactorily the popular philosophy employs itself upon this great question, they need only impartially reflect upon the manner in which thoughts develop themselves in their minds. It is infinitely improbable that the cause of mind, that is, of existence, is similar to mind.

ON A FUTURE STATE.

It has been the persuasion of an immense majority of human beings in all ages and nations that we continue to live after death,—that apparent termination of all the functions of sensitive and intellectual existence. Nor has mankind been contented with supposing that species of existence which some philosophers have asserted; namely, the resolution of the component parts of the mechanism of a living being into its elements, and the impossibility of the minutest particle of these sustaining the smallest diminution. They have clung to the idea that sensibility and thought, which they have distinguished from the objects of it, under the several names of spirit and matter, is, in its own nature, less susceptible of division and decay, and that, when the body is resolved into its elements, the principle which animated it will remain perpetual and unchanged. Some philosophers—and those to whom we are indebted for the most stupendous discoveries in physical science, suppose, on the other hand, that intelligence is the mere result of certain combinations among the particles of its objects; and those among them who believe that we live after death, recur to the interposition of a supernatural power, which shall overcome the tendency inherent in all material combinations, to dissipate and be absorbed into other forms.

Let us trace the reasonings which in one and the other have conducted to these two opinions, and endeavour to discover what we ought to think on a question of such momentous interest. Let us analyse the ideas and feelings which constitute the contending beliefs, and watchfully establish a discrimination between words and thoughts. Let us bring the question to the test of experience and fact; and ask ourselves, considering our nature in its entire extent, what light we derive from a sustained and comprehensive view of its component parts, which may enable us to assert, with certainty, that we do or do not live after death.

The examination of this subject requires that it should be strict of all those accessory topics which adhere to it in the common opinion of men. The existence of a God, and a future state of rewards and punishments, are totally foreign to the subject. If it be proved that the world is ruled by a Divine Power, no inference necessarily can be drawn from that circumstance in favour of a future state. It has been asserted, indeed, that as goodness and justice are to be numbered among the attributes of the Deity, he will undoubtedly compensate the virtuous who suffer during life, and that he will make every sensitive being, who does not deserve punishment, happy for ever. But this view of the subject, which it would be tedious as well as superfluous to develop and expose, satisfies no person, and cuts the knot which we now seek to untie. Moreover, should it be proved, on the other hand, that the mysterious principle which regulates the proceedings of the universe, is neither intelligent nor sensitive, yet it is not an inconsistency to suppose at the same time, that the animating power survives the body which it has animated, by laws as independent of any supernatural agent as those through which it first became united with it. Nor, if a future state be clearly proved, does it follow that it will be a state of punishment or reward.

By the word death, we express that condition in which natures resembling ourselves apparently cease to be that which they were. We no longer hear them speak, nor see them move. If they have sensations and apprehensions, we no longer participate in them. We know no more than that those external organs, and all that fine texture of material frame, without which we have no experience that life or thought can subsist, are dissolved and scattered abroad. The body is placed under the earth, and after a certain period there remains no vestige even of its form. This is that contemplation of inexhaustible melancholy, whose shadow eclipses the brightness of the world. The common observer is struck with dejection at the spectacle. He contends in vain against the persuasion of the grave, that the dead indeed cease to be. The corpse at his feet is prophetic of his own destiny. Those who have preceded him, and whose voice was delightful to his ear; whose touch met his like sweet and subtle fire; whose aspect spread a visionary light upon his path—these he cannot meet again. The organs of sense are destroyed,
and the intellectual operations dependent on them have perished with their sources. How can a corpse see or feel! Its eyes are eaten out, and its heart is black and without motion. What intercourse can two heaps of putrid clay and crumbling bones hold together! When you can discover where the fresh colours of the faded flower abide, or the music of the broken lyre, seek life among the dead. Such are the anxious and fearful contemplations of the common observer, though the popular religion often prevents him from confessing them even to himself.

The natural philosopher, in addition to the sensations common to all men inspired by the event of death, believes that he sees with more certainty that it is attended with the annihilation of sentiment and thought. He observes the mental powers increase and fade with those of the body, and even accommodate themselves to the most transitory changes of our physical nature. Sleep suspends many of the faculties of the vital and intellectual principle; drunkenness and disease will either temporarily or permanently derange them. Madness or idiocy may utterly extinguish the most excellent and delicate of those powers. In old age the mind gradually withers; and as it grew and was strengthened with the body, so does it together with the body sink into decrepitude. Assuredly these are convincing evidences that so soon as the organs of the body are subjected to the laws of inanimate matter, sensation, and perception, and apprehension, are at an end. It is probable that what we call thought is not an actual being, but no more than the relation between certain parts of the universe is composed, and which ceases to exist so soon as those parts change their position with regard to each other. Thus colour, and sound, and taste, and odour exist only relatively. But ideas which sensational one can communicate! If we have not existed before birth; if, at the period when the parts of our nature on which thought and life depend, seem to be woven together, they are woven together; if there are no reasons to suppose that we have existed before that period at which our existence apparently commences.
then there are no grounds for supposition that we shall continue to exist after our existence has apparently ceased. So far as thought and life is concerned, the same will take place with regard to us, individually considered, after death, as had place before our birth.

It is said that it is possible that we should continue to exist in some mode totally inconceivable to us at present. This is a most unreasonable presumption. It casts on the adherents of annihilation the burden of proving the negative of a question, the affirmative of which is not supported by a single argument, and which, by its very nature, lies beyond the experience of the human understanding. It is sufficiently easy, indeed, to form any proposition, concerning which we are ignorant, just not so absurd as not to be contradictory in itself, and defy refutation. The possibility of whatever enters into the wildest imagination to conceive is thus triumphantly vindicated. But it is enough that such assertions should be either contradictory to the known laws of nature, or exceed the limits of our experience, that their fallacy or irrelevance to our consideration should be demonstrated. They persuade, indeed, only those who desire to be persuaded.

This desire to be for ever as we are; the reluctance to a violent and unexperienced change, which is common to all the animated and inanimate combinations of the universe, is, indeed, the secret persuasion which has given birth to the opinions of a future state.

SPECULATIONS ON METAPHYSICS.

I.—THE MIND.

I. It is an axiom in mental philosophy, that we can think of nothing which we have not perceived. When I say that we can think of nothing, I mean, we can imagine nothing, we can reason of nothing, we can remember nothing, we can foresee nothing. The most astonishing combinations of poetry, the subtlest deductions of logic and mathematics, are no other than combinations which the intellect makes of sensations according to its own laws. A catalogue of all the thoughts of the mind, and of all their possible modifications, is a cyclopedic history of the universe.

But, it will be objected, the inhabitants of the various planets of this and other solar systems; and the existence of a Power bearing the same relation to all that we perceive and are, as what we call a cause does to what we call effect, were never subjects of sensation, and yet the laws of mind almost universally suggest, according to the various disposition of each, a conjecture, a persuasion, or a conviction of their existence. The reply is simple; these thoughts are also to be included in the catalogue of existence; they are modes in which thoughts are combined; the objection only adds force to the conclusion, that beyond the limits of perception and thought nothing can exist.

Thoughts, or ideas, or notions, call them what you will, differ from each other, not in kind, but in force. It has commonly been supposed that those distinct thoughts which affect a number of persons, at regular intervals, during the passage of a multitude of other thoughts, which are called real, or external objects, are totally different in kind from those which affect only a few persons, and which recur at irregular intervals, and are usually more obscure and indistinct, such as hallucinations, dreams, and the ideas of madness. No essential distinction between any one of these ideas, or any class of them, is founded on a correct observation of the nature of things, but merely on a consideration of what thoughts are most invariably subservient to the security and happiness of life; and if nothing more were expressed by the distinction, the philosopher might safely accommodate his language to that of the vulgar. But they pretend to assert an essential difference, which has no foundation in truth, and which suggests a narrow and false conception of universal nature, the parent of the most fatal errors in speculation. A specific difference between every thought of the mind, is, indeed, a necessary consequence of that law by which it perceives diversity and number; but a generic and essential difference is wholly arbitrary. The principle of the agreement and similarity of all thoughts, is, that they are all thoughts; the principle of their disagreement consists in the variety and irregularity of the occasions on which they arise in the mind. That in which they agree, to that in which they differ, is as everything to nothing. Important distinctions, of various degrees of force, indeed, are to be established between them, if they were, as they may be, subjects of ethical and economical discussion; but that is a question altogether distinct.

By considering all knowledge as bounded by
perception, whose operations may be indefinitely combined, we arrive at a conception of Nature inexplicably more magnificent, simple and true, than accords with the ordinary systems of complicated and partial consideration. Nor does a contemplation of the universe, in this comprehensive and synthetical view, exclude the subtlest analysis of its modifications and parts.

A scale might be formed, graduated according to the degrees of a combined ratio of intensity, duration, connection, periods of recurrence, and utility, which would be the standard, according to which all ideas might be measured, and an uninterrupted chain of nicely shadowed distinctions would be observed, from the faintest impression on the senses, to the most distinct combination of those impressions; from the simplest of those combinations, to that mass of knowledge which, including our own nature, constitutes what we call the universe.

We are intuitively conscious of our own existence, and of that connection in the train of our successive ideas, which we term our identity. We are conscious also of the existence of other minds; but not intuitively. Our evidence, with respect to the existence of other minds, is founded upon a very complicated relation of ideas, which it is foreign to the purpose of this treatise to anatomise. The basis of this relation is, undoubtedly, a periodical recurrence of masses of ideas, which our voluntary determinations have, in one peculiar direction, no power to circumscribe or to arrest, and against the recurrence of which they can only imperfectly provide. The irresistible laws of thought constrain us to believe that the precise limits of our actual ideas are not the actual limits of possible ideas; the law, according to which these deductions are drawn, is called analogy; and this is the foundation of all our inferences, from one idea to another, as much as they resemble each other.

We see trees, houses, fields, living beings in our own shape, and in shapes more or less analogous to our own. These are perpetually changing the mode of their existence relatively to us. To express the varieties of these modes, we say, they move; and as this motion is continual, though not uniform, we express our conception of the diversities of its course by—it has been, it is, it shall be. These diversities are events or objects, and are essential, considered relatively to human identity, for the existence of the human mind. For if the inequalities, produced by what has been termed the operations of the external universe were levelled by the perception of our being, uniting, and filling up their interstices, motion and measurement, and time, and space; the elements of the human mind being thus abstracted, sensation and imagination cease. Mind cannot be considered pure.

II.—WHAT METAPHYSICS ARE. ERRORS IN THE USUAL METHODS OF CONSIDERING THEM.

We do not attend sufficiently to what passes within ourselves. We combine words, combined a thousand times before. In our minds we assume entire opinions; and in the expression of those opinions, entire phrases, when we would philosophise. Our whole style of expression and sentiment is infected with the tnest plagiarisms. Our words are dead, our thoughts are cold and borrowed.

Let us contemplate facts; let us, in the great study of ourselves, resolutely compel the mind to a rigid consideration of itself. We are not content with conjecture, and inductions, and syllogisms, in sciences regarding external objects. As in these, let us also, in considering the phenomena of mind, severely collect those facts which cannot be disputed. Metaphysics will thus possess this conspicuous advantage over every other science, that each student, by attentively referring to his own mind, may ascertain the authorities upon which any assertions regarding it are supported. There can thus be no deception, we ourselves being the depositaries of the evidence of the subject which we consider.

Metaphysics may be defined as an inquiry concerning those things belonging to, or connected with, the internal nature of man.

It is said that mind produces motion; and it might as well have been said, that motion produces mind.

III.—DIFFICULTY OF ANALYZING THE HUMAN MIND.

If it were possible that a person should give a faithful history of his being, from the earliest epochs of his recollection, a picture would be presented such as the world has never contemplated before. A mirror would be held up to all men in which they might behold their own recollections, and, in dim perspective, their shadowy hopes and fears—all that they dare not, or that daring and desiring, they could not expose to the open eye of day. But thought can with difficulty visit the intricate and winding chambers which it inhabits. It is like a river whose rapid and perpetual stream flows outwards—like one in dread who speeds through the recesses of some haunted pile.
dare not look behind. The caverns of the mind are obscure, and shadowy; or pervaded with a lustre, beautifully bright indeed, but shining not beyond their portals. If it were possible to be where we have been, vitally and indeed—if, at the moment of our presence there, we could define the results of our experience,—if the passage from sensation to reflection—from a state of passive perception to voluntary contemplation, were not so dizzying and so tumultuous, this attempt would be less difficult.

IV.—HOW THE ANALYSIS SHOULD BE CARRIED ON.

Most of the errors of philosophers have arisen from considering the human being in a point of view too detailed and circumscribed. He is not a moral, and an intellectual,—but also, and pre-eminently, an imaginative being. His own mind is his law; his own mind is all things to him. If we would arrive at any knowledge which should be serviceable from the practical conclusions to which it leads, we ought to consider the mind of man and the universe as the great whole on which to exercise our speculations. Here, above all, verbal disputes ought to be laid aside, though this has long been their chosen field of battle. It imports little to inquire whether thought be distinct from the objects of thought. The use of the words external and internal, as applied to the establishment of this distinction, has been the symbol and the source of much dispute. This is merely an affair of words, and as the dispute deserves, to say, that when speaking of the objects of thought, we indeed only describe one of the forms of thought—or that, speaking of thought, we only apprehend one of the operations of the universal system of beings.

V.—CATALOGUE OF THE PHENOMENA OF DREAMS, AS CONNECTING SLEEPING AND WAKING.

1. Let us reflect on our infancy, and give as faithfully as possible a relation of the events of sleep.

And first I am bound to present a faithful picture of my own peculiar nature relatively to sleep. I do not doubt that were every individual to imitate me, it would be found that among many circumstances peculiar to their individual nature, a sufficiently general resemblance would be found to prove the connection existing between those peculiarities and the most universal phenomena. I shall employ caution, indeed, as to the facts which I state, that they contain nothing false or exaggerated. But they contain no more than certain elucidations of my own nature; concerning the degree in which it resembles, or differs from, that of others, I am by no means accurately aware. It is sufficient, however, to caution the reader against drawing general inferences from particular instances.

I omit the general instances of delusion in fever or delirium, as well as mere dreams considered in themselves. A delineation of this subject, however inexhaustible and interesting, is to be passed over.

What is the connection of sleeping and of waking?

2. I distinctly remember dreaming three several times, between intervals of two or more years, the same precise dream. It was not so much what is ordinarily called a dream; the single image, unconnected with all other images, of a youth who was educated at the same school with myself, presented itself in sleep. Even now, after the lapse of many years, I can never hear the name of this youth, without the three places where I dreamed of him presenting themselves distinctly to my mind.

3. In dreams, images acquire associations peculiar to dreaming; so that the idea of a particular house, when it recurs a second time in dreams, will have relation with the idea of the same house, in the first time, of a nature entirely different from that which the house excites, when seen or thought of in relation to waking ideas.

4. I have beheld scenes, with the intimate and unaccountable connection of which with the obscure parts of my own nature, I have been irresistibly impressed. I have beheld a scene which has produced no unusual effect on my thoughts. After the lapse of many years I have dreamed of this scene. It has hung on my memory, it has haunted my thoughts, at intervals, with the pertinacity of an object connected with human affections. I have visited this scene again. Neither the dream could be dissociated from the landscape, nor the landscape from the dream, nor feelings, such as neither singly could have awakened, from both. But the most remarkable event of this nature, which ever occurred to me, happened five years ago at Oxford. I was walking with a friend, in the neighbourhood of that city, engaged in earnest and interesting conversation. We suddenly turned the corner of a lane, and the view, which its high banks and hedges had concealed, presented itself. The view consisted of a windmill, standing in one among many plashy meadows, inclosed with stone walls; the irregular and broken ground, between the wall and the road on which we stood; a long low hill behind the windmill, and a grey covering...
of uniform cloud spread over the evening sky. It was that season when the last leaf had just fallen from the scant and stunted ash. The scene surely was a common scene; the season and the hour little calculated to kindle lawless thought; it was a tame uninteresting assemblage of objects, such as would drive the imagination for refuge in serious and sober talk, to the evening fireside, and the dessert of winter fruits and wine. The effect which it produced on me was not such as could have been expected. I suddenly remembered to have seen that exact scene in some dream of long ago.

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FRAGMENTS.

SPECULATIONS ON MORALS.

I.—PLAN OF A TREATISE ON MORALS.

That great science which regards nature and the operations of the human mind, is popularly divided into Morals and Metaphysics. The latter relates to a just classification, and the assignment of distinct names to its ideas; the former regards simply the determination of that arrangement of them which produces the greatest and most solid happiness. It is admitted that a virtuous or moral action, is that action which, when considered in all its accessories and consequences, is fitted to produce the highest pleasure to the greatest number of sensitive beings. The laws according to which all pleasure, since it cannot be equally felt by all sensitive beings, ought to be distributed by a voluntary agent, are reserved for a separate chapter.

The design of this little treatise is restricted to the development of the elementary principles of morals. As far as regards that purpose, metaphysical science will be treated merely so far as a source of negative truth; whilst morality will be considered as a science, respecting which we can arrive at positive conclusions.

The misguided imaginations of men have rendered the ascertaining of what is not true, the principal direct service which metaphysical science can bestow upon moral science. Moral science itself is the doctrine of the voluntary actions of man, as a sentient and social being. These actions depend on the thoughts in his mind. But there is a mass of popular opinion, from which the most enlightened persons are seldom wholly free, into the truth or falsehood of which it is incumbent on us to inquire, before we can arrive at any firm conclusions as to the conduct which we ought to pursue in the regulation of our own minds, or towards our fellow-beings; or before we can ascertain the elementary laws, according to which these thoughts, from which these actions flow, are originally combined.

The object of the forms according to which human society is administered, is the happiness of the individuals composing the communities which they regard, and these forms are perfect or imperfect in proportion to the degree in which they promote this end.

This object is not merely the quantity of happiness enjoyed by individuals as sensitive beings, but the mode in which it should be distributed among them as social beings. It is not enough, if such a coincidence can be conceived as possible, that one person or class of persons should enjoy the highest happiness, whilst another is suffering a disproportionate degree of misery. It is necessary that the happiness produced by the common efforts, and preserved by the common care, should be distributed according to the just claims of each individual; if not, although the quantity produced should be the same, the end of society would remain unfulfilled. The object is in a compound proportion to the quantity of happiness produced, and the correspondence of the mode in which it is distributed, to the elementary feelings of man as a social being.

The disposition in an individual to promote this object is called virtue; and the two constituent parts of virtue, benevolence and justice, are correlative with these two great portions of the only true object of all voluntary actions of a human being. Benevolence is the desire to be the author of happiness; and justice is the desire to be the author of morality.

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Here I was obliged to leave off, overcome by thrilling horror. This remark closes this fragment, which was written in 1815. I remember well his coming to me from writing it, pale and agitated, to seek refuge in conversation from the fearful emotions it excited. No man, as these fragments prove, had such keen sensations as Shelley. His nervous temperament was wound up by the delicacy of his health to an intense degree of sensibility, and while his active mind pondered for ever upon, and drew conclusions from his sensations, his reverses increased their vivacity, till they mingled with, and made one with thought, and both became absorbing and tumultuous, even to physical pain.—M.S.
of good, and justice the apprehension of the manner in which good ought to be done.

Justice and benevolence result from the elementary laws of the human mind.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE NATURE OF VIRTUE.

Sec. 1. General View of the Nature and Objects of Virtue.—3. The Origin and Basis of Virtue, as founded on the Elementary Principles of Mind.—4. The Laws which now from the nature of Mind regulating the application of those principles to human actions.—5. Virtue, a possible attribute of man.

We exist in the midst of a multitude of beings like ourselves, upon whose happiness most of our actions exert some obvious and decisive influence.

The regulation of this influence is the object of moral science.

We know that we are susceptible of receiving painful or pleasurable impressions of greater or less intensity and duration. That is called good which produces pleasure; that is called evil which produces pain. These are general names, applicable to every class of causes, from which an overbalance of pain or pleasure may result. But when a human being is the active instrument of generating or diffusing happiness, the principle through which it is most effectually instrumental to that purpose, is called virtue. And benevolence, or the desire to be the author of good, united with justice, or an apprehension of the manner in which that good is to be done, constitutes virtue.

But, wherefore should a man be, benevolent and just! The immediate emotions of his nature, especially in its most inartificial state, prompt him to inflict pain, and to arrogate dominion. He desires to heap superfluities to his own store, although others perish with famine. He is propelled to guard against the smallest invasion of his own liberty, though he reduces others to a condition of the most pitiless servitude. He is revengeful, proud and selfish. Wherefore should he curb these propensities?

It is inquired, for what reason a human being should engage in procuring the happiness, or refrain from producing the pain of another? When a reason is required to prove the necessity of adopting any system of conduct, what is it that the objector demands? He requires proof of that system of conduct being such as will most effectually promote the happiness of mankind. To demonstrate this, is to render a moral reason. Such is the object of Virtue.

A common sophism, which, like many others, depends on the abuse of a metaphorical expression to a literal purpose, has produced much of the confusion which has involved the theory of morals. It is said that no person is bound to be just or kind, if, on his neglect, he should fail to incur some penalty. Duty is obligation. There can be no obligation without an obliger. Virtue is a law, to which it is the will of the lawgiver that we should conform; which will we should in no manner be bound to obey, unless some dreadful punishment were attached to disobedience. This is the philosophy of slavery and superstition.

In fact, no person can be bound or obliged, without some power preceding to bind and oblige. If I observe a man bound hand and foot, I know that some one bound him. But if I observe him returning self-satisfied from the performance of some action, by which he has been the willing author of extensive benefit, I do not infer that the anticipation of hellish agonies, or the hope of heavenly reward, has constrained him to such an act.

... It remains to be stated in what manner the sensations which constitute the basis of virtue originate in the human mind; what are the laws which it receives there; how far the principles of mind allow it to be an attribute of a human being; and, lastly, what is the probability of persuading mankind to adopt it as a universal and systematic motive of conduct.

BENEVOLENCE.

There is a class of emotions which we instinctively avoid. A human being, such as is man considered in his origin, a child a month old, has a very imperfect consciousness of the existence of other natures resembling itself. All the energies of its being are directed to the extinction of the pains with which it is perpetually assailed. At length it discovers that it is surrounded by natures susceptible of sensations similar to its own. It is very late before children attain to this knowledge. If a child observes, without emotion, its nurse or its mother suffering acute pain, it is attributable rather to ignorance than insensibility. So soon as the accents and gestures, significant of pain, are referred to the feelings which they express, they awaken in the mind of the beholder a desire that they should cease. Pain is thus apprehended to be evil for its own sake, without any other necessary reference to the mind by which its existence is perceived, than such as is indispensable to its perception. The tendencies of our original sensations, indeed, all have for their object the preservation of our individual being. But these are passive.

* A leaf of manuscript is wanting here, manifestly treating of self-love and disinterestedness—M. S.
and unconscious. In proportion as the mind acquires an active power, the empire of these tendencies becomes limited. Thus an infant, a savage, and a solitary beast, is selfish, because its mind is incapable of receiving an accurate intimation of the nature of pain as existing in beings resembling itself. The inhabitant of a highly civilised community will more acutely sympathise with the sufferings and enjoyments of others, than the inhabitant of a society of a less degree of civilisation. He who shall have cultivated his intellectual powers by familiarity with the highest specimens of poetry and philosophy, will usually sympathise more than one engaged in the less refined functions of manual labour. Every one has experience of the fact, that to sympathise with the sufferings of another, is to enjoy a transitory oblivion of his own.

The mind thus acquires, by exercise, a habit, as it were, of perceiving and abhorring evil, however remote from the immediate sphere of sensations with which that individual mind is conversant. Imagination or mind employed in prophetically imaging forth its objects, is that faculty of human nature on which every gradation of its progress, nay, every, the minutest, change, depends. Pain or pleasure, if subtly analysed, will be found to consist entirely in prospect. The only distinction between the selfish man and the virtuous man is, that the imagination of the former is confined within a narrow limit, whilst that of the latter embraces a comprehensive circumference. In this sense, wisdom and virtue may be said to be inseparable, and criteria of each other. Selfishness is the offspring of ignorance and mistake; it is the portion of unreflecting infancy, and savage solitude, or of those whom toil or evil occupations have blunted or rendered torpid; disinterested benevolence is the product of a cultivated imagination, and has an intimate connexion with all the arts which add ornament, or dignity, or power, or stability to the social state of man. Virtue is thus entirely a refinement of civilised life; a creation of the human mind; or, rather, a combination which it has made, according to elementary rules contained within itself, of the feelings suggested by the relations established between man and man.

All the theories which have refined and exalted humanity, or those which have been devised as alleviations of its mistakes and evils, have been based upon the elementary emotions of disinterestedness, which we feel to constitute the majesty of our nature. Patriotism, as it existed in the ancient republics, was never, as has been supposed, a calculation of personal advantages. When Mutius Scævola thrust his hand into the burning coals, and Regulus returned to Carthage, and Epicharis sustained the rack silently, in the torments of which she knew that she would speedily perish, rather than betray the conspirators to the tyrant;* these illustrious persons certainly made a small estimate of their private interest. If it be said that they sought posthumous fame; instances are not wanting in history which prove that men have even defied infamy for the sake of good. But there is a great error in the world with respect to the selfishness of fame. It is certainly possible that a person should seek distinction as a medium of personal gratification. But the love of fame is frequently no more than a desire that the feelings of others should confirm, illustrate, and sympathise with, our own. In this respect it is allied with all that draws us out of ourselves. It is the "last infirmity of noble minds." Chivalry was likewise founded on the theory of self-sacrifice. Love possesses so extraordinary a power over the human heart, only because disinterestedness is united with the natural propensities. These propensities themselves are comparatively impotent in cases where the imagination of pleasure to be given, as well as to be received, does not enter into the account. Let it not be objected that patriotism, and chivalry, and sentimental love, have been the fountains of enormous mischief. They are cited only to establish the proposition that, according to the elementary principles of mind, man is capable of desiring and pursuing good for its own sake.

JUSTICE.

The benevolent propensities are thus inherent in the human mind. We are impelled to seek the happiness of others. We experience a satisfaction in being the authors of that happiness. Everything that lives is open to impressions of pleasure and pain. We are led by our benevolence to regard every human being indiscriminately; we will seek to confer pleasure without calculating the mischief that may result. They will avoid inflicting pain, though that pain should be attended with eventual benefit; they will seek to confer pleasure without calculating the mischief that may result. They benefit one at the expense of many.

There is a sentiment in the human mind that regulates benevolence in its application as a principle of action. This is the sense of justice. Justice, as well as benevolence, is an elementary law of human nature. It is through this principle that men are impelled to distribute any means of pleasure which

* Tacitus.
benevolence may suggest the communication of to others, in equal portions among an equal number of applicants. If ten men are shipwrecked on a desert island, they distribute whatever subsistence may remain to them, into equal portions among themselves. If six of them conspire to deprive the remaining four of their share, their conduct is termed unjust.

The existence of pain has been shown to be a circumstance which the human mind regards with dissatisfaction, and of which it desires the cessation. It is equally according to its nature to desire that the advantages to be enjoyed by a limited number of persons should be enjoyed equally by all. This proposition is supported by the evidence of indisputable facts. Tell some ungarbled tale of a number of persons being made the victims of the enjoyment of one, and he who would appeal in favour of any system which might produce such an evil to the primary emotions of our nature, would have nothing to reply. Let two persons, equally strangers, make application for some benefit in the possession of a third to bestow, and to which he feels that they have an equal claim. They are both sensitive beings; pleasure and pain affect them alike.

CHAPTER II.

It is foreign to the general scope of this little Treatise to encumber a simple argument by contending against any of the trite objections of habit or fanaticism. But there are two; the first, the basis of all political mistake, and the second, the prolific cause and effect of religious error, which it seems useful to refute.

First, it is inquired, "Wherefore should a man be benevolent and just?" The answer has been given in the preceding chapter.

If a man persists to inquire why he ought to promote the happiness of mankind, he demands a mathematical or metaphysical reason for a moral action. The absurdity of this scepticism is more apparent, but not less real than the exacting a moral reason for a mathematical or metaphysical fact. If any person should refuse to admit that all the radii of a circle are of equal length, or that human actions are necessarily determined by motives, until it could be proved that these radii and these actions uniformly tended to the production of the greatest general good, who would not wonder at the unreasonable and capricious association of his ideas?!

The writer of a philosophical treatise may, I imagine, at this advanced era of human intellect, be held excused from entering into a controversy with those reasoners, if such there are, who would claim an exemption from its decrees in favour of any one among those diversified systems of obscure opinion respecting morals, which, under the name of religions, have in various ages and countries prevailed among mankind. Besides that if, as these reasoners have pretended, eternal torture or happiness will ensue as the consequence of certain actions, we should be no nearer the possession of a standard to determine what actions were right and wrong, even if this pretended revelation, which is by no means the case, had furnished us with a complete catalogue of them. The character of actions as virtuous or vicious would by no means be determined alone by the personal advantage or disadvantage of each moral agent individually considered. Indeed, an action is often virtuous in proportion to the greatness of the personal calamity which the author willingly draws upon himself by daring to perform it. It is because an action produces an overbalance of pleasure or pain to the greatest number of sentient beings, and not merely because its consequences are beneficial or injurious to the author of that action, that it is good or evil. Nay, this latter consideration has a tendency to pollute the purity of virtue, inasmuch as it consists in the motive rather than in the consequences of an action. A person who should labour for the happiness of mankind lest he should be tormented eternally in Hell, would, with reference to that motive, possess as little claim to the epithet of virtuous, as he who should torture, imprison, and burn them alive, a more usual and natural consequence of such principles, for the sake of the enjoyments of Heaven.

My neighbour, presuming on his strength, may direct me to perform or to refrain from a particular action, indicating a certain arbitrary penalty in the event of disobedience within his power to inflict. My action, if modified by his menaces, can in no degree participate in virtue. He has afforded me no criterion as to what is right or wrong. A king, or an assembly of men, may publish a proclamation affixing any penalty to any particular action, but that is not immoral because such penalty is affixed. Nothing is more evident than that the epithet of virtue is inapplicable to the refraining from that action on account of the evil arbitrarily attached to it. If the action is in itself beneficial, virtue would rather consist in not refraining from it, but in firmly defying the personal consequences attached to its performance.

Some usurper of supernatural energy might
subdue the whole globe to his power; he might possess new and unheard-of resources for enduring his punishments with the most terrible attributes of pain. The torments of his victims might be intense in their degree, and protracted to an infinite duration. Still the "will of the lawgiver" would afford no surer criterion as to what actions were right or wrong. It would only increase the possible virtue of those who refuse to become the instruments of his tyranny.

11.—MORAL SCIENCE CONSISTS IN CONSIDERING THE DIFFERENCE, NOT THE RESEMBLANCE, OF PERSONS.

The internal influence, derived from the constitution of the mind from which they flow, produces that peculiar modification of actions, which makes them intrinsically good or evil.

To attain an apprehension of the importance of this distinction, let us visit, in imagination, the proceedings of some metropolis. Consider the multitude of human beings who inhabit it, and survey, in thought, the actions of the several classes into which they are divided. Their obvious actions are apparently uniform; the stability of human society seems to be maintained sufficiently by the uniformity of the conduct of its members, both with regard to themselves, and with regard to others. The labourer arises at a certain hour, and applies himself to the task enjoined him. The functionaries of government and law are regularly employed in their offices and courts. The trader holds a train of conduct from which he never deviates. The ministers of religion employ an accustomed language, and maintain a decent and equable regard. The army is drawn forth, the motions of every soldier are such as they were expected to be; the general commands, and his words are echoed from troop to troop. The domestic actions of men are, for the most part, indistinguishable one from the other, at a superficial glance. The actions which are classed under the general appellation of marriage, education, friendship, &c., are perpetually going on, and to a superficial glance, are similar one to the other.

But, if we would see the truth of things, they must be stripped of this fallacious appearance of uniformity. In truth, no one action has, when considered in its whole extent, any essential resemblance with any other. Each individual, who composes the vast multitude which we have been contemplating, has a peculiar frame of mind, which, whilst the features of the great mass of his actions remain uniform, impresses the minuter lineaments with its peculiar hues. Thus, whilst his life, as a whole, is like the lives of other men, in detail, it is most unlike; and the more subjects divided the actions become; that is, the more they enter into that class which have a vital influence on the happiness of others and his own, so much the more are they distinct from those of other men.

"Those little, nameless unremembered acts Of kindness and of love," as well as those deadly outrages which are inflicted by a look, a word—or less—the very refraining from some faint and most evanescent expression of countenance; those flow from a profounder source than the series of our habitual conduct, which, it has been already said, derives its origin from without. These are the actions, and such as these, which make human life what it is, and are the fountains of all the good and evil with which its entire surface is so widely and impartially overspread; and though they are called minute, they are called so in compliance with the blindness of those who cannot estimate their importance. It is in the due appreciating the general effects of their peculiarities, and in cultivating the habit of acquiring decisive knowledge respecting the tendencies arising out of them in particular cases, that the most important part of moral science consists. The deepest abyss of these vast and multitudinous caverns, it is necessary that we should visit.

This is the difference between social and individual man. Not that this distinction is to be considered definite, or characteristic of one human being as compared with another, it denotes rather two classes of agency, common in a degree to every human being. None is exempt, indeed, from that species of influence which affects, as it were, the surface of his being, and gives the specific outline to his conduct. Almost all that is ostensible submits to that legislature created by the general representation of the past feelings of mankind—imperfect as it is from a variety of causes, as it exists in the government, the religion, and domestic habits. Those who do not nominally, yet actually, submit to the same power. The external features of their conduct, indeed, can no more escape it, than the clouds can escape from the stream of the wind; and his opinion, which he often hopes be has dispassionately secured from all contagion of prejudice and vulgarity, would be found, on examination, to be the inevitable excrecence of the very usages from which he vehemently dissents. Internally all is conducted otherwise; the efficiency, the essence, the vitality of actions, derives its colour from what is no ways contributed to from any external source. Like the plant, which while it derives the accident of its size and shape from the soil in which it springs, and is rankened,
We look on all that in ourselves with which we can discover a resemblance in others; and consider those resemblances as the materials of moral knowledge. It is in the differences that it actually consists.

ION; OR, THE ILIAD.

Socrates and Ion.

Socrates.—Hail to thee, 0 Ion! from whence returnest thou amongst us now!—from thine own native Ephesus!

Ion.—No, Socrates; I come from Epidaurus and the feasts in honour of Aesculapius.

Socrates.—Had the Epidaurians instituted a contest of rhapsody in honour of the God?

Ion.—And not in rhapsodies alone; there were contests in every species of music.

Socrates.—And in which did you contend? And what was the success of your efforts?

Ion.—I bore away the first prize at the games, O Socrates.

Socrates.—Well done! You have now only to consider how you shall win the Panathenaea.

Ion.—That may also happen, God willing.

Socrates.—Your profession, O Ion, has often appeared to me an enviable one. For, together with the nicest care of your person, and the most studied elegance of dress, it imposes upon you the necessity of a familiar acquaintance with many and excellent poets, and especially with Homer, the most admirable of them all. Nor is it merely because you can repeat the verses of this great poet, that I envy you, but because you fathom his inmost thoughts. For he is no rhapsodist who does not understand the whole scope and intention of the poet, and is not capable of interpreting it to his audience. This he cannot do without a full comprehension of the meaning of the author he undertakes to illustrate; and worthy, indeed, of envy are those who can fulfil these conditions.

Ion.—Thou speakest truth, O Socrates. And, indeed, I have expended my study particularly on this part of my profession. I flatter myself that no man living excels me in the interpretation of Homer; neither Metrodorus of Lampaeus, nor Stesimbrotus the Thasian, nor Glauco, nor any other rhapsodist of the present times can express so many various and beautiful thoughts upon Homer as I can.

Socrates.—I am persuaded of your eminent skill, O Ion. You will not, I hope, refuse me a specimen of it?

Ion.—And, indeed, it would be worth your while to hear me declaim upon Homer. I deserve a golden crown from his admirers.

Socrates.—And I will find leisure some day or other to request you to favour me so far. At present, I will only trouble you with one question. Do you excel in explaining Homer alone, or are you conscious of a similar power with regard to Hesiod and Archilochus?

Ion.—I possess this high degree of skill with regard to Homer alone, and I consider that sufficient.

Socrates.—Are there any subjects upon which Homer and Hesiod say the same things?

Ion.—Many, as it seems to me.

Socrates.—Whether do you demonstrate these things better in Homer or Hesiod?

Ion.—In the same manner, doubtless; inasmuch as they say the same words with regard to the same things.

Socrates.—But with regard to those things in which they differ;—Homer and Hesiod both treat of divination, do they not?

Ion.—Certainly.

Socrates.—Do you think that you or a diviner would make the best exposition, respecting all that these poets say of divination, both as they agree and as they differ?

Ion.—A diviner probably.

Socrates.—Suppose you were a diviner, do you not think that you could explain the discrepancies of those poets on the subject of your profession, if you understand their argument?

Ion.—Clearly so.

Socrates.—How does it happen then that you are possessed of skill to illustrate Homer, and not Hesiod, or any other poet in an equal degree? Is the subject-matter of the poetry of Homer different from all other poets? Does he not principally
treat of war and social intercourse, and of the distinct functions and characters of the brave man and the coward, the professional and private person, the mutual relations which subsist between the Gods and men; together with the modes of their intercourse, the phenomena of Heaven, the secrets of Hades, and the origin of Gods and heroes. Are not these the materials from which Homer wrought his poem?

Ion.—Assuredly, O Socrates.

Socrates.—And the other poets, do they not treat of the same matter?

Ion.—Certainly: but not like Homer.

Socrates.—How! Worse?

Ion.—Oh! far worse.

Socrates.—Then Homer treats of them better than they!

Ion.—Oh! Jupiter!—how much better!

Socrates.—Amongst a number of persons employed in solving a problem of arithmetic, might not a person know, my dear Ion, which had given the right answer?

Ion.—Certainly.

Socrates.—The same person who had been aware of the false one, or some other?

Ion.—The same, clearly.

Socrates.—That is, some one who understood arithmetic?

Ion.—Certainly.

Socrates.—Among a number of persons giving their opinions on the wholesomeness of different foods, whether would one person be capable to pronounce upon the rectitude of the opinions of those who judged rightly, and another on the erroneousness of those which were incorrect, or would the same person be competent to decide respecting them both?

Ion.—The same, evidently.

Socrates.—What would you call that person?

Ion.—A physician.

Socrates.—We may assert then, universally, that the same person who is competent to determine the truth, is competent also to determine the falsehood of whatever assertion is advanced on the same subject; and, it is manifest, that he who cannot judge respecting the falsehood, or unfitness of what is said upon a given subject, is equally incompetent to determine upon its truth or beauty!

Ion.—Assuredly.

Socrates.—The same person would then be competent or incompetent for both!

Ion.—Yes.

Socrates.—Do you not say that Homer and the other poets, and among them Hesiod and Archilochus, speak of the same things, but unequally; one better and the other worse?

Ion.—And I speak truth.

Socrates.—But if you can judge of what is well said by the one, you must also be able to judge of what is ill said by another, inasmuch as it expresses less correctly.

Ion.—It should seem so.

Socrates.—Then, my dear friend, we should not err if we asserted that Ion possessed a like power of illustration respecting Homer and all other poets; especially since he confesses that the same person must be esteemed a competent judge of all those who speak on the same subjects; inasmuch as those subjects are understood by him when spoken of by one, and the subject-matter of almost all the poets is the same.

Ion.—What can be the reason then, O Socrates, that when any other poet is the subject of conversation I cannot compel my attention, and I feel utterly unable to declaim anything worth talking of, and positively go to sleep! But when any one makes mention of Homer, my mind applies itself without effort to the subject; I awaken as if it were from a trance, and a profusion of eloquent expressions suggest themselves involuntarily!

Socrates.—It is not difficult to suggest the cause of this, my dear friend. You are evidently unable to declaim on Homer according to art and knowledge; for did your art endow you with this faculty, you would be equally capable of exerting it with regard to any other of the poets. Is not poetry, as an art or a faculty, a thing entire and one?

Ion.—Assuredly.

Socrates.—The same mode of consideration must be admitted with respect to all arts which are severally one and entire. Do you desire to bear what I understand by this, O Ion?

Ion.—Yes, by Jupiter, Socrates, I am delighted with listening to you wise men.

Socrates.—It is you who are wise, my dear Ion; you rhapsodists, actors, and the authors of the poems you recite. I, like an unprofessional and private man, can only speak the truth. Observe how common, vulgar, and level to the comprehension of any one, is the question which I now ask relative to the same consideration belonging to one entire art. Is not painting an art whole and entire?

Ion.—Certainly.

Socrates.—Did you ever know a person competent to judge of the paintings of Polygnotus, the son of Aglaophon, and incompetent to judge of the production of any other painter; who, on the supposition of the works of other painters being exhibited to him, was wholly at a loss, and very much inclined to go to sleep, and lost all faculty of
reasoning on the subject; but when his opinion was required of Polygnotus, or any one single painter you please, awoke, paid attention to the subject, and discarded on it with great eloquence and capacity!

Ion.—Never, by Jupiter!

Socrates.—Did you ever know any one very skilful in determining the merits of Daedalus, the son of Metion, Episcus, the son of Panopus, Theodorus the Samian, or any other great sculptor, who was immediately at a loss, and felt sleepy the moment any other sculptor was mentioned?

Ion.—I never met with such a person certainly.

Socrates.—Nor, do I think, that you ever met with a man professing himself a judge of poetry and rhapsody, and competent to criticize either Olympus, Thamyris, Orpheus, or Phemius of Ithaca, the rhapsodist, who, the moment he came to Ion the Ephesian, felt himself quite at a loss, utterly incompetent to judge whether he rhapsodized well or ill.

Ion.—I cannot refute you, Socrates, but of this I am conscious to myself: that I excel all men in the copiousness and beauty of my illustration of Homer, as all who have heard me will confess, and with respect to other poets, I am deserted of this power. It is for you to consider what may be the cause of this distinction.

Socrates.—I will tell you, O Ion, what appears to me to be the cause of this inequality of power. It is that you are not master of any art for the illustration of Homer, but it is a divine influence which moves you, like that which resides in the stone called Magnet by Euripides, and Heracleus by the people. For not only does this stone possess the power of attracting iron rings, but it can communicate to them the power of attracting other rings; so that you may see sometimes a long chain of rings, and other iron substances, attached and suspended one to the other by this influence. And as the power of the stone circulates through all the links of this series, and attaches each to each, so the Muse, communicating through those whom she has first inspired, to all others capable of sharing in the inspiration, the influence of that first enthusiasm, creates a chain and a succession. For the authors of those great poems which we admire, do not attain to excellence through the rules of any art, but they utter their beautiful melodies of verse in a state of inspiration, and, as it were, possessed by a spirit not their own. Thus the composers of lyrical poetry create those admired songs of theirs in a state of divine insanity, like the Corybantes, who lose all control over their reason in the enthusiasm of the sacred dance; and, during this supernatural possession, are excited to the rhythm and harmony which they communicate to men. Like the Bacchantes, who, when possessed by the God draw honey and milk from the rivers, in which, when they come to their senses, they find nothing but simple water. For the souls of the poets, as poets tell us, have this peculiar ministration in the world. They tell us that these souls, flying like bees from flower to flower, and wandering over the gardens and the meadows and the honey-flowing fountains of the Muses, return to us laden with the sweetness of melody; and arrayed as they are in the plumes of rapid imagination, they speak truth. For a poet is indeed a thing ethereally light, winged, and sacred, nor can he compose anything worth calling poetry until he becomes inspired, and, as it were, mad, or whilst any reason remains in him. For whilst a man retains any portion of the thing called reason, he is utterly incompetent to produce poetry or to vaticinate. Thus, those who declaim various and beautiful poetry upon any subject, as for instance upon Homer, are not enabled to do so by art or study; but every rhapsodist or poet, whether dithyrambic, encomiastic, chorale, epic, or iambic, is excellent in proportion to the extent of his participation in the divine influence, and the degree in which the Muse itself has descended on him. In other respects, poets may be sufficiently ignorant and incapable. For they do not compose according to any art which they have acquired, but from the impulse of the divinity within them; for did they know any rules of criticism according to which they could compose beautiful verses upon one subject, they would be able to exert the same faculty with respect to all or any other. The God seems purposely to have deprived all poets, prophets, and soothsayers of every particle of reason and understanding, the better to adapt them to their employment as his ministers and interpreters; and that we, their auditors, may acknowledge that those who write so beautifully, are possessed, and address us, inspired by the God. Tymicmus the Chalcidian, is a manifest proof of this, for he never before composed any poem worthy to be remembered; and yet, was the author of that Paeon which everybody sings, and which excels almost every other hymn, and which he, himself, acknowledges to have been inspired by the Muse. And, thus, it appears to me, that the God proves beyond a doubt, that these transcendent poems are not human as the work of men, but divine as coming from the God. Poets then are the interpreters of the divinities—each being possessed by some one deity; and to make this apparent, the God designedly inspires the worst poets with the sublimest verse. Does it seem to you that I am in the right, O Ion?

Ion.—Yes, by Jupiter! My mind is enlightened...
by your words, O Socrates, and it appears to me

that great poets interpret to us through some
divine election of the God.

Socrates.—And do not you rhapsodists inter-

pret poets?

Ion.—We do.

Socrates.—Thus you interpret the interpreters!

Ion.—Evidently.

Socrates.—Remember this, and tell me; and
do not conceal that which I ask. When you de-

claim well, and strike your audience with admi-

ration; whether you sing of Ulysses rushing upon
the threshold of his palace, discovering himself to
the suitors, and pouring his shafts out at his feet;
or of Achilles assailing Hector; or those affecting
passages concerning Andromache, or Hecuba, or
Priam, are you then self-possessed? or, rather, are
you not rapt and filled with such enthusiasm by
the deeds you recite, that you fancy yourself in
Ithaca or Troy, or wherever else the poem trans-
ports you?

Ion.—You speak most truly, Socrates, nor will I
deny it; for, when I recite of sorrow, my eyes fill
with tears; and when of fearful or terrible deeds,
my hair stands on end, and my heart beats fast.

Socrates.—Tell me, Ion, can we call him in his
senses, who weeps while dressed in splendid gar-
ments, and crowned with a golden coronal, not
losing any of these things? and is filled with fear
when surrounded by ten thousand friendly persons,
not one among whom desires to despoil or injure
him?

Ion.—To say the truth, we could not.

Socrates.—Do you often perceive your audience
moved also?

Ion.—Many among them, and frequently. I,
standing on the rostrum, see them weeping, with
eyes fixed earnestly on me, and overcome by my
declaration. I have need so to agitate them; for
if they weep, I laugh, taking their money; if they
should laugh, I must weep, going without it.

Socrates.—Do you not perceive that your au-
ditor is the last link of that chain which I have
described as held together through the power of
the magnet! You rhapsodists and actors are the
middle links, of which the poet is the first—and
through all these the God influences whichever
mind he selects, as they conduct this power one to
the other; and thus, as rings from the stone, so
hangs a long series of chorus-dancers, teachers, and
disciples from the Muse. Some poets are in-
fluenced by one Muse, some by another; we call
them possessed, and this word really expresses the
truth, for they are held. Others, who are inter-
preters, are inspired by the first links, the poets,
and are filled with enthusiasm, some by one, some
by another; some by Orpheus, some by Musæus,
but the greater number are possessed and inspired
by Homer. You, O Ion, are influenced by Homer.

If you recite the works of any other poet, you get
drowsy, and are at a loss what to say; but when
you hear any of the compositions of that poet you
are roused, your thoughts are excited, and you
grow eloquent;—for what you say of Homer is not
derived from any art or knowledge, but from divine
inspiration and possession. And the Corybantes
feel acutely the melodies of him by whom they are
inspired, and abound with verse and gesture for
his songs alone, and care for no other; thus, you,
O Ion, are eloquent when you expound Homer, and
are barren of words with regard to every other
poet. And this explains the question you asked,
wherefore Homer, and no other poet, inspires you
with eloquence. It is that you are thus excellent
in your praise, not through science, but from
divine inspiration.

Ion.—You say the truth, Socrates. Yet, I am
surprised that you should be able to persuade me
that I am possessed and insane when I praise
Homer. I think I shall not appear such to you
when you hear me.

Socrates.—I desire to hear you, but not before
you have answered me this one question. What
subject does Homer treat best? for, surely, he does
not treat all equally.

Ion.—You are aware that he treats of every-
th ing.

Socrates.—Does Homer mention subjects on
which you are ignorant?

Ion.—What can those be!

Socrates.—Does Homer frequently dilate on
various arts—on chariot driving, for instance? if I
remember the verses, I will repeat them.

Ion.—I will repeat them, for I remember them.

Socrates.—Repeat what Nestor says to his son
Antilochus, counselling him to be cautious in
turning, during the chariot race at the funeral
games of Patroclus.

And warily proceed,
A little bending to the left-hand steed;
But urge the right, and give him all the reins:
While thy strict hand his fellow's head restrains,
And turns him short; till, doubling as they roll,
The wheel's round nave appears to brush the goal.
Yet, not to break the car or lame the horse,
Clear of the stony heap direct the course.

Pape, Book 13.
Socrates.— Enough. Now, O Ion, would a physician or a charioteer be the better judge as to Homer's sagacity on this subject?

ION.— Of course, a charioteer.

Socrates.— Because he understands the art—or from what other reason!

ION.— From his knowledge of the art.

Socrates.— For one science is not gifted with the power of judging of another—a steersman, for instance, does not understand medicine!

ION.— Without doubt.

Socrates.— Nor a physician, architecture!

ION.— Of course not.

Socrates.— Is it not thus with every art? If we are adepts in one, we are ignorant of another. But first tell me, do not all arts differ one from the other?

ION.— They do.

Socrates.— For, you, as well as I, can testify that when we say an art is the knowledge of one thing, we do not mean that it is the knowledge of another.

ION.— Certainly.

Socrates.— For, if each art contained the knowledge of all things, why should we call them by different names? We do so that we may distinguish them one from the other. Thus, you as well as I, know that these are five fingers; and if I asked you whether we both meant the same thing or another, when we speak of arithmetic—would you not say the same?

ION.— Yes.

Socrates.— And tell me, when we learn one art, we must both learn the same things with regard to it; and other things if we learn another.

ION.— Certainly.

Socrates.— And he who is not versed in an art, is not a good judge of what is said or done with respect to it!

ION.— Certainly not.

Socrates.— To return to the verses which you just recited, do you think that you or a charioteer would be better capable of deciding whether Homer had spoken rightly or not?

ION.— Doubtless a charioteer.

Socrates.— For you are a rhapsodist, and not a charioteer.

ION.— Yes.

Socrates.— And the art of reciting verses is different from that of driving chariots!

ION.— Certainly.

Socrates.— And if it is different, it supposes a knowledge of different things!

ION.— Certainly.

Socrates.— And when Homer introduces Hecamede, the concubine of Nestor, giving Machaon a posset to drink, and he speaks thus:—

ION.— Does it belong to the medical or rhapsodical art, to determine whether Homer speaks rightly on this subject?

ION.— The medical.

Socrates.— And when he says—

ION.— Manifestly to the rhapsodical art.

Socrates.— Consider whether you are not inspired to make some such demand as this to me:—Come, Socrates, since you have found in Homer an accurate description of these arts, assist me also in the inquiry as to his competence on the subject of soothsayers and divination; and how far he speaks well or ill on such subjects; for he often treats of them in the Odyssey, and especially when he introduces Theoclymenus the Soothsayer of the Melampians, prophesying to the Suitors:

ION.— Certainly.

Socrates.— Often too in the Iliad, as at the battle at the walls; for he there says—

ION.— Oftentimes, amidst the tumults of the divine, Pours a large portion of the Pramnian wine; With goat's-milk cheese, a flavorful taste bestows, And last with flour the smiling surface strews.

ION.— She plunged, and instantly shot the dark profound: As, bearing death in the ficklest bait. From the bent angle sinks the leaden weight.

ION.— Nor gives the sun his golden orb to roll, But universal night usurps the pole.
I assert, it belongs to a soothsayer both to observe and to judge respecting such appearances as these.

Ion.—And you assert the truth, O Socrates.

Socrates.—And you also, my dear Ion. For we have in our turn recited from the Odyssey and the Iliad, passages relating to vaticination, to medicine and the piscatorial art; and as you are more skilled in Homer than I can be, do you now make mention of whatever relates to the rhapsodist and his art; for a rhapsodist is competent above all other men to consider and pronounce on whatever has relation to his art.

Ion.—Or with respect to everything else mentioned by Homer.

Socrates.—Do not be so forgetful as to say everything. A good memory is particularly necessary for a rhapsodist.

Ion.—And what do I forget?

Socrates.—Do you not remember that you admitted the art of reciting verses was different from that of driving chariots?

Ion.—I remember.

Socrates.—And did you not admit that being different, the subjects of its knowledge must also be different?

Ion.—Certainly.

Socrates.—You will not assert that the art of rhapsody is that of universal knowledge; a rhapsodist may be ignorant of some things.

Ion.—Except, perhaps, such things as we now discuss, O Socrates.

Socrates.—What do you mean by such subjects, besides those which relate to other arts? And with which among them do you profess a competent acquaintance, since not with all?

Ion.—I imagine that the rhapsodist has a perfect knowledge of what it is becoming for a man to speak—what for a woman; what for a slave, what for a free man; what for the ruler, what for him who is governed.

Socrates.—How! do you think that a rhapsodist knows better than a pilot what the captain of a ship in a tempest ought to say?

*a signal omen stopped the passing host,
Their martial fury in their wonder lost.
Jove's bird on sounding pinions beats the skies;
A bleeding serpent of enormous size
His talons trusted, alive and curling round,
He stung the bird, whose throat received the wound;
Mad with the smart, he drops the fatal prey;
In airy circles wings his painful way,
Floats on the winds and rends the heaven with cries:
Amidst the host the fallen serpent lies.

Pope, Book 12.
MENEXENUS; OR, THE FUNERAL ORATION.

Ion.— By far, O Socrates.

Socrates.— And you are also the most excellent
general among the Greeks!

Ion.— I am. I learned the art from Homer.

Socrates.— How is it then, by Jupiter, that
being both the best general and the best rhapsodist
among us, that you continually go about
Greece rhapsodising, and never lead our armies?
Does it seem to you that the Greeks greatly
need golden-crowned rhapsodists, and have no
want of generals?

Ion.— My native town, O Socrates, is ruled by
yours, and requires no general for her wars;— and
neither will your city nor the Lacedemonians elect
me to lead their armies—you think your own
generals sufficient.

Socrates.— My good Ion, are you acquainted
with Apollodorus the Cyzicenion?

Ion.— What do you mean?

Socrates.— He whom, though a stranger, the
Athenians oftinelected general; and Phanosthenes
the Andrian, and Heraclides the Clazomenian, all
foreigners, but whom this city has chosen, as being
great men, to lead its armies, and to fill other high
offices. Would not, therefore, Ion the Ephesian
be elected and honoured if he were esteemed
capable? Were not the Ephesians originally from
Athens, and is Ephesus the least of cities? But
if you spoke true, Ion, and praise Homer accord-
ing to art and knowledge, you have deceived me,—
since you declared that you were learned on the
subject of Homer, and would communicate your
knowledge to me—but you have disappointed me,
and are far from keeping your word. For you will
not explain in what you are so excessively clever,
though I greatly desire to learn; but, as various as
Proteus, you change from one thing to another,
and to escape at last, you disappear in the form of
a general, without disclosing your Homeric wisdom.
If, therefore, you possess the learning which you
promised to expound on the subject of Homer, you
deceive me and are false. But if you are eloquent
on the subject of this Poet, not through knowledge,
but by inspiration, being possessed by him, ignorant
the while of the wisdom and beauty you display,
then I allow that you are no deceiver. Choose
then whether you will be considered false or in-
spired!

Ion.— It is far better, O Socrates, to be thought
inspired.

Socrates.— It is better both for you and for us,
O Ion, to say that you are the inspired, and not the
learned, eulogist of Homer.

MENEXENUS; OR, THE FUNERAL ORATION.

A Fragment.

Socrates and Menexenus.

Socrates.— Whence comest thou, O Menexenus?
from the forum?

Menexenus.— Even so; and from the senate-
house.

Socrates.— What was thy business with the
senate? Art thou persuaded that thou hast attained
to that perfection of discipline and philosophy,
from which thou mayest aspire to undertake
greater matters? Wouldst thou, at thine age, my
wonderful friend, assume to thyself the govern-
ment of us who are thine elders, lest thy family
should at any time fail in affording us a protector?

Menexenus.— If thou, O Socrates, shouldst per-
mit and counsel me to enter into public life, I would
cariously endeavour to fit myself for the attempt.
If otherwise, I would abstain. On the present
occasion, I went to the senate-house, merely from
having heard that the senate was about to elect
one to speak concerning those who are dead. Thou
knowest that the celebration of their funeral
approaches?

Socrates.— Assuredly. But whom have they
chosen?

Menexenus.— The election is deferred until to-
morrow; I imagine that either Dion or Archinus
will be chosen.

Socrates.— In truth, Menexenus, the condition
of him who dies in battle is, in every respect, for-
tunate and glorious. If he is poor, he is conducted
to his tomb with a magnificent and honourable
funeral, amidst the praises of all; if even he were
a coward, his name is included in a panegyric pro-
nounced by the most learned men; from which all
the vulgar expressions, which unpremeditated com-
position might admit, have been excluded by the
careful expressions of leisure; who praise so admirably,
enlarging upon every topic remotely, or imme-
diately connected with the subject, and blending so
eloquent a variety of expressions, that, praising in
every manner the state of which we are citizens, and those who have perished in battle, and ourselves who yet live, they steal away our spirits as with enchantment. Whilst I listen to their praises, O Menexenus, I am penetrated with a very lofty conception of myself, and overcome by their flatteries. I appear to myself immeasurably more honourable and generous than before, and many of the strangers who are accustomed to accompany me, regard me with additional veneration, after having heard these relations; they seem to consider the whole state, including me, much more worthy of admiration, after they have been soothed into persuasion by the orator. The opinion thus inspired of my own majesty will last me more than three days sometimes, and the penetrating melody of the words descends through the ears into the mind, and clings to it; so that it is often three or four days before I come to my senses sufficiently to perceive in what part of the world I am, or succeed in persuading myself that I do not inhabit one of the islands of the blessed. So skilful are these orators of ours.

Menexenus.—Thou always laughest at the orators, O Socrates. On the present occasion, however, the unforeseen election will preclude the person chosen from the advantages of a preconcerted speech; the speaker will probably be reduced to the necessity of extemporising.

Socrates.—How so, my good friend! Every one of the candidates has, without doubt, his oration prepared; and if not, there were little difficulty, on this occasion, of inventing an unmeditated speech. If, indeed, the question were of Athenians, who should speak in the Peloponnesus; or of Peloponnesians, who should speak at Athens, an orator who would persuade and be applauded, must employ all the resources of his skill. But to the orator who contends for the approbation of those whom he praises, success will be little difficult.

Menexenus.—Is that thy opinion, O Socrates?

Socrates.—In truth it is.

Menexenus.—Shouldst thou consider thyself competent to pronounce this oration, if thou shouldst be chosen by the senate?

Socrates.—There would be nothing astonishing if I should consider myself equal to such an undertaking. My mistress in oratory was perfect in the science which she taught, and had formed many other excellent orators, and one of the most eminent among the Greeks, Pericles, the son of Xanthippus.

Menexenus.—Who is she? Assuredly thou meanest Aspasia.

Socrates.—Aspasia, and Connus the son of Metrobios, the two instructors. From the former of these I learned rhetoric, and from the latter music. There would be nothing wonderful if a man so educated should be capable of great energy of speech. A person who should have been instructed in a manner totally different from me; who should have learned rhetoric from Antiphon the son of Rhannusius, and music from Lampsess, would be competent to succeed in such an attempt as praising the Athenians to the Athenians.

Menexenus.—And what shouldst thou have to say, if thou wert chosen to pronounce the oration?

Socrates.—Of my own, probably nothing. But yesterday I heard Aspasia declaim a funeral oration over these same persons. She had heard, as thou sayest, that the Athenians were about to choose an orator, and she took the occasion of suggesting a series of topics proper for such an orator to select; in part extemporaneously, and in part such as she had already prepared. I think it probable that she composed the oration by interweaving such fragments of oratory as Pericles might have left.

Menexenus.—Rememberest thou what Aspasia said?

Socrates.—Unless I am greatly mistaken. I learned it from her; and she is so good a schoolmistress, that I should have been beaten if I had not been perfect in my lesson.

Menexenus.—Why not repeat it to me?

Socrates.—I fear lest my mistress be angry, should I publish her discourse.

Menexenus.—O, fear not. At least deliver a discourse; you will do what is exceedingly delightful to me, whether it be of Aspasia or any other. I entreat you to do me this pleasure.

Socrates.—I see that I must do what you require. In a little while, if you should ask me to strip naked and dance, I shall be unable to refuse you, at least, if we are alone. Now, listen. She spoke thus, if I recollect, beginning with the dead, in whose honour the oration is supposed to have been delivered.
FRAGMENTS
FROM THE REPUBLIC OF PLATO.

I. But it would be almost impossible to build your city in such a situation that it would need no imposts.—Impossible.—Other persons would then be required, who might undertake to conduct from another city those things of which they stood in need.—Certainly.—But the merchant who should return to his own city, without any of those articles which it needed, would return empty-handed. It will be necessary, therefore, not only to produce a sufficient supply, but such articles, both in quantity and in kind, as may be required to remunerate those who conduct the imports. There will be needed then more husbandmen, and other artificers, in our city. There will be needed also other persons who will undertake the conveyance of the imports and the exports, and these persons are called merchants. If the commerce which these necessities produce is carried on by sea, other persons will be required who are accustomed to nautical affairs. And, in the city itself, how shall the products of each man's labour be transported from one to another; those products, for the sake of the enjoyment and the ready distribution of which, they were first induced to institute a civil society!—By selling and buying, surely.—A market and money, as a symbol of exchange, arises out of this necessity.—Evidently.—When the husbandman, or any other artificer, brings the produce of his labours to the public place, and those who desire to barter their produce for it do not happen to arrive exactly at the same time, would he not lose his time, and the profit of it, if he were to sit in the market waiting for them? Assuredly. But, there are persons who, perceiving this, will take upon themselves the arrangement between the buyer and the seller. In constituted civil societies, those who are employed on this service, ought to be the infirm, and unable to perform any other; but, exchanging on one hand for money, what any person comes to sell, and giving the articles thus bought for a similar equivalent to those who might wish to buy.

II.—Description of a frugal enjoyment of the goods of the world.

III.—But with this system of life some are not contented. They must have beds and tables, and other furniture. They must have scarce ointments and perfumes, women, and a thousand superfluities of the same character. The things which we mentioned as sufficient, houses, and clothes, and food, are not enough. Painting and mosaic-work must be cultivated, and works in gold and ivory. The society must be enlarged in consequence. This city, which is of a healthy proportion, will not suffice, but it must be replenished with a multitude of persons, whose occupations are by no means indispensable. Huntsmen and mimics, persons whose occupation it is to arrange forms and colours, persons whose trade is the cultivation of the more delicate arts, poets and their ministers, rhapsodists, actors, dancers, manufacturers of all kinds of instruments and schemes of female dress, and an immense crowd of other ministers to pleasure and necessity. Do you not think we should want schoolmasters, tutors, nurses, hair-dressers, barbers, manufacturers and cooks? Should we not want pig-drivers, which were not wanted in our more modest city, in this one, and a multitude of others to administer to other animals, which would then become necessary articles of food,—or should we not!—Certainly we should.—Should we not want physicians much more, living in this manner than before! The same tract of country would no longer provide sustenance for the state. Must we then not usurp from the territory of our neighbours, and then we should make aggressions, and so we have discovered the origin of war; which is the principal cause of the greatest public and private calamities.—C. xi.

IV.—And first, we must improve upon the composers of fabulous histories in verse, to compose them according to the rules of moral beauty; and those not composed according to the rules must be rejected; and we must persuade mothers and nurses to teach those which we approve to their children, and to form their minds by moral fables, far more than their bodies by their hands.—Lib. ii.

V.—ON THE DANGER OF THE STUDY OF ALLEGORICAL COMPOSITION (IN A LARGE SENSE) FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

For a young person is not competent to judge what portions of a fabulous composition are allegorical and what literal; but the opinions produced
by a literal acceptation of that which has no meaning, or a bad one, except in an allegorical sense, are often irradicable.—Lib. ii.

vi.—God then, since he is good, cannot be, as is vulgarly supposed, the cause of all things; he is the cause, indeed, of very few things. Among the great variety of events which happen in the course of human affairs, evil prodigiously overbalances good in everything which regards men. Of all that is good there can be no other cause than God; but some other cause ought to be discovered for evil, which should never be imputed as an effect to God.—L. ii.

vii.—Plato's doctrine of punishment as laid down, p. 146, is refuted by his previous reasonings.—P. 26.

viii.—The Unchangeable Nature of God.

Do you think that God is like a vulgar conjuror, and that he is capable for the sake of effect, of assuming, at one time, one form, and at another time, another? Now, in his own character, converting his proper form into a multitude of shapes, now deceiving us, and offering vain images of himself to our imagination? Or do you think that God is single and one, and least of all things capable of departing from his permanent nature and appearance?

ix.—The Permanency of What is Excellent.

But everything, in proportion as it is excellent, either in art or nature, or in both, is least susceptible of receiving change from any external influence.

x.—Against Superstitious Tales.

Nor should mothers terrify their children by these fables, that Gods go about in the night-time, resembling strangers, in all sorts of forms: at once blaspheming the Gods, and rendering their children cowardly.

xi.—The True Essence of Falsehood and its Origin.

Know you not, that that which is truly false, if it may be permitted me so to speak, all, both Gods and men, detest?—How do you mean?—Thus: No person is willing to falsify in matters of the highest concern to himself concerning those matters, but fears, above all things, lest he should accept falsehood.—Yet, I understand you not. You think that I mean something profound. I say that no person is willing in his own mind to receive or to assert a falsehood, to be ignorant, to be in error, to possess that which is not true. This is truly to be called falsehood, this ignorance and error in the mind itself. What is usually called falsehood, or deceit in words, is but a voluntary imitation of what the mind itself suffers in the involuntary possession of that falsehood, an image of later birth, and scarcely, in a strict and complete sense, deserving the name of falsehood.—Lib. ii.

xii.—Against a Belief in Hell.

If they are to possess courage, are not those doctrines alone to be taught, which render death least terrible? Or do you conceive that any man can be brave who is subjected to a fear of death? that he who believes the things that are related of hell, and thinks that they are truth, will prefer in battle, death to slavery, or defeat?—Lib. iiv—Then follows a criticism on the poetical accounts of hell.

xiii.—On Grief.

We must then abolish the custom of lamenting and commiserating the deaths of illustrious men. Do we assert that an excellent man will consider it anything dreadful that his intimate friend, who is also an excellent man, should die?—By no means, (on excessive refinement). He will abstain from lamenting over his loss, as if he had suffered some great evil!—Surely. May we not assert in addition, that such a person as we have described suffices to himself for all purposes of living well and happily, and in no manner needs the assistance or society of another? that he would endure with resignation the destitution of a son, or a brother, or possessions, or whatever external adjuncts of life might have been attached to him? and that, on the occurrence of such contingencies, he would support them with moderation and mildness, by no means bursting into lamentations, or resigning himself to despondency?—Lib. iii.

Then he proceeds to allege passages of the poets in which opposite examples were held up to approbation and imitation.

xiv.—The Influence of Early Constant Imitation.

Do you not apprehend that imitations, if they shall have been practised and persevered in from early youth, become established in the habits and nature, in the gestures of the body, and the tones of the voice, and lastly, in the intellect itself?—C. iii.

xv.—On the Effect of Bad Taste in Art.

Nor must we restrict the poets alone to an exhibition of the example of virtuous manners in their compositions, but all other artists must be
forbidden, either in sculpture, or painting, or architecture, to employ their skill upon forms of an immoral, unchastened, monstrous, or illiberal type, either in the forms of living beings, or in architectural arrangements. And the artist capable of this employment of his art, must not be suffered in our community, lest those destined to be guardians of the society, nourished upon images of deformity and vice, like cattle upon bad grass, gradually gathering and depasturing every day a little, may ignorantly establish one great evil, composed of these many evil things, in their minds.—C. iii.

The monstrous figures called Arabesques, however in some of them to be found a mixture of a truer and simpler taste, which are found in the ruined palaces of the Roman Emperors, bear, nevertheless, the same relation to the brutal profligacy and killing luxury which required them, as the majestic figures of Castor and Pollux, and the simple beauty of the sculpture of the friezes of the Parthenon, bear to the more beautiful and simple manners of the Greeks of that period. With a liberal interpretation, a similar analogy might be extended into literary composition.

XVI.—Against the Learned Professions.

What better evidence can you require of a corrupt and pernicious system of discipline in a state, than that not merely persons of base habits and plebeian employments, but men who pretend to have received a liberal education, require the assistance of lawyers and physicians, and those too who have attained to a singular degree (so desperate are these diseases of body and mind) of skill. Do you not consider it an abject necessity, a proof of the deepest degradation, to need to be instructed in what is just or what is needful, as by a master and a judge, with regard to your personal knowledge and suffering?

What would Plato have said to a priest, such as his office is, in modern times?—C. iii.

XVII.—On Medicine.

Do you not think it an abject thing to require the assistance of the medicinal art, not for the cure of wounds, or such external diseases as result from the accidents of the seasons (ἐπὶ ἱματίας), but on account of sloth and the superfluous indulgences which we have already condemned; thus being filled with wind and water, like holes in earth, and compelling the elegant successors of Esculapius to invent new names, fistulences, and catarrhs, &c., for the new diseases which are the progeny of your luxury and sloth?—L. iii.

XVIII.—The Effect of the Dietetic System.

Herodicus being pedotribus (μαθητής, ἔκ-

ministra palatii), and his health becoming weak, united the gymnastic with the medical art, and having condemned himself to a life of weariness, afterwards extended the same pernicious system to others. He made his life a long death. For humouring the disease, mortal in its own nature, to which he was subject, without being able to cure it, he postponed all other purposes to the care of medicating himself, and through his whole life was subject to an access of his malady, if he departed in any degree from his accustomed diet, and by the employment of this skill, dying by degrees, he arrived at an old age.—L. iii.

Esculapius never pursued these systems, nor Machaon or Podalirius. They never undertook the treatment of those whose frames were inwardly and thoroughly diseased, so to prolong a worthless existence, and bestow on a man a long and wretched being, during which they might generate children in every respect the inheritors of their infirmity.—L. iii.

XIX.—Against What Is Falsely Called "Knowledge of the World."

A man ought not to be a good judge until he be old; because he ought not to have acquired a knowledge of what injustice is, until his understanding has arrived at maturity: not apprehending its nature from a consideration of its existence in himself; but having contemplated it distinct from his own nature in that of others, for a long time, until he shall perceive what an evil it is, not from his own experience and its effects within himself, but from his observations of them as resulting in others. Such a one were indeed an honourable judge, and a good; for he who has a good mind, is good. But that judge who is considered so wise, who having himself committed great injustices, is supposed to be qualified for the detection of it in others, and who is quick to suspect, appears keen, indeed, as long as he associates with those who resemble him; because, deriving experience from the example afforded by a consideration of his own conduct and character, he acts with caution; but when he associates with men of universal experience and real virtue, he exposes the defects resulting from such experience as he possesses, by distrusting men unreasonably and mistaking true virtue, having no example of it within himself with which to compare the appearances manifested in others; yet, such a one finding more associates who are virtuous than such as are wise, necessarily appears, both to himself and others,
ON A PASSAGE IN CRITO.

It is well known that when Socrates was condemned to death, his friends made arrangements for his escape from prison and his after security; of which he refused to avail himself, from the reason, that a good citizen ought to obey the laws of his country. On this Shelley makes the following remarks—

The reply is simple.

Indeed, your city cannot subsist, because the laws are no longer of avail. For how can the laws be said to exist, when those who deserve to be nourished in the Prytanea at the public expense, are condemned to suffer the penalties only due to the most atrocious criminals; whilst those against, and to protect from whose injustice, the laws were framed, live in honour and security? I neither overthrow your state, nor infringe your laws. Although you have inflicted an injustice on me, which is sufficient, according to the opinions of the multitude, to authorise me to consider you and me as in a state of warfare; yet, had I the power, so far from inflicting any revenge, I would endeavour to overcome you by benefits. All that I do at present is, that which the peaceful traveller would do, who, caught by robbers in a forest, escapes from them whilst they are engaged in the division of the spoil. And this I do, when it would not only be indifferent, but delightful to me to die, surrounded by my friends, secure of the inheritance of glory, and escaping, after such a life as mine, from the decay of mind and body which must soon begin to be my portion should I live. But, I prefer the good, which I have it in my power yet to perform.

Such are the arguments, which overturn the sophism placed in the mouth of Socrates by Plato. But there are others which prove that he did well to die.
HISTORY OF A SIX WEEKS' TOUR

THROUGH A PART OF

FRANCE, SWITZERLAND, GERMANY, AND
HOLLAND;

WITH LETTERS, DESCRIPTIVE OF A SAIL ROUND THE LAKE OF GENEVA,
AND OF THE GLACIERS OF CHAMOUNI.

PREFACE.

Nothing can be more unpresuming than this little volume. It contains the account of some desultory visits by a party of young people to scenes which are now so familiar to our countrymen, that few facts relating to them can be expected to have escaped the many more experienced and exact observers, who have sent their journals to the press. In fact, they have done little else than arrange the few materials which an imperfect journal, and two or three letters to their friends in England afforded. They regret, since their little History is to be offered to the public, that these materials were not more copious and complete. This is a just topic of censure to those who are less inclined to be amused than to condemn. Those whose youth has been past as theirs (with what success it imports not) in pursuing, like the swallow, the inconstant summer of delight and beauty which invests this visible world, will perhaps find some entertainment in following the author, with her husband and friend, on foot, through part of France and Switzerland, and in sailing with her down the castled Rhine, through scenes beautiful in themselves, but which, since she visited them, a great poet has clothed with the freshness of a diviner nature. They will be interested to hear of one who has visited Meillerie, and Chézery, and Chillon, and Vevai—classic ground, peopled with tender and glorious imaginations of the present and the past.

They have perhaps never talked with one who has beheld, in the enthusiasm of youth, the glaciers, and the lakes, and the forests, and the fountains of the mighty Alps. Such will perhaps forgive the imperfections of their narrative for the sympathy which the adventures and feelings which it recounts, and a curiosity respecting scenes already rendered interesting and illustrious, may excite.

JOURNAL.

It is now nearly three years since this journey took place, and the journal I then kept was not very copious; but I have so often talked over the incidents that befell us, and attempted to describe the scenery through which we passed, that I think few occurrences of any interest will be omitted.

We left London, July 28th, 1814, on a hotter day than has been known in this climate for many years. I am not a good traveller, and this heat agreed very ill with me, till, on arriving at Dover, I was refreshed by a sea-bath. As we very much wished to cross the Channel with all possible speed, we would not wait for the packet of the following day (it being then about four in the afternoon) but hiring a small boat, resolved to make the passage the same evening, the seamen promising us a voyage of two hours.

The evening was most beautiful; there was but
little wind, and the sails flapped in the flagging breeze: the moon rose, and night came on, and with the night a slow, heavy swell, and a fresh breeze, which soon produced a sea so violent as to toss the boat very much. I was dreadfully seasick, and as is usually my custom when thus affected, I slept during the greater part of the night, awaking only from time to time to ask where we were, and to receive the dismal answer each time—"Not quite half way."

The wind was violent and contrary; if we could not reach Calais, the sailors proposed making for Boulogne. They promised only two hours' sail from shore, yet hour after hour passed, and we were still far distant, when the moon sunk in the red and stormy horizon, and the fast-flashing lightning became pale in the breaking day.

We were proceeding slowly against the wind, when suddenly a thunder-squall struck the sail, and the waves rushed into the boat: even the sailors acknowledged that our situation was perilous; but they succeeded in reefing the sail—the wind was now changed, and we drove before the gale directly to Calais. As we entered the harbour I awoke from a comfortless sleep, and saw the sun rise broad, red, and cloudless over the pier.

**FRANCE.**

Exhausted with sickness and fatigue, I walked over the sand with my companions to the hotel. I heard for the first time the confused buzz of voices speaking a different language from that to which I had been accustomed; and saw a costume very unlike that worn on the opposite side of the Channel; the women with high caps and short jackets; the men with ear-rings; ladies walking about with high bonnets or coiffures lodged on the top of the head, the hair dragged up underneath, without any stray curls to decorate the temples or cheeks. There is, however, something very pleasing in the manners and appearance of the people of Calais, that prepossesses you in their favour. A national reflection might occur, that when Edward III. took Calais, he turned out the old inhabitants, and peopled it almost entirely with our own countrymen; but, unfortunately, the manners are not English.

We remained during that day and the greater part of the next at Calais: we had been obliged to leave our boxes the night before at the English custom-house, and it was arranged that they should go by the packet of the following day, which, detained by contrary wind, did not arrive until night. S*** and I walked among the fortifications on the outside of the town; they consisted of fields where the hay was making. The aspect of the country was rural and pleasant.

On the 30th of July, about three in the afternoon, we left Calais, in a cabriolet drawn by three horses. To persons who had never before seen anything but a spruce English chaise and post-boy, there was something irresistibly ludicrous in our equipage. Our cabriolet was shaped somewhat like a post-chaise, except that it had only two wheels, and consequently there were no doors at the sides; the front was let down to admit the passengers. The three horses were placed abreast, the tallest in the middle, who was rendered more formidable by the addition of an unintelligible article of harness, resembling a pair of wooden wings fastened to his shoulders; the harness was of rope; and the postilion, a queer, upright little fellow with a long pigtail, croqueted his whip, and clattered on, while an old forlorn shepherd with a cocked hat gazed on us as we passed.

The roads are excellent, but the heat was intense, and I suffered greatly from it. We slept at Boulogne the first night, where there was an ugly but remarkably good-tempered femme-de-chambre. This made us, for the first time, remark the difference which exists between this class of persons in France and in England. In the latter country they are prudish, and if they become in the least degree familiar, they are impudent. The lower orders in France have the easiness and politeness of the most well-bred English; they treat you unaffectedly as your equal, and consequently there is no scope for insolence.

We had ordered horses to be ready during the night, but we were too fatigued to make use of them. The man insisted on being paid for the whole post. Ah! madame, said the femme-de-chambre, pensez-y; c'est pour dédommagier les pauvres chevaux d'avoir perdû leur doux sommeil. A joke from an English chambermaid would have been quite another thing.

The first appearance that struck our English eyes was the want of enclosures; but the fields were flourishing with a plentiful harvest. We observed no vines on this side Paris.
The weather still continued very hot, and travelling produced a very bad effect upon my health; my companions were induced by this circumstance to hasten the journey as much as possible; and accordingly we did not rest the following night, and the next day, about two, arrived in Paris.

In this city there are no hotels where you can reside as long or as short a time as you please, and we were obliged to engage apartments at an hotel for a week. They were dear, and not very pleasant. As usual, in France, the principal apartment was a bed-chamber; there was another closet with a bed, and an ante-chamber, which we used as a sitting-room.

The heat of the weather was excessive, so that we were unable to walk except in the afternoon. On the first evening we walked to the gardens of the Tuileries; they are formal and uninteresting, in the French fashion, the trees cut into shapes, and without any grass. I think the Boulevards infinitely more pleasant. This street nearly surrounds Paris, and is eight miles in extent; it is very wide, and planted on either side with trees.

At one end is a superb cascade which refreshes the senses by its continual splashing: near this stands the gate of St. Denis, a beautiful piece of sculpture. I do not know how it may at present be disfigured by the Gothic barbarism of the conquerors of France, who were not contented with retaking the spoils of Napoleon, but, with impotent malice, destroyed the monuments of their own defeat. When I saw this gate, it was in its splendour, and made you imagine that the days of Roman greatness were transported to Paris.

After remaining a week in Paris, we received a small remittance that set us free from a kind of imprisonment there, which we found very irksome. But how should we proceed! After talking over and rejecting many plans, we fixed on one eccentric enough, but which, from its romance, was very pleasing to us. In England we could not have put it in execution without sustaining continual insult and impertinence; the French are far more tolerant of the vagaries of their neighbours. We resolved to walk through France; but as I was too weak for any considerable distance, and as C— could not be supposed to be able to walk as far as S— each day, we determined to purchase an ass, to carry our portmanteau and one of us by turns.

Early, therefore, on Monday, August 8th, S—and C—went to the ass market, and purchased an ass, and the rest of the day, until four in the afternoon, was spent in preparations for our departure; during which, Madame l'hotesse paid us a visit, and attempted to dissuade us from our design. She represented to us that a large army had been recently disbanded, that the soldiers and officers wandered about the country, and that les dames seraient certainement enlevées. But we were proof against her arguments, and packing up a few necessaries, leaving the rest to go by the diligence, we departed in a fiacre from the door of the hotel, our little ass following.

We dismissed the coach at the barrier. It was dusk, and the ass seemed totally unable to bear one of us, appearing to sink under the portmanteau, although it was small and light. We were, however, merry enough, and thought the leagues short. We arrived at Charenton about ten.

Charenton is prettily situated in a valley, through which the Seine flows, winding among banks variegated with trees. On looking at this scene, C— exclaimed, "Oh! this is beautiful enough; let us live here." This was her exclamation on every new scene, and as each surpassed the one before, she cried, "I am glad we did not stay at Charenton, but let us live here."

Finding our ass useless, we sold it before we proceeded on our journey, and bought a mule for ten napoléons. About nine o'clock we departed. We were clad in black silk. I rode on the mule, which carried also our portmanteau; S—and C—followed, bringing a small basket of provisions. At about one we arrived at Gros-Bois, there, under the shade of trees, we ate our bread fruit, and drank our wine, thinking of Don Quixote and Sancho.

The country through which we passed was highly cultivated, but uninteresting; the horizon scarcely ever extended beyond the circumference of a few fields, bright and waving with the golden harvest. We met several travellers; but our mode, although novel, did not appear to excite any curiosity or remark. This night we slept at Guignes, in the same room and beds in which Napoleon and some of his generals had rested during the late war. The little old woman of the place was highly gratified in having this little story to tell, and spoke in warm praise of the Empress Josephine and Marie Louise, who had at different times passed on that road.

As we continued our route, Provins was the first place that struck us with interest. It was our stage of rest for the night; we approached it at sunset. After having gained the summit of a hill, the prospect of the town opened upon us as it lay in the valley below; a rocky hill rose abruptly on one side, on the top of which stood a ruined citadel, with extensive walls and towers; lower down, but beyond, was the cathedral, and the whole formed a scene for painting. After having
travelled for two days through a country perfectly without interest, it was a delicious relief for the eye to dwell again on some irregularities and beauty of country. Our fare at Provins was coarse, and our beds uncomfortable, but the remembrance of this prospect made us contented and happy.

We now approached scenes that reminded us of what we had nearly forgotten, that France had lately been the country in which great and extraordinary events had taken place. Nogent, a town we entered about noon the following day, had been entirely desolated by the Cossacs. Nothing could be more entire than the ruin which these barbarians had spread as they advanced; perhaps they remembered Moscow and the destruction of the Russian villages; but we were now in France, and the distress of the inhabitants, whose houses had been burned, their cattle killed, and all their wealth destroyed, has given a sting to my detestation of war, which none can feel who have not travelled through a country pillaged and wasted by this plague, which, in his pride, man inflicts upon his fellow.

We quitted the great route soon after we had left Nogent, to strike across the country to Troyes. About six in the evening we arrived at St-Aubin, a lovely village embosomed in trees; but, on a nearer view, we found the cottages roofless, the rafters black, and the walls dilapidated; — a few inhabitants remained. We asked for milk—that had none to give; all their cows had been taken by the Cossacs. We had still some leagues to travel that night, but we found that they were not post leagues, but the measurement of the inhabitants, and nearly double the distance. The road lay over a desert plain, and, as night advanced, we suddenly lost all trace of the road; but a few trees, indistinctly seen, seemed to indicate the position of a village. About ten we arrived at Trois-Maisons, where, after a supper on milk and sour bread, we retired to rest on wretched beds: but sleep is seldom denied, except to the indolent; and after the day's fatigue, although my bed was nothing more than a sheet spread upon straw, I slept soundly until the morning was considerably advanced.

S—— had hurt his ankle so considerably the preceding evening, that he was obliged, during the whole of the following day's journey, to ride on our mule. Nothing could be more barren and wretched than the tract through which we now passed; the ground was chalky and uncovered even by grass, and where there had been any attempts made towards cultivation, the strangling ears of corn discovered more plainly the barren nature of the soil. Thousands of insects which were of the same white colour as the road, infested our path; the sky was cloudless, and the sun darted its rays upon us, reflected back by the earth, until I nearly fainted under the heat. A village appeared at a distance, cheering us with a prospect of rest. It gave us new strength to proceed; but it was a wretched place, and afforded us but little relief. It had been once large and populous, but now the houses were roofless, and the ruins that lay scattered about, the gardens covered with the white dust of the torn cottages, the black burnt beams, and squalid looks of the inhabitants, presented in every direction the melancholy aspect of devastation. One house, a cabaret, alone remained; we were here offered plenty of milk, stinking bacon, sour bread, and a few vegetables, which we were to dress for ourselves.

As we prepared our dinner in a place so filthy, that the sight of it alone was sufficient to destroy our appetite, the people of the village collected around us, squallid with dirt, their countenances expressing everything that is disgusting and brutal. They seemed, indeed, entirely detached from the rest of the world, and ignorant of all that was passing in it. There is much less communication between the various towns of France than in England. The use of passports may easily account for this: these people did not know that Napoleon was deposed; and when we asked why they did not rebuild their cottages, they replied, that they were afraid that the Cossacs would destroy them again upon their return. Ecchimeine (the name of this village) is in every respect the most disgusting place I ever met with.

Two leagues beyond, on the same road, we came to the village of Pavillon,—so unlike Ecchimeine, that we might have fancied ourselves in another quarter of the globe; here everything denoted cleanliness and hospitality; many of the cottages were destroyed, but the inhabitants were employed in repairing them. What could occasion so great a difference?

Still our road lay over this tract of uncultivated country, and our eyes were fatigued by observing nothing but a white expanse of ground, where no bramble or stunted shrub adorned its barrenness. Towards evening we reached a small plantation of vines: it appeared like one of those islands of verdure that are met with in the midst of the sands of Libya, but the grapes were not yet ripe. S—— was totally incapable of walking, and C—— and I were very tired before we arrived at Troyes.

We rested here for the night, and devoted the
following day to a consideration of the manner in which we should proceed. S——'s sprain rendered our pedestrianism impossible. We accordingly sold our mule, and bought an open voiture, that went on four wheels, for five napoleons, and hired a man with a mule, for eight more, to convey us to Neuchâtel in six days.

The suburbs of Troyes were destroyed, and the town itself dirty and uninviting. I remained at the inn writing letters, while S—— and C—— arranged this bargain and visited the cathedral of the town; and the next morning we departed in our voiture for Neuchâtel. A curious instance of French vanity occurred on leaving this town. Our voiturier pointed to the plain around, and mentioned, that it had been the scene of a battle between the Russians and the French. "In which the Russians gained the victory!"—"Ah no, madame," replied the man, "the French are never beaten."—"But how was it then," we asked, "that the Russians had entered Troyes soon after?"—"Oh, after having been defeated, they took a circuitous route, and thus entered the town."

Vandeuvres is a pleasant town, at which we rested during the hours of noon. We walked in the grounds of a nobleman, laid out in the English taste, and terminated in a pretty wood; it was a scene that reminded us of our native country. As we left Vandeuvres the aspect of the country suddenly changed; abrupt hills, covered with vines, but irregular and rocky. The last gate of the town was cut through the precipitous rock that arose on one side, and in that place jutted into the road.

We ascended a little hill, and saw before us an amphitheatre of hills covered with vines, but irregular and rocky. The view was interspersed by green meadows, groves of poplar and white willow, and spires of village churches, which the Cossacks had yet spared. Many villages, ruined by the war, occupied the most romantic spots.

In the evening we arrived at Bar-sur-Aube, a beautiful town, placed at the opening of the vale where the hills terminate abruptly. We climbed the highest of these, but scarce had we reached the top, when a mist descended upon everything, and the rain began to fall; we were wet through before we could reach our inn. It was evening, and the laden clouds made the darkness almost as deep as that of midnight; but in the west an unusually brilliant and fiery redness occupied an opening in the vapours, and added to the interest of our little expedition: the cottage lights were reflected in the tranquil river, and the dark hills behind, dimly seen, resembled vast and frowning mountains.

As we quitted Bar-sur-Aube, we at the same time bade a short farewell to hills. Passing through the towns of Chaumont, Langres, (which was situated on a hill, and surrounded by ancient fortifications), Champlitte, and Gray, we travelled for nearly three days through plains, where the country gently undulated, and relieved the eye from a perpetual flat, without exciting any peculiar interest. Gentle rivers, their banks ornamented by a few trees, stole through these plains, and a thousand beautiful summer insects skimmed over the streams.

The third day was a day of rain, and the first that had taken place during our journey. We were soon wet through, and were glad to stop at a little inn to dry ourselves. The reception we received here was very unprepossessing, the people still kept their seats round the fire, and seemed very unwilling to make way for the dripping guests. In the afternoon, however, the weather became fine, and at about six in the evening we entered Beauçon.

Hills had appeared in the distance during the whole day, and we had advanced gradually towards them, but were unprepared for the scene that broke upon us as we passed the gate of this city. On quitting the walls, the road wound underneath a high precipice; on the other side, the hills rose more gradually, and the green valley that intervened between them was watered by a pleasant river; before us arose an amphitheatre of hills covered with vines, but irregular and rocky. The last gate of the town was cut through the precipitous rock that arose on one side, and in that place jutted into the road.

On approaching to mountain scenery filled us with delight; it was otherwise with our voiturier: he came from the plains of Troyes, and these hills so utterly scared him, that he in some degree lost his reason. After winding through the valley, we began to ascend the mountains which were its boundary: we left our voiture, and walked on, delighted with every new view that broke upon us.

When we had ascended the hills for about a mile and a half, we found our voiturier at the door of a wretched inn, having taken the mule from the voiture, and obstinately determined to remain for the night at this miserable village of Mort. We could only submit, for he was deaf to all we could urge, and to our remonstrances only replied, Je ne puis plus.

Our beds were too uncomfortable to allow a thought of sleeping in them: we could only procure one room, and our hostess gave us to understand that our voiturier was to occupy the same apartment. It was of little consequence, as we had previously resolved not to enter the beds. The evening was fine, and after the rain the air was perfumed by many delicious scents. We climbed to a rocky seat on the hill that overlooked the village, where we remained until sunset. The night was passed by the kitchen fire in a wretched manner,
striving to catch a few moments of sleep, which were denied to us. At three in the morning we pursued our journey.

Our road led to the summit of the hills that environ Besançon. From the top of one of these we saw the whole expanse of the valley filled with a white undulating mist, which was pierced like islands by the piny mountains. The sun had just risen, and a ray of red light lay upon the waves of this fluctuating vapour. To the west, opposite the sun, it seemed driven by the light against the rocks in immense masses of foaming cloud, until it became lost in the distance, mixing its tints with the fleecy sky.

Our voiturier insisted on remaining two hours at the village of Noé, although we were unable to procure any dinner, and wished to go on to the next stage. I have already said, that the hills scared his senses, and he had become disobedling, sullen, and stupid. While he waited, we walked to the neighbouring wood: it was a fine forest, carpeted beautifully with moss, and in various places overhung by rocks, in whose crevices young pines had taken root, and spread their branches for shade to those below; the noon heat was intense, and we were glad to shelter ourselves from it in the shady retreats of this lovely forest.

On our return to the village, we found, to our extreme surprise, that the voiturier had departed nearly an hour before, leaving word that he expected to meet us on the road. S—s ankle had become very painful, but we could procure no conveyance, and as the sun was nearly setting, we were obliged to hasten on. The evening was most beautiful, and the scenery lovely enough to beguile us of our fatigue: the horned moon hung in the light of sunset, that threw a glow of unusual depth of redness over the piny mountains and the dark deep valleys which they inclosed; at intervals in the woods were beautiful lawns interspersed with picturesque clumps of trees, and dark pines overshadowed our road.

In about two hours we arrived at the promised termination of our journey. We found, according to our expectation, that M. le Voiturier had pursued his journey with the utmost speed. We were enabled, however, to procure here a rude kind of cart, S— being unable to walk. The moon became yellow, and hung low, close to the woody horizon. Every now and then sleep overcame me, but our vehicle was too rude and rough to permit its indulgence. I looked on the stars—and the constellations seemed to weave a wild dance, as the visions of slumber invaded the domains of reality. In this manner we arrived late at Pontarlier, where we found our driver, who blundered out many falsehoods for excuses; and thus ended the adventures of that day.

SWITZERLAND.

On passing the French barrier, a surprising difference may be observed between the opposite nations that inhabit either side. The Swiss cottages are much cleaner and neater, and the inhabitants exhibit the same contrast. The Swiss women wear a great deal of white linen, and their whole dress is always perfectly clean. This superior cleanliness is chiefly produced by the difference of religion: travellers in Germany remark the same contrast between the protestant and catholic towns, although they be but a few leagues separate.

The scenery of this day's journey was divine, exhibiting piny mountains, barren rocks, and spots of verdure surpassing imagination. After descending for nearly a league between lofty cliffs, covered with pines, and interspersed with green glades, where the grass is short, and soft, and beautifully verdant, we arrived at the village of St. Sulpiæa.
The mule had latterly become very lame, and the man so disobliging, that we determined to engage a horse for the remainder of the way. Our voiturier had anticipated us; without, in the least, intimating his intention to us, he had determined to leave us at this village, and taken measures to that effect. The man we now engaged was a Swiss, a cottager of the better class, who was proud of his mountains and his country. Pointing to the glades that were interspersed among the woods, he informed us that they were very beautiful, and were excellent pasture; that the cows thrived there, and consequently produced excellent milk, from which the best cheese and butter in the world were made.

The mountains after St. Sulpice became loftier and more beautiful. We passed through a narrow valley between two ranges of mountains, clothed with forests, at the bottom of which flowed a river, from whose narrow bed on either side the boundaries of the vale arose precipitously. The road lay about half way up the mountain, which formed one of the sides, and we saw the overhanging rocks above us, and below, enormous pines, and the river, not to be perceived but from its reflection of the light of heaven, far beneath. The mountains of this beautiful ravine are so little asunder, that in time of war with France an iron chain is thrown across it. Two leagues from Neufchatel we saw the Alps: range after range of black mountains are seen extending one before the other, and far behind all, towering above every feature of the scene, the snowy Alps. They were a hundred miles distant, but reach so high in the heavens that they look like those accumulated clouds of dazzling white that arrange themselves on the horizon during summer. Their immensity staggersthe imagination, and so far surpasses all conception, that it requires an effort of the understanding to believe that they indeed form a part of the earth.

From this point we descended to Neufchâtel, which is situated in a narrow plain, between the mountains and its immense lake, and presents no additional aspect of peculiar interest.

We remained the following day at this town, occupied in a consideration of the step it would now be advisable for us to take. The money we brought with us from Paris was nearly exhausted, but we obtained about £38, in silver, upon discount, from one of the bankers of the city, and with this we resolved to journey towards the lake of Uri, and seek, in that romantic and interesting country, some cottage where we might dwell in peace and solitude. Such were our dreams, which we should probably have realised, had it not been for the deficiency of that indispensable article money, which obliged us to return to England.

A Swiss, whom S—- met at the post-office, kindly interested himself in our affairs, and assisted us to hire a voiture to convey us to Lucerne, the principal town of the lake of that name, which is connected with the lake of Uri. This man was imbued with the spirit of true politeness, and endeavoured to perform real services, and seemed to regard the mere ceremonials of the affair as things of very little value. On the 21st August, we left Neufchâtel; our Swiss friend accompanied us a little way out of the town. The journey to Lucerne occupied rather more than two days. The country was flat and dull, and, excepting that we now and then caught a glimpse of the divine Alps, there was nothing in it to interest us. Lucerne promised better things, and as soon as we arrived (August 23d) we hired a boat, with which we proposed to coast the lake until we should meet with some suitable habitation, or perhaps, even going to Altorf, cross Mont St. Gothard, and seek in the warm climate of the country to the south of the Alps an air more salubrious, and a temperature better fitted for the precarious state of S—-'s health, than the bleak region to the north. The lake of Lucerne is encompassed on all sides by high mountains that rise abruptly from the water;—sometimes their bare fronts descend perpendicularly, and cast a black shade upon the waves;—at other times they are covered with thick wood, whose dense foliage is interspersed by the brown bare crags on which the trees have taken root. In every part where a glade shows itself in the forest it appears cultivated, and cottages peep from among the woods. The most luxuriant islands, rocky, and covered with moss, and bending trees, are sprinkled over the lake. Most of these are decorated by the figure of a saint in wretched wax-work.

The direction of this lake extends at first from east to west, then turning a right angle, it lies from north to south; this latter part is distinguished in name from the other, and is called the lake of Uri. The former part is also nearly divided midway, where the jutting land almost meets, and its craggy sides cast a deep shadow on the little strait through which you pass. The summits of several of the mountains that inclose the lake to the south are covered by eternal glaciers; of one of these, opposite Brunen, they tell the story of a priest and his mistress, who, flying from persecution, inhabited a cottage at the foot of the snows. One winter night an avalanche overwhelmed them, but their plaintive voices are still heard in stormy nights, calling for succour from the peasants.
Brunen is situated on the northern side of the angle which the lake makes, forming the extremity of the lake of Lucerne. Here we rested for the night, and dismissed our boatmen. Nothing could be more magnificent than the view from this spot. The high mountains encompassed us, darkening the waters; at a distance on the shores of Uri, we could perceive the chapel of Tell, and this was the village where he matured the conspiracy which was to overthrow the tyrant of his country; and indeed, this lovely lake, these sublime mountains, and wild forests, seemed a fit cradle for a mind aspiring to high adventure and heroic deeds. Yet we saw no glimpse of his spirit in his present countrymen. The Swiss appeared to us then, and experience has confirmed our opinion, a people slow of comprehension and of action; but habit has made them unfit for slavery, and they would, I have little doubt, make a brave defence against any invader of their freedom.

Such were our reflections, and we remained until late in the evening on the shores of the lake, conversing, enjoying the rising breeze, and contemplating with feelings of exquisite delight the divine objects that surrounded us.

The following day was spent in a consideration of our circumstances, and in contemplation of the scene around us. A furious vent d'ltalie (south wind) tore up the lake, making immense waves, and carrying the water in a whirlwind the air, when it fell like heavy rain into the lake. The waves broke with a tremendous noise on the rocky shores. This conflict continued during the whole day, but it became calmer toward the evening.

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In the meantime we endeavoured to find a habitable house, but could only procure two unfurnished rooms in an ugly big house, called the Chateau. These we hired at a guinea a month, had beds moved into them, and the next day took possession. But it was a wretched place, with no comfort or convenience. It was with difficulty that we could get any food prepared: as it was cold and rainy, we ordered a fire—they lighted an immense stove which occupied a corner of the room; it was long before it heated, and when hot, the warmth was so unwholesome, that we were obliged to throw open our windows to prevent a kind of suffocation; added to this, there was but one person in Brunen who could speak French, a barbarous kind of German being the language of this part of Switzerland. It was with difficulty, therefore, that we could get our most ordinary wants supplied. Our amusement meanwhile was writing. S— commenced a romance on the subject of the Assassins, and I wrote to his dictation.

Our immediate inconveniences led us to a more serious consideration of our situation. At one time we proposed crossing Mont St. Gothard into Italy; but the £28 which we possessed, was all the money that we could count upon with any certainty, until the following December. S—'s presence in London was absolutely necessary for the procuring any further supply. What were we to do! we should soon be reduced to absolute want. Thus, after balancing the various topics that offered themselves for discussion, we resolved to return to England.

Having formed this resolution, we had not a moment for delay: our little store was sensibly decreasing, and £28 could hardly appear sufficient for so long a journey. It had cost us sixty to cross France from Paris to Neuchatel; but we now resolved on a more economical mode of travelling. Water conveyances are always the cheapest, and fortunately we were so situated, that by taking advantage of the rivers of the Reuss and Rhine, we could reach England without travelling a league on land. This was our plan; we should travel eight hundred miles, and was this possible on so small a sum! but there was no other alternative, and indeed S— only knew how very little we had to depend upon.

We departed the next morning for the town of Lucerne. It rained violently during the first part of our voyage, but towards its conclusion the sky became clear, and the sun-beams dried and cheered us. We saw again, and for the last time, the rocky shores of this beautiful lake, its verdant isles, and snow-capt mountains.

We landed at Lucerne, and remained in that town the following night, and the next morning (August 28th) departed in the diligence para for Loffenberg, a town on the Rhine, where the falls of that river prevented the same vessel from proceeding any further. Our companions in this voyage were of the meanest class, smoked prodigiously, and were exceedingly disgusting. After having landed for refreshment in the middle of the day, we found, on our return to the boat, that our former seats were occupied; we took others, when the original possessors angrily, and almost with violence, insisted upon our leaving them. Their brutal rudeness to us, who did not understand their language, provoked S— to knock one of the foremost down: he did not return the blow, but continued his vociferations until the boatmen interfered, and provided us with other seats.

The Reuss is exceedingly rapid, and we de-
scended several falls, one of more than eight feet. Most of the passengers landed at this point, to re-
embark when the boat had descended into smooth water—the boatmen advised us to remain on board. There is something very delicious in the sensation, when at one moment you are at the top of a fall of water, and before the second has expired you are at the bottom, still rushing on with the impulse which the descent has given. The waters of the Rhone are blue, those of the Reuss are of a deep green. I should think that there must be something in the beds of these rivers, and that the accidents of the banks and sky cannot alone cause this difference.

Sleeping at Dettingen, we arrived the next morning at LofTenberg, where we engaged a small canoe to convey us to Mumph. I give these boats this Indian appellation, as they were of the rudest construction—long, narrow, and flat-bottomed: they consisted merely of straight pieces of deal board, unpainted, and nailed together with so little care, that the water constantly poured in at the crevices, and the boat perpetually required emptying. The river was rapid, and sped swiftly, breaking as it passed on innumerable rocks just covered by the water: it was a sight of some dread to see our frail boat winding among the eddies of the rocks, which it was death to touch, and when the slightest inclination on one side would instantly have overset it.

We could not procure a boat at Mumph, and we thought ourselves lucky in meeting with a return cabriolet to Rheinfelden; but our good fortune was of short duration: about a league from Mumph the cabriolet broke down, and we were obliged to proceed on foot. Fortunately we were overtaken by some Swiss soldiers, who were discharged and returning home; they carried our box for us as far as Rheinfelden, when we were directed to proceed a league farther to a village where boats were commonly hired. Here, although not without some difficulty, we procured a boat for Basle, and proceeded down a swift river, while evening came on, and the air was bleak and comfortless. Our voyage was, however, short, and we arrived at the place of our destination by six in the evening.

GERMANY.

Before we slept, S— had made a bargain for a boat to carry us to Mayence, and the next morning, bidding adieu to Switzerland, we embarked in a boat laden with merchandise, but where we had no fellow-passengers to disturb our tranquillity by their vulgarity and rudeness. The wind was violently against us, but the stream, aided by a slight exertion from the rowers, carried us on; the sun shone pleasantly, S— read aloud to us Mary Wollstonecraft's Letters from Norway, and we passed our time delightfully.

The evening was such as to find few parallels in beauty; as it approached, the banks, which had hitherto been flat and uninteresting, became exceedingly beautiful. Suddenly the river grew narrow, and the boat dashed with inconceivable rapidity round the base of a rocky hill covered with pines; a ruined tower, with its desolated windows, stood on the summit of another hill that jutted into the river; beyond, the sunset was illuminating the distant mountains and clouds, casting the reflection of its rich and purple hues on the agitated river. The brilliance and contrasts of the colours on the circling whirlpools of the stream, was an appearance entirely new and most beautiful; the shades grew darker as the sun descended below the horizon, and after we had landed, as we walked to our inn round a beautiful bay, the full moon arose with divine splendour, casting its silver light on the before purple waves.

The following morning we pursued our journey in a slight canoe, in which every motion was accompanied with danger; but the stream had lost much of its rapidity, and was no longer impeded by rocks; the banks were low, and covered with willows. We passed Strasburg, and the next morning it was proposed to us that we should proceed in the diligence par cau, as the navigation would become dangerous for our small boat. There were only four passengers besides ourselves, three of these were students of the Stras-burgh university: Schweitz, a rather handsome, good-tempered young man; Hoff, a kind of shapeless animal, with a heavy, ugly, German face; and Schneider, who was nearly an idiot, and on whom his companions were always playing a thousand tricks: the remaining passengers were a woman and an infant.

The country was uninteresting, but we enjoyed fine weather, and slept in the boat in the open air without any inconvenience. We saw on the shores few objects that called forth our attention,
if I except the town of Mannheim, which was strikingly neat and clean. It was situated at about a mile from the river, and the road to it was planted on each side with beautiful acacias. The last part of this voyage was performed close under land, as the wind was so violently against us, that, even with all the force of a rapid current in our favour, we were hardly permitted to proceed. We were told (and not without reason) that we ought to congratulate ourselves on having exchanged our canoe for this boat, as the river was now of considerable width, and tossed by the wind into large waves. The same morning a boat, containing fifteen persons, in attempting to cross the water, had upset in the middle of the river, and every one in it perished. We were told (and not without reason) that we ought to congratulate ourselves on having exchanged our canoe for this boat, as the river was now of considerable width, and tossed by the wind into large waves. The same morning a boat, containing fifteen persons, in attempting to cross the water, had upset in the middle of the river, and everyone in it perished.

Mayence is one of the best fortified towns in Germany. The river, which is broad and rapid, guards it to the east, and the hills for three leagues around exhibit signs of fortifications. The town itself is old, the streets narrow, and the houses high: the cathedral and towers of the town still bear marks of the bombardment which took place in the revolutionary war.

We took our place in the diligence par eau for Cologne, and the next morning (September 4th) departed. This conveyance appeared much more like a mercantile English affair than any we had before seen; it was shaped like a steam-boat, with a cabin and a high deck. Most of our companions chose to remain in the cabin; this was fortunate for us, since nothing could be more horribly disgusting than the lower order of smoking, drinking Germans who travelled with us; they swaggered and talked, and got tipsy, and, what was hideous to English eyes, kissed one another; there were, however, two or three merchants of a better class, who appeared well-informed and polite.

The part of the Rhine down which we now glided, is that so beautifully described by Lord Byron in his third canto of Childe Harold. We read these verses with delight, as they conjured before us those lovely scenes with truth and vividness of painting, and with the exquisite addition of glowing language and a warm imagination. We were carried down by a dangerously rapid current, and saw on either side of us hills covered with vines and trees, craggy cliffs crowned by desolate towers, and wooded islands, where picturesque ruins peeped from behind the foliage, and cast the shadows of their forms on the troubled waters, which distorted without deforming them. We heard the songs of the vintagers, and if surrounded by disgusting Germans, the sight was not so replete with enjoyment as I now fancy it to have been; yet memory, taking all the dark shades from the picture, presents this part of the Rhine to my remembrance as the loveliest paradise on earth.

We had sufficient leisure for the enjoyment of these scenes, for the boatmen, neither rowing nor steering, suffered us to be carried down by the stream, and the boat turned round and round as it descended.

While I speak with disgust of the Germans who travelled with us, I should, in justice to these borderers, record, that at one of the inns here we saw the only pretty woman we met with in the course of our travels. She is what I should conceive to be a truly German beauty; grey eyes, slightly tinged with brown, and expressive of uncommon sweetness and frankness. She had lately recovered from a fever, and this added to the interest of her countenance, by adorning it with an appearance of extreme delicacy.

On the following day we left the hills of the Rhine, and found that, for the remainder of our journey, we should move sluggishly through the flats of Holland: the river also winds extremely, so that, after calculating our resources, we resolved to finish our journey in a land diligence. Our water conveyance remained that night at Bonn, and that we might lose no time, we proceeded post the same night to Cologne, where we arrived late; for the rate of travelling in Germany seldom exceeds a mile and a half an hour.

Cologne appeared an immense town, as we drove through street after street to arrive at our inn. Before we slept, we secured places in the diligence, which was to depart next morning for Cleves.

Nothing in the world can be more wretched than the travelling in this German diligence: the coach is clumsy and comfortless, and we proceeded so slowly, stopping so often, that it appeared as if we should never arrive at our journey's end. We were allowed two hours for dinner, and two more were wasted in the evening while the coach was being changed. We were then requested, as the diligence had a greater demand for places than it could supply, to proceed in a cabriolet which was provided for us. We readily consented, as we hoped to travel faster than in the heavy diligence; but this was not permitted, and we jogged on all night behind this cumbersome machine. In the
morning when we stopped, we for a moment indulged a hope that we had arrived at Cleves, which was at the distance of five leagues from our last night's stage; but we had only advanced three leagues in seven or eight hours, and had yet eight miles to perform. However, we first rested about three hours at this stage, where we could not obtain breakfast or any convenience, and at about eight o'clock we again departed, and with slow, although far from easy travelling, faint with hunger and fatigue, we arrived by noon at Cleves.

HOLLAND.

Tired by the slow pace of the diligence, we resolved to post the remainder of the way. We had now, however, left Germany, and travelled at about the same rate as an English post-chaise. The country was entirely flat, and the roads so sandy, that the horses proceeded with difficulty. The only ornaments of this country are the turf fortifications that surround the towns. At Nimègue we passed the flying bridge, mentioned in the letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montague. We had intended to travel all night, but at Triel, where we arrived at about ten o'clock, we were assured that no post-boy was to be found who would proceed at so late an hour, on account of the robbers who infested the roads. This was an obvious imposition; but as we could procure neither horses nor driver, we were obliged to sleep here. During the whole of the following day the road lay between canals, which intersect this country in every direction. The roads were excellent, but the Dutch have contrived as many inconveniences as possible. In our journey of the day before, we had passed by a windmill, which was so situated with regard to the road, that it was only by keeping close to the opposite side, and passing quickly, that we could avoid the sweep of its sails.

The roads between the canals were only wide enough to admit of one carriage, so that when we encountered another we were obliged sometimes to back for half a mile, until we should come to one of the drawbridges which led to the fields, on which one of the cabriolets was backed, while the other passed. But they have another practice, which is still more annoying: the flax when cut is put to soak under the mud of the canals, and then placed to dry against the trees which are planted on either side of the road; the stench that it exhales, when the beams of the sun draw out the moisture, is scarcely endurable. We saw many enormous frogs and toads in the canals; and the only sight which refreshed the eye by its beauty was the delicious verdure of the fields, where the grass was as rich and green as that of England, an appearance not common on the Continent.

Rotterdam is remarkably clean: the Dutch even wash the outside brickwork of their houses. We remained here one day, and met with a man in a very unfortunate condition: he had been born in Holland, and had spent so much of his life between England, France, and Germany, that he had acquired a slight knowledge of the language of each country, and spoke all very imperfectly. He said that he understood English best, but he was nearly unable to express himself in that.

On the evening of the 8th of September we sailed from Rotterdam, but contrary winds obliged us to remain nearly two days at Marsluys, a town about leagues from Rotterdam. Here our last guinea was expended, and we reflected with wonder that we had travelled eight hundred miles for less than thirty pounds, passing through lovely scenes, and enjoying the beauteous Rhine, and all the brilliant shows of earth and sky, perhaps more, travelling as we did, in an open boat, than if we had been shut up in a carriage, and passed on the road under the hills. During our stay at Marsluys, S—— continued his Romance.

The captain of our vessel was an Englishman, and had been a king's pilot. The bar of the Rhine a little below Marsluys is so dangerous, that without a very favourable breeze, none of the Dutch vessels dare attempt its passage; but although the wind was a very few points in our favour, our captain resolved to sail, and although half repentant before he had accomplished his undertaking, he was glad and proud when, triumphing over the timorous Dutchmen, the bar was crossed, and the vessel safe in the open sea. It was in truth an enterprise of some peril; a heavy gale had prevailed during the night, and although it had abated since the morning, the breakers at the bar were still exceedingly high. Through some delay, which had arisen from the ship having got aground in the harbour, we arrived half an hour after the
LETTERS FROM GENEVA.

LETTER I.
Hôtel de Sécheron, Geneva, May 17, 1816.

We arrived at Paris on the 8th of this month, and were detained two days for the purpose of obtaining the various signatures necessary to our passports, the French government having become much more circumspect since the escape of Lavallette. We had no letters of introduction, or any friend in that city, and were therefore confined to our hotel, where we were obliged to hire apartments for the week, although, when we first arrived, we expected to be detained one night only; for in Paris there are no houses where you can be accommodated with apartments by the day.

The manners of the French are interesting, although less attractive, at least to Englishmen, than before the last invasion of the Allies: the discontent and sullenness of their minds perpetually betrays itself. Nor is it wonderful that they should regard the subjects of a government which fills their country with hostile garrisons, and sustains a detested dynasty on the throne, with an acrimony and indignation of which that government alone is the proper object. This feeling is honourable to the French, and encouraging to all those of every nation in Europe who have a fellow feeling with the oppressed, and who cherish an unconquerable hope that the cause of liberty must at length prevail.

Our route after Paris, as far as Troyes, lay through the same uninteresting tract of country which we had traversed on foot nearly two years before; but on quitting Troyes we left the road leading to Neufchâtel, to follow that which was to conduct us to Geneva. We entered Dijon on the third evening after our departure from Paris, and passing through Dôle, arrived at Poligny. This town is built at the foot of Jura, which rises abruptly from a plain of vast extent. The rocks of the mountain overhang the houses. Some difficulty in procuring horses detained us here until the evening closed in, when we proceeded, by the light of a stormy moon, to Champagnolles, a little village situated in the depth of the mountains. The road was serpentine and exceedingly steep, and was overhung on one side by half-dying myrtles, whilst the other was a gulf, filled by the darkness of the driving clouds. The dashing of the invisible streams announced to us that we had quitted the plains of France, as we slowly ascended, amidst a violent storm of wind and rain, to Champagnolles, where we arrived at twelve o'clock, the fourth night after our departure from Paris.

The next morning we proceeded, still ascending among the ravines and valleys of the mountain. The scenery perpetually grows more wonderful and sublime: pine forests of impenetrable thickness and untrodden, nay, inaccessible expanses, spread on every side. Sometimes the dark woods descending, follow the route into the valleys, the distorted trees struggling with knotted roots between the most barren clefts; sometimes the road winds high into the regions of frost, and then the forests become scattered, and the branches of the trees are loaded with snow, and half of the enormous pines themselves buried in the wavy drifts. The spring, as the inhabitants informed us, was unusually late, and indeed the cold was excessive; as we ascended the mountains, the same clouds which rained on us in the valleys poured forth large flakes of snow thick and fast.
The sun occasionally shone through these showers, and illuminated the magnificent ravines of the mountains, whose gigantic pines were some laden with snow, some wreathed round by the lines of scattered and lingering vapour; others darting their spires into the sunny sky, brilliantly clear and azure.

As the evening advanced, and we ascended higher, the snow which we had beheld whitening the overhanging rocks, now encroached upon our road, and snowed fast as we entered the village of Les Rousses, where we were threatened by the apparent necessity of passing the night in a bad inn and dirty beds. For, from that place there are two roads to Geneva; one by Nion, in the Swiss territory, where the mountain route is shorter, and comparatively easy at that time of the year, when the road is for several leagues covered with snow of an enormous depth; the other road lay through Gex, and was too circuitous and dangerous to be attempted at so late an hour in the day. Our passport, however, was for Gex, and we were told that we could not change its destination; but all these police laws, so severe in themselves, are to be softened by bribery, and this difficulty was at length overcome. We hired four horses, and ten men to support the carriage, and departed from Les Rousses at six in the evening, when the sun had already far descended, and the snow, pelting against the windows of our carriage, assisted the coming darkness to deprive us of the view of the lake of Geneva and the far distant Alps.

The prospect around, however, was sufficiently sublime to command our attention—never was scene more awfully desolate. The trees in these regions are incredibly large, and stand in scattered clumps over the white wilderness; the vast expanse of snow was chequered only by these gigantic pines, and the poles that marked our road: no river nor rock-encircled lawn relieved the eye, by adding the picturesque to the sublime. The natural silence of that uninhabited desert contrasted strangely with the voices of the men who conducted us, who, with animated tones and gestures, called to one another in a patois composed of French and Italian, creating disturbance, where, but for them, there was none.

To what a different scene are we now arrived! To the warm sunshine, and to the humming of sun-loving insects. From the windows of our hotel we see the lovely lake, blue as the heavens which it reflects, and sparkling with golden beams. The opposite shore is sloping, and covered with vines, which, however, do not so early in the season add to the beauty of the prospect. Gentlemen’s seats are scattered over those banks, behind which rise the various ridges of black mountains, and towering far above, in the midst of its snowy Alps, the majestic Mont Blanc, highest and queen of all. Such is the view reflected by the lake; it is a bright summer scene without any of that sacred solitude and deep seclusion that delighted us at Lucerne.

We have not yet found out any very agreeable walks, but you know our attachment to water excursions. We have hired a boat, and every evening, at about six o’clock, we sail on the lake, which is delightful, whether we glide over a glassy surface or are speeded along by a strong wind. The waves of this lake never affect me with that sickness that deprives me of all enjoyment in a sea voyage; on the contrary, the tossing of our boat raises my spirits and inspires me with unusual hilarity. Twilight here is of short duration, but we at present enjoy the benefit of an increasing moon, and seldom return until ten o’clock, when, as we approach the shore, we are saluted by the delightful scent of flowers and new-mown grass, and the chirp of the grasshoppers, and the song of the evening birds.

We do not enter into society here, yet our time passes swiftly and delightfully. We read Latin and Italian during the heats of noon, and when the sun declines we walk in the garden of the hotel, looking at the rabbits, relieving fallen coxchaffers, and watching the motions of a myriad of lizards, who inhabit a southern wall of the garden. You know that we have just escaped from the gloom of winter and of London; and coming to this delightful spot during this divine weather, I feel as happy as a new-fledged bird, and hardly care what twig I fly to, so that I may try my new-found wings. A more experienced bird may be more difficult in its choice of a bower; but, in my present temper of mind, the budding flowers, the fresh grass of spring, and the happy creatures about me that live and enjoy these pleasures, are quite enough to afford me exquisite delight, even though clouds should shut out Mont Blanc from my sight. Adieu!

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**LETTER II.**

**COLIGNY—GENEVA—PLAINPALAIS.**

_Campagne Chapuis, near Coligny, 1st June._

You will perceive from my date that we have changed our residence since my last letter. We now inhabit a little cottage on the opposite shore of the lake, and have exchanged the view of Mont Blanc and her snowy aiguilles for the dark frowning Jura, behind whose range we every
evening see the sun sink, and darkness approaches our valley from behind the Alps, which are then tinged by that glowing rose-like hue which is observed in England to attend on the clouds of an autumnal sky when day-light is almost gone. The lake is at our feet, and a little harbour contains our boat, in which we still enjoy our evening excursions on the water. Unfortunately we do not now enjoy those brilliant skies that hailed us on our first arrival to this country. An almost perpetual rain confines us principally to the house; but when the sun bursts forth it is with a splendour and heat unknown in England. The thunder storms that visit us are grander and more terrific than I have ever seen before. We watch them as they approach from the opposite side of the lake, observing the lightning play among the clouds in various parts of the heavens, and dart in jagged figures upon the piny heights and clouds of Jura, dark with the shadow of the overhanging cloud, while perhaps the sun is shining cheerily upon us. One night we enjoyed a finer storm than I had ever before beheld. The lake was lit up—the pines on Jura made visible, and all the scene illuminated for an instant, when a pitchy blackness succeeded, and the thunder came in frightful bursts over our heads, amidst the darkness.

But while I still dwell on the country around Geneva, you will expect me to say something of the town itself: there is nothing, however, in it that can repay you for the trouble of walking over its rough stones. The houses are high, the streets narrow, many of them on the ascent, and no public building of any beauty to attract your eye, or any architecture to gratify your taste. The town is surrounded by a wall, the three gates of which are shut exactly at ten o'clock, when no bribery (as in France) can open them. To the south of the town is the promenade of the Genevese, a grassy plain planted with a few trees, and called Plainpalais. Here a small obelisk is erected to the glory of Rousseau, and here (such is the mutability of human life) the magistrates, the successors of those who exiled him from his native country, were shot in the presence of the populace, during that revolution, which his writings mainly contributed to mature, and which, notwithstanding the temporary bloodshed and injustice with which it was polluted, has produced enduring benefits to mankind, which all the chicanery of statesmen, nor even the great conspiracy of kings, can entirely render vain. From respect to the memory of their predecessors, none of the present magistrates ever walk in Plainpalais. Another Sunday recreation for the citizens is an excursion to the top of Mont Salève. This hill is within a league of the town, and rises perpendiculary from the cultivated plain. It is ascended on the other side, and I should judge from its situation that your toil is rewarded by a delightful view of the course of the Rhone and Arve, and of the shores of the lake. We have not yet visited it.

There is more equality of classes here than in England. This occasions a greater freedom and refinement of manners among the lower orders than we meet with in our own country. I fancy the haughty English ladies are greatly disgusted with this consequence of republican institutions, for the Genevese servants complain very much of their scolding, an exercise of the tongue, I believe, perfectly unknown here. The peasants of Switzerland may not however emulate the vivacity and grace of the French. They are more cleanly, but they are slow and inapt. I know a girl of twenty who, although she had lived all her life among vineyards, could not inform me during what month the vintage took place, and I discovered she was utterly ignorant of the order in which the months succeed one to another. She would not have been surprised if I had talked of the burning sun and delicious fruits of December, or of the frosts of July. Yet she is by no means deficient in understanding.

The Genevese are also much inclined to puritanism. It is true that from habit they dance on a Sunday, but as soon as the French government was abolished in the town, the magistrates ordered the theatre to be closed, and measures were taken to pull down the building.

We have latterly enjoyed fine weather, and nothing is more pleasant than to listen to the evening song of the vine-dressers. They are all women, and most of them have harmonious although masculine voices. The theme of their ballads consists of shepherds, love, flocks, and the sons of kings who fall in love with beautiful shepherdesses. Their tunes are monotonous, but it is sweet to hear them in the stillness of evening, while we are enjoying the sight of the setting sun, either from the hill behind our house or from the lake.

Such are our pleasures here, which would be greatly increased if the season had been more favourable, for they chiefly consist in such enjoyments as sunshine and gentle breezes bestow. We have not yet made any excursion in the environs of the town, but we have planned several, when you shall hear again of us; and we will endeavour, by the magic of words, to transport the ethical part of you to the neighbourhood of the Alps, and mountain streams, and forests, which, while they clothe the former, darken the latter with their vast shadows. Adieu!

M. S.
LETTER III.

To T. P. Esq.

MELLERIE, CLARENS, CHILLON, VEVAI, LAUSANNE.

Montalgre, near Coligni, Geneva, July 18th.

It is nearly a fortnight since I have returned from Vevai. This journey has been on every account delightful, but most especially, because then I first knew the divine beauty of Rousseau’s imagination, as it exhibits itself in Julie. It is inconceivable what an enchantment the scene itself lends to those delineations, from which its own most touching charm arises. But I will give you an abstract of our voyage, which lasted eight days, and if you have a map of Switzerland, you can follow me.

We left Montalgre at half-past two on the 23d of June. The lake was calm, and after three hours of rowing we arrived at Hermance, a beautiful little village, containing a ruined tower, built, the villagers say, by Julius Caesar. There were three other towers similar to it, which the Genevese destroyed for their own fortifications in 1560. We got into the tower by a kind of window. The walls are immensely solid, and the stone of which it is built so hard, that it yet retained the mark of chisels. The boatmen said, that this tower was once three times higher than it is now. There are two staircases in the thickness of the walls, one of which is entirely demolished, and the other half ruined, and only accessible by a ladder. The town itself, now an inconsiderable village inhabited by a few fishermen, was built by a queen of Burgundy, of Berne, who burnt and ravaged everything they could find.

Leaving Hermance, we arrived at sunset at the village of Nerni. After looking at our lodgings, we sat on a wall beside the lake, looking at some children who were playing at a game like ninepins. The children here appeared in an extraordinary way deformed and diseased. Most of them were crooked, and with enlarged throats; but one little boy had such exquisite grace in his mien and motions, as I never before saw equalled in a child. His countenance was beautiful for the expression with which it overflowed. There was a mixture of pride and gentleness in his eyes and lips, the indications of sensibility, which his education will probably prevent to misery or seduce to crime; but there was more of gentleness than of pride, and it seemed that the pride was tamed from its original wildness by the habitual exercise of milder feelings. My companion gave him a piece of money, which he took without speaking, with a sweet smile of easy thankfulness, and then with an unembarrassed air turned to his play. All this might scarcely be; but the imagination surely could not forbear to breathe into the most inanimate forms, some likeness of its own visions, on such a serene and glowing evening, in this remote and romantic village, beside the calm lake that bore us hither.

On returning to our inn, we found that the servant had arranged our rooms, and deprived them of the greater portion of their former disconsolate appearance. They reminded my companion of Greece: it was five years, he said, since he had slept in such beds. The influence of the recollections excited by this circumstance on our conversation gradually faded, and I retired to rest with no unpleasant sensations, thinking of our journey to-morrow, and of the pleasure of recounting the little adventures of it when we return.

The next morning we passed Yvoire, a scattered village with an ancient castle, whose houses are interspersed with trees, and which stands at a little distance from Nerni, on the promontory which bounds a deep bay, some miles in extent. So soon as we arrived at this promontory, the lake began to assume an aspect of wilder magnificence. The mountains of Savoy, whose summits were bright with snow, descended in broken slopes to the lake; on high, the rocks were dark with pine forests, which become deeper and more immense, until the ice and snow mingle with the points of naked rock that pierce the blue air; but below, groves of walnut, chestnut, and oak, with openings of lawny fields, attested the milder climate.

As soon as we had passed the opposite promontory, we saw the river Drance, which descends from between a chasm in the mountains, and makes a plain near the lake, intersected by its divided streams. Thousands of beatles, beautiful water-birds, like sea-gulls, but smaller, with purple on their backs, take their station on the shallows where its waters mingle with the lake. As we approached Evian, the mountains descended more precipitously to the lake, and masses of intermingled wood and rock overhung its shining spire.

We arrived at this town about seven o’clock, after a day which involved more rapid changes of atmosphere than I ever recollect to have observed before.
The morning was cold and wet; then an easterly wind, and the clouds hard and high; then thunder showers, and wind shifting to every quarter; then a warm blast from the south, and summer clouds hanging over the peaks, with bright blue sky between. About half an hour after we had arrived at Evian, a few flashes of lightning came from a dark cloud, directly overhead, and continued after the cloud had dispersed. "Dies petur pura tonantes egit equos!" a phenomenon which certainly had no influence on me, corresponding with that which it produced on Horace.

The appearance of the inhabitants of Evian is more wretched, diseased and poor, than I ever recollect to have seen. The contrast indeed between the subjects of the King of Sardinia and the citizens of the independent republics of Switzerland, affords a powerful illustration of the blighting mischief of despotism, within the space of a few miles. They have mineral waters here, eaux vives, they call them. In the evening we had some difficulty about our passports, but so soon as the syndic heard my companion's rank and name, he apologised for the circumstance. The inn was good. During our voyage, on the distant height of a hill, covered with pine-forests, we saw a ruined castle, which reminded me of those on the Rhine.

We left Evian on the following morning, with a wind of such violence as to permit but one sail to be carried. The waves also were exceedingly high, and our boat so heavily laden, that there appeared to be some danger. We arrived, however, safely at Meillerie, after passing with great speed mighty forests which overhung the lake, and lawns of exquisite verdure, and mountains with bare and icy points, which rose immediately from the summit of the rocks, whose bases were echoing to the waves.

We here heard that the Empress Maria Louisa had slept at Meillerie,—before the present inn was built, and when the accommodations were those of the most wretched village,—in remembrance of St. Preux. How beautiful it is to find that the common sentiments of human nature can attach themselves to those who are the most removed from its duties and its enjoyments, when Genius pleads for their admission at the gate of Power. To own them was becoming in the Empress, and confirms the affectionate praise contained in the regret of a great and enlightened nation. A Bourbon dared not even to have remembered Rousseau. She owed this power to that democracy which her husband's dynasty outraged, and of which it was however, in some sort, the representative among the nations of the earth. This little incident shows at once how unfit and how impossible it is for the ancient system of opinions, or for any power built upon a conspiracy to revive them, permanently to subsist among mankind. We dined there, and had some honey, the best I have ever tasted, the very essence of the mountain flowers, and as fragrant. Probably the village derives its name from this production. Meillerie is the well-known scene of St. Preux's visionary exile; but Meillerie is indeed enchanted ground, were Rousseau no magician. Groves of pine, chestnut, and walnut overshadow it; magnificent and unbounded forests to which England affords no parallel. In the midst of these woods are dells of lowly expanse, inconceivably verdant, adorned with a thousand of the rarest flowers, and odorous with thyme.

The lake appeared somewhat calmer as we left Meillerie, sailing close to the banks, whose magnificence augmented with the turn of every promontory. But we congratulated ourselves too soon: the wind gradually increased in violence, until it blew tremendously; and, as it came from the remotest extremity of the lake, produced waves of a frightful height, and covered the whole surface with a chaos of foam. One of our boatmen, who was a dreadfully stupid fellow, persisted in holding the sail at a time when the boat was on the point of being driven under water by the hurricane. On discovering his error, he let it entirely go, and the boat for a moment refused to obey the helm; in addition, the rudder was so broken as to render the management of it very difficult; one wave fell in, and then another. My companion, an excellent swimmer, took off his coat, I did the same, and we sat with our arms crossed, every instant expecting to be swamped. The sail was, however, again held, the boat obeyed the helm, and still in imminent peril from the immensity of the waves, we arrived in a few minutes at a sheltered port, in the village of St. Gingoux.

I felt in this near prospect of death a mixture of sensations, among which terror entered, though but subordinately. My feelings would have been less painful had I been alone; but I knew that my companion would have attempted to save me, and I was overcome with humiliation, when I thought that his life might have been risked to preserve mine. When we arrived at St. Gingoux, the inhabitants, who stood on the shore, unaccustomed to see a vessel as frail as ours, and fearing to venture at all on such a sea, exchanged looks of wonder and congratulation with our boatmen, who, as well as ourselves, were well pleased to set foot on shore.

St. Gingoux is even more beautiful than Meillerie;
the mountains are higher, and their loftiest points of elevation descend more abruptly to the lake. On high, the aerial summits still cherish great depths of snow in their ravines, and in the paths of their unseen torrents. One of the highest of these is called Roche de St Julien, beneath whose pinnacles the forests become deeper and more extensive; the chestnut gives a peculiarity to the scene, which is most beautiful, and will make a picture in my memory, distinct from all other mountain scenes which I have ever before visited.

As we arrived here early, we took a route to visit the mouth of the Rhone. We went between the mountains and the lake, under groves of mighty chestnut trees, beside perpetual streams, which are nourished by the snows above, and form stalactites on the rocks, over which they fall. We saw a line of tremendous breakers; the river is as rapid as when it leaves the lake, but is muddy and dark. We went about a league farther on the road to La Valais, and stopped at a castle called La Tour de Bouverie, which seems to be the frontier of Switzerland and Savoy, as we were asked for our passports, on the supposition of our proceeding to Italy.

On one side of the road was the immense Roche de St Julien, which overhung it; through the gateway of the castle we saw the snowy mountains of La Valais, clothed in clouds, and, on the other side, was the willowy plain of the Rhone, in a character of striking contrast with the rest of the scene, bounded by the dark mountains that overhang Clarens, Vevai, and the lake that rolls between. In the midst of the plain rises a little isolated hill, on which the white spire of a church peeps from among the tufted chestnut woods. We returned to St Gingoux before sunset, and I passed the evening in reading Julie.

As my companion rises late, I had time before breakfast, on the ensuing morning, to hunt the waterfalls of the river that fall into the lake at St. Gingoux. The stream is indeed, from the declivity over which it falls, only a succession of waterfalls, which roar over the rocks with a perpetual sound, and suspend their unceasing spray on the leaves and flowers that overhang and adorn its savage banks. The path that conducted along this river sometimes avoided the precipices of its shores, by leading through meadows; sometimes threaded the base of the perpendicular and caverned rocks. I gathered in these meadows a nosegay of such flowers as I never saw in England, and which I thought more beautiful for that rarity.

On my return, after breakfast, we sailed for Clarens, determining first to see the three mouths of the Rhone, and then the castle of Chillon; the day was fine, and the water calm. We passed from the blue waters of the lake over the stream of the Rhone, which is rapid even at a great distance from its confluence with the lake; the turbid waters mixed with those of the lake, but mixed with them unwillingly. (See Nouvelle Heloise, Lettre 17, Part. 4.) I read Julie all day; an overflowing, as it now seems, surrounded by the scenes which it has so wonderfully peopled, of sublimest genius, and more than human sensibility. Meillerie, the Castle of Chillon, Clarens, the mountains of La Valais and Savoy, present themselves to the imagination as monuments of things that were once familiar, and of beings that were once dear to it. They were created indeed by one mind, but a mind so powerfully bright as to cast a shade of falsehood on the records that are called reality.

We passed on to the Castle of Chillon, and visited its dungeons and towers. Those prisons are excavated below the lake; the principal dungeon is supported by seven columns, whose branching capitals support the roof. Close to the very walls, the lake is 800 feet deep; iron rings are fastened to these columns, and on them were engraved a multitude of names, partly those of visitors, and partly doubtless of the prisoners, of whom now no memory remains, and who thus beguiled a solitude which they have long ceased to feel. One date was as ancient as 1670. At the commencement of the Reformation, and indeed long after that period, this dungeon was the receptacle of those who shook, or who denied the system of idolatry, from the effects of which mankind is even now slowly emerging.

Close to this long and lofty dungeon was a narrow cell, and beyond it one larger and far more lofty and dark, supported upon two unornamented arches. Across one of these arches was a beam, now black and rotten, on which prisoners were hung in secret. I never saw a monument more terrible of that cold and inhuman tyranny, which it has been the delight of man to exercise over man. It was indeed one of those many tremendous fulfilments which render the "pernicios humani generis" of the great Tacitus so solemn and irrefragable a prophecy. The gendarme, who conducted us over this castle, told us that there was an opening to the lake, by means of a secret spring, connected with which the whole dungeon might be filled with water before the prisoners could possibly escape.

We proceeded with a contrary wind to Clarens against a heavy swell. I never felt more strongly
than on landing at Clarens, that the spirit of old
times had deserted its once cherished habitation.
A thousand times, thought I, have Julia and St.
Preux walked on this terraced road, looking to-
wards these mountains which I now behold; nay,
treading on the ground where I now tread. From
the window of our lodging our landlord pointed
out "le bosquet de Julie." At least the inha-
bitants of this village are impressed with an idea,
that the persons of that romance had actual ex-
istence. In the evening we walked thither. It is,
indeed, Julia's wood. The hay was making under
the trees; the trees themselves were aged, but
vigorously, and interspersed with younger ones,
which are destined to be their successors, and in
future years, when we are dead, to afford a shade
to future worshippers of nature, who love the
memory of that tenderness and peace of which
this was the imaginary abode. We walked for-
ward among the vineyards, whose narrow terraces
overlook this affecting scene. Why did the cold
maxims of the world compel me at this moment to
repress the tears of melancholy transport which it
would have been so sweet to indulge, immeasur-
ably, even until the darkness of night had swallowed
up the objects which excited them!
I forgot to remark, what indeed my companion
remarked to me, that our danger from the storm
took place precisely in the spot where Julie and
her lover were nearly overset, and where St. Preux
was tempted to plunge with her into the lake.
On the following day we went to see the castle
of Clarens, a square strong house, with very few
windows, surrounded by a double terrace that
overlooks the valley, or rather the plain of Clarens.
The road which conducted to it wound up the
steep ascent through woods of walnut and chestnut.
We gathered roses on the terrace, in the feeling
that they might be the posterity of some planted
by Julie's hand. We sent their dead and withered
leaves to the absent.
We went again to "the bosquet de Julie," and
found that the precise spot was now utterly ob-
literated, and a heap of stones marked the place
where the little chapel had once stood. Whilst we
were executing the author of this brutal folly,
our guide informed us that the land belonged to
the convent of St. Bernard, and that this ou-
rage had been committed by their orders. I
knew before, that if avarice could harden the
hearts of men, a system of prescriptive religion
has an influence far more iminical to natural
sensibility. I know that an isolated man is some-
times restrained by shame from outraging the
venerable feelings arising out of the memory of
genius, which once made nature even lovelier
than itself; but associated man holds it as the
very sacrament of his union to forswear all de-
licacy, all benevolence, all remorse; all that is
ture, or tender, or sublime.

We sailed from Clarens to Vevey. Vevey is a
town more beautiful in its simplicity than any I
have ever seen. Its market-place, a spacious
square interspersed with trees, looks directly
upon the mountains of Savoy and Lake Geneva, the
lake, and the valley of the Rhone. It was at
Vevey that Rousseau conceived the design of Julie.

From Vevey we came to Ouchy, a village near
Lausanne. The coasts of the Pays de Vaud,
though full of villages and vineyards, present an
aspect of tranquillity and peculiar beauty which
well compensates for the solitude which I am
accustomed to admire. The hills are very high
and rocky, crowned and interspersed with woods.
Waterfalls echo from the cliffs, and shine afar. In
one place we saw the traces of two rocks of im-
mense size, which had fallen from the mountain
behind. One of these lodged in a room where
a young woman was sleeping, without injuring her.
The vineyards were utterly destroyed in its path,
and the earth torn up.

The rain detained us two days at Ouchy. We,
however, visited Lausanne, and saw Gibbon's house.
We were shown the decayed summer-house where
he finished his History, and the old acacias on the
terrace, from which he saw Mont Blanc, after
having written the last sentence. There is some-
thing grand and even touching in the regret which
he expresses at the completion of his task. It
was conceived amid the ruins of the Capitol. The
sudden departure of his cherished and accustomed
soil must have left him, like the death of a dear
friend, sad and solitary.

My companion gathered some acacia leaves to
preserve in remembrance of him. I refrained
from doing so, fearing to outrage the greater and
more sacred name of Rousseau; the contempla-
tion of whose imperishable creations had left no vacancy
in my heart for mortal things. Gibbon had a cold
and unimpassioned spirit. I never felt more incli-
nation to rail at the prejudices which cling to such
a thing, than now that Julie and Clarens, Lausanne
and the Roman Empire, compelled me to a con-
trast between Rousseau and Gibbon.

When we returned, in the only interval of sun-
shine during the day, I walked on the pier which
the lake was lashing with its waves. A rainbow
spanned the lake, or rather rested one extremity
of its arch upon the water, and the other at the
foot of the mountains of Savoy. Some white
houses, I know not if they were those of Meillerie,
shone through the yellow fire.
On Saturday the 30th of June we quitted Ouchy, and after two days of pleasant sailing arrived on Sunday evening at Montalegre.

LETTER IV.

To T. P. Esq.

ST. MARTIN—SERVOZ—CHAMOUNI—MONTANVERT—MONT BLANC.

Hôtel de Londres, Chamouni, July 22nd, 1816.

Whilst you, my friend, are engaged in securing a home for us, we are wandering in search of recollections to embellish it. I do not err in conceiving that you are interested in details of all that is majestic or beautiful in nature; but how shall I describe to you the scenes by which I am now surrounded? To exhaust the epithets which express the astonishment and the admiration—the very excess of satisfied astonishment, where expectation scarcely acknowledged any boundary, is this to impress upon your mind the images which fill mine now, even till it overflow? I too have read the raptures of travellers; I will be warned by their example; I will simply detail to you all that I can relate, or all that, if related, would enable you to conceive, what we have done or seen since the morning of the 20th, when we left Geneva.

We commenced our intended journey to Chamouni at half-past eight in the morning. We passed through the champain country, which extends from Mont Salève to the base of the higher Alps. The country is sufficiently fertile, covered with corn-fields and orchards, and intersected by sudden acclivities with flat summits. The day was cloudless and excessively hot, the Alps were perpetually in sight, and as we advanced, the mountains, which form their outskirts, closed in around us. We passed a bridge over a stream, which discharges itself into the Arve. The Arve itself, much swollen by the rains, flows constantly to the right of the road.

As we approached Bonneville through an avenue composed of a beautiful species of drooping poplar, we observed that the corn-fields on each side were covered with inundation. Bonneville is a neat little town, with no conspicuous peculiarity, except the white towers of the prison, an extensive building overlooking the town. At Bonneville the Alps commence, one of which, clothed by forests, rises almost immediately from the opposite bank of the Arve.

From Bonneville to Cluses the road conducts through a spacious and fertile plain, surrounded on all sides by mountains, covered like those of Meillerie with forests of intermingled pine and chestnut.

At Cluses the road turns suddenly to the right, following the Arve along the chasm, which it seems to have hollowed for itself among the perpendicular mountains. The scene assumes here a more savage and colossal character: the valley becomes narrow, affording no more space than is sufficient for the river and the road. The pines descend to the banks, imitating, with their irregular spires, the pyramidal crags, which lift themselves far above the regions of forest into the deep azure of the sky, and among the white dazzling clouds. The scene, at the distance of half a mile from Cluses, differs from that of Matlock in little else than in the immensity of its proportions, and in its untamable inaccessible solitude, inhabited only by the goats which we saw browsing on the rocks.

Near Maglans, within a league of each other, we saw two waterfalls. They were no more than mountain rivulets, but the height from which they fell, at least of twelve hundred feet, made them assume a character inconsistent with the smallness of their stream. The first fell from the overhanging brow of a black precipice on an enormous rock, precisely resembling some colossal Egyptian statue of a female deity. It struck the head of the visionary image, and gracefully dividing there, fell from it in folds of foam more like to cloud than water, imitating a veil of the most exquisite woof. It then united, concealing the lower part of the statue, and hiding itself in a winding of its channel, burst into a deeper fall, and crossed our route in its path towards the Arve.

The other waterfall was more continuous and larger. The violence with which it fell made it look more like some shape which an exhalation had assumed, than like water, for it streamed beyond the mountain, which appeared dark behind it, as it might have appeared behind an evanescent cloud.

The character of the scenery continued the same until we arrived at St. Martin, (called in the maps Sallanches,) the mountains perpetually becoming more elevated, exhibiting at every turn of the road more craggy summits, loftier and wider extent of forests, darker and more deep recesses.

The following morning we proceeded from St. Martin, on mules, to Chamouni, accompanied by two guides. We proceeded, as we had done the preceding day, along the valley of the Arve, a valley surrounded on all sides by immense mountains, whose rugged precipices are intermixed on high with dazzling snow. Their bases were still covered with the eternal forests, which perpetually grew darker and more profound as we approached the inner regions of the mountains.

On arriving at a small village at the distance of
a league from St. Martin, we dismounted from our mules, and were conducted by our guides to view a cascade. We beheld an immense body of water fall two hundred and fifty feet, dashing from rock to rock, and casting a spray which formed a mist around it, in the midst of which hung a multitude of sunbows, which faded or became unspeakably vivid, as the inconstant sun shone through the clouds. When we approached near to it, the rain of the spray reached us, and our clothes were wetted by the quick-falling but minute particles of water. The cataract fell from above into a deep craggly chasm at our feet, where, changing its character to that of a mountain stream, it pursued its course towards the Arve, roaring over the rocks that impeded its progress.

As we proceeded, our route still lay through the valley, or rather, as it had now become, the vast ravine, which is at once the couch and the creation of the terrible Arve. We ascended, winding between mountains, whose immensity staggered the imagination. We crossed the path of a torrent, of the terrible Arve. We ascended, winding between mountains, whose immensity staggered the imagination. We crossed the path of a torrent, which three days since had descended from the thawing snow, and torn the road away.

We dined at Servoz, a little village, where there are lead and copper mines, and where we saw a cabinet of natural curiosities, like those of Keswick and Bethgelert. We saw in this cabinet some chamois' horns, and the horns of an exceedingly rare animal called the bouquetin, which inhabits the deserts of snow to the south of Mont Blanc: it is an animal of the stag kind; its horns weigh, at least, twenty-seven English pounds. It is inconceivable how so small an animal could support so inordinate a weight. The horns are of a very peculiar conformation, being broad, massy, and pointed at the ends, and surrounded with a number of rings, which are supposed to afford an indication of its age: there were seventeen rings on the largest of these horns.

From Servoz three leagues remain to Chamouni. Mont Blanc was before us—the Alps, with their innumerable glaciers on high all around, closing in the complicated windings of the single vale—forests inexpressibly beautiful, but majestic in their beauty—intermingled beech and pine, and oak, overshadowed our road, or receded, whilst lawns of such verdure as I have never seen before, occupied these openings, and gradually became darker in their recesses. Mont Blanc was before us, but it was covered with cloud; its base, furrowed with dreadful gaps, was seen above. Pinnacles of snow intolerably bright, part of the chain connected with Mont Blanc, shone through the clouds at intervals on high. I never knew—I never imagined—what mountains were before. The immensity of these aerial summits excited, when they suddenly burst upon the sight, a sentiment of ecstatic wonder, not unalled to madness. And remember this was all one scene, it all pressed home to our regard and our imagination. Though it embraced a vast extent of space, the snowy pyramids which shot into the bright blue sky seemed to overhang our path; the ravine, clothed with gigantic pines, and black with its depth below, so deep that the very roaring of the untameable Arve, which rolled through it, could not be heard above—all was as much our own, as if we had been the creators of such impressions in the minds of others as now occupied our own. Nature was the poet, whose harmony held our spirits more breathless than that of the divinest.

As we entered the valley of Chamouni, (which, in fact, may be considered as a continuation of those which we have followed from Bonneville and Cluses,) clouds hung upon the mountains at the distance perhaps of 6000 feet from the earth, but so as effectually to conceal, not only Mont Blanc, but the other aiguilles, as they call them here, attached and subordinate to it. We were travelling along the valley, when suddenly we heard a sound as of the burst of smothered thunder rolling above; yet there was something in the sound, that told us it could not be thunder. Our guide hastily pointed out to us a part of the mountain opposite, from whence the sound came. It was an avalanche. We saw the smoke of its path among the rocks, and continued to hear at intervals the bursting of its fall. It fell on the bed of a torrent, which it displaced, and presently we saw its tawny-coloured waters also spread themselves over the ravine, which was their couch.

We did not, as we intended, visit the Glacier des Bossons to-day, although it descends within a few minutes' walk of the road, wishing to survey it at least when unfatigued. We saw this glacier, which comes close to the fertile plain, as we passed. Its surface was broken into a thousand unaccountable figures: conical and pyramidal crystallizations, more than fifty feet in height, rise from its surface, and precipices of ice, of dazzling splendour, overhang the woods and meadows of the vale. This glacier winds upwards from the valley, until it joins the masses of frost from which it was produced above, winding through its own ravine like a bright belt flung over the black region of pines. There is more in all these scenes than mere magnitude of proportion; there is a majesty of outline; there is an awful grace in the very colours which invest these wonderful shapes—a charm which is peculiar to them, quite distinct even from the reality of their unutterable greatness.
July 24.

Yesterday morning we went to the source of the Arveiron. It is about a league from this village; the river rolls forth impetuously from an arch of ice, and spreads itself in many streams over a vast space of the valley, ravaged and laid bare by its inundations. The glacier by which its waters are nourished, overhangs this cavern and the plain, and the forests of pine which surround it, with terrible precipices of solid ice. On the other side rises the immense glacier of Montanvert, fifty miles in extent, occupying a chasm among mountains of inconceivable height, and of forms so pointed and abrupt, that they seem to pierce the sky. From this glacier we saw, as we sat on a rock, close to one of the streams of the Arveiron, masses of ice detach themselves from on high, and rush with a loud dull noise into the vale. The violence of their fall turned them into powder, which flowed over the rocks in imitation of waterfalls, whose ravines they usurped and filled.

In the evening, I went with Ducréé, my guide, the only tolerable person I have seen in this country, to visit the glacier of Bossons. This glacier, like that of Montanvert, comes close to the vale, overhanging the green meadows and the dark woods with the dazzling whiteness of its precipices and pinnacles, which are like spires of radiant crystal, covered with a net-work of frosted silver. These glaciers flow perpetually into the valley, ravaging in their slow but irresistible progress the pastures and the forests which surround them, performing a work of desolation in ages, which a river of lava might accomplish in an hour, but far more irretrievably; for where the ice has once descended, the hardest plant refuses to grow; if even, as in some extraordinary instances, it should recede after its progress has once commenced. The glaciers perpetually move onward, at the rate of a foot each day, with a motion that commences at the spot where, on the boundaries of perpetual congelation, they are produced by the freezing of the waters which arise from the partial melting of the eternal snows. They drag with them from the regions whence they derive their origin, all the ruins of the mountain, enormous rocks, and immense accumulations of sand and stones. These are driven onwards by the irresistible stream of solid ice; and when they arrive at a declivity of the mountain, sufficiently rapid, roll down, scattering ruin. I saw one of these rocks which had descended in the spring, (winter here is the season of silence and safety,) which measured forty feet in every direction.

The verge of a glacier, like that of Bossons, presents the most vivid image of desolation that it is possible to conceive. No one dares to approach it; for the enormous pinnacles of ice which perpetually fall, are perpetually reproduced. The pines of the forest, which bound it at one extremity, are overthrown and shattered, to a wide extent, at its base. There is something inexpressibly dreadful in the aspect of the few branchless trunks, which, nearest to the ice rifts, still stand in the uprooted soil. The meadows perish, overwhelmed with sand and stones. Within this last year, these glaciers have advanced three hundred feet into the valley. Sauvage, the naturalist, says, that they have their periods of increase and decay: the people of the country hold an opinion entirely different; but as I judge, more probable. It is agreed by all, that the snow on the summit of Mont Blanc and the neighbouring mountains perpetually augments, and that ice, in the form of glaciers, subsists without melting in the valley of Chamouni during its transient and variable summer. If the snow which produces this glacier must augment, and the heat of the valley is no obstacle to the perpetual existence of such masses of ice as have already descended into it, the consequence is obvious; the glaciers must augment and will subsist, at least until they have overflowed this vale.

I will not pursue Buffon's sublime but gloomy theory—that this globe which we inhabit will, at some future period, be changed into a mass of frost by the encroachments of the polar ice, and of that produced on the most elevated points of the earth. Do you, who assert the supremacy of Ahriman, imagine him throned among these desolating snows, among these palaces of death and frost, so sculptured in this their terrible magnificence by the adamantine hand of necessity, and that he casts around him, as the first essays of his final usurpation, avalanches, torrents, rocks, and thunders, and above all these deadly glaciers, at once the proof and symbol of his reign;—add to this, the degradation of the human species—who, in these regions, are half deformed or idiotic, and most of whom are deprived of anything that can excite interest or admiration. This is part of the subject more mournful and less sublime; but such as neither the poet nor the philosopher should disdain to regard.

This morning we departed, on the promise of a fine day, to visit the glacier of Montanvert. In that part where it fills a slanting valley, it is called the Sea of Ice. This valley is 950 toises, or 7600 feet, above the level of the sea. We had not proceeded far before the rain began to fall, but we
The ice of whose sides is more beautifully azure than the sky. In these regions everything has one general progress, which ceases neither day nor night; it breaks and bursts for ever: some undulations sink while others rise; it is never the same. The echo of rocks, or of the ice and snow which fall from their overhanging precipices, or roll from their aerial summits, scarcely ceases for one moment. One would think that Mont Blanc, like the god of the Stoics, was a vast animal, and that the frozen blood for ever circulated through his stony veins.

We have returned from visiting the glacier of Montanvert, or as it is called, the Sea of Ice, a scene in truth of dizzying wonder. The path that winds to it along the side of a mountain, now clothed with pines, now intersected with snowy hollows, is wide and steep. The cabin of Montanvert is three leagues from Chamouni, half of which distance is performed on mules, not so sure-footed but that on the first day the one which I rode fell in what the guides call a mauvais pas, so that I narrowly escaped being precipitated down the mountain. We passed over a hollow covered with snow, down which vast stones are accustomed to roll. One had fallen the preceding day, a little time after we had returned: our guides desired us to pass quickly, for it is said that sometimes the least sound will accelerate their descent. We arrived at Montanvert, however, safe.

On all sides precipitous mountains, the abodes of unrelenting frost, surround this vale: their sides are banked up with ice and snow, broken, heaped high, and exhibiting terrific chasms. The summits are sharp and naked pinacles, whose overhanging steepness will not even permit snow to rest upon them. Lines of dazzling ice occupy here and there their perpendicular rifts, and shine through the driving vapours with inexpressible brilliancy; they pierce the clouds like things not belonging to this earth. The vale itself is filled with a mass of undulating ice, and has an ascent sufficiently gradual even to the remotest abysses of these horrible deserts. It is only half a league (about two miles) in breadth, and seems much less. It exhibits an appearance as if frost had suddenly bound up the waves and whirlpools of a mighty torrent. We walked some distance upon its surface. The waves are elevated about twelve or fifteen feet from the surface of the mass, which is intersected by long gaps of unfathomable depth, the ice of whose sides is more beautifully azure than the sky. In these regions everything changes, and is in motion. This vast mass of ice has one general progress, which ceases neither day nor night; it breaks and bursts for ever: some undulations sink while others rise; it is never the same. The echo of rocks, or of the ice and snow which fall from their overhanging precipices, or roll from their aerial summits, scarcely ceases for one moment. One would think that Mont Blanc, like the god of the Stoics, was a vast animal, and that the frozen blood for ever circulated through his stony veins.

We have returned through the rain to St. Martin. The scenery had lost something of its immensity, thick clouds hanging over the highest mountains; but visitings of sunlight intervened between the showers, and the blue sky shone between the accumulated clouds of snowy whiteness which brought them; the dazzling mountains sometimes glittered through a chasm of the clouds above our heads, and all the charm of its grandeur remained. We repassed Pont Pilliarier, a wooden bridge over the Arve, and the ravine of the Arve. We repassed the pine forests which overhang the defile, the chateau of St. Michael; a haunted ruin, built on the edge of a precipice, and shadowed over by the eternal forest. We repassed the vale of Servoz, a vale more beautiful, because more luxuriant, than that of Chamouni. Mont Blanc forms one of the sides of this vale also, and the other is inclosed by an irregular amphitheatre of enormous mountains, one of which is in ruins, and fell fifty years ago into the higher part of the valley: the smoke of its fall was seen in Piedmont, and people went from Turin to investigate whether a volcano had not burst forth among the Alps. It continued falling many days, spreading, with the shock and thunder of its ruin, consternation into the neighbouring vales. In the evening we arrived at St. Martin. The next day we wound through the valley, which I have described before, and fell fifty years ago into the higher part of the valley: the smoke of its fall was seen in Piedmont, and people went from Turin to investigate whether a volcano had not burst forth among the Alps. It continued falling many days, spreading, with the shock and thunder of its ruin, consternation into the neighbouring vales. In the evening we arrived at St. Martin. The next day we wound through the valley, which I have described before, and arrived in the evening at our home.

We have bought some specimens of minerals and plants, and two or three crystal seals, at Mont Blanc, to preserve the remembrance of having approached it. There is a cabinet of histoire naturelle at Chamouni, just as at Keswick, Matlock, and Clifton; the proprietor of which is the very vilest specimen of that vile species of quack, that, together with the whole army of anabergistes and guides, and indeed the entire mass of the population, subsist on the weakness and credulity of travellers as leeches subsist on the sick. The most interesting of my purchases is a large collection of all the seeds of rare alpine plants, with their names written upon the outside of the papers that contain them. These I mean to colonise in my garden in England, and to permit you to make what choice you please from them. They are companions which the Celandine — the classic
Celandine, need not despise; they are as wild and more daring than he, and will tell him tales of things even as touching and sublime as the gaze of a vernal poet. Did I tell you that there are troops of wolves among these mountains! In the winter they descend into the valleys, which the snow occupies six months of the year, and devour everything that they can find out of doors. A wolf is more powerful than the fiercest and strongest dog. There are no bears in these regions. We heard, when we were at Lucerne, that they were occasionally found in the forests which surround that lake.

Adieu. S.

JOURNAL.

Geneva, Sunday, 18th August, 1816.

S

See Apollo's Sexton,* who tells us many mysteries of his trade. We talk of Ghosts. Neither Lord Byron nor M. G. L. seem to believe in them; and they both agree, in the very face of reason, that none could believe in ghosts without believing in God. I do not think that all the persons who profess to discredit these visitations, really discredit them; or, if they do in the daylight, are not admonished, by the approach of loneliness and midnight, to think more respectfully of the world of shadows.

Lewis recited a poem, which he had composed at the request of the Princess of Wales. The Princess of Wales, he premised, was not only a believer in ghosts, but in magic and witchcraft, and asserted, that prophecies made in her youth had been accomplished since. The tale was of a lady in Germany.

This lady, Minna, had been exceedingly attached to her husband, and they had made a vow that the one who died first, should return after death to visit the other as a ghost. She was sitting one day alone in her chamber, when she heard an unusual sound of footsteps on the stairs. The door opened, and her husband's spectre, gashed with a deep wound across the forehead, and in military habiliments, entered. She appeared startled at the apparition; and the ghost told her, that when he should visit her in future, she would hear a passing-bell toll, and these words distinctly uttered close to her ear, "Minna, I am here." On inquiry, it was found that her husband had fallen in battle on the very day she was visited by the vision. The intercourse between the ghost and the woman

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* Mr. G. Lewis—so named in "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers." When Lewis first saw Lord Byron, he asked him earnestly,—"Why did you call me Apollo's Sexton?" The noble Poet found it difficult to reply to this categorical species of reproof. The above stories have, some of them, appeared in print; but, as a ghost story depends entirely on the mode in which it is told, I think the reader will be pleased to read these, written by Shelley, fresh from their relation by Lewis.—M. S.
predecessor, and learned that he was universally beloved, as a man of unexampled integrity and benevolence; but that he was the prey of a secret and perpetual sorrow. His grief was supposed to have arisen from an attachment to a young lady, with whom his situation did not permit him to unite himself. Others, however, asserted, that a connexion did subsist between them, and that even she occasionally brought to his house two beautiful boys, the offspring of their connexion.—Nothing further occurred until the cold weather came, and the new minister desired a fire to be lighted in the stove of the room where he slept. A hideous stench arose from the stove as soon as it was lighted, and, on examining it, the bones of two male children were found within.

II.

LORD LYTTELTON and a number of his friends were joined during the chase by a stranger. He was excellently mounted, and displayed such courage, or, rather so much desperate rashness, that no other person in the hunt could follow him. The gentlemen, when the chase was concluded, invited the stranger to dine with them. His conversation was something of a wonderful kind. He astonished, he interested, he commanded the attention of the most inert. As night came on, the company, being weary, began to retire one by one, much later than the usual hour: the most intellectual among them were retained latest by the stranger’s fascination. As he perceived that they began to depart, he redoubled his efforts to retain them. At last, when few remained, he entreated them to stay with him; but all pleaded the fatigue of a hard day’s chase, and all at last retired. They had been in bed about an hour, when they were awakened by the most horrible screams, which issued from the stranger’s room. Every one rushed towards it. The door was locked. After a moment’s deliberation they burst it open, and found the stranger stretched on the ground, writhing with agony, and weltering in blood. On their entrance he arose, and collecting himself, apparently with a strong effort, entreated them to leave him—not to disturb him, that he would give every possible explanation in the morning. They complied. In the morning, his chamber was found vacant, and he was seen no more.

III.

MILES ANDREWS, a friend of Lord Lyttleton, was sitting one night alone when Lord Lyttleton came in, and informed him that he was dead, and that this was his ghost which he saw before him.
JOURNAL

Sazon. Low, yet precipitous hills, covered with vines or woods, and with streams, meadows, and poplars, at the bottom.

Sunday, September 1st.— Leave Rouvray, pass Auxerre, where we dine; a pretty town, and arrive, at two o’clock, at Villeneuve le Guiard.

Monday 2d.— From Villeneuve le Guiard, we arrive at Fontainebleau. The scenery around this palace is wild and even savage. The soil is full of rocks, apparently granite, which on every side break through the ground. The hills are low, but precipitous and rough. The valleys, equally wild, are shaded by forests. In the midst of this wilderness stands the palace. Some of the apartments equal in magnificence anything that I could conceive. The roofs are fretted with gold, and the canopies of velvet. From Fontainebleau we proceed to Versailles, in the route towards Rouen. We arrive at Versailles at nine.

Tuesday 3d.— We saw the palace and gardens of Versailles and le Grand et Petit Trianon. They surpass Fontainebleau. The gardens are full of statues, vases, fountains, and colonnades. In all that essentially belongs to a garden they are extraordinarily deficient. The orangery is a stupid piece of expense. There was one orange-tree, not apparently so old, sown in 1442. We saw only the gardens and the theatre at the Petit Trianon. The gardens are in the English taste, and extremely pretty. The Grand Trianon was open. It is a summer palace, light, yet magnificent. We were unable to devote the time it deserved to the gallery of paintings here. There was a portrait of Madame de la Vallière, the repentant mistress of Louis XIV. She was melancholy, but exceedingly beautiful, and was represented as holding a skull, and sitting before a crucifix, pale, and with downcast eyes.

We then went to the great palace. The apartments are unfurnished; but even with this disadvantage, they are more magnificent than those of Fontainebleau. They are lined with marble of various colours, whose pedestals and capitals are gilt, and the ceiling is richly gilt with compartments of painting. The arrangement of these materials has in them, it is true, something effeminate and royal. Could a Grecian architect have commanded all the labour and money which was expended on Versailles, he would have produced a fabric which the whole world has never equalled. We saw the Hall of Hercules, the balcony where the King and the Queen exhibited themselves to the Parisian mob. The people who showed us through the palace, obstinately refused to say anything about the Revolution. We could not even find out in which chamber the rioters of the 10th August found the king. We saw the Salle d’Opéra, where are now preserved the portraits of the kings. There was the race of the house of Orleans, with the exception of Egalité, all extremely handsome. There was Madame de Maintenon, and beside her a beautiful little girl, the daughter of La Vallière. The pictures had been hidden during the Revolution. We saw the Library of Louis XVI. The librarian had held some place in the ancient court near Marie-Antoinette. He returned with the Bourbons, and was waiting for some better situation. He showed us a book which he had preserved during the Revolution. It was a book of paintings, representing a tournament at the Court of Louis XIV.; and it seemed that the present desolation of France, the fury of the injured people, and all the horrors to which they abandoned themselves, stung by their long sufferings, flowed naturally enough from expenditures so immense, as must have been demanded by the magnificence of this tournament. The vacant rooms of this palace imaged well the hollow show of monarchy. After seeing these things we departed toward Havre, and slept at Auxerre.

Wednesday 4th.— We passed through Rouen, and saw the cathedral, an immense specimen of the most costly and magnificent gothic. The interior of the church disappoints. We saw the burial-place of Richard Coeur de Lion and his brother. The altar of the church is a fine piece of marble. Sleep at Yvetot.

Thursday 5th.— We arrive at Havre, and wait for the packet—wind contrary.

S.
LETTERS FROM ITALY.

LETTER I.
To Leigh Hunt, Esq.
Lyons, March 22, 1818.

My dear Friend,—Why did you not wake me that night before we left England, you and Marianne? I take this as rather an unkind piece of kindness in you; but which, in consideration of the six hundred miles between us, I forgive.

We have journeyed towards the spring, that has been hastening to meet us from the south; and though our weather was at first abominable, we have now warm sunny days, and soft winds, and a sky of deep azure, the most serene I ever saw.
The heat in this city to-day, is like that of London in the midst of summer. My spirits and health sympathize in the change. Indeed, before I left London, my spirits were as feeble as my health, and I had demands on them which I found it difficult to supply. I have read "Foliage;" with most of the poems I am already familiar. What a delightful poem the "Nymphs" is! It is truly poetical, in the intense and emphatic sense of the word. If six hundred miles were not between us, I should say what pity that glib was not omitted, and that the poem is not as faultless as it is beautiful. But, for fear I should spoil your next poem, I will not let slip a word upon the subject.

Give my love to Marianne and her sister, and tell Marianne she defrauded me of a kiss by not waking me when she went away, and that, as I have no better mode of conveying it, I must take the best, and ask you to pay the debt. When shall I see you again? Oh, that it might be in Italy! I confess that the thought of how long we may be divided makes me very melancholy. Adieu, my dear friends. Write soon.

Ever most affectionately yours,

P. B. S.*

*In a brief journal I kept at that time, I find a few pages in Shelley's handwriting, descriptive of the passage over the mountains of Les Echelles: "March 26, Thursday. We travel towards the mountains, and begin to enter the valleys of the Alps. The country becomes covered again with verdure and cultivation, and white chateaux and scattered cottages among woods of old oak and walnut trees. The vines are here peculiarly pictur-
course I except the Alps themselves; but no sooner had we arrived at Italy, than the loveliness of the earth and the serenity of the sky made the greatest difference in my sensations. I depend on these things for life; for in the smoke of cities, and the tumult of human kind, and the chilling fogs and rain of our own country, I can hardly be said to live. With what delight did I hear the woman, who conducted us to see the triumphal arch of Augustus at Susa, speak the clear and complete language of Italy, though half unintelligible to me, after that nasal and abbreviated cacophony of the French! A ruined arch of magnificent proportions in the Greek taste, standing in a kind of road of green lawn, overgrown with violets and primroses, and in the midst of stupendous mountains, and a blonde woman, of light and graceful manners, something in the style of Fuselli's Eve, were the first things we met in Italy.

This city is very agreeable. We went to the opera last night—which is a most splendid exhibition. The opera itself was not a favourite, and the singers very inferior to our own. But the ballet, or rather a kind of melodrame or pantomimic drama, was the most splendid spectacle I ever saw. We have no Miss Melanie here—in every other respect, Milan is unquestionably superior. The manner in which language is translated into gesture, the complete and full effect of the whole as illustrating the history in question, the unaffected self-possession of each of the actors, even to the children, made this choral drama more impressive than I could have conceived possible. The story is Othello, and strange to say, it left no disagreeable impression.

I write, but I am not in the humour to write, and you must expect longer, if not more entertaining, letters soon— that is, in a week or so—when I am a little recovered from my journey. Pray tell us all the news with regard to our own offspring, whom we left at nurse in England; as well as those of our friends. Mention Cobbett and politics too—and Hunt—to whom Mary is now writing—and particularly your own plans and yourself. You shall hear more of me and my plans soon. My health is improved already—and my spirits something—and I have many literary schemes, and one in particular—which I thirst to be settled that I may begin. I have ordered Oliver to send you some sheets &c., for revision.

Adieu.—Always faithfully yours,

P. B. S.

LETTER III.

To T. L. P Esq.

Milan, April 20, 1818.

MY DEAR P.—I had no conception that the distance between us, measured by time in respect of letters, was so great. I have but just received yours dated the 2nd—and when you will receive mine written from this city somewhat later than the same date, I cannot know. I am sorry to hear that you have been obliged to remain at Marlow; a certain degree of society being almost a necessity of life, particularly as we are not to see you this summer in Italy. But this, I suppose, must be as it is. I often revisit Marlow in thought. The curse of this life is, that whatever is once known, can never be unknown. You inhabit a spot, which before you inhabit it, is as indifferent to you as any other spot upon earth, and when, persuaded by some necessity, you think to leave it, you leave it not; it clings to you—and with memories of things, which, in your experience of them, gave no such promise, revenges your desertion. Time flows on, places are changed; friends who were with us, are no longer with us; yet what has been seems yet to be, but barren and stripped of life. See, I have sent you a study for Nightmare Abbey.

Since I last wrote to you we have been to Como, looking for a house. This lake exceeds anything I ever beheld in beauty, with the exception of the arbutus islands of Killarney. It is long and narrow, and has the appearance of a mighty river winding among the mountains and the forests. We sailed from the town of Como to a tract of country called the Tremesina, and saw the various aspects presented by that part of the lake. The mountains between Como and that village, or rather cluster of villages, are covered on high with melodrame or pantomimic, woods (the eating chestnuts, on which the inhabitants of the country subsist in time of scarcity), which sometimes descend to the very verge of the lake, overhanging it with their hoary branches. But usually the immediate border of this shore is composed of laurel-trees, and bay, and myrtle, and wild fig-trees, and olives which grow in the crevices of the rocks, and overhang the caverns, and shadow the deep glens, which are filled with the flashing light of the waterfalls. Other flowering shrubs, which I cannot name, grow there also. On high, the towers of village churches are seen white among the dark forests. Beyond, on the opposite shore, which faces the south, the mountains descend less precipitously to the lake, and although they are much higher, and
some covered with perpetual snow, there intervenes between them and the lake a range of lower hills, which have glens and rifts opening to the other, such as I should fancy the abysses of Ida or Parnassus. Here are plantations of olive, and orange, and lemon trees, which are now so loaded with fruit, that there is more fruit than leaves,—and vineyards. This shore of the lake is one continued village, and the Milanese nobility have their villas here. The union of culture and the untameable profusion and loveliness of nature is here so close, that the line where they are divided can hardly be discovered. But the finest scenery is that of the Villa Pliniana; so called from a fountain which ebbs and flows every three hours, described by the younger Pliny, which is in the court-yard. This house, which was once a magnificent palace, and is now half in ruins, we are endeavouring to procure. It is built upon terraces raised from the bottom of the lake, together with its garden, at the foot of a semicircular precipice, overshadowed by profound forests of chestnut. The scene from the colonnade is the most extraordinary, at once, and the most lovely that eye ever beheld. On one side is the mountain, and immediately over you are clusters of cypress-trees of an astonishing height, which seem to pierce the sky. Above you, from among the clouds, as it were, descends a waterfall of immense size, broken by the woody rocks into a thousand channels to the lake. On the other side is seen the blue extent of the lake and the mountains, speckled with sails and spires. The apartments of the Pliniana are immensely large, but ill furnished and antique. The terraces, which overlook the lake, and conduct under the shade of such immense laurel-trees as deserve the epithet of Pythian, are most delightful. We staid at Como two days, and have now returned to Milan, waiting the issue of our negotiation about a house. Como is only six leagues from Milan, and its mountains are seen from the cathedral.

This cathedral is a most astonishing work of art. It is built of white marble, and cut into pinnacles of immense height, and the utmost delicacy of workmanship, and loaded with sculpture. The effect of it, piercing the solid blue with those groups of dazzling spires, relieved by the serene depth of this Italian heaven, or by moonlight when the stars seem gathered among those clustered shapes, is beyond any thing I had imagined architecture capable of producing. The interior, though very sublime, is of a more earthly character, and with its stained glass and massy granite columns overloaded with antique figures, and the silver lamps, that burn for ever under the canopy of black cloth beside the brazen altar and the marble fretwork of the dome, give it the aspect of some gorgeous sepulchre. There is one solitary spot among those aisles, behind the altar, where the light of day is dim and yellow under the storied window, which I have chosen to visit, and read Dante there.

I have devoted this summer, and indeed the next year, to the composition of a tragedy on the subject of Tasso’s madness, which I find upon inspection is, if properly treated, admirably dramatic and poetical. But, you will say, I have no dramatic talent; very true, in a certain sense; but I have taken the resolution to see what kind of a tragedy a person without dramatic talent could write. It shall be better morality than Fazio, and better poetry than Bertram, at least. You tell me nothing of Rhododaphne, a book from which, I confess, I expected extraordinary success.

Who lives in my house at Marlow now, or what is to be done with it? I am seriously persuaded that the situation was injurious to my health, or I should be tempted to feel a very absurd interest in who is to be its next possessor. The expense of our journey here has been very considerable—but we are now living at the hotel here, in a kind of Pension, which is very reasonable in respect of price, and when we get into a menage of our own, we have every reason to expect that we shall experience something of the boasted cheapness of Italy. The finest bread, made of sifted flour, the whitest and the best I evertasted, is only one English pen'ny a pound. All the necessaries of life bear a proportional relation to this. But then the luxuries, tea, &c., are very dear,—and the English, as usual, are cheated in a way that is quite ridiculous, if they have not their wits about them. We do not know a single human being, and the opera, until last night, has been always the same. Lord Byron, we hear, has taken a house for three years, at Venice; whether we shall see him or not, I do not know. The number of English who pass through this town is very great. They ought to be in their own country in the present crisis. Their conduct is wholly inexcusable. The people here, though inoffensive enough, seem both in body and soul a miserable race. The men are hardly men; they look like a tribe of stupid and shrivelled slaves, and I do not think that I have seen a gleam of intelligence in the countenance of man since I passed the Alps. The women in enslaved countries are always better than the men; but they have tight-laced figures, and figures and mien which express (Oh how unlike the French:) a mixture of the coquette and prude, which reminds...
me of the worst characteristics of the English.* Everything but humanity is in much greater perfection here than in France. The cleanliness and comfort of the inns is something quite English. The country is beautifully cultivated; and altogether, if you can, as one ought always to do, find your happiness in yourself, it is a most delightful and commodious place to live in.

Adieu.—Your affectionate friend,

P. B. S.

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LETTER IV.

To T. L. P. Esq.

Milan, April 20th, 1818.

My dear P.,—I write, simply to tell you, to direct your next letters, Poste Restante, Pisa. We have engaged a veturino for that city, and leave Milan to-morrow morning. Our journey will occupy six or seven days.

Pisa is not six miles from the Mediterranean, with which it communicates by the river Arno. We shall pass by Piacenza, Parma, Bologna, the Apennines, and Florence, and I will endeavour to tell you something of these celebrated places in my next letter; but I cannot promise much, for, though my health is much improved, my spirits are unequal, and seem to desert me when I attempt to write.

Pisa, they say, is uninhabitable in the midst of summer—we shall do, therefore, what other people do, retire to Florence, or to the mountains. But I will write to you our plans from Pisa, when I shall understand them better myself.

You may easily conjecture the motives which led us to forego the divine solitude of Como. To me, whose chief pleasure in life is the contemplation of nature, you may imagine how great is this loss.

Let us hear from you once a fortnight. Do not forget those who do not forget you.

Adieu.—Ever most sincerely yours,

P. B. Shelley.

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LETTER V.

To T. L. P. Esq.

Livorno, June 5, 1818.

My dear P.,—We have not heard from you since the middle of April—that is, we have received only one letter from you since our departure from England. It necessarily follows that some accident has intercepted them. Address, in future, to the care of Mr. Gisborne, Livorno—and I shall receive them, though sometimes somewhat circuitously, yet always securely.

We left Milan on the 1st of May, and travelled across the Apennines to Pisa. This part of the Apennine is far less beautiful than the Alps; the mountains are wide and wild, and the whole scenery broad and undetermined—the imagination cannot find a home in it. The plain of the Milanese, and that of Parma, is exquisitely beautiful—it is like one garden, or rather cultivated wilderness; because the corn and the meadow-grass grow under high and thick trees, festooned to one another by regular festoons of vines. On the seventh day we arrived at Pisa, where we remained three or four days. A large disagreeable city, almost without inhabitants. We then proceeded to this great trading town, where we have remained a month, and which, in a few days, we leave for the Bagni di Lucca, a kind of watering-place situated in the depth of the Apennines; the scenery surrounding this village is very fine.

We have made some acquaintance with a very amiable and accomplished lady, Mrs. Gisborne, who is the sole attraction in this most unattractive of cities. We had no idea of spending a month here, but she has made it even agreeable. We shall see something of Italian society at the Bagni di Lucca, where the most fashionable people resort.

When you send my parcel—which, by-the-bye, I should request you to direct to Mr. Gisborne—I wish you could contrive to enclose the two last parts of Clarke's Travels, relating to Greece, and belonging to Hookham. You know I subscribe there still—and I have determined to take the Examiner here. You would, therefore, oblige me, by sending it weekly, after having read it yourself, to the same direction, and so clipped, as to make as little weight as possible.

I write as if writing where perhaps my letter may never arrive.

With every good wish from all of us,

Believe me most sincerely yours,

P. B. S.

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LETTER VI.

To Mr. and Mrs. Gisborne,

(LIVORNO).

You cannot know, as some friends in England do, to whom my silence is still more inexcusable, that this silence is no proof of forgetfulness or neglect.
I have, in truth, nothing to say, but that I shall be happy to see you again, and renew our delightful walks, until the desire or the duty of seeing new things hurry us away. We have spent a month here in our accustomed solitude, with the exception of one night at the Casino; and the choice society of all ages, which I took care to pack up in a large trunk before we left England, have revisited us here. I am employed just now, having little better to do, in translating into my faint and inefficient periods, the divine eloquence of Plato's Symposium; only as an exercise, or, perhaps, to give Mary some idea of the manners and feelings of the Athenians—so different on many subjects from that of any other community that ever existed.

We have almost finished Ariosto—who is entertaining and graceful, and sometimes a poet. Forgive me, worshippers of a more equal and tolerant divinity in poetry, if Ariosto pleases me less than you. Where is the gentle seriousness, the delicate sensibility, the calm and sustained energy, without which true greatness cannot be? He is so cruel, too, in his descriptions; his most prized virtues are vices almost without disguise. He constantly vindicates and embellishes revenge in its grossest form; the most deadly superstition that ever infested the world. How different from the tender and solemn enthusiasm of Petrarch—or even the delicate moral sensibility of Tasso, though somewhat obscured by an assumed and artificial style.

We read a good deal here—and we read little in Livorno. We have ridden, Mary and I, once only, to a place called Prato Fiorito, on the top of the mountains: the road, winding through forests, and over torrents, and on the verge of green ravines, affords scenery magnificently fine. I cannot describe it to you, but bid you, though vainly, come and see. I take great delight in watching the changes of the atmosphere here, and the growth of the thunder showers with which the noon is often overshadowed, and which break and fade away towards evening into flocks of delicate clouds. Our fire-flies are fading away fast; but there is the planet Jupiter, who rises majestically over the rift in the forest-covered mountains to the south, and the pale summer lightning which is spread out every night, at intervals, over the sky. No doubt Providence has contrived these things, that, when the fire-flies go out, the low-flying owl may see her way home.

Remember me kindly to the Machinists.

With the sentiment of impatience until we see you again in the autumn,

I am, yours most sincerely,

P. B. Shelley.

Bagni di Lucca, July 10th, 1818.
Letters from Italy.

The modern Italians seem a miserable people, without sensibility, or imagination, or understanding. Their outside is polished, and an intercourse with them seems to proceed with much facility, though it ends in nothing, and produces nothing. The women are particularly empty, and though possessed of the same kind of superficial grace, are devoid of every cultivation and refinement. They have a ball at the Casino here every Sunday, which we attend—but neither Mary nor C—— dance. I do not know whether they refrain from philosophy or protestantism. I hear that poor Mary's book is attacked most violently in the Quarterly Review. We have heard some praise of it, and among others, an article of Walter Scott's in Blackwood's Magazine.

If you should have anything to send us—and, I assure you, anything relating to England is interesting to us—commit it to the care of Ollier the bookseller, or P——; they send me a parcel every quarter.

My health is, I think, better, and, I imagine, continues to improve, but I still have busy thoughts and dispiriting cares, which I would shake off—and it is now summer. —A thousand good wishes to yourself and your undertakings.

Ever most affectionately yours,

P. B. S.

Letter VIII.

To Mrs. Shelley,

(BAGNI DI LUCCA).

Florence, Thursday, 11 o’Clock,

20th August, 1818.

Dearest Mary,

We have been delayed in this city four hours, for the Austrian minister's passport, but are now on the point of setting out with a vetturino, who engages to take us on the third day to Padua; that is, we shall only sleep three nights on the road. Yesterday's journey, performed in a one-horse cabriolet, almost without springs, over a rough road, was excessively fatiguing. — suffered most from it; for, as to myself, there are occasions in which fatigue seems a useful medicine, as I have felt no pain in my side—a most delightful respite—since I left you. The country was various and exceedingly beautiful. Sometimes there were those low cultivated lands, with their vine festoons, and large bunches of grapes just becoming purple—at others we passed between high mountains, crowned with some of the most majestic Gothic ruins I ever saw, which frowned from the bare precipices, or were half seen among the olive-copse. As we approached Florence, the country became cultivated to a very high degree, the plain was filled with the most beautiful villas, and, as far as the eye could reach, the mountains were covered with them; for the plains are bounded on all sides by blue and misty mountains. The vines are here trailed on low trellises of reeds interwoven into crosses to support them, and the grapes, now almost ripe, are exceedingly abundant. You everywhere meet those teams of beautiful white oxen, which are now labouring the little vine-divided fields with their Virgilian ploughs and carts. Florence itself, that is the Lung’ Arno (for I have seen no more), I think is the most beautiful city I have yet seen. It is surrounded with cultivated hills, and from the bridge which crosses the broad channel of the Arno, the view is the most animated and elegant I ever saw. You see three or four bridges, one apparently supported by Corinthian pillars, and the white sails of the boats, relieved by the deep green of the forest, which comes to the water's edge, and the sloping hills covered with bright villas on every side. Domes and steeples rise on all sides, and the cleanliness is remarkably great. On the other side there are the foldings of the Vale of Arno above; first the hills of olive and vine, then the chestnut woods, and then the blue and misty pine forests, which invest the aerial Apennines, that fade in the distance. I have seldom seen a city so lovely at first sight as Florence.

We shall travel hence within a few hours, with the speed of the post, since the distance is 190 miles, and we are to do it in three days, besides the half day, which is somewhat more than sixty miles a-day. We have now got a comfortable carriage and two mules, and, thanks to Paolo, have made a very decent bargain, comprising everything, to Padua. I should say we had delightful fruit for breakfast—figs, very fine—and peaches, unfortunately gathered before they were ripe, whose smell was like what one fancies of the wakening of Paradise flowers.

Well, my dearest Mary, are you very lonely! Tell me truth, my sweetest, do you ever cry! I shall hear from you once at Venice, and once on my return here. If you love me you will keep up your spirits—and, at all events, tell me truth about it; for, I assure you, I am not of a disposition to be flattered by your sorrow, though I should be by your cheerfulness; and, above all, by seeing such fruits of my absence as were produced when we were at Geneva. What acquintances have you made? I might have travelled to Padua.
with a German, who had just come from Rome, and had scarce recovered from a malaria fever, caught in the Pontine Marshes, a week or two since; and I conceded to ——'s entreaties—and to your absent suggestions, and omitted the opportunity, although I have no great faith in such species of contagion. It is not very hot—not at all too much so for my sensations; and the only thing that incommodes me are the gnats at night, who roar like so many humming-tops in one's ear—and I do not always find zanzariere. How is Willmouse and little Clara! They must be kissed for me—and you must particularly remember to speak my name to William, and see that he does not quite forget me before I return. Adieu—my dearest girl, I think that we shall soon meet. I shall write again from Venice. Adieu, dear Mary!

I have been reading the "Noble Kinsmen," in which, with the exception of that lovely scene, to which you added so much grace in reading to me, I have been disappointed. The Jailor's Daughter is a poor imitation, and deformed. The whole story wants moral discrimination and modesty. I do not believe that Shakspere wrote a word of it.

LETTER IX.
To Mrs. SHELLEY,
(BAGNI DI LUCCA).

Venice, Sunday morning.

My dearest Mary,—We arrived here last night at 12 o'clock, and it is now before breakfast the next morning. I can, of course, tell you nothing of the future; and though I shall not close this letter till post time, yet I do not know exactly when that is. Yet, if you are very impatient, look along the letter and you will see another date, when I may have something to relate. I came from Padua hither in a gondola, and the gondoliere, among other things, without any hint on my part, began talking of Lord Byron. He said he was a giovinotto Inglese, with a nome stravagante, who lived very luxuriously, and spent great sums of money. This man, it seems, was one of Lord B.’s gondoliere. No sooner had we arrived at the inn, than the waiter began talking about him—said, that he frequented Mrs. H.'s conversazione very much.

Our journey from Florence to Padua contained nothing which may not be related another time. At Padua, as I said, we took a gondola—and left it at three o'clock. These gondolas are the most beautiful and convenient boats in the world. They are finely carpeted and furnished with black, and painted black. The couches on which you lean are extraordinarily soft, and are so disposed as to be the most comfortable to those who lean or sit. The windows have at will either Venetian plate-glass flowered, or Venetian blinds, or blinds of black cloth to shut out the light. The weather here is extremely cold—indeed, sometimes very painfully so, and yesterday it began to rain. We passed the laguna in the middle of the night in a most violent storm of wind, rain, and lightning. It was very curious to observe the elements above in a state of such tremendous convulsion, and the surface of the water almost calm; for these lagunas, though five miles broad, a space enough in a storm to sink a gondola, are so shallow that the boatmen drive the boat along with a pole. The sea-water, furiously agitated by the wind, shone with sparkles like stars. Venice, now hidden and now disclosed by the driving rain, shone dimly with its lights. We were all this while safe and comfortable. Well, adieu, dearest: I shall, as Miss Byron says, resume the pen in the evening.

Sunday Night, 5 o’Clock in the Morning.

Well, I will try to relate everything in its order.

At three o’clock I called on Lord Byron: he was delighted to see me. He took me in his gondola across the laguna to a long sandy island, which defends Venice from the Adriatic. When we disembarked, we found his horses waiting for us, and we rode along the sands of the sea, talking. Our conversation consisted in histories of his wounded feelings, and questions to my affairs, and great professions of friendship and regard for me. He said, that if he had been in England at the time of the Chancery affair, he would have moved heaven and earth to have prevented such a decision. We talked of literary matters, his Fourth Canto, which, he says, is very good, and indeed repeated some stanzas of great energy to me. When we returned to his palace—which

THE LETTER IS HERE TORN.

The Hoppners are the most amiable people I ever knew. They are much attached to each other, and have a nice little boy, seven months old. Mr. H. paints beautifully, and this excursion, which he has just put off, was an expedition to the Julian Alps, in this neighbourhood—for the sake of sketching, to procure winter employment. He has only a fortnight’s leisure, and he has sacrificed two days of it to strangers whom he never saw before. Mrs. H. has hazel eyes and sweet looks.

(PAPER TORN.)
Well, but the time presses; I am now going to the banker's to send you money for the journey, which I shall address to you at Florence, Post-office. Pray come instantly to Este, where I shall be waiting in the utmost anxiety for your arrival. You can pack up directly you get this letter, and employ the next day on that. Then take a vetturino for Florence to arrive the same evening. From Florence to Este is three days' vetturino journey—and you could not, I think, do it quicker by the post. Make Paolo take you to good inns, as we found very bad ones; and pray avoid the Tre Mori at Bologna, perche vi sono cose inespressibili nei letti. I do not think you can, but try to get from Florence to Bologna in one day. Do not take the poet, for it is not much faster and very expensive. I have been obliged to decide on all these things without you: I have done for the best—and, my own beloved Mary, you must soon come and scold me if I have done wrong, and kiss me if I have done right—for, I am sure, I do not know which—and it is only the event that can show. We shall at least be saved the trouble of introduction, and have formed acquaintance with a lady who is so good, so beautiful, so angelically mild, that were she as wise too, she would be quite a ***. Her eyes are like a reflection of yours. Her manners are like yours when you know and like a person. Do you know, dearest, how this letter was written? By scraps and patches, and interrupted every minute. The gondola is now come to take me to the banker's. Este is a little place, and the house found without difficulty. I shall count four days for this letter: one day for packing, four for coming here—and on the ninth or tenth day we shall meet.

I am too late for the post—but I send an express to overtake it. Enclosed is an order for fifty pounds. If you knew all that I had to do!—Dearest love, be well, be happy, come to me—confide in your own constant and affectionate P. B. S.

Kiss the blue-eyed darlings for me, and do not let William forget me. Clara cannot recollect me.

LETTER X.

To Miss SHELLEY.

Padua, mezzogiorno.

My best Mary,—I found at Mount Selice a favourable opportunity for going to Venice, where I shall try to make some arrangement for you and little Ca. to come for some days, and shall meet you, if I do not write anything in the mean time, at Padua, on Thursday morning. C. says she is obliged to come to see the Medico, whom we missed this morning, and who has appointed as the only hour at which he can be at leisure—half-past eight in the morning. You must, therefore, arrange matters so that you should come to the Stella d'Oro a little before that hour—a thing to be accomplished only by setting out at half-past three in the morning. You will by this means arrive at Venice very early in the day, and avoid the heat, which might be bad for the babe, and take the time, when she would at least sleep great part of the time. C. will return with the return carriage, and I shall meet you, or send to you at Padua.

Meanwhile remember Charles the First—and do you be prepared to bring at least some of Myrra translated; bring the book also with you, and the sheets of "Prometheus Unbound," which you will find numbered from one to twenty-six on the table of the pavilion. My poor little Clara, how is she to-day! Indeed I am somewhat uneasy about her, and though I feel secure that there is no danger, it would be very comfortable to have some reasonable person's opinion about her. The Medico at Padua is certainly a man in great practice, but I confess he does not satisfy me. Am I not like a wild swan to be gone so suddenly! But, in fact, to set off alone to Venice required an exertion. I felt myself capable of making it, and I knew that you desired it. What will not be—if so it is destined—the lonely journey through that wide, cold France! But we shall see. Adieu, my dearest love—remember Charles I. and Myrra. I have been already imagining how you will conduct some scenes. The second volume of St. Leon begins with this proud and true sentiment—"There is nothing which the human mind can conceive, which it may not execute." Shakespeare was only a human being.

Adieu till Thursday.—Your ever affectionate P. B. S.

LETTER XI.

To T. L. P. Esq.

Este, October 8, 1818.

My dear P,—I have not written to you, I think, for six weeks. But I have been on the point of writing many times, and have often felt that I had many things to say. But I have not been without events to disturb and distract me, amongst which is the death of my little girl. She died of a disorder peculiar to the climate.
have all had bad spirits enough, and I, in addition, had health. I intend to be better soon: there is no malady, bodily or mental, which does not either kill or is killed.

We left the Baths of Lucca, I think, the day after I wrote to you — on a visit to Venice — partly for the sake of seeing the city. We made a very delightful acquaintance there with a Mr. and Mrs. Hoppner, the gentleman an Englishman, and the lady a Swissesse, mild and beautiful, and unprejudiced, in the best sense of the word. The kind attentions of these people made our short stay at Venice very pleasant. I saw Lord Byron, and really hardly knew him again; he is changed into the liveliest and happiest-looking man I ever met. He read me the first canto of his "Don Juan" — a thing in the style of Beppo, but infinitely better, and dedicated to Southey, in ten or a dozen stanzas, more like a mixture of wormwood and verdigrise than satire. Venice is a wonderfully fine city. The approach to it over the laguna, with its domes and turrets glittering in a long line over the blue waves, is one of the finest architectural delusions in the world. It seems to have— and literally it has— its foundations in the sea. The silent streets are paved with water, and you hear nothing but the dashing of the oars, and the occasional cries of the gondolieri. I heard nothing of Tasso. The gondolas themselves are things of a most romantic and picturesque appearance; I can only compare them to moths of which a coffin might have been the chrysalis. They are hung with black, and painted black, and carpeted with grey; they curl at the prow and stern, and at the former there is a nondescript beak of shining steel, which glitters at the end of its long black mass.

The Doge's palace, with its library, is a fine monument of aristocratic power. I saw the dungeons, where these scoundrels used to torment their victims. They are of three kinds — one adjoining the place of trial, where the prisoners destined to immediate execution were kept. I could not descend into them, because the day on which I visited it, was festa. Another under the leads of the palace, where the sufferers were roasted to death or madness by the ardours of an Italian sun; and others called the Pozzi— or wells, deep underneath, and communicating with those on the roof by secret passages — where the prisoners were confined sometimes half up to their middles in stinking water. When the French came here, they found only one old man in the dungeons, and he could not speak. But Venice, which was once a tyrant, is now the next worst thing, a slave; for in fact it ceased to be free, or worth our regret as a nation, from the moment that the oligarchy usurped the rights of the people. Yet, I do not imagine that it was ever so degraded as it has been since the French, and especially the Austrian yoke. The Austrians take sixty per cent. in taxes, and impose free quarters on the inhabitants. A horde of German soldiers, as vicious and more disgusting than the Venetians themselves, insult these miserable people. I had no conception of the excess to which avarice, cowardice, superstition, ignorance, passionless lust; and all the inexpressible brutalities which degrade human nature, could be carried, until I had passed a few days at Venice.

We have been living this last month near the little town from which I date this letter, in a very pleasant villa which has been lent to us, and we are now on the point of proceeding to Florence, Rome, and Naples — at which last city we shall spend the winter, and return northwards in the spring. Behind us here are the Euganean hills, not as beautiful as those of the Bagni di Lucca, with Arqua, where Petrarch's house and tomb are religiously preserved and visited. At the end of our garden is an extensive Gothic castle, now the habitation of owls and bats, where the Medici family resided before they came to Florence. We see before us the wide flat plains of Lombardy, in which we see the sun and moon rise and set, and the evening star, and all the golden magnificence of autumnal clouds. But I reserve wonder for Naples.

I have been writing — and indeed have just finished the first act of a lyric and classical drama, to be called "Prometheus Unbound." Will you tell me what there is in Cicero about a drama supposed to have been written by Eschylus under this title.

I ought to say that I have just read Malthus in a French translation. Malthus is a very clever man, and the world would be a great gainer if it would seriously take his lessons into consideration, if it were capable of attending seriously to anything but mischief — but what on earth does he mean by some of his inferences!

Yours ever faithfully,

P. B. S.

I will write again from Rome and Florence — in better spirits, and to more agreeable purpose, I hope. You saw those beautiful stanzas in the fourth canto about the Nymph Egeria. Well, I did not whisper a word about nympholepsy: I hope you acquit me — and I hope you will not carry delicacy so far as to let this suppress anything nympholeptic.
LETTER XII.

To T. L. P. Esq.

Ferrara, Nov. 25, 1818.

My dear P.—We left Este yesterday on our journey towards Naples. The roads were particularly bad; we have, therefore, accomplished only two days' journey, of eighteen and twenty-four miles each, and you may imagine that our horses must be tolerably good ones, to drag our carriage, with five people and heavy luggage, through deep and clayey roads. The roads are, however, good during the rest of the way.

The country is flat, but intersected by lines of wood, trellised with vines, whose broad leaves are now stamped with the redness of their decay. Every here and there one sees people employed in agricultural labours, and the plough, the harrow, or the cart, drawn by long teams of milk-white or dove-coloured oxen of immense size and exquisite beauty. This, indeed, might be the country of Pasiphaes. In one farm-yard I was shown sixty-three of these lovely oxen, tied to their stalls, in excellent condition. A farm-yard in this part of Italy is somewhat different from one in England. First, the house, which is large and high, with strange-looking unpainted window-shutters, generally closed, and dreary beyond conception. The farm-yard and out-buildings, however, are usually in the neatest order. The threshing-floor is not under cover, but like that described in the Georgics, usually flattened by a broken column, and neither the mole, nor the toad, nor the ant, can find on its area a crevice for their dwelling. Around it, at this season, are piled the stacks of the leaves and stalks of Indian corn, which has lately been threshed and dried upon its surface. At a little distance are vast heaps of many-coloured zucche or pumpkins, some of enormous size, piled as winter food for the hogs. There are turkeys, too, and fowls wandering about, and two or three dogs, who bark with a sharp hyalactism. The people who are occupied with the care of these things seem neither ill-clothed or ill-fed, and the blunt incivility of their manners has an English air with it, winter food for the hogs. There are turkeys, too, 'hobark with a sharp hylactism. The people who

Jew banker at Venice, another Shylock.—We arrived late at the inn where I now write; it was

once the palace of a Venetian nobleman, and is now an excellent inn. To-morrow we are going to see the sights of Ferrara.

We have had heavy rain and thunder all night; and the former still continuing, we went in the carriage about the town. We went first to look at the cathedral, but the beggars very soon made us sound a retreat; so, whether, as it is said, there is a copy of a picture of Michael Angelo there or no, I cannot tell. At the public library we were more successful. This is, indeed, a magnificent establishment, containing, as they say, 160,000 volumes. We saw some illuminated manuscripts of church music, with the verses of the psalms interlined between the square notes, each of which consisted of the most delicate tracery, in colours inconceivably vivid. They belonged to the neighbouring convent of Certosa, and are three or four hundred years old; but their hues are as fresh as if they had been executed yesterday. The tomb of Ariosto occupies one end of the largest saloon of which the library is composed; it is formed of various marbles, surmounted by an expressive bust of the poet, and subscribed with a few Latin verses, in a less miserable taste than those usually employed for similar purposes. The most interesting exhibitions here, are the writings, &c., of Ariosto and Tasso, which are preserved, and were concealed from the undistinguishing depredations of the French with pious care. There is the arm-chair of Ariosto, an old plain wooden piece of furniture, the hard seat of which was once occupied by, but has now survived its master. I could fancy Ariosto sitting in it; and the satires in his own handwriting which they unfold beside it, and the old bronze inkstand, loaded with figures, which belonged also to him, assists the willing delusion. This inkstand has an antique, rather than an ancient appearance. Three nymphs lean forth from the circumference, and on the top of the lid stands a cupid, winged and looking up, with a torch in one hand, his bow in the other, and his quiver beside him. A medal was bound round the skeleton with this legend—Pro bono malum. What this reverse of the boasted Christian maxim means, or how it applies to Ariosto, either as a satirist or a serious writer, I cannot exactly tell. The cicerone attempted to explain, and it is to his commentary...
that my bewildering is probably due—if, indeed, the meaning be very plain, as is possibly the case.

There is here a manuscript of the entire Gerusalemme Liberata, written by Tasso's own hand; a manuscript of some poems, written in prison, to the Duke Alfonso; and the satires of Ariosto, written also by his own hand; and the Pastor Fido of Guarini. The Gerusalemme, though it had evidently been copied and recopied, is interlined, particularly towards the end, with numerous corrections. The hand-writing of Ariosto is a small, firm, and pointed character, expressing, as I should say, a strong and keen, but circumscribed energy of mind; that of Tasso is large, free, and flowing, except that there is a checked expression in the midst of its flow, which brings the letters into a smaller compass than one expected from the beginning of the word. It is the symbol of an intense and earnest mind, exceeding at times its own depth, and admonished to return by the dullness of the waters of oblivion striking upon its adventurous feet. You know I always seek in what I see the manifestation of something beyond the present and tangible object; and as we do not agree in physiognomy, so we may not agree now. But my business is to relate my own sensations, and not to attempt to inspire others with them. Some of the MSS. of Tasso were sonnets to his persecutor, which contain a great deal of what is called flattery. If Alfonso's ghost were asked how he felt those praises now, I wonder what he would say. But to me there is much more to pity than to condemn in these entreaties and praises of Tasso. It is as a bigot prays to and praises his god, whom he knows to be the most remorseless, capricious, and inflexible of tyrants, but whom he knows also to be omnipotent. Tasso's situation was widely different from that of any persecuted being of the present day; for, from the depth of dungeons, public opinion might now at length be awakened to an echo that would startle the oppressor. But then there was no hope. There is something irresistibly pathetic to me in the sight of Tasso's own hand-writing, moulding expressions of adulation and entreaty to a deaf and stupid tyrant, in an age when the most heroic virtue would have exposed its possessor to hopeless persecution, and—such is the alliance between virtue and genius—which unoffending genius could not escape.

We went afterwards to see his prison in the hospital of Sant' Anna, and I enclose you a piece of the wood of the very door, which for seven years and three months divided this glorious being from the air and the light which had nourished in him those influences which he has communicated, through his poetry, to thousands. The dungeon is low and dark, and, when I say that it is really a very decent dungeon, I speak as one who has seen the prisons in the doges' palace of Venice. But it is a horrible abode for the coarsest and meanest thing that ever wore the shape of man, much more for one of delicate susceptibilities and elevated fancies. It is low, and has a grated window, and being sunk some feet below the level of the earth, is full of unwholesome damps. In the darkest corner is a mark in the wall where the chains were rivetted, which bound him hand and foot. After some time, at the instance of some Cardinal, his friend, the Duke allowed his victim a fire-place; the mark where it was walled up yet remains.

At the entrance of the Liceo, where the library is, we were met by a penitent; his form was completely enveloped in a ghost-like drapery of white flannel; his bare feet were sandalled; and there was a kind of net-work visor drawn over his eyes, so as entirely to conceal his face. I imagine that this man had been adjudged to suffer this penance for some crime known only to himself and his confessor, and this kind of exhibition is a striking instance of the power of the Catholic superstition over the human mind. He passed, rattling his wooden box for charity.

Adieu.—You will hear from me again before I arrive at Naples.

Yours, ever sincerely,
P. B. S.

LETTER XIII.

To T. L. P., Esq.

Bologna, Monday, Nov. 19, 1812.

My dear P,—I have seen a quantity of things here—churches, palaces, statues, fountains, and pictures; and my brain is at this moment like a portfolio of an architect, or a print-shop, or a commonplace-book. I will try to recollect something of what I have seen; for, indeed, it requires, if it will obey, an act of volition. First, we went to the cathedral, which contains nothing remarkable, except a kind of shrine, or rather a marble canopy, loaded with sculptures, and supported on four marble columns. We went then to a palace—I am sure I forget the name of it—where we saw a large gallery of pictures. Of course, in a picture gallery you see three hundred pictures you forget, for one you remember. I remember, however, an interesting picture by Guido, of the Rape of Proserpine, in which Proserpine cast back her languid and half-

* These penitents ask alms, to be spent in masses for the souls in purgatory.
unwilline eyes, as it were, to the flowers she had left ungathered in the fields of Enna. There was an exquisitely executed piece of Correggio, about four saints, one of whom seemed to have a pet dragon in a leash. I was told that it was the devil who was bound in that style—but who can make anything of four saints! For what can they be supposed to be about? There was one painting, indeed, by this master, Christ beatiﬁed, inexpressibly ﬁne. It is a half ﬁgure, seated on a mass of clouds, tinged with an ethereal, rose-like lustre; the arms are expanded; the whole frame seems dilated with expression; the countenance is heavy, as it were, with the weight of the rapture of the spirit; the lips parted, but scarcely parted, with the breath of intense but regulated passion; the eyes are calm and benignant; the whole features harmonised in majesty and sweetness. The hair is parted on the forehead, and falls in heavy locks on each side. It is motionless, but seems as if the faintest breath would move it. The colouring, I suppose, must be very good, if I could remark and understand it. The sky is of a pale aerial orange, like the tint of latest sunset; it does not seem painted; it was trying to catch her back by the hair, and her face was half turned towards him; her long chestnut hair was floating in the stream of the wind, and threw its shadow over her fair forehead. Her hazel eyes were ﬁxed on her pursuer, with a meaning look of playfulness, and a lightsmile was hovering on her lips. The colours which arrayed her delicate limbs were ethereal and warm.

We went to see heaven knows how many more palaces—Ranuzzi, Marriscalchi, Aldobrandi. If you want Italian names for any purpose, here they are; I should be glad of them if I was writing a novel. I saw many more of Guido. One, a Samson drinking water out of an ass’s jaw-bone, in the midst of the slaughtered Philistines. Why he is supposed to do this, God, who gave him this jaw-bone, alone knows—but certain it is, that the painting is a very ﬁne one. The ﬁgure of Samson stands in strong relief in the foreground, coloured, as it were, in the hues of human life, and full of strength and elegance. Round him lie the Philistines in all the attitudes of death. One prone, with the slight convulsion of pain just passing from his forehead, whilst on his lips and chin death lies as heavy as sleep. Another leaning on his arm, with his hand, white and motionless, hanging out beyond. In the distance, more dead bodies; and, still further beyond, the blue sea and the blue mountains, and one white and tranquil sail.

There is a Murder of the Innocents, also, by Guido, finely coloured, with much ﬁne expression—but the subject is very horrible, and it seemed deﬁcient in strength—at least, you require the highest ideal energy, the most poetical and exalted conception of the subject, to reconcile you to such a contemplation. There was a Jesus Christ cruciﬁed, by the same, very ﬁne. One gets tired, indeed, whatever may be the conception and execution of it, of seeing that monotonous and agonised form for ever exhibited in one prescriptive attitude of torture. But the Magdalen, clinging to the cross with the look of passive and gentle despair beaming from beneath her bright ﬂaxen hair, and the ﬁgure of St. John, with his looks uplifted in passionate compassion; his hands clasped, and his ﬁngers twisting themselves together, as it were, with involuntary anguish; his feet almost writhing up from the ground with the same sympathy; and the whole of this arrayed in colours of a diviner nature, yet most like nature’s self. Of the contemplation of this one would never weary.

There was a “Fortune” too, of Guido; a piece of mere beauty. There was the ﬁgure of Fortune on a globe, eagerly proceeding onwards, and Love was trying to catch her back by the hair, and her face was half turned towards him; her long chestnut hair was ﬂoating in the stream of the wind, and threw its shadow over her fair forehead. Her hazel eyes were ﬁxed on her pursuer, with a meaning look of playfulness, and a light smile was hovering on her lips. The colours which arrayed her delicate limbs were ethereal and warm.

But, perhaps, the most interesting of all the pictures of Guido which I saw was a Madonna Lattante. She is leaning over her child, and the maternal feelings with which she is pervaded are shadowed forth on her soft and gentle countenance, and in her simple and affectionate gestures—there is what an unfeeling observer would call a dulness in the expression of her face; her eyes are almost closed; her lip depressed; there is a serious, and even a heavy relaxation, as it were, of all the muscles which are called into action by ordinary emotions: but it is only as if the spirit of love, almost insupportable from its intensity, were brooding over and weighing down the soul, or whatever it is, without which the material frame is inanimate and inexpressive.

There is another painter here, called Franceschini, a Bolognese, who, though certainly very inferior to Guido, is yet a person of excellent powers. One entire church, that of Santa Caterina, is covered by his works. I do not know whether any of his pictures have ever been seen in England. His colouring is less warm than that of Guido, but nothing can be more clear and delicate; it is as if he could have dipped his pencil in the hues of some serenest and star-shining twilight. His forms have the same delicacy and aerial loveliness;
LETTERS FROM ITALY.

their eyes are all bright with innocence and love; their lips scarce divided by some gentle and sweet emotion. His winged children are the loveliest ideal beings ever created by the human mind. These are generally, whether in the capacity of Cherubim or Cupid, accessories to the rest of the picture; and the underplot of their lovely and infantine play is something almost pathetic, from the excess of its unpretending beauty. One of the best of his pieces is an Annunciation of the Virgin;—the Angel is beaming in beauty; the Virgin, soft, retiring, and simple.

We saw, besides, one picture of Raphael—St. Cecilia: this is in another and higher style; you forget that it is a picture as you look at it; and yet it is most unlike any of those things which we call reality. It is of the inspired and ideal kind, and seems to have been conceived and executed in a similar state of feeling to that which produced among the ancients those perfect specimens of poetry and sculpture which are the baffling models of succeeding generations. There is a unity and a perfection in it of an incomunicable kind. The central figure, St. Cecilia, seems rapt in such inspiration as produced her image in the painter’s mind; her deep, dark, eloquent eyes lifted up; her chestnut hair flung back from her forehead—she holds an organ in her hands—her countenance, as it were, calmed by the depth of its passion and rapture, and penetrated throughout with the warm and radiant light of life. She is listening to the music of heaven, and, as I imagine, has just ceased to sing, for the four figures that surround her evidently point, by their attitudes, towards her; particularly St. John, who, with a tender yet impassioned gesture, bends his countenance towards her, languid with the depth of his emotion. At her feet lie various instruments of music, broken and unstrung. Of the colouring I do not speak; it eclipses nature, yet it has all her truth and softness.

We saw some pictures of Domenichino, Caracci, Albano, Guerino, Elizabetta Sirani. The two former, remember, I do not pretend to taste—I cannot admire. Of the latter there are some beautiful Madonnas. There are several of Guerino, which they said were very fine. I dare say they were, for the strength and complication of his figures made my head turn round. One, indeed, was certainly powerful. It was the representation of the founder of the Carthusians exercising his austerities in the desert, with a youth as his attendant, kneeling beside him at an altar: on another altar stood a skull and a crucifix; and around were the rocks and the trees of the wilderness. I never saw such a figure as this fellow. His face was wrinkled like a dried snake’s skin, and drawn in long hard lines: his very hands were wrinkled. He looked like an animated mummy. He was clothed in a loose dress of death-coloured flannel, such as you might fancy a shroud might be, after it had wrapped a corpse a month or two. It had a yellow, putrified, ghastly hue, which is cast on all the objects around, so that the hands and face of the Carthusian and his companion were jaundiced by this sepulchral glimmer.

Why write books against religion, when we may hang up such pictures! But the world either will not or cannot see. The gloomy effect of this was softened, and, at the same time, its sublimity diminished, by the figure of the Virgin and Child in the sky, looking down with admiration on the monk, and a beautiful flying figure of an angel.

Enough of pictures. I saw the place where Guido and his mistress, Elizabetta Sirani, were buried. This lady was poisoned at the age of twenty-six, by another lover, a rejected one of course. Our guide said she was very ugly, and that we might see her portrait to-morrow.

Well, good-night, for the present. “To-morrow to fresh fields and pastures new.”

To-day we first went to see those divine pictures of Raffael and Guido again, and then rode up the mountains, behind this city, to visit a chapel dedicated to the Madonna. It made me melancholy to see that they had been varnishing and restoring some of these pictures, and that even some had been pierced by the French bayonets. These are symptoms of the mortality of man, and, perhaps, few of his works are more evanescent than paintings. Sculpture retains its freshness for twenty centuries—the Apollo and the Venus are as they were. But books are perhaps the only productions of man coeval with the human race. Sophocles and Shakspeare can be produced and reproduced for ever. But how evanescent are paintings! and must necessarily be. Those of Zeuxis and Apelles are no more; and perhaps they bore the same relation to Homer and Aeschylos, that those of Guido and Raffael bear to Dante and Petrarch. There is one refuge from the despondency of this contemplation. The material part, indeed, of their works must perish, but they survive in the mind of man, and the resonances connected with them are transmitted from generation to generation. The poet embodies them in his creations; the systems of philosophers are modelled to gentleness by their contemplation: opinion, that legislator, is infected with their influence; men become better and wiser; and
the unseen seeds are perhaps thus sown, which shall produce a plant more excellent even than that from which they fell. But all this might as well be said or thought at Marlow as Bologna.

The chapel of the Madonna is a very pretty Corinthian building—very beautiful indeed. It commands a fine view of these fertile plains, the many-folded Apennines, and the city. I have just returned from a moonlight walk through Bologna. It is a city of colonnades, and the effect of moonlight is strikingly picturesque. There are two towers here—one 400 feet high—ugly things, built of brick, which lean both different ways; and with the delusion of moonlight shadows, you might almost fancy that the city is rocked by an earthquake. They say they were built so on purpose; but I observe in all the plain of Lombardy the church towers lean.

Adieu.—God grant you patience to read this long letter, and courage to support the expectation of the next. Pray part them from the Cobbetta on your breakfast table—they may fight it out in your mind.

Yours ever, most sincerely,
P. B. S.

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LETTER XIV.
To T. L. P., Esq.

Rome, November 30th, 1818.

My dear P.—Behold me in the capital of the vanished world! But I have seen nothing except St. Peter’s and the Vatican, overlooking the city in the mist of distance, and the Dogana, where they took us to have our luggage examined, which is built between the ruins of a temple to Antoninus Pius. The Corinthian columns rise over the dwindled palaces of the modern town, and the wrought cornice is changed on one side, as it were, to masses of wave-worn precipes, which overhang you, far, far on high.

I take advantage of this rainy evening, and before Rome has effaced all other recollections, to endeavour to recall the vanished scenes through which we have passed. We left Bologna, I forget on what day, and passing by Rimini, Fano, and Foligno, along the Via Flaminia and Terni, have arrived at Rome after ten days’ somewhat tedious, but most interesting journey. The most remarkable things we saw were the Roman excavations in the rock, and the great waterfall of Terni. Of course you have heard that there is a Roman bridge and a triumphal arch at Rimini, and in what excellent taste they are built. The bridge is not unlike the Strand bridge, but more bold in proportion, and of course infinitely smaller.

From Fano we left the coast of the Adriatic, and entered the Apennines, following the course of the Matesurus, the banks of which were the scene of the defeat of Asdrubal; and it is said (you can refer to the book) that Livy has given a very exact and animated description of it. I forget all about it, but shall look as soon as our boxes are opened. Following the river, the vale contracts, the banks of the river become steep and rocky, the forests of oak and ilex which overhang its emerald-coloured stream, cling to their abrupt precipes. About four miles from Fossombrone, the river forces for itself a passage between the walls and toppling precipes of the loftiest Apennines, which are here rifted to their base, and undermined by the narrow and tumultuous torrent. It was a cloudy morning, and we had no conception of the scene that awaited us. Suddenly the low clouds were struck by the clear north wind, and like curtains of the finest gauze, removed one by one, were drawn from before the mountain, whose heaven-cleaving pinnacles and black crags overhanging one another, stood at length defined in the light of day. The road runs parallel to the river, at a considerable height, and is carried through the mountain by a vaulted cavern. The marks of the chisel of the legionaries of the Roman Consul are yet evident.

We passed on day after day, until we came to Spoleto, I think the most romantic city I ever saw. There is here an aqueduct of astonishing elevation, which unites two rocky mountains—there is the path of a torrent below, whitening the green dell with its broad and barren track of stones, and above there is a castle, apparently of great strength and of tremendous magnitude, which overhangs the city, and whose marble bastions are perpendicular with the precipice. I never saw a more impressive picture; in which the shapes of nature are of the grandest order, but over which the creations of man, sublime from their antiquity and greatness, seem to predominate. The castle was built by Belisarius or Narses, I forget which, but was of that epoch.

From Spoleto we went to Terni, and saw the cataract of the Velino. The glaciers of Montanvert and the source of the Arveiron is the grandest spectacle I ever saw. This is the second. Imagine a river sixty feet in breadth, with a vast volume of waters, the outlet of a great lake among the higher mountains, falling 300 feet into a sightless gulf of snow-white vapour, which bursts up for ever and for ever from a circle of black crags, and thence leaping downwards, made five or six other cataracts, each fifty or a hundred feet high, which, exhibit, on a smaller scale, and with beautiful and sublime variety, the same appearances. But words
before. It is as white as snow, but thick and tawny folds, flaking off like solid snow gliding down a mountain. It does not seem hollow within, but without it is unequal, like the folding of linen thrown carelessly down; your eye follows it, and it is lost below; not in the black rocks which gird it around, but in its own foam and spray, in the cloud-like vapours boiling up from below, which is not like rain, nor mist, nor spray, nor foam, but water, in a shape wholly unlike anything I ever saw before. It is as white as snow, but thick and impenetrable to the eye. The very imagination is bewildered in it. A thunder comes up from the abyss wonderful to hear; for, though it ever sounds, it is never the same, but, modulated by the changing motion, rises and falls intermittently; we passed half an hour in one spot looking at it, and thought but a few minutes had gone by. The surrounding scenery is, in its kind, the loveliest and most sublime that can be conceived. In our surrounding scenery is, in its kind, the loveliest and most sublime that can be conceived. In our first walk we passed through some olive groves, of large and ancient trees, whose hoary and twisted trunks leaned in all directions. We then crossed a path of orange trees by the riverside, laden with their golden fruit, and came to a forest of ilex of a large size, whose evergreen and acorn-bearing boughs were intertwined over our winding path. Around, hemming in the narrow vale, were pinnacles of lofty mountains of pyramidal rock clothed with all evergreen plants and trees; the vast pine whose feathery foliage trembled in the blue air, the ilex, that ancestral inhabitant of these mountains, the arbutus with its crimson-coloured fruit and glittering leaves. After an hour’s walk, we came beneath the cataract of Terni, within the distance of half a mile; nearer you cannot approach, for the Nar, which has here its confluence with the river formed by this confluence, over a narrow natural bridge of rock, and saw the cataract from the platform I first mentioned. We think of spending some time next year near this waterfall. The inn is very bad, or we should have stayed there longer.

We came from Terni last night to a place called Nepi, and to-day arrived at Rome across the much-belied Campagna di Roma, a place I confess infinitely to my taste. It is a flattering picture of Bagshot Heath. But then there are the Apennines on one side, and Rome and St. Peter’s on the other, and it is intersected by perpetual della clothed with arbutus and ilex.

Adieu—very faithfully yours, P. B. S.

LETTER XV.

To T. L. P., Esq.

Naples, December 22, 1818.

My dear P.—I have received a letter from you here, dated November 1st; you see the reciprocation of letters from the term of our travels is more slow. I entirely agree with what you say about Childre Harold. The spirit in which it is written is, if insane, the most wicked and mischievous insanity that ever was given forth. It is a kind of obstinate and self-willed folly, in which he hardens himself. I demonstrated with him in vain on the tone of mind from which such a view of things alone arises. For its real root is very different from its apparent one. Nothing can be less sublime than the true source of these expressions of contempt and desperation. The fact is, that first, the Italian women with whom he associates, are perhaps the most contemptible of all who exist under the moon—the most ignorant, the most disgusting, the most bigoted; • • • • • an ordinary Englishman cannot approach them. Well, L. B. is familiar with the lowest sort of these women, the people his gondoliers pick up in the streets. He associates with whores who seem almost to have lost the gait and physiognomy of man, and who do not scruple to avow practices which are not only not named, but I believe seldom even conceived in England. He says he disapproves, but he endures. He is heartily and deeply discontented with himself; and contemplating in the distorted mirror of his own thoughts the nature and the destiny of man, what can he behold but objects of contempt and despair! But that he is a great poet, I think the address to Ocean proves. And he has a certain degree of candour while you talk to him, but unfortunately it does not outlast your departure. No, I do not doubt, and, for his sake, I ought to hope, that his present career must end soon in some violent circumstance.

Since I last wrote to you, I have seen the ruins of Rome, the Vatican, St. Peter’s, and all the miracles of ancient and modern art contained in that majestic city. The impression of it exceeds anything I have ever experienced in my travels. We stayed there only a week, intending to return at the end of February, and devote two or three months to its mines of inexhaustible contemplation, to which period I refer you for a minute account of it. We visited the Forum and the ruins of the Coliseum every day. The Coliseum is unlike any work of human hands I ever saw before. It is of enormous height and circuit, and the arches built of massy stones are piled on one another,
and jut into the blue air, shattered into the forms of overhanging rocks. It has been changed by time into the image of an amphitheatre of rocky hills overgrown by the wild olive, the myrtle, and the fig-tree, and threaded by little paths, which wind among its ruined stairs and immeasurable galleries: the copsewood overshadows you as you wander through its labyrinthins, and the wild weeds of this climate of flowers bloom under your feet. The arena is covered with grass, and pierces, like the skirts of a natural plain, the chasms of the broken arches around. But a small part of the exterior circumference remains—it is exquisitely broken arches around. But a small part of the interior is all ruin. I can scarcely believe that when encrusted with Dorian marble and ornamented by columns of Egyptian granite, its effect could have been so sublime and so impressive as in its present state. It is open to the sky, and it was the clear and sunny weather of the end of November in this climate when we visited it, day after day.

Near it is the arch of Constantine, or rather the arch of Trajan; for the servile and avaricious senate of degraded Rome ordered, that the monument of his predecessor should be demolished in order to dedicate one to the Christian reptile, who had crept among the blood of his murdered family to the supreme power. It is exquisitely beautiful and perfect. The Forum is a plain in the midst of Rome, a kind of desert full of heaps of stones and pits; and though so near the habitations of men, is the most desolate place you can conceive. The ruins of temples stand in and around it, shattered columns and ranges of others complete, supporting cornices of exquisite workmanship, and vast vaults of shattered domes distinct with regular compartments, once filled with sculptures of ivory or brass. The temples, of Jupiter, and Concord, and Peace, and the Sun, and the Moon, and Vesta, are all within a short distance of this spot. Behold the wrecks of what a great nation once dedicated to the abstractions of the mind! Rome is a city, as it were, of the dead, or rather of those who cannot die, and who survive the puny generations which inhabit and pass over the spot which they have made sacred to eternity. In Rome, at least in the first enthusiasm of your recognition of ancient time, you see nothing of the Italians. The nature of the city assists the delusion, for its vast and antique walls describe a circumference of sixteen miles, and thus the population is thinly scattered over this space, nearly as great as London. Wide wild fields are enclosed within it, and there are grassy lanes and copses winding among the ruins, and a great green hill, lonely and bare, which overhangs the Tiber. The gardens of the modern palaces are like wild woods of cedar, and cypress, and pine, and the neglected walks are overgrown with weeds. The English burying-place is a green slope near the walls, under the pyramidal tomb of Cestius, and is, I think, the most beautiful and solemn cemetery I ever beheld. To see the sun shining on its bright grass, fresh, when we first visited it, with the autumnal dews, and hear the whispering of the wind among the leaves of the trees which have overgrown the tomb of Cestius, and the soil which is stirring in the sun-warm earth, and to mark the tombs, mostly of women and young people who were buried there, one might, if one were to die, desire the sleep they seem to sleep. Such is the human mind, and so it peoples with its wishes vacancy and oblivion.

I have told you little about Rome; but I reserve the Pantheon, and St. Peter’s, and the Vatican, and Raffael, for my return. About a fortnight ago I left Rome, and Mary and C—— followed in three days, for it was necessary to procure lodgings here without alighting at an inn. From my peculiar mode of travelling I saw little of the country, but could just observe that the wild beauty of the scenery and the barbarous ferocity of the inhabitants progressively increased. On entering Naples, the first circumstance that engaged my attention was an assassination. A youth ran out of a shop, pursued by a woman with a bludgeon, and a man armed with a knife. The man overtook him, and with one blow in the neck laid him dead in the road. On my expressing the emotions of horror and indignation which I felt, a Calabrian priest, who travelled with me, laughed heartily, and attempted to quiz me, as what the English call a flat. I never felt such an inclination to beat any one. Heaven knows I have little power, but he saw that I looked extremely displeased, and was silent. This same man, a fellow of gigantic strength and stature, had expressed the most frantic terror of robbers on the road; he cried at the sight of my pistol, and it had been with great difficulty that the joint exertions of myself and the vetturino had quieted his hysterics.

But external nature in these delightful regions contrasts with and compensates for the deformity and degradation of humanity. We have a lodging divided from the sea by the royal gardens, and from our windows we see perpetually the blue waters of the bay, forever changing, yet forever the same, and encompassed by the mountainous island of Caprese, the lofty peaks which overhang
Salerno, and the woody hill of Posilipo, whose promontories hide from us Misenum and the lofty isle Inarime, which, with its divided summit, forms the opposite horn of the bay. From the pleasant walks of the garden we see Vesuvius; a smoke by day and a fire by night is seen upon its summit, and the glassy sea often reflects its light or shadow. The climate is delicious. We sit without a fire, with the windows open, and have almost all the productions of an English summer. The weather is usually like what Wordsworth calls "the first fine day of March;" sometimes very much warmer, though perhaps it wants that "each minute sweeter than before," which gives an intoxicating sweetness to the awakening of the earth from its winter's sleep in England. We have made two excursions, one to Baiæ and one to Vesuvius, and we propose to visit, successively, the islands, Psestum, Pompeii, and Beneventum.

We set off an hour after sunrise one radiant morning in a little boat; there was not a cloud in the sky, nor a wave upon the sea, which was so translucent that you could see the hollow caverns clothed with the glaucous sea-moss, and the leaves and branches of those delicate woods that pave the unequal bottom of the water. As noon approached, the heat, and especially the light, became intense. We passed Posilipo, and came first to the eastern point of the bay of Puzzoli, which is within the great bay of Naples, and which again encloses that of Baiæ. Here are lofty rocks and craggy islets, with arches and portals of precipices standing in the sea, and enormous caverns, which echoed faintly with the murmur of the languid tide. This great bay of Naples, and which again encloses that of Baiæ, and which again encloses that of Baiæ, is called La Scuola di Virgilio. We then went directly across to the promontory of Misenum, leaving the precipitous island of Nitids on the right. Here we were conducted to see the Mare Morto, and the Elysian fields; the spot on which Avernus was once a chasm of deadly and pestilential vapours. About half a mile from Avernus, a high hill, called Monte Novo, was thrown up by volcanic fire.

Passing onward we came to Pozzoli, the ancient Diomede, where there are the columns remaining of a temple to Scaprés, and the wreck of an enormous amphitheatre, changed, like the Colosseum, into a natural hill of the overteeming vegetation. Here also is the Solfátara, of which there is a poetical description in the Civil War of Petronius, beginning—"Est locus," and in which the verses of the poet are infinitely finer than what he describes, for it is not a very curious place. After seeing these things we returned by moonlight to Naples in our boat. What colours there were in the sky, what radiance in the evening star, and how the moon was encompassed by a light unknown to our regions!

Our next excursion was to Vesuvius. We went to Resina in a carriage, where Mary and I mounted mules, and — was carried in a chair on the shoulders of four men, much like a member of parliament after he has gained his election, and looking, with less reason, quite as frightened. So we arrived at the hermitage of San Salvador, where an old hermit, belted with rope, set forth the pistes for our refreshment.

Vesuvius is, after the Glaciers, the most impressive exhibition of the energies of nature I ever saw. It has not the immeasurable greatness, the overpowering magnificence, nor, above all, the radiating beauty of the glaciers; but it has all their character of tremendous and irresistible strength. From Resina to the hermitage you wind up the mountain, and cross a vast stream of hardened lava, which is an actual image of the waves of the sea, changed into hard black stone by enchantment. The lines of the boiling flood seem to hang in the air, and it is difficult to believe that the billows which seem hurrying down upon you are not actually in motion. This plain was once a sea of liquid fire. From the hermitage we crossed another vast stream of lava, and then went on foot up the cone—this is the only part of the ascent in which there is
difficulty, and that difficulty has been much exaggerated. It is composed of rocks of lava, and declivities of ashes; by ascending the former and descending the latter, there is very little fatigue. On the summit is a kind of irregular plain, the most horrible chaos that can be imagined; riven into ghastly chasms, and heaped up with tumuli of great stones and cinders, and enormous rocks blackened and calcined, which had been thrown from the volcano upon one another in terrible confusion. In the midst stands the conical hill from which volumes of smoke, and the fountains of liquid fire, are rolled forth forever. The mountain is present in a slight state of eruption; and a thick heavy white smoke is perpetually rolled out, interrupted by enormous columns of an impene- trable black bituminous vapour, which is hurled up, fold after fold, into the sky with a deep hollow sound, and fiery stones are rained down from its darkness, and a black shower of ashes fell even where we sat. The lava, like the glacier, creeps on perpetually, with a cracking sound as of suppressed fire. There are several springs of lava; and in one place it rushes precipitously over a high crag, rolling down the half-molten rocks and its own overhanging waves; a cataract of quivering fire. We approached the extremity of one of the rivers of lava; it is about twenty feet in breadth and ten in height; and as the inclined plane was not rapid, its motion was very slow. We saw the masses of its dark exterior surface detach themselves as it moved, and betray the depth of the liquid flame. In the day the fire is but slightly seen; you only see the pleasure it would give me to welcome such a party.

I have depression enough of spirits and not good health, though I believe the warm air of Naples does me good. We see absolutely no one here. Adieu, my dear P——.

Affectionately your friend,

P. B. S.

LETTER XVI.

To T. L. P., Esq.

Naples, Jan. 26th, 1819.

My dear P., — Your two letters arrived within a few days of each other, one being directed to Naples, and the other to Livorno. They are more welcome visitors to me than mine can be to you. I writing as from sepulchres, you from the habitations of men yet unburaed; though the sexton, Castlereagh, after having dug their grave, stands with his spade in his hand, evidently doubting whether he will not be forced to occupy it himself. Your news about the bank-note trials is excellent good. Do I not recognise in it the influence of Cobbett! You don’t tell me what occupies Parliament. I know you will laugh at my demand, and assure me that it is indifferent. Your pamphlet I want exceedingly to see. Your calculations in the
letter are clear, but require much oral explanation. You know I am an infernal arithmetician. If none but me had contemplated "lucentemque globum lunae, Titaniaque astra," the world would yet have doubted whether they were many hundred feet higher than the mountain tops.

In my accounts of pictures and things, I am more pleased to interest you than the many; and this is fortunate, because, in the first place, I have no idea of attempting the latter, and if I did attempt it, I should assuredly fail. A perception of the beautiful characterises those who differ from ordinary men, and those who can perceive it would not buy enough to pay the printer. Besides, I keep no journal, and the only records of my voyage will be the letters I send you. The bodily fatigue of standing for hours in galleries exhausts me; I believe that I don't see half that I ought, on that account. And then we know nobody; and the common Italians are so sullen and stupid, it's impossible to get information from them. At Rome, where the people seem superior to any in Italy, I cannot fail to stumble on something. If I had health, and strength, and equal spirits, if I had no conception of anything so perfect yet discovered of all ages, and harmonising the contending creeds by which mankind have been ruled. Far from me is such an attempt, and I shall be content, by exercising my fancy, to amuse myself, and perhaps some others, and cast what weight I can into the scale of that balance, which the Giant of Arthegall holds.

Since you last heard from me, we have been to see Pompeii, and are waiting now for the return of spring weather, to visit, first, Pestum, and then the islands; after which we shall return to Rome. I was astonished at the remains of this city; I had no conception of anything so perfect yet remaining. My idea of the mode of its destruction was this:—First, an earthquake shattered it, and unroofed almost all its temples, and split its columns; then a rain of light small pumice-stones fell; then torrents of boiling water, mixed with ashes, filled up all its crevices. A wide, flat hill, from which the city was excavated, is now covered by thick woods, and you see the tombs and the theatres, the temples and the houses, surrounded by the uninhabited wilderness. We entered the town from the side towards the sea, and first saw two theatres; one more magnificent than the other, strewn with the ruins of the white marble which formed their seats and cornices, wrought with deep, bold sculpture. In the front, between the stage and the seats, is the circular space, occasionally occupied by the chorus. The stage is very narrow, but long, and divided from this space by a narrow enclosure parallel to it, I suppose for the orchestra. On each side are the consul's boxes, and below, in the theatre at Herculanum, were found two equestrian statues of admirable workmanship, occupying the same place as the great bronze lamps did at Drury Lane. The smallest of the theatres is said to have been comic, though I should doubt. From both you see, as you sit on the seats, a prospect of the most wonderful beauty.

You then pass through the ancient streets; they are very narrow, and the houses rather small, but all constructed on an admirable plan, especially for this climate. The rooms are built round a court, or sometimes two, according to the extent of the house. In the midst is a fountain, sometimes surrounded with a portico, supported on fluted columns of white stucco; the floor is paved with mosaic, sometimes wrought in imitation of vine leaves, sometimes in quaint figures, and more or less beautiful, according to the rank of the inhabitant. There were paintings on all, but most of them have been removed to decorate the royal museums. Little winged figures, and small ornaments of exquisite elegance, yet remain. There is an ideal life in the forms of these paintings of an incomparable loveliness, though most are evidently the work of very inferior artists. It seems as if, from the atmosphere of mental beauty which surrounded them, every human being caught a splendour not his own. In one house you see how the bed-rooms were managed:—a small sofa was built up, where the cushions were placed; two pictures, one representing Diana and Endymion, the other Venus and Mars, decorate the chamber; and a little niche, which contains the statue of a domestic god. The floor is composed of a rich mosaic of the rarest marbles, agate, jasper, and porphyry; it looks to the marble fountain and the snow-white columns, whose entablatures strew the floor of the portico they supported. The houses have only one story, and the apartments, though not large, are very lofty. A great advantage results from this, wholly unknown in our cities. The public buildings, whose ruins are now forests as it were of white fluted columns, and which then supported entablatures, loaded with sculptures, were seen on all sides over the roofs of the houses. This was the excellence of the ancients. Their
private expenses were comparatively moderate; the dwelling of one of the chief senators of Pompeii is elegant indeed, and adorned with most beautiful specimens of art, but small. But their public buildings are everywhere marked by the bold and grand designs of an unsparing magnificence. In the little town of Pompeii, it is wonderful to see the number and the grandeur of their public buildings. Another advantage, too, is that, in the present case, the glorious scenery around is not shut out, and that, unlike the inhabitants of the Cimmerian ravines of modern cities, the ancient Pompeians could contemplate the clouds and the lamps of heaven; could see the moon rise high behind Vesuvius, and the sun set in the sea, tremulous with an atmosphere of golden vapour, between Inarime and Misenum.

We next saw the temples. Of the temple of Esculapius little remains but an altar of black stone, adorned with a cornice imitating the scales of a serpent. His statue, in terra-cotta, was found in the cell. The temple of Isis is more perfect. It is surrounded by a portico of fluted columns, and in the area around it are two altars, and many ceppi for statues; and a little chapel of white stucco, as hard as stone, of the most exquisite proportion; its panels are adorned with figures in bas-relief, slightly indicated, but of a workmanship the most delicate and perfect that can be conceived. They are Egyptian subjects, executed by a Greek artist, who has harmonised all the unnatural extravagances of the original conception into the supernatural loveliness of his country's genius. They scarcely touch the ground with their feet, and their wind-uplifted robes seem in the place of wings. The temple in the midst raised on a high platform, and approached by steps, was decorated with exquisite paintings, some of which we saw in the museum at Portici. It is small, of the same materials as the chapel, with a pavement of mosaic, and fluted Ionic columns of white stucco, so white that it dazzles you to look at it.

Thence through other porticoes and labyrinths of walls and columns, (for I cannot hope to detail everything to you,) we came to the Forum. This is a large square, surrounded by lofty porticoes of fluted columns, some broken, some entire, their entablatures strewed under them. The temple of Jupiter, of Venus, and another temple, the Tribunal, and the Hall of Public Justice, with their forests of lofty columns, surround the Forum. Two pedestals or altars of an enormous size, (for, whether they supported equestrian statues, or were the altars of the temple of Venus, before which they stand, the guide could not tell,) occupy the lower end of the Forum. At the upper end, supported on an elevated platform, stands the temple of Jupiter. Under the colonnade of its portico we sat, and pulled out our oranges, and figs, and bread, and mediare, (sorry fare, you will say,) and rested to eat. Here was a magnificent spectacle. Above and between the multitudinous shafts of the sun-shining columns was seen the sea, reflecting the purple heaven of noon above it, and supporting, as it were, on its line the dark lofty mountains of Sorrento, of a blue inexpressibly deep, and tinged towards their summits with streaks of new-fallen snow. Between was one small green island. To the right was Capreae, Inarime, Prochyta, and Misenum. Behind was the single summit of Vesuvius, rolling forth volumes of thick white smoke, whose foam-like column was sometimes darted into the clear dark sky, and fell in little streaks along the wind. Between Vesuvius and the nearer mountains, as through a chasm, was seen the main line of the loftiest Apennines, to the east. The day was radiant and warm. Every now and then we heard the subterranean thunder of Vesuvius; its distant deep peals seemed to shake the very air and light of day, which interpenetrated our frames, with the sullen and tremendous sound. This scene was what the Greeks beheld (Pompeii, you know, was a Greek city). They lived in harmony with nature; and the interstices of their incomparable columns were portals, as it were, to admit the spirit of beauty which animates this glorious universe to visit those whom it inspired. If such is Pompeii, what was Athens? What scene was exhibited from the Acropolis, the Parthenon, and the temples of Hercules, and Theseus, and the Winds? The islands and the Egean sea, the mountains of Argolis, and the peaks of Pindus and Olympus, and the darkness of the Boeotian forests interspersed!

From the Forum we went to another public place; a triangular portico, half enclosing the ruins of an enormous temple. It is built on the edge of the hill overlooking the sea. That black point is the temple. In the apex of the triangle stands an altar and a fountain, and before the altar once stood the statue of the builder of the portico. Returning hence, and following the consular road, we came to the eastern gate of the city. The walls are of enormous strength, and inclose a space of three miles. On each side of the road beyond the gate are built the tombs. How unlike ours! They seem not so much hiding-places for that which must decay, as voluptuous chambers for immortal spirits. They
are of marble, radiantly white; and two, especially beautiful, are loaded with exquisite bas-reliefs. On the stucco-wall that incloses them are little emblematic figures, of a relief exceedingly low, of dead and dying animals, and little winged genii, and female forms bending in groups in some funereal office. The higher reliefs represent, one a nautical subject, and the other a Bacchanalian one. Within the cell stand the cinerary urns, sometimes one, sometimes more. It is said that paintings were found within; which are now, as has been everything moveable in Pompeii, removed, and scattered about in royal museums. These tombs were the most impressive things of all. The wild woods surround them on either side; and along the broad stones of the paved road which divides them, you hear the late leaves of autumn shiver and rustle in the stream of the inconstant wind, as it were, like the step of ghosts. The radiance and magnificence of these dwellings of the dead, the white freshness of the scarcely finished marble, the impassioned or imaginative life of the figures which adorn them, contrast strangely with the simplicity of the houses of those who were living when Vesuvius overwhelmed them.

I have forgotten the amphitheatre, which is of great magnitude, though much inferior to the Coliseum. I now understand why the Greeks were such great poets; and, above all, I can account, it seems to me, for the harmony, the unity, the perfection, the uniform excellence, of all their works of art. They lived in a perpetual commerce with external nature, and nourished themselves upon the spirit of its forms. Their theatres were all open to the mountains and the sky. Their columns, the ideal types of a sacred forest, with its roof of interwoven tracery, admitted the light and wind; the odour and the freshness of the country penetrated the cities. Their temples were mostly upaithric; and the flying clouds, the stars, or the deep sky, were seen above. Oh, but for that series of wretched wars which terminated in the Roman conquest of the world; but for the Christian religion, which put the finishing stroke on the ancient system; but for those changes that conducted Athens to its ruin,—to what an eminence might not humanity have arrived!

In a short time I hope to tell you something of the museum of this city. You see how ill I follow the maxim of Horace, at least in its literal sense: "nil admirari"—which I should say, "properes est una"—to prevent there ever being anything admirable in the world. Fortunately Plato is of my opinion; and I had rather err with Plato than be right with Horace.

At this moment I received your letter, indicating that you are removing to London. I am very much interested in the subject of this change, and beg you would write me all the particulars of it. You will be able now to give me perhaps a closer insight into the politics of the times than was permitted you at Marlow. Of H—I have a very slight opinion. There are rumours here of a revolution in Spain. A ship came in twelve days from Catalonia, and brought a report that the king was massacred; that eighteen thousand insurgents surrounded Madrid; but that before the popular party gained head enough, seven thousand were murdered by the Inquisition. Perhaps you know all by this time. The old king of Spain is dead here. Cobbett is a fine <i>apprætor</i>—does his influence increase or diminish? What a pity that so powerful a genius should be combined with the most odious moral qualities.

We have reports here of a change in the English ministry—to what does it amount? for, besides my national interest in it, I am on the watch to vindicate my most sacred rights, invaded by the chancery court.

I suppose now we shall not see you in Italy this spring, whether Hunt comes or not. It's probable I shall hear nothing from him for some months, particularly if he does not come. Give me some nouvelles.

I am under an English surgeon here, who says I have a disease of the liver, which he will cure. We keep horses, as this kind of exercise is absolutely essential to my health. Elise* has just married our Italian servant, and has quitted us; the man was a great rascal, and cheated enormously: this event was very much against our advice.

I have scarcely been out since I wrote last. Adieu!—Yours most faithfully,

P. B. S.

**LETTER XVII.**

To T. L. P. Esq.

Rome, March 23rd. 1819.

My dear P.,—I wrote to you the day before our departure from Naples. We came by slow journeys, with our own horses, to Rome, resting one day at Mola di Gaeta, at the inn called Villa di Ciccone, from being built on the ruins of his Villa, whose immense substructions overhang the sea, and are scattered among the orange-groves. Nothing can be lovelier than the scene from the terraces of the inn. On one side precipitous

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* A Swiss girl whom we had engaged as nursery-maid two years before, at Geneva.
mountains, whose bases slope into an inclined plane of olive and orange copse—the latter forming, as it were, an emerald sky of leaves, starred with innumerable globes of their ripening fruit, whose rich splendour contrasted with the deep green foliage; on the other the sea—bounded on one side by the antique town of Gaeta, and the other by what appears to be an island, the promontory of Circe. From Gaeta to Terracina the whole scenery is of the most sublime character. At Terracina, precipitous conical crags of immense height shoot into the sky and overhang the sea. At Albano, we arrived again in sight of Rome. Arches after arches in unending lines stretching across the uninhabited wilderness, the blue defined line of the mountains seen between them; masses of nameless ruin standing like rocks out of the plain; and the plain itself, with its billowy and unequal surface, announced the neighbourhood of Rome. And what shall I say to you of Rome! If I speak of the inanimatc ruins, the rude stones piled upon stones, which are these pulchres of the fame of those who once arrayed them with the beauty which has faded, will you believe me insensible to the vital, the almost breathing creations of genius yet subsisting in their perfection! What has become, you will ask, of the Apollo, the Gladiator, the Venus of the Capitol! What of the Apollo di Relvedere, the Laocoon! What of Raphael and Guido! These things are best spoken of when the mind has drunk in the spirit of their forms; and little indeed can I, who must devote no more than a few months to the contemplation of them, hope to know or feel of their profound beauty.

I think I told you of the Coliseum, and its impressions on me on my first visit to this city. The next most considerable relic of antiquity, considered as a ruin, is the Thermes of Caracalla. These consist of six enormous chambers, above 200 feet in height, and each enclosing a vast space like that of a field. There are, in addition, a number of towers and labyrinthine recesses, hidden and woven over by the wild growth of weeds and ivy. Never was any desolation more sublime and lovely. The perpendicular wall of ruin is cloven into steep ravines filled up with flowering shrubs, whose thick twisted roots are knotted in the ruts of the stones. At every step the aerial pinnacles of shattered stone group into new combinations of effect, and tower above the lofty yet level walls, as the distant mountains change their aspect to one travelling rapidly along the plain. The perpendicular walls resemble nothing more than that cliff of Bisham wood, that is overgrown with wood, and yet is stony and precipitous—you know the one I mean; not the chalk-pit, but the spot that has the pretty copse of fir-trees and privet-bushes at its base, and where H—— and I scrambled up, and you, to my infinite discontent, would go home. These walls surround green and level spaces of lawn, on which some elms have grown, and which are interspersed towards their skirts by masses of the fallen ruin, overwinded with the broad leaves of the creeping weeds. The blue sky canopies it, and is as the everlasting roof of these enormous halls.

But the most interesting effect remains. In one of the buttresses, that supports an immense and lofty arch, “which bridges the very winds of heaven,” are the crumbling remains of an antique winding staircase, whose sides are open in many places to the precipice. This you ascend, and arrive on the summit of these piles. There grow on every side thick entangled wildernesses of myrtle, and the myrtillus, and bay, and the flowering laurestinus, whose white blossoms are just developed, will you believe me insensible to the vital, the almost breathing creations of genius yet subsisting in their perfection! What has become, you will ask, of the Apollo, the Gladiator, the Venus of the Capitol! What of the Apollo di Relvedere, the Laocoon! What of Raphael and Guido! These things are best spoken of when the mind has drunk in the spirit of their forms; and little indeed can I, who must devote no more than a few months to the contemplation of them, hope to know or feel of their profound beauty.

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extent, your imagination will fill up all that I am unable to express of this astonishing scene.

I speak of these things not in the order in which I visited them, but in that of the impression which they made on me, or perhaps chance directs. The ruins of the ancient Forum are so far fortunate that they have not been walled up in the modern city. They stand in an open, lonesome place, bounded on one side by the modern city, and the other by the Palatine Mount, covered with shapeless masses of ruin. The tourists tell you all about these things, and I am afraid of stumbling on their language when I enumerate what is so well known. There remain eight granite columns of the Ionic order, with their entablature, of the temple of Concord, founded by Camillus. I fear that the immense expense demanded by these columns forbids us to hope that they are the remains of any edifice dedicated by that most perfect and virtuous of men. It is supposed to have been repaired under the Eastern Emperors; alas, what a contrast of recollections! Near them stand those Corinthian fluted columns, which supported the angle of a temple; the architrave and entablature are worked with delicate sculpture. Beyond, to the south, is another solitary column; and still more distant, three more, supporting the wreck of an entablature. Descending from the Capitol to the Forum, is the triumphal arch of Septimius Severus, less perfect than that of Constantine, though from its proportions and magnitude a most impressive monument. That of Constantine, or rather of Titus, (for the relief and sculpture, and even the colossal images of Dacian captives, were torn by a decree of the senate from an arch dedicated to the latter, to adorn that of this stupid and wicked monster, Constantine, one of whose chief merits consists in establishing a religion, the destroyer of those arts which would have rendered so base a spoliation unnecessary) is the most perfect. It is an admirable work of art. It is built of the finest marble, and the outline of the reliefs is in many parts as perfect as if it just finished. Four Corinthian fluted columns support, on each side, a bold entablature, whose bases are loaded with reliefs of captives in every attitude of humiliation and slavery. The compartments above express, in bolder relief, the enjoyment of success; the conqueror on his throne, or in his chariot, or nodding figures of Victory, whose hair floats on the wind of their own speed, and whose arms are outstretched, bearing trophies, as if impatient to meet. They look, as it were, borne from the subject extremities of the earth, on the breath which is the exhalation of that battle and desolation, which it is their mission to commemorate. Never were monuments so completely fitted to the purpose for which they were designed, of expressing that mixture of energy and error which is called a triumph.

I walk forth in the purple and golden light of an Italian evening, and return by star or moon light, through this scene. The elms are just budding, and the warm spring winds bring unknown odours, all sweet, from the country. I see the radiant Orion through the mighty columns of the temple of Concord, and the mellow fading light softens down the modern buildings of the Capitol, the only ones that interfere with the sublime desolation of the scene. On the steps of the Capitol itself, stand two colossal statues of Castor and Pollux, each with his horse, finely executed, though far inferior to those of Monte Cavallo, the cast of one of which you know we saw together in London. This walk is close to our lodging, and this is my evening walk.

What shall I say of the modern city! Rome is yet the capital of the world. It is a city of palaces and temples, more glorious than those which any other city contains, and of ruins more glorious than they. Seen from any of the eminences that surround it, it exhibits domes beyond domes, and palaces, and colonnades interminably, even to the horizon; interspersed with patches of desert, and mighty ruins which stand girt by their own desolation, in the midst of the fanes of living religions and the habitations of living men, in sublime loneliness. St. Peter's is, as you have heard, the loftiest building in Europe. Externally it is inferior in architectural beauty to St. Paul's, though not wholly devoid of it; internally it exhibits littleness on a large scale, and is in every respect opposed to antique taste. You know my propensity to admire; and I tried to persuade myself out of this opinion—in vain; the more I see of the interior of St. Peter's, the less impression as a whole does it produce on me. I cannot even think it lofty, though its dome is considerably higher than any hill within fifty miles of London; and when one reflects, it is an astonishing monument of the daring energy of man. Its colonnade is wonderfully fine, and there are two fountains, which rise in spire-like columns of water to an immense height in the sky, and falling on the porphyry vases from which they spring, fill the whole air with a radiant mist.
which at noon is thronged with innumerable rainbows. In the midst stands an obelisk. In front is the palace-like facade of St. Peter's, certainly magnificent; and there is produced, on the whole, an architectural combination unequalled in the world. But the dome of the temple is concealed, except at a very great distance, by the facade and the inferior part of the building, and that diabolical contrivance they call an attic.

The effect of the Pantheon is totally the reverse of that of St. Peter's. Though not a fourth part of the size, it is, as it were, the visible image of the universe; in the perfection of its proportions, as when you regard the unmeasured dome of heaven, the idea of magnitude is swallowed up and lost. It is open to the sky, and its wide dome is lighted by the ever-changing illumination of the air. The clouds of noon fly over it, and at night the keen stars are seen through the azure darkness, hanging among the clouds. We visited it by moonlight; the overhanging colours of the sky, and breaks them into a thousand prismatic hues and graduated shadows—they fall together with its dashing water-drops into the outer basin. The elevated situation of this fountain produces, I imagine, this effect of colour. On each side, on an elevated pedestal, stand the statues of Castor and Pollux, in the act of taming his horse; which are said, but I believe wholly without authority, to be the work of Phidias and Praxiteles. These figures combine the irresistible energy with the sublime and perfect loveliness supposed to have belonged to their divine nature. The reins no longer exist, but the position of their hands and the sustained and calm command of their regard, seem to require no mechanical aid to enforce obedience. The countenances at so great a height are scarcely visible, and I have a better idea of that of which we saw a cast together in London, than of the other. But the sublime and living majesty of their limbs and mien, the nervous and fiery animation of the horses they restrain, seen in the blue sky of Italy, and overlooking the city of Rome, surrounded by the light and the music of that crystalline fountain, no cast can communicate.

The fountain on the Quirinal, or rather the group formed by the statues, obelisk and the fountain, is, however, the most admirable of all. From the Piazza Quirinale, or rather Monte Cavallo, you see the boundless ocean of domes, spires, and columns, which is the City, Rome. On a pedestal of white marble rises an obelisk of red granite, piercing the blue sky. Before it is a vast basin of porphyry, in the midst of which rises a column of the purest water, which collects into itself all the overhanging colours of the sky, and breaks them into a thousand prismatic hues and graduated shadows—they fall together with its dashing water-drops into the outer basin. The elevated situation of this fountain produces, I imagine, this effect of colour. On each side, on an elevated pedestal, stand the statues of Castor and Pollux, each in the act of taming his horse; which are said, but I believe wholly without authority, to be the work of Phidias and Praxiteles. These figures combine the irresistible energy with the sublime and perfect loveliness supposed to have belonged to their divine nature. The reins no longer exist, but the position of their hands and the sustained and calm command of their regard, seem to require no mechanical aid to enforce obedience. The countenances at so great a height are scarcely visible, and I have a better idea of that of which we saw a cast together in London, than of the other. But the sublime and living majesty of their limbs and mien, the nervous and fiery animation of the horses they restrain, seen in the blue sky of Italy, and overlooking the city of Rome, surrounded by the light and the music of that crystalline fountain, no cast can communicate.

These figures were found at the Baths of Constantine; but, of course, are of remote antiquity. I do not acquiesce however in the practice of attributing to Phidias, or Praxiteles, or Scopas, or some great master, any admirable work that may be found. We find little of what remained, and perhaps the works of these were such as greatly surpassed all that we conceive of most perfect and admirable in what little has escaped the deluge. If I am too jealous of the honour of the Greeks, our masters and creators, the gods whom we should worship,—pardon me.

I have said what I feel without entering into any critical discussions of the ruins of Rome, and the mere outside of this inexhaustible mine of thought and feeling. Hobhouse, Eustace, and Forsyth, will tell all the shew-knowledge about it,—“the common stuff of the earth.” By-the-by, Forsyth is worth reading, as I judge from a chapter or two I have seen. I cannot get the book here.

I ought to have observed that the central arch
of the triumphal Arch of Titus yet subsists, more perfect in its proportions, they say, than any of a later date. This I did not remark. The figures of Victory, with unfolded wings, and each spurning back a globe with outstretched feet, are, perhaps, more beautiful than those on either of the others. Their lips are parted: a delicate mode of indicating the fervour of their desire to arrive at the destined resting-place, and to express the eager respiration of their speed. Indeed, so essential to beauty were the forms expressive of the exercise of the imagination and the affections considered by Greek artists, that no ideal figure of antiquity, not destined to some representation directly exclusive of such a character, is to be found with closed lips. Within this arch are two panneled alto relieves, one representing a train of people bearing in procession the instruments of Jewish worship, among which is the holy candlestick with seven branches; on the other, Titus standing on a quadriga, with a winged Victory. The grouping of the horses, and the beauty, correctness, and energy of their delineation, is remarkable, though they are much destroyed.*

LETTER XVIII.
To T. L. P. Esq.
Rome, April 6th, 1819.

MY DEAR P.,—I sent you yesterday a long letter, all about antique Rome, which you had better keep for some leisure day. I received yours, and one of Hunt's, yesterday.—So, you know the B—s! I could not help considering Mrs. B., when I knew her, as the most admirable specimen of a human being I had ever seen. Nothing earthly ever appeared to me more perfect than her character and manners. It is improbable that I shall ever meet again the person whom I so much esteemed, and still admire. I wish, however, that when you see her, you would tell her that I have not forgotten her, nor any of the amiable circle once assembled round her; and that I desire such remembrances to her as an exile and a Pariah may be permitted to address to an acknowledged member of the community of mankind. I hear they dined at your lodgings.

But no mention of A—and his wife—where were they! C—, though so young when I saw her, gave indications of her mother's excellences; and, certainly less fascinating, is, I doubt not, equally amiable, and more sincere. It was hardly possible for a person of the extreme subtlity and delicacy of Mrs. B—'s understanding and affections, to be quite sincere and constant.

I am all anxiety about your I. H. affair. There are few who will feel more hearty satisfaction at your success, in this or any other enterprise, than I shall. Pray let me have the earliest intelligence.

When shall I return to England? The Pythia has ascended the tripod, but she replies not. Our present plans—and I know not what can induce us to alter them—lead us back to Naples in a month or six weeks, where it is almost decided that we should remain until the commencement of 1820. You may imagine, when we receive such letters as yours and Hunt's, what this resolution costs us—but those are not our only communications from England. My health is materially better. My spirits, not the most brilliant in the world; but that we attribute to our solitary situation, and, though happy, how should I be lively! We see something of Italian society indeed. The Romans please me much, especially the women, who, though totally devoid of every kind of information, or culture of the imagination, or affections, or understanding—and, in this respect, a kind of gentle savages—yet contrive to be interesting. Their extreme innocence and naiveté, the freedom and gentleness of their manners; the total absence of affection, makes an intercourse with them very like an intercourse with uncorrupted children, whom they resemble in loveliness as well as simplicity. I have seen two women in society here of the highest beauty; their brows and lips, and the moulding of the face modelled with sculptural exactness, and the dark luxuriance of their hair floating over their fine complexion; and the lips—you must hear the common-places which escape from them, before they cease to be dangerous. The only inferior
part are the eyes, which, though good and gentle, want the mazy depth of colour behind colour, with which the intellectual women of England and Germany entangle the heart in soul-inwoven labyrinths.

This is holy-week, and Rome is quite full. The Emperor of Austria is here, and Maria Louisa is coming. On their journey through the other cities of Italy, she was greeted with loud acclamations, and views of Napoleon. Idiots and slaves! Like the frogs in the fable, because they are discontented with the log, they call upon the stork, who devours them. Great festivities, and magnificent funzioni here—we cannot get tickets to all. There are five thousand strangers in Rome, and only room for five hundred, at the celebration of the famous Miserere, in the Sixtine chapel, the only thing I regret we shall not be present at. After all, Rome is eternal; and were all that is extinguished, that which has been, the ruins and the sculptures, would remain, and Raffaele and Guido be alone regretted.

In the Square of St. Peter's there are about three hundred fettered criminals at work, hoeing out the weeds that grow between the stones of the pavement. Their legs are heavily ironed, and some are chained two by two. They sit in long rows, hoeing out the weeds, dressed in parti-coloured clothes. Near them sit or saunter, groups of soldiers, armed with loaded muskets. The iron discord of those innumerable chains clanks up into the sonorous air, and produces, contrasted with the musical dashing of the fountains, and the ruins and the sculptures, would remain, and Raffaele and Guido be alone regretted.

My "Prometheus Unbound" is just finished, and in a month or two I shall send it. It is a drama, with characters and mechanism of a kind yet unattempted; and I think the execution is better than any of my former attempts. By-the-bye, have you seen Ollier? I never hear from him, and am ignorant whether some verses I sent him from Naples, entitled, I think, "Lines on the Euganean hills," have reached him in safety or not. As to the Reviews, I suppose there is nothing but abuse; and this is not hearty or sincere enough to amuse me. As to the poem now printing, I lay no stress on it one way or the other. The concluding lines are natural.

I believe, my dear P., that you wish us to come back to England. How is it possible! Health, competence, tranquillity—all these Italy permits, and England takes away. I am regarded by all who know or hear of me, except, I think, on the whole, five individuals, as a rare prodigy of crime and pollution, whose look even might infect. This is a large computation, and I don't think I could mention more than three. Such is the spirit of the English abroad as well as at home.†

Few compensate, indeed, for all the rest, and if I were alone I should laugh; or if I were rich enough to do all things, which I shall never be, Pity me for my absence from those social enjoyments which England might afford me, and which I know so well how to appreciate. Still, I shall return some fine morning, out of pure weakness of heart.

My dear P., most faithfully yours,

P. B. SHELLEY.

LETTER XIX.

TO MRS. GIBBORNE.

LETTER TO MR. AND MRS. GISBORNE.

(Rome, April 6th, 1819.)

My dear Friends,—A combination of circumstances, which Mary will explain to you, leads us

* Rosalind and Helen.

† These expressions show how keenly Shelley felt the columns heaped on him during his life. The very exaggeration of which he is guilty, is a clue to much of his despondency. His seclusion from society resulted greatly from his extreme ill health, and his dislike of strangers and numbers, as well as the system of domestic economy which his lavish benevolence forced us to restrict within narrow bounds. In justice to our countrymen, I must mention that several distinguished for intellectual eminence, among them, Frederic Earl of Guttford, and Sir William Drummond, called on him at Rome. Accident at the time prevented him from cultivating their acquaintance—the death of our son, and our subsequent retirement at Pisa, shut us out still more from the world. I confess that the insolence of some of the more vulgar among the travelling English, rendered me anxious that Shelley should be more willing to extend his acquaintance among the better sort, but his health was an insuperable bar.

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back to Naples in June, or rather the end of May, where we shall remain until the ensuing winter. We shall take a house at Portici or Castel a Mare, until late in the autumn.

The object of this letter is to ask you to spend this period with us. There is no society which we have regretted or desired so much as yours, and in our solitude the benefit of your concession would be greater than I can express.

What is a sail to Naples? It is the season of tranquil weather and prosperous winds. If I knew the magic that lay in any given form of words, I would employ them to persuade; but I fear that all I can say is, as you know with truth, we desire that you would come—we wish to see you. You came to see Mary at Lucca, directly I had departed to Venice. It is not our custom, when we can help it, any more than it is yours, to divide our pleasures.

What shall I say to entice you? We shall have a piano, and some books, and—little else, beside ourselves. But what will be most inviting to you, you will give much, though you may receive but little, pleasure.

But whilst I write this with more desire than hope, yet some of that, perhaps the project may fall into your designs. It is intolerable to think of your being buried at Livorno. The success assured by Mr. Revely's talents requires another scene. You may have decided to take this summer to consider—and why not with us at Naples, rather than at Livorno?

I could address, with respect to Naples, the words of Polypheme in Theocritus, to all the friends I wish to see, and you especially:

*Εἴσινοι, Γαλάτεις, καὶ Εξίσωβοι μέλος,
Πατερ ἐγὼ ὑός ὧν καθήμενος, ὁλαθὲς ἄνθρωποι.*

Most sincerely yours,

P. B. SHELLY.

LETTER XX.
To T. L. P., Esq.

Livorno, July, 1819.

MY DEAR P.—We still remain, and shall remain nearly two months longer, at Livorno. Our house is a melancholy one,† and only cheered by letters from England. I got your note, in which you speak of three letters having been sent to Naples, which I have written for. I have heard also from H—, who confirms the news of your success, an intelligence most grateful to me.

The object of the present letter is to ask a favour of you. I have written a tragedy, on the subject of a story well known in Italy, and, in my conception, eminently dramatic. I have taken some pains to make my play fit for representation, and those who have already seen it judge favourably. It is written without any of the peculiar feelings and opinions which characterise my other compositions; I having attended simply to the impartial development of such characters, as it is probable the persons represented really were, together with the greatest degree of popular effect to be produced by such a development. I send you a translation of the Italian manuscript on which my play is founded, the chief subject of which I have touched very delicately; for my principal doubt, as to whether it would succeed as an acting play, hangs entirely on the question, as to whether such a thing as incest in this shape, however treated, would be admitted on the stage. I think, however, it will form no objection: considering, first, that the facts are matter of history; and, secondly, the peculiar delicacy with which I have treated it.

I am exceedingly interested in the question of whether this attempt of mine will succeed or no. I am strongly inclined to the affirmative at present, founding my hopes on this, that, as a composition, it is certainly not inferior to any of the modern plays that have been acted, with the exception of "Remorse." That the interest of its plot is incredibly greater and more real; and that there is nothing beyond what the multitude are contented to believe that they can understand, either in imagery, opinion, or sentiment. I wish to preserve a complete incognito, and can trust to you, that whatever else you do, you will at least favour me on this point. Indeed this is essential, deeply essential to its success. After it had been acted, and successfully (could I hope such a thing), I would own it if I pleased, and use the celebrity it might acquire to my own purposes.

What I want you to do is, to procure for me its presentation at Covent Garden. The principal character, Beatrice, is precisely fitted for Miss O'Neil, and it might even seem written for her, (God forbid that I should ever see her play it—it would tear my nerves to pieces,) and, in all respects it is fitted only for Covent Garden. The chief male character, I confess, I should be very unwilling that any one but Kean should play—that is impossible, and I must be contented with an inferior actor. I think you know some of the people of that theatre, or at least, some one who knows them; and when you have read the play, you may say enough, perhaps, to induce them not

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* Come, O Galatea; and having come, forget, as do I, now sitting here, to return home.
† We had lost our eldest, and, at that time, only child, the preceding month at Rome.
to reject it without consideration—but of this, perhaps, if I may judge from the tragedies which they have accepted, there is no danger at any rate.

Write to me as soon as you can on this subject, because it is necessary that I should present it, or, if rejected by the theatre, print it this coming season; lest somebody else should get hold of it, as the story, which now exists only in manuscript, begins to be generally known among the English. The translation which I send you is to be prefixed to the play, together with a print of Beatrice. I have a copy of her picture by Guido, now in the Colonna palace at Rome—the most beautiful creature you can conceive.

Of course, you will not show the manuscript to any one—and write to me by return of post, at which time the play will be ready to be sent.

I expect soon to write again, and it shall be a less selfish letter. As to Ollier, I don’t know what has been published, or what has arrived at his hands.—My “Prometheus,” though ready, I do not send till I know more.

Ever yours, most faithfully,
P. B. S.

LETTER XXI.
To LEIGH HUNT, Esq.
Livorno, August 18th, 1813.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—How good of you to write to us so often, and such kind letters! But it is like lending a beggar. What can I offer in return!

Though surrounded by suffering and disquietude, and, latterly, almost overcome by our strange misfortune, I have not been idle. My “Prometheus” is finished, and I am also on the eve of completing another work, totally different from anything you might consider that I should write; of a more popular kind; and, if anything of mine could deserve attention, of higher claims. “Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck, till thou approve the performance.”

I send you a little poem to give to Ollier for publication, but without my name. P. will correct the proofs. I wrote it with the idea of offering it to the “Examiner,” but I find it is too long. It was composed last year at Este; two of the characters you will recognise; and the third is also in some degree a painting from nature, but, with respect to time and place, ideal. You will find the little piece, I think, in some degree consistent with your own ideas of the manner in which poetry ought to be written. I have employed a certain familiar style of language to express the actual way in which people talk with each other, whom education and a certain refinement of sentiment have placed above the use of vulgar idioms. I use the word vulgar in its most extensive sense. The vulgarity of rank and fashion is as gross in its way as that of poverty, and its cast terms equally expressive of bare conceptions and therefore equally unfit for poetry. Not that the familiar style is to be admitted in the treatment of a subject wholly ideal, or in that part of any subject which relates to common life, where the passion, exceeding a certain limit, touches the boundaries of that which is ideal. Strong passion expresses itself in metaphor, borrowed from objects alike remote or near, and casts over all the shadow of its own greatness. But what am I about? If my grandmother sucks eggs, was it I who taught her?

If you would really correct the proof, I need not trouble P., who, I suppose, has enough. Can you take it as a compliment that I prefer to trouble you?

I do not particularly wish this poem to be known as mine; but, at all events, I would not put my name to it. I leave you to judge whether it is best to throw it into the fire, or to publish it. So much for self—self, that burr that will stick to one. Your kind expressions about my Eclogue gave me great pleasure; indeed, my great stimulus in writing, is to have the approbation of those who feel kindly towards me. The rest is mere duty. I am also delighted to hear that you think of us and form fancies about us. We cannot yet come home. Most affectionately yours,
P. B. SHELLEY.

LETTER XXII.
To LEIGH HUNT, Esq.
Livorno, Sept. 8, 1819.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—At length has arrived Ollier’s parcel, and with it the portrait. What a delightful present! It is almost yourself, and we sat talking with it, and of it, all the evening. It is a great pleasure to us to possess it, a pleasure in time of need, coming to us when there are few others. How we wish it were you, and not your picture! How I wish we were with you!

This parcel, you know, and all its letters, are now a year old—some older. There are all kinds of dates, from March to August, and “your date,” to use Shakspeare’s expression, “is better in a pudding, than in your letter.”—“Virginity,” Paroles says, but letters are the same thing in another shape.
With it came, too, Lamb's works. I have looked at none of the other books yet. What a lovely thing is his "Rosamund Gray"! How much knowledge of the sweetest and deepest parts of our nature in it! When I think of such a mind as Lamb's—when I see how unnoticed remain things of such exquisite and complete perfection, what should I hope for myself, if I had not higher objects in view than fame? I have seen too little of Italy, and of pictures. Perhaps P. has shown you some of my letters to him. But at Rome I was very ill, seldom able to go out without a carriage; and though I kept horses for two months there, yet there is so much to see! Perhaps I attended more to sculpture than painting, its forms being more easily intelligible than that of the latter. Yet, I saw the famous works of Raffaele, whom I agree with the whole world in thinking the finest painter. With respect to Michael Angelo I dissent, and think with astonishment and indignation of the common notion that he equals, and, in some respects, exceeds Raffaele. He seems to me to have no sense of moral dignity and loveliness; and the energy for which he has been so much praised, appears to me to be a certain rude, external, mechanical quality, in comparison with anything possessed by Raffaele, or even much inferior artists. His famous painting in the Sixtine Chapel seems to me deficient in beauty and majesty, both in the conception and the execution. He has been called the Dante of painting; but if we find some of the gross and strong outlines which are employed in the most distasteful passages of the "Inferno," where shall we find your Francesca—where the spirit coming over the sea in a boat, like Mars rising from the vapours of the horizon—where Matilda gathering flowers, and all the exquisite tenderness, and sensibility, and ideal beauty, in which Dante excelled all poets except Shakespeare!

As to Michael Angelo's Moses—but you have a cast of that in England. I write these things, heaven knows why!

I have written something and finished it, different from anything else, and a new Attempt for me; and I mean to dedicate it to you. I should not have done so without your approbation, but I asked your picture last night, and it smiled assent. If I did not think it in some degree worthy of you, I would not make you a public offering of it. I expect to have to write to you soon about it. If Ollier is not turned Jew, Christian, or become infected with the Mosanists, he will publish it. Don't let him be frightened, for it is nothing which, by any courtesy of language, can be termed either moral or immoral.

Mary has written to Marianne for a parcel, in which I beg you will make Ollier enclose what you know would most interest me—your "Calendar," (a sweet extract from which I saw in the Examiner,) and the other poems belonging to you; and, for some friends of mine, my Eclogue. This parcel, which must be sent instantly, will reach me by October, but don't trust letters to it, except just a line or so. When you write, write by the post.

Ever your affectionate

P. B. S.

My love to Marianne and Beasy, and Thornton too, and Percy, &c., and if you could imagine any way in which I could be useful to them here, tell me. I will enquire about the Italian chalk. You have no idea of the pleasure this portrait gives me.

LETTER XXIII.

To Leigh Hunt, Esq.

LIVORNO, Sept. 17th, 1828.

My dear Friend,—We are now on the point of leaving this place for Florence, where we have taken pleasant apartments for six months, which brings us to the 1st of April, the season at which new flowers and new thoughts spring forth upon the earth and in the mind. What is then our destination is yet undecided. I have not yet seen Florence, except as one sees the outside of the streets; but its physiognomy indicates it to be a city which, though the ghost of a republic, yet possesses most amiable qualities. I wish you would meet us therein the spring, and we would try to muster up a "litta brigata," which, leaving behind them the pestilence of remembered misfortunes, might act over again the pleasures of the Interdictors in Boccaccio. I have been lately reading this most divine writer. He is, in a high sense of the word, a poet, and his language has the rhythm and harmony of verse. I think him not equal certainly to Dante or Petrarch, but far superior to Tasso and Ariosto, the children of a later and of a colder day. I consider the three first as the productions of the vigour of the infancy of a new nation—as rivulets from the same spring as those which fed the greatness of the republics of Florence and Pisa, and which checked the influence of the German emperors; and from which, through obscurer channels, Raffaele and Michael Angelo drew the light and the harmony of their inspiration. When the second-rate poets of Italy wrote, the corrupting blight of tyranny was already bearing on every bud of genius. Energy, and simplicity, and unity of idea, were no more. In vain do we see in the finest passages of Ariosto and Tasso, any expression which at all approaches in this respect
to those of Dante and Petrarch. How much do I admire Boccaccio! What descriptions of nature are those in his little introductions to every new day! It is the morning of life stripped of that mist of familiarity which makes it obscure to us. Boccaccio seems to me to have possessed a deep sense of the fair ideal of human life, considered in its social relations. His more serious theories of love agree especially with mine. He often expresses things lightly too, which have serious meanings of a very beautiful kind. He is a moral casuist, the opposite of the Christian, stoical, ready-made, and worldly system of morals. Do you remember of a very beautiful kind. He is a moral casuist, you ask him for it he will show it you. I think it ses things lightly too, which have serious meanings

We expect Mary to be confined towards the end of October. The birth of a child will probably retrieve her from some part of her present melancholy depression. It would give me much pleasure to know Mr. Lloyd. Do you know, when I was in Cumberland, I got Southey to borrow a copy of Berkeley from him, and I remember observing some pencil notes in it, probably written by Lloyd, which I thought particularly acute. One, especially, struck me as being the assertion of a doctrine, of which even then I had long been persuaded, and on which I had founded much of my persuasions, as regarded the imagined cause of the universe—"Mind cannot create, it can only perceive." Ask him if he remembers having written it. Of Lamb you know my opinion, and you can bear witness to the regret which I felt, when I learned that the calumny of an enemy had deprived me of his society whilst in England.——Ollier told me that the Quarterly are going to review me. I suppose it will be a pretty one, and as I am acquiring a taste for humour and drollery, I confess I am curious to see it. I have sent my "Prometheus Unbound" to P.; if you ask him for it he will show it you. I think it will please you.

While I went to Florence, Mary wrote, but I did not see her letter.——Well, good b'ye. Next Monday I shall write to you from Florence. Love to all.

Most affectionately your friend,

P. B. S.

LETTER XXIV.
To Mrs. GISBORNE.

Florence, October 13th or 14th, 1819.

My DEAR FRIEND,—The regret we feel at your absence from you persuades me that it is a state which cannot last, and which, so long as it must

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Last, will be interrupted by some intervals, one of which is destined to be, your all coming to visit us here. Poor Oscar! I feel a kind of remorse to think of the unequal love with which two animated beings regard each other, when I experience no such sensations for him, as those which he manifested for us. His importunate regret is, however, a type of ours, as regards you. Our memory—if you will accept so humble a metaphor—is for ever scratching at the door of your absence.

About Henry and the steam-engine.* I am in

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* Shelley sat on foot the building of a steam-boat, to ply between Marseilles, Genoa, and Leghorn. Such an enterprise promised fortunes to his friend who undertook to build it, and the anticipation filled him with delight. Unfortunately, an unforeseen complication of circumstances caused the design to be abandoned, when already far advanced towards completion. I insert a letter from Mrs. Gisborne, which will explain some portion of this letter:

"MY DEAREST MRS. SHELLEY,—I began to feel a little uneasy at not hearing from you by Wednesday's post; you may judge, therefore, with how much pleasure I received your friendly lines, informing me you had arrived, and good state of health, and that of Mr. Shelley. A little agitation of the nerves is a trifling evil, and was to be expected after such a tremendous journey for you at such a time; yet you would not refrain from two little innocent quizzes, notwithstanding your hand trembling. I confess I dreaded the consequences when I saw the carriage drive off on the rough road. Did you observe that foolish dog Oscar, running by your side, waving his long slender tail? Giuseppa was obliged to catch him up in his arms to stop his course; he continued for several days at dinner-times to howl piteously, and to scratch at all his might at the door of your abandoned house. What a forlorn house! I cannot bear to look at it. My last letter from Mr. Gisborne is dated the fourth; he has been seriously indisposed ever since his first attack; he suffers now a return of his cough, which he can only mitigate by taking quantities of opium. I do not expect to see him until the end of the week. You see that he was not the person to undertake a land-journey to England by abominable French diligences. (What says C. to the words abominable and French?) I think he might have suffered less in a foot journey, pursued leisurely e a suo commodo. All's well that ends well! Mr. G. gives a shocking account of Marseilles; he seems to think Tuscany a delightful country, compared to what he has seen. Boccaccio seems to me to have possessed a deep sense of the fair ideal of human life, considered in its social relations. His more serious theories of love agree especially with mine. He often expresses things lightly too, which have serious meanings
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Torture until this money comes from London, though I am sure that it will and must come; unless, indeed, my banker has broke, and then it will be my loss, not Henry's—a little delay will mend the matter. I would then write instantly to London an effectual letter, and by return of post all would be set right—it would then be a thing easily set straight—but if it were not, you know me too well not to know that there is no personal suffering or degradation, or toil, or anything that can be named, with which I do not feel myself bound to support this enterprise of Henry. But all this rhodomontade only shows how correct Mr. Bielby's advice was, about the discipline necessary for my imagination. No doubt that all will go on with mercantile and common-place exactness, and that you will be spared the suffering, and I the virtue, incident to some untoward event.

I am anxious to hear of Mr. Gisborne's return, and I anticipate the surprise and pleasure with which he will learn that a resolution has been taken which leaves you nothing to regret in that event. It is with unspeakable satisfaction that I reflect that my entreaties and persuasions overcame your scruples on this point, and that whatever advantage shall accrue from it will belong to you, whilst any reproach due to the imprudence of such an enterprise must rest on me. I shall thus share the pleasure of success, and bear the blame and loss, (if such a thing were possible,) of a reverse; and what more can a man, who is a friend to another, desire for himself? Let us believe in a kind of optimism, in which we are our own gods. It is best that Mr. Gisborne should have returned; it is best that I should have over-persuaded you and Henry; it is best that you should all live together, without any more solitary attempts; it is best that this one attempt should have been made, otherwise, perhaps, one thing which is best might not have occurred; and it is best that we should think all this for the best, even though it is not; because Hope, as Coleridge says, is a solemn duty, which we owe alike to ourselves and to the world—a worship to the spirit of good within, which requires, before it sends that inspiration forth, which im-

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presses its likeness upon all that it creates, devoted and disinterested homage.

A different scene is this from that in which you made the chief character of our changing drama. We see no one, as usual. Madame M • • • i is quiet, and we only meet her now and then, by chance. Her daughter, not so fair, but I fear as cold, as the snowy Florimel in Spenser, is in and out of love with C — as the winds happen to blow; and C —, who, at the moment I happen to write, is in a high state of transitory contentment, is setting off to Vienna in a day or two.

My £100, from what mistake remains to be explained, has not yet arrived, and the banker here is going to advance me £50, on my bill at three months—all additional facilitation, should any such be needed, for the steam-boat. I have yet seen little of Florence. The gallery, I have a design of studying piece-meal; one of my chief objects in Italy being the observing in statuary and painting the degree in which, and the rules according to which, that ideal beauty, of which we have so intense yet so obscure an apprehension, is realised in external forms.

Adieu.—I am anxious for Henry's first letter. Give to him and take to yourself those sentiments, whatever they may be, with which you know that I cannot cease to regard you.

Most faithfully and affectionately yours,

P. B. S.

I had forgotten to say that I should be very much obliged to you, if you would contrive to send The Cenci, which are at the printer's, to England, by the next ship. I forgot it in the hurry of departure.—I have just heard from P., saying, that he don't think that my tragedy will do, and that he don't much like it. But I ought to say, to blunt the edge of his criticism, that he is a nursling of the exact and superficial school in poetry.

If Mr. G. is returned, send the “Prometheus” with them.

LETTER XXV.

To Henry Reveley, Esq.

Florence, Oct. 28, 1819.

My dear Henry,—So it seems I am to begin the correspondence, though I have more to ask than to tell.

You know our bargain; you are to write me uncorrected letters, just as the words come, so let me have them— I like coin from the mint—though it may be a little rough at the edges;—clipping is penal according to our statute.

In the first place listen to a reproach; you ought to have sent me an acknowledgement of my
LETTERS FROM ITALY.

LETTER XXVI.
To Mr. and Mrs. Gisborne.

Florence, Oct. 28, 1819.

My dear Friends,— I receive this morning the strange and unexpected news, that my bill of £200 has been returned to Mr. Webb protested. Ultimately this can be nothing but delay, as I have only drawn from my banker’s hands so much as to leave them still in possession of £80, and this I positively know, and can prove by documents. By return of post, for I have not only written to my banker, but to private friends, no doubt Henry will be enabled to proceed. Let him meanwhile do all that can be done.

Meanwhile, to save time, could not money be obtained temporarily, at Livorno, from Mr. W——, or Mr. G——, or any of your acquaintance, on my bills at three or six months, indorsed by Mr. Gisborne and Henry, so that he may go on with his work? If a month is of consequence, think of this.

Be of good cheer, Madonna mia, all will go well. The inclosed is for Henry, and was written before this news, as he will see; but it does not, strange as it is, abate one atom of my cheer.

Accept, dear Mr. G., my best regards.

Yours faithfully,

P. B. S.

LETTER XXVII.
To Mr. and Mrs. Gisborne.

Florence, Nov. 6, 1819.

My dear Friends,—I have just finished a letter of five sheets on Carlile’s affair, and am in hourly expectation of Mary’s confinement: you will imagine an excuse for my silence.

I forbear to address you, as I had designed, on the subject of your income as a public creditor of the English government, as it seems you have not the exclusive management of your funds; and the peculiar circumstances of the delusion are such that none but a very few persons will ever be brought to see its instability but by the experience of loss. If I were to convince you, Henry would probably be unable to convince his uncle. In vindication, however, of what I have already said, revolution. It is the business of a friend to say what he thinks without fear of giving offence; and, if I were not a friend, argument is worth its market-price anywhere.

Believe me, my dear Henry,

Your very faithful friend,

P. B. S.
LETTERS FROM ITALY.

allow me to turn your attention to England at this hour.

In order to meet the national expenses, or rather that some approach towards meeting them might seem to be made, a tax of £3,000,000 was imposed. The first consequence of this has been a defalcation in the revenue at the rate of £3,600,000 a year. Were the country in the most tranquil and prosperous state, the minister, in such a condition of affairs, must reduce the interest of the national debt, or add to it; a process which would only insure the greater ultimate reduction of the interest. But the people are nearly in a state of insurrection, and the least unpopular noblemen perceive the necessity of conducting a spirit, which it is no longer possible to oppose. For submitting to this necessity—which, be assured, the haughty aristocrats unwillingly did—Lord Fitzwilliam has been degraded from his situation of Lord-Lieutenant. An additional army of 11,500 men has received orders to be organised. Everything is preparing for a bloody struggle, in which, if the ministers succeed, they will assuredly diminish the interest of the national debt, for no combination of the heaviest tyranny can raise the taxes for its payment. If the people conquer, the public creditor will equally suffer; for it is monstrous to imagine that they will submit to the perpetual inheritance of a double aristocracy. They will perhaps find some crown and church lands, and appropriate the tithes to make a kind of compensation to the public creditor. They will confiscate the estates of their political enemies. But all this will not pay a tenth part of their debt. The existing government, atrocious as it is, is the surest party to which a public creditor may attach himself. He may reason that it may last my time, though in the event the ruin is more complete than in the case of a popular revolution. I know you too well to believe you capable of arguing in this manner; I only reason on how things stand.

Your income may be reduced from £210 to 150, and then £100, and then by the issue of immense quantities of paper to save the immediate cause of one of the conflicting parties, to any value however small; or the source of it may be cut off at once. The ministers had, I doubt not, long since determined to establish an arbitrary government; and if they had not determined so, they have now entangled themselves in that consequence of their instinct as rulers, and if they recede they must perish. They are, however, not receding, and we are on the eve of great actions.

Kindest regards to Henry. I hope he is not stopped for want of money, as I shall assuredly send him what he wants in a month from the date of my last letter. I received his letter from Pistoia, and have no other criticism to make on it, except the severest—that it is too short. How goes on Portuguese and Theocritus? I have deserted the odorous gardens of literature, to journey across the great sandy desert of politics; not, as you may imagine, without the hope of finding some enchanted paradise. In all probability, I shall be overwhelmed by one of the tempestuous columns which are forever traversing, with the speed of a storm, and the confusion of a chaos, that pathless wilderness. You meanwhile will be lamenting in some happy oasis that I do not return. This is out-Calderonizing Muley. We have had lightning and rain here in plenty. I like the Cascini very much, where I often walk alone, watching the leaves, and the rising and falling of the Arno. I am full of all kinds of literary plans.

Meanwhile, all yours most faithfully,

P. B. S.

LETTER XXVIII.

To LEIGH HUNT, Esq.

Firenze, Nov. 13, 1819.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Yesterday morning Mary brought me a little boy. She suffered but two hours' pain, and is now so well that it seems a wonder that she stays in bed. The babe is also quite well, and has begun to suck. You may imagine that this is a great relief and a great comfort to me amongst all my misfortunes, past, present, and to come.

Since I last wrote to you, some circumstances have occurred, not necessary to explain by letter, which makes my pecuniary condition a very painful one. The physicians absolutely forbid my travelling to England in the winter, but I shall probably pay you a visit in the spring. With what pleasure, among all the other sources of regret and discomfort with which England abounds for me, do I think of looking on the original of that kind and earnest face, which is now opposite Mary's bed. It will be the only thing which Mary will envy me, or will need to envy me, in that journey, for I shall come alone. Shaking hands with you is worth all the trouble; the rest is clear loss.

I will tell you more about myself and my pursuits in my next letter.

Kind love to Marianne, Bessy, and all the children. Poor Mary begins (for the first time) to look a little consoled; for we have spent, as you may imagine, a miserable five months.

Good-bye, my dear Hunt.

Your affectionate friend,

P. B. S.

I have had no letter from you for a month.
LETTER XXIX.
To Mrs. GISBORNE.

Florence, Nov. 16, 1819.

Madonna,—I have been lately voyaging in a sea without my pilot, and although my sail has often been torn, my boat become leaky, and the log lost, I have yet sailed in a kind of way from island to island; some of craggy and mountainous magnificence, some clothed with moss and flowers, and radiant with fountains, some barren deserts. I have been reading Calderon without you. I have read the "Cisma de Inglaterra," the "Cabellos de Absolom," and three or four others. These pieces, inferior to those we read, at least to the "Príncipe Constante," in the splendour of particular passages, are perhaps superior in their satisfying completeness. The Cabellos de Absolom is full of the deepest and tenderest touches of nature. Nothing can be more pathetically conceived than the character of old David, and the tender and impartial love, overcoming all insults and all crimes, with which he regards his conflicting and disobedient sons. The incest scene of Amnon and Tamar is perfectly tremendous. Well may Calderon say in the person of the former—

Sil sangre sin fuego hierie,
que fara sangre con fuego?

Incest is, like many other incorrect things, a very poetical circumstance. It may be the excess of love or hate. It may be the defiance of everything for the sake of another, which clothes itself in the glory of the highest heroism; or it may be that cynical rage which, confounding the good and the bad in existing opinions, breaks through them for the purpose of rioting in selfishness and antipathy. Calderon, following the Jewish historians, has represented Amnon's action in the basest point of view—he is a prejudiced savage, acting what he abhors, and abhorring that which is the unwilling party to his crime.

Adieu. Madonna, yours truly,
P. B. S.

I transcribe you a passage from the Cisma de Inglaterra—spoken by "Carlos, Embazador de Francia, enamorado de Ana Boleña." Is there anything in Petrarch finer than the second stanza.*

* Porque apenas el Sol se coronaba
de nueva luz en la estacion primavera,
que ya en sus umbrales adora;
segundo Sol en abreviada esfera;
la noche apenas tremula bajaba,
as solos mis deseos lienzajes,
con uno a mi jardin, republica de flores,
era tercero el de mis amores.
rules the most absurd;—so much for Theocritus and the Greeks.∗

In spite of all your arguments, I wish your money were out of the funds. This middle course which you speak of, and which may probably have place, will amount to your losing not all your income, nor retaining all, but have the half taken away. I feel intimately persuaded, whatever political forms may have place in England, that no party can continue many years, perhaps not many months, in the administration, without diminishing the interest of the national debt.—And once having commenced—and having done so safely—where will it end?

Give Henry my kindest thanks for his most interesting letter, and bid him expect one from me by the next post.

Mary and the babe continue well. Last night we had a magnificent thunder storm, with claps that shook the house like an earthquake. Both Mary and C— unite with me in kindest remembrances to all.

Most faithfully yours obliged,

F. B. S.

Florence, Nov. 189, 1819.

* I subjoin here a fragment of a letter, I know not to whom addressed: it is to a woman—which shows how, worshipping as Shelley did the spirit of the literature of ancient Greece, he considered that this could be found only in its original language, and did not consider that time wasted which a person who had pretensions, intellectual culture, and enthusiasm, spent in acquiring them.

"It is probable that you will be earnest to employ the sacred talisman of language. To acquire these you are now necessitated to sacrifice many hours of the time, when, instead of being conversant with particles and verbs, your nature incites you to contemplation and meditation. When, for instance, you refer to the names, and dates, and motions of the human body, but clothed in the very language of the authors—that language dictated by and expressive of the passions and principles that governed their conduct. Facts are not what we want to know in poetry, in history, in the lives of individual men, in satire, or panegyric. They are the mere divisions, the arbitrary points on which we hang, and to which we refer those delicate and evanescent hues of mind, which language delights and instructs us in precise proportion as it expresses. What is a translation of Homer into English? A person who is ignorant of Greek, need only look at Paradise Lost, or the tragedy of Lear translated into French, to obtain an analogous conception of its worthless and miserable inadequacy. Taddeo, or Livius, or Herodotus, are equally unprofitable and un instructive in translation. You require to know and to be intimate with those persons who have acted a distinguished part to benefit, to enlighten, or even to pervert and injure mankind. Before you can do this, the four years are yet to be consumed in the discipline of the ancient languages, and those of modern Europe, which you only imperfectly know, and which conceal from your intimacies such names as Ariosto, Tasso, Petrarch, and Machiaveli; or Goethe, Schiller, Wieland, &c. The French language you, like every other respectable woman, already know; and if the
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Montoriolies flow into their craggy forms, and the splendour of their fusion filling millions of miles of the void space, like the tail of a comet, so looking, so delighting in his work. God sees his machine spinning round the sun, and delights in its success, and has taken out patents to supply all the suns in space with the same manufacture. Your boat will be to the ocean of water, what this earth is to the ocean of other—a prosperous and swift voyager.

When shall we see you all! You not, I suppose, till our boat is ready to sail—and then, if not before, I must, of course, come to Livorno. Our plans for the winter are yet scarcely defined; they tend towards our spending February and March at Pisa, where our communications will not be so distant, nor so epistolary. C— left us a week ago, not without many lamentations, as all true lovers pay on such occasions. He is to write me an account of the Trieste steam-boat, which I will transmit to you.

Mrs. Shelley, and Miss C— return you their kindest salutations, with interest.

Most affectionately yours,

P. B. Shelley.

LETTER XXXII.

To LEIGH HUNT, Esg.

Florence, Nov. 23, 1819.

My dear Friend,— Two letters, both bearing date Oct. 20, arrive on the same day; one is always glad of twins. We hear of a box arrived at Genoa with books and clothes; it must be yours. Meanwhile the babe is wrapped in flannel petticoats, and we get on with him as we can. He is small, healthy, and pretty. Mary is recovering rapidly. Marianne, I hope, is quite well.

You do not tell me whether you have received my lines on the Manchester affair. They are of the exoteric species, and are meant, not for the "Indicator," but the "Examiner." I would send for the former, if you like, some letters on such subjects of art as suggest themselves in Italy. Perhaps I will, at a venture, send you a specimen of what I mean next post. I enclose you in this a piece for the "Examiner," or let it share the fate, whatever that fate may be, of the "Masque of Anarchy."*

I am sorry to hear that you have employed yourself in translating the "Aminta," though I doubt not it will be a just and beautiful translation. You ought to write Amintas. You ought to exercise your fancy in the perpetual creation of new forms of gentleness and beauty.

With respect to translation, even I will not be seduced by it; although the Greek plays, and some of the ideal dramas of Calderon, (with which I have lately, and with inexpressible wonder and delight, become acquainted) are perpetually tempting me to throw over their perfect and glowing forms the grey veil of my own words. And you know me too well to suspect that I refrain from a belief that what I could substitute for them would deserve the regret which yours would, if suppressed. I have confidence in my moral sense alone; but that is a land of originality. I have only translated the Cyclops of Euripides, when I could absolutely do nothing else; and the Symposium of

* Peter Bell the Third.
Plato, which is the delight and astonishment of all who read it; I mean the original, or so much of the original as is seen in my translation, not the translation itself.

I think I have had an accession of strength since my residence in Italy, though the disease itself in the side, whatever it may be, is not subdued. Some day we shall all return from Italy. I fear that in England things will be carried violently by the rulers, and they will not have learned to yield in time to the spirit of the age. The great thing to do is to hold the balance between popular impatience and tyrannical obstinacy; to inculcate with fervour both the right of resistance and the duty of forbearance. You know my principles incite me to take all the good I can get in politics, for ever aspiring to something more. I am one of those whom nothing will fully satisfy, but who are ready to be partially satisfied in all that is practicable. We shall see.

Give Bessy a thousand thanks from me for writing out in that pretty neat hand your kind and powerful defence. Ask what she would like best from Italian land. We mean to bring you all something; and Mary and I have been wondering what it shall be. Do you, each of you, choose.

Adieu, my dear friend.

Yours affectionately ever,
P. B. S.

LETTER XXXIV.
To HENRY KEVELEY, Esq.
Florence, 18th Dec. 1819.

My dear Henry,— You see, as I said, it only amounts to delay, all this abominable entanglement. I send you 484 dollars, or ordinary francsconi, I suppose, but you will tell me what you receive in Tuscan money, if they are not— the produce of £100. So my heart is a little lightened, which, I assure you, was heavy enough until this moment, on your account. I write to Messrs. Ward to pay you.

I have received no satisfactory letter from my bankers, but I must expect it every week—or, at least, in a month from this date, when I will not fail to transmit you the remainder of what may be necessary.

Everybody here is talking of a steam-ship which is building at Leghorn; one person said, as if he knew the whole affair, that he was waiting in Tuscany to take his departure to Naples in it. Your name has not, to my knowledge, been mentioned. I think you would do well to encourage this publicity.

I have better health than I have known for a long time—ready for any stormy cruise. When will the ship be ready to sail? We have been feeding ourselves with the hope that Mr. Gisborne and your mother would have paid us their promised visit. I did not even hope, perhaps not even wish, that you should, until the engine is finished. My regret at this failure has several times impelled me to go to Leghorn—but I have always resisted the temptation. Ask them, entreat them, from me, to appoint some early day. We have a bed and room, and everything prepared.

I write in great haste, as you may see. Ever believe me, my dear Henry, your attached friend,
P. B. S.
LETTER XXXVI.

To JOHN GIBBON, Esq.

MY DEAR SIR,—We have suddenly taken the determination to avail ourselves of this lovely weather to approach you as far as Pisa. I need not assure you—unless my malady should violently return—you will see me at Leghorn.

We embark; and I promise myself the delight of the sky, the water, and the mountains. I must suffer at any rate, but I expect to suffer less in a boat than in a carriage. I have many things to say, which let me reserve till we meet.

I sympathise in all your good news, as I have done in your ill. Let Henry take care of himself, and not, desiring to combine too many advantages, check the progress of his recovery, the greatest of all.

Remember me affectionately to him and to Mrs. Gisborne, and accept for yourself my unalterable sentiments of regard. Meanwhile, consider well your plans, which I only half understand.

Ever most faithfully yours,

P. B. SHELLEY.

Florence, 25th Jan., 1820.

REMARKS ON SOME OF THE STATUES IN THE GALLERY OF FLORENCE.

THE NIOBE.

Of all that remains to us of Greek antiquity, this figure is perhaps the most consummate personification of loveliness, with regard to its countenance, as that of the Venus of the Tribune is with regard to its entire form of a woman. It is colossal: the size adds to its value; because it allows the spectator the choice of a greater number of points of view, and afford him a more analytical one, in which to catch a greater number of the infinite modes of expression, of which any form approaching ideal beauty is necessarily composed. It is the figure of a mother in the act of sheltering, from some divine and inevitable peril, the last, we may imagine, of her surviving children.

The little creature, terrified, as we may conceive, at the strange destruction of all its kindred, has fled to its mother, and is hiding its head in the folds of her robe, and casting back one arm, as in a passionate appeal for defence, where it never before could have been sought in vain. She is clothed in a thin tunic of delicate woof; and her hair is fastened on her head into a knot probably by that mother whose care will never fasten it again. Niobe is enveloped in profuse drapery, a portion of which the left hand has gathered up, and is in the act of extending it over the child in the instinct of shielding her from what reason knows to be inevitable. The right (as the restorer has properly imagined), is drawing up her daughter to her; and with that instinctive gesture, and by its gentle pressure, is encouraging the child to believe that it can give security. The countenance of Niobe is the consummation of feminine majesty and loveliness, beyond which the imagination scarcely doubts that it can conceive anything.

That masterpiece of the poetic harmony of marble expresses other feelings. There is embodied a sense of the inevitable and rapid destiny which is consummating around her, as if it were already over. It seems as if despair and beauty had combined, and produced nothing but the sublimity of grief. As the motions of the form expressed the instinctive sense of the possibility of protecting the child, and the accustomed and affectionate assurance that she would find an asylum within her arms, so reason and imagination speak in the countenance the certainty that no mortal defence is of avail. There is no terror in the countenance, only grief—deep, remediless grief. There is no anger:—of what avail is indignation against what is known to be omnipotent? There is no selfish shrinking from personal pain—there is no panic at supernatural agency—there is no adverting to herself as herself; the calamity is mightier than to leave scope for such emotions.

Everything is swallowed up in sorrow; she is all tears; her countenance, in assured expectation of the arrow piercing its last victim in her embrace, is fixed on her omnipotent enemy. The pathetic beauty of the expression of her tender, and inexhaustible, and unquenchable despair, is beyond the effect of any other sculpture. As soon as the arrow shall pierce her last tie upon earth, the fable that she was turned into stone, or dissolved into a fountain of tears, will be but a feeble emblem of the sadness of hopelessness, in which the few and evil years of her remaining life, we feel, must flow away.

It is difficult to speak of the beauty of the countenance, or to make intelligible in words, from what such astonishing loveliness results.

The head, resting somewhat backward upon the full and flowing contour of the neck, is as in the act of watching an event momentarily to arrive. The hair is delicately divided on the forehead, and a gentle beauty gleams from the broad and clear forehead, over which its strings are drawn. The face is of an oval fulness, and the features conceived with the daring of a sense of power. In
this respect it resembles the careless majesty which Nature stamps upon the rare masterpiece of her creation, harmonizing them as it were from the harmony of the spirit within. Yet all this not only consists with, but is the cause of, the subtlest delicacy of clear and tender beauty—the expression at once of innocence and sublimity of soul—of purity and strength—of all that touches the most removed and divine of the chords that make music in our thoughts—of that which shakes with astonishment even the most superficial.

THE MINERVA.

The head is of the highest beauty. It has a close helmet, from which the hair, delicately parted on the forehead, half escapes. The attitude gives entire effect to the perfect form of the neck, and to that full and beautiful moulding of the lower part of the face and mouth, which is in living being the seat of the expression of a simplicity and integrity of nature. Her face, upraised to heaven, is animated with a profound, sweet, and impassioned melancholy, with an earnest, and fervid, and disinterested pleading against some vast and inevitable wrong. It is the joy and poetry of sorrow, making grief beautiful, and giving it that nameless feeling which, from the imperfection of language, we call pain, but which is not all pain, through a feeling which makes not only its possessor, but the spectator of it, prefer it to what is called pleasure, in which all is not pleasure. It is difficult to think that this head, though of the highest ideal beauty, is the head of Minerva, although the attributes and attitude of the lower part of the statue certainly suggest that idea. The Greeks rarely, in their representations of the characters of their gods,—unless we call the poetic enthusiasm of Apollo a mortal passion,—expressed the disturbance of human feeling; and here is deep and impassioned grief animating a divine countenance. It is, indeed, divine. Wisdom (which Minerva may be supposed to emblem) is pleading earnestly with Power,—and invested with the expression of that grief, because it must ever plead so vainly. The drapery of the statue, the gentle beauty of the feet, and the grace of the attitude, are what may be seen in many other statues belonging to that astonishing era which produced it;—such a countenance is seen in few.

This statue happens to be placed on a pedestal, the subject of whose reliefs is in a spirit wholly the reverse. It was probably an altar to Bacchus—possibly a funeral urn. Under the festoons of fruits and flowers that grace the pedestal, the corners of which are ornamented with the skulls of goats, are sculptured some figures of Maenads under the inspiration of the god. Nothing can be conceived more wild and terrible than their gestures, touching, as they do, the verge of distortion, into which their fine limbs and lovely forms are thrown. There is nothing, however, that exceeds the possibility of nature, though it borders on the utmost line.

The tremendous spirit of superstition, aided by drunkenness, producing something beyond insanity, seems to have caught them in its whirlwinds, and to bear them over the earth, as the rapid volutions of a tempest have the ever-changing trunk of a waterspout, or as the torrent of a mountain river whirls the autumnal leaves resistlessly along in its full eddies. The hair, loose and floating, seems caught in the tempest of their own tumultuous motion; their heads are thrown back, leaning with a strange delirium upon their necks, and looking up to heaven, whilst they totter and stumble even in the energy of their tempestuous dance.

One represents Agave with the head of Pentheus in one hand, and in the other a great knife; a second has a spear with its pine cone, which was the Thyrsus; another dances with mad voluptuousness; the fourth is beating a kind of tambourine.

This was indeed a monstrous superstition, even in Greece, where it was alone capable of combining ideal beauty, and poetical and abstract enthusiasm, with the wild errors from which it sprung. In Rome it had a more familiar, wicked, and dry appearance; it was not suited to the severe and exact apprehensions of the Romans, and their strict morals were violated by it, and sustained deep injury, little analogous to its effects upon the Greeks, who turned all things—superstition, prejudice, murder, madness—to beauty.

ON THE VENUS, CALLED ANAYTONIENE.

She has just issued from the bath, and is yet animated with the enjoyment of it. She seems all soft and mild enjoyment, and the curved lines of her fine limbs flow into each other with a never-ending sinuosity of sweetness. Her face expresses a breathless, yet passive and innocent voluptuousness, free from affection. Her lips, without the sublimity of lofty and impassioned passion, the grandeur of enthusiastic imagination of the Apollo of the Capitol, or the union of both, like the Apollo Belvidere, have the tenderness of arch, yet pure and affectionate, desire; and the mode in which the ends of the mouth are drawn in, yet lifted or half-opened, with the smile that for ever circles round them, and the tremulous curve into which they are wrought by inextinguishable desire, and the tongue lying against
IN THE GALLERY OF FLORENCE.

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the lower lip, as in the listlessness of passive joy, express love, still love.

Her eyes seem heavy and swimming with pleasure, and her small forehead fades on both sides into that sweet swelling and thin declension of the bone over the eye, in the mode which expresses simple and tender feelings.

The neck is full, and panting as with the aspiration of delight, and flows with gentle curves into her perfect form.

Her form is indeed perfect. She is half-sitting and half-rising from a shell, and the fulness of her limbs, and their complete roundness and perfection, do not diminish the vital energy with which they seem to be animated. The position of the arms, which are lovely beyond imagination, is natural, unaffected, and easy. This, perhaps, is the finest personification of Venus, the deity of superficial desire, in all antique statuary. Her pointed and pear-like person, ever virgin, and her attitude modesty itself.

A BAS-RELIEF:

PROBABLY THE SIDE OF A SARCOPHAGUS.

The lady is lying on a couch, supported by a young woman, and looking extremely exhausted; her dishevelled hair is floating about her shoulders, and she is half-covered with drapery that falls on the couch.

Her tunic is exactly like a chemise, only the sleeves are longer, coming halfway down the upper part of the arm. An old wrinkled woman, with a cloak over her head, and an enormously sagacious look, has a most profenitmal appearance, and is taking hold of her arm gently with one hand, and with the other is supporting it. I think she is feeling her pulse. At the side of the couch sits a woman in grief, holding her head in her hands. At the bottom of the bed is another matron tear ing her hair, and in the act of screaming out most violently, which she seems, however, by the rest of her gestures, to do with the utmost deliberation, as having come to the resolution, that it was a correct thing to do. So behind her is a gossip of the most ludicrous ugliness, crying, I suppose, or praying, for her arms are crossed upon her neck. There is also a fifth setting up a wail. To the left of the couch a nurse is sitting on the ground dandling the child in her arms, and wholly occupied in so doing. The infant is swaddled. Behind her is a female who appears to be in the act of rushing in with dishevelled hair and violent gesture, and in one hand brandishing a whip or a thunderbolt. This is probably some emblematic person, the messenger of death, or a fury, whose personification would be a key to the whole. What they are all wailing at, I know not; whether the lady is dying, or the father has directed the child to be exposed: but if the mother be not dead, such a tumult would kill a woman in the straw in these days.

The other compartment, in the second scene of the drama, tells the story of the presentation of the child to its father. An old man has it in his arms, and, with professional and mysterious officiousness, is holding it out to the father. The father, a middle-aged and very respectable-looking man, perhaps not long married, is looking with the admiration of a bachelor on his first child, and perhaps thinking that he was once such a strange little creature himself. His hands are clasped, and he is gathering up between his arms the folds of his cloak; an emblem of his gathering up all his faculties, to understand the tale the gossip is bringing.

An old man is standing beside him, probably his father, with some curiosity, and much tenderness in his looks. Around are collected a host of his relations, of whom the youngest, a handsome girl, seems the least concerned. It is altogether an admirable piece, quite in the spirit of the comedies of Terence.

MICHAEL ANGELO'S BACCHUS.

The countenance of this figure is a most revolting mistake of the spirit and meaning of Bacchus. It looks drunken, brutal, narrow-minded, and has an expression of dissoluteness the most revolting. The lower part of the figure is stiff, and the manner in which the shoulders are united to the breast, and the neck to the head, abundantly inharmonious. It is altogether without unity, as was the idea of the deity of Bacchus in the conception of a Catholic. On the other hand, considered only as a piece of workmanship, it has many merits. The arms are executed in a style of the most perfect and manly beauty. The body is conceived with great energy, and the manner in which the lines mingle into each other, of the highest boldness and truth. It wants unity as a work of art — as a representation of Bacchus it wants everything.

A JUNO.

A statue of great merit. The countenance expresses a stern and unquestioned severity of dominion, with a certain sadness. The lips are beautiful — susceptible of expressing scorn — but not without sweetness. With fine lips a person is never wholly bad, and they never belong to the expression of emotions wholly selfish — lips being the seat of imagination. The drapery is finely conceived.
and the manner in which the act of throwing back one leg is expressed, in the diverging folds of the drapery of the left breast fading in bold yet graduated lines into a skirt, as it descends from the left shoulder, is admirably imagined.

AN APOLLO,

With serpents twining round a wreath of laurel, on which the quiver is suspended. It probably was, when complete, magnificently beautiful. The restorer of the head and arms, following the indication of the muscles on the right side, has lifted the arm as in triumph at the success of an arrow, imagining to imitate the Lycian Apollo, in that so finely described by Apollonius Rhodius, when the dazzling radiance of his limbs shone over the Euxine. The action, energy, and godlike animation of these limbs, speak a spirit which seems as if it could not be consumed.

LETTER XXXVII.

To Mr. and Mrs. GISBORNE.

Pisa, Feb., 1820.

Pray let us see you soon, or our threat may cost both us and you something—a visit to Livorno. The stage direction on the present occasion is, (exit Moonshine) and enter Wall; or rather four walls, who surround and take prisoners the Galan and Dama.

 Seriously, pray do not disappoint us. We shall watch the sky, and the death of the scirocco must be the birth of your arrival.

Mary and I are going to study mathematics. We design to take the most compendious, yet certain methods of arriving at the great results. We believe that your right-angled Triangle will contain the solution of the problem of how to proceed.

Do not write, but come. Mary is too idle to write, but all that she has to say is come. She joins with me in condemning the moonlight plan. Indeed we ought not to be so selfish as to allow you to come at all, if it is to cost you all the fatigue and annoyance of returning the same night. But it will not be—so adieu.

LETTER XXXVIII.

To JOHN GISBORNE, Esq.

(LONDON.)

Pisa, Mar. 23, 1820.

My dear Friends,—I write to you thus early, because I have determined to accept of your kind offer about the correction of "Prometheus." The bookseller makes difficulties about sending the proofs to me, and to whom else can I so well entrust what I am so much interested in having done well; and to whom would I prefer to owe the recollection of an additional kindness done to me? I enclose you two little papers of corrections and additions; —I do not think you will find any difficulty in interpolating them into their proper places.

Well, how do you like London, and your journey; the Alps in their beauty and their eternity; Paris in its slight and transitory colours; and the wearisome plains of France—and the moral people with whom you drank tea last night! Above all, how are you! And of the last question, believe me, we are now most anxiously waiting for a reply—until which I will say nothing, nor ask anything. I rely on the journal with as much security as if it were already written.

I am just returned from a visit to Leghorn, Casciano, and your old fortress at Sant' Elmo. I bought the vases you saw for about twenty sequins less than Michele asked, and had them packed up, and, by the polite assistance of your friend, Mr. Guebhard, sent them on board. I found your Giuseppe very useful in all this business. He got me tea and breakfast, and I slept in your boiwe, and departed early the next morning for Casciano. Everything seems in excellent order at Casa Ricci—garden, pigeons, tables, chairs, and beds. As I did not find my bed sealed up, I left it as I found...
LETTERS FROM ITALY.

LETTER XL.

TO MR. AND MRS. GIBBONS.

(LONDON.)

My dear Friends,—I am to a certain degree indifferent as to the reply to our last proposal, and, therefore, will not allude to it. Permit me only on subjects of this nature to express one sentiment, which you would have given me credit for, even if not expressed. Let no considerations of my interest, or any retrospect to the source from which the funds were supplied, modify your decision as to returning and pursuing or abandoning the adventure of the steam-engine. My object was solely your true advantage, and it is when I am baffled of this, by any attention to a mere form, that I shall be ill requited. Nay, more, I think it for your interest, should you obtain almost whatever situation for Henry, to accept Clementi's proposal, and remain in England— not without accepting it, for it does no more than balance the difference of expense between Italy and London; and if you have any trust in the justice of my moral sense, and believe that in what concerns true honour and virtuous conduct in life, I am an experienced counsellor, you will not hesitate— these things being equal— to accept this proposal. The opposition I made, while you were in Italy, to the abandonment of the steam-boat project, was founded, you well know, on the motives which have influenced everything that ever has guided, or ever will guide any thing that I can do or say respecting you. I thought it against Henry's interest. I think it now against his interest that he and you should abandon your prospects in England. As to us— we are uncertain people, who are chased by the spirits of our destiny from purpose to purpose, like clouds by the wind.

There is one thing more to be said. If you decide to remain in England, assuredly it would be foolish to return. Your journey would cost you between £100 and £200, a sum far greater than you could expect to save by the increased price by which you would sell your things. Remit the matter to me, and I will cast off my habitual character, and attend to the minutest points. With Mr. G—'s devil take his name, I can't write it, you know who's assistance, all this might be accomplished in such a manner as to save a very considerable sum. Though I shall suffer from your decision in the proportion as your society is delightful to me, I cannot forbear expressing my persuasion, that the time, the expense, and the trouble of returning to Italy, if your ultimate

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* Baths of natural warm springs, distant four miles from Pisa, and called Indifferently Bagno di Pisa, and Bagno di San Giuliano.
decision be to settle in London, ought all to be spared. A year, a month, a week, at Henry's age, and with his purposes, ought not to be unemployed. It was the depth with which I felt this truth, which impelled me to incite him to this adventure of the steam-boat.

LETTER XLI.
To Mrs. SHELLEY.

LEGGORN.

My dear Love,— I believe I shall have taken a very pleasant and spacious apartment at the Bagni for three months. It is as all the others are— dear. I shall give forty or forty-five sequins for the three months, but as yet I do not know which. I could get others something cheaper, and a great deal worse; but if we would write, it is requisite to have space.

To-morrow evening, or the following morning, you will probably see me. T is planning a journey to England to secure his property in the event of a revolution, which, he is persuaded, is on the eve of exploding. I neither believe that, nor do I fear that the consequences will be so immediately destructive to the existing forms of social order. Money will be delayed, and the exchange reduced very low, and my annuity and ••••, on account of these being money, will be in some danger; but land is quite safe. Besides, it will not be so rapid. Let us hope we shall have a reform. T will be lulled into security, while the slow progress of things is still flowing on, after this affair of the Queen may appear to be blown over. There are bad news from Palermo: the soldiers resisted the people, and a terrible slaughter, amounting, it is said, to four thousand men, ensued. The event, however, was as it should be. Sicily, like Naples, is free. By the brief and partial accounts of the Florence paper, it appears that the enthusiasm of the people was prodigious, and that the women fought from the houses, raining down boiling oil on the assailants.

I am promised a bill on Vienna on the 5th, the day on which my note will be paid, and the day on which I purpose to leave Leghorn. •••• is very unhappy at the idea of T.'s going to England, though she seems to feel the necessity of it. Some time or other he must go to settle his affairs, and they seem to agree that this is the best opportunity. I have no thought of leaving Italy. The best thing we can do is to save money, and, if things take a decided turn, (which I am convinced they will at last, but not perhaps for two or three years,) it will be time for me to assert my rights, and preserve my annuity. Meanwhile, such may decide us. Kiss sweet babe, and kiss me for me—I love you affectionately. P.S. Casa Sita.

Sunday morning, 20th July, 1821.

I have taken the house for forty sequins—a good bargain, and a very good thing to go on—this is about thirteen sequins. To-morrow I go to look over the intention of me therefore on Tuesday morning.

Sunday evening.

LETTER XLII.
To Mrs. SHELLEY.

LEGGORN DI SAN GUGLIELMO.

I am afraid, my dearest, that I shall have to be with you so soon as tomorrow, though I shall use every exertion. I have not seen, nor shall until this evening, the son I have, and he is to drink tea with us at an evening, and bring the Constitutional.

You will have seen the papers, but I knew they will not contain the latest and most news. It is certain, by private letters from merchants, that a serious insurrection has broken at Paris, and the reports last night as an attack made by the populace on the Rebels continued when the last accounts came over. Naples the constitutional party have deposed the Austrian minister, that if the Empire make war on them, their first action will be to put to death all the members of the ministry—a necessary and most just measure, as the forces of the combatants, as well as the men of their respective causes, are so unequal. Kings should be everywhere the hostages for what were admirable.

What will become of the Gisbornes, an English, at Paris! How soon will England and perhaps Italy, be caught by the same fire? And what, to come from the solar grain of sand, shall we do! Kiss babe for me, and your own self is somewhat better, but my side still seems a little. Your affectionately.

[Leghorn], Casa Ricci, Sept. 1st, 1821.

LETTER XLIII.
To the EDITOR OF THE "QUARTERLY REVIEW." 

Sir,—Should you cast your eye on the spirit of this letter before you read the contents, I might imagine that they related to a sheltered paper which appeared in your Review some time?
since. I never notice anonymous attacks. The wretch who wrote it has doubtless the additional reward of a consciousness of his motives, besides the thirty guineas a sheet, or whatever it is that you pay him. Of course you cannot be answerable for all the writings which you edit, and I certainly bear you no ill-will for having edited the abuse to which I allude—indeed, I was too much amused by being compared to Pharaoh, not readily to forgive editor, printer, publisher, stitcher, or any one, except the despicable writer, connected with something so exquisitely entertaining. Seriously speaking, I am not in the habit of permitting myself to be disturbed by what is said or written of me, though, I dare say, I may be condemned sometimes justly enough. But I feel, in respect to the writer in question, that "I am there sitting, where he durst not soar.”

The case is different with the unfortunate subject of this letter, the author of Endymion, to whose feelings and situation I entreat you to allow me to call your attention. I write considerably in the dark; but if it is Mr. Gifford that I am addressing, I am persuaded that in an appeal to his humanity and justice, he will acknowledge the fact. I am aware that the first duty of a Reviewer is towards the public, and 1 am willing to confess that the Endymion is a poem considerably defective, and that, perhaps, it deserved as much censure as the pages of your Review record against it; but, not to mention that there is a certain contemptuousness of phraseology from which it is difficult for a critic to abstain, in the review of Endymion, I do not think that the writer has given it its due praise. Surely the poem, with all its faults, is a very remarkable production for a man of Keats’s age, and the promise of ultimate excellence is such as has rarely been afforded even by such as have afterwards attained high literary eminence. Look at book ii. line 833, &c, and book iii. line 113 to 120—read down that page, and then again from line 193. I could cite many other passages, to convince you that it deserved milder usage. Why it should have been reviewed at all, excepting for the purpose of bringing itsexcellences into notice, I cannot conceive, for it was very little read, and there was no danger that it should become a model to the age of that false taste, with which I confess that it is replenished.

Poor Keats was thrown into a dreadful state of mind by this review, which, I am persuaded, was not written with any intention of producing the effect, to which it has, at least, greatly contributed, of embittering his existence, and inducing a disease from which there are now but faint hopes of his recovery. The first effects are described to me to have resembled insanity, and it was by assiduous watching that he was restrained from effecting purposes of suicide. The agony of his sufferings at length produced the rupture of a blood-vessel in the lungs, and the usual process of consumption appears to have begun. He is coming to pay me a visit in Italy; but I fear that unless his mind can be kept tranquil, little is to be hoped from the mere influence of climate.

But let me not extort anything from your pity. I have just seen a second volume, published by him evidently in careless despair. I have desired my bookseller to send you a copy, and allow me to solicit your especial attention to the fragment of a poem entitled “Hyperion,” the composition of which was checked by the Review in question. The great proportion of this piece is surely in the very highest style of poetry. I speak impartially, for the canons of taste to which Keats has conformed in his other compositions are the very reverse of my own. I leave you to judge for yourself: it would be an insult to you to suppose that from motives, however honourable, you would lend yourself to a deception of the public.

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LETTER XLIV.

To JOHN GIBBORNE, Esq.

Pisa, Oct. (November, 1820.)

My dear Sir,—I send you the Phaedon and Tacitus. I congratulate you on your conquest of the Iliad. You must have been astonished at the perpetually increasing magnificence of the last seven books. Homer there truly begins to be himself. The battle of the Scamander, the funeral of Patroclus, and the high and solemn close of the whole bloody tale in tenderness and inexpressible sorrow, are wrought in a manner incomparable with anything of the same kind. The Odyssey is sweet, but there is nothing like this.

I am bathing myself in the light and odour of the flowery and starry Autos. I have read them all more than once. Henry will tell you how much I am in love with Pacchiani. I suffer from my disease considerably. Henry will also tell you how much, and how whimsically, he alarmed me last night.

My kindest remembrances to Mrs. Gibborne, and best wishes for your health and happiness.

Faithfully yours,

P. B. S.

I have a new Calderon coming from Paris.
LETTER XLV.
To HENRY REVELEY, Esq.

My dear Henry,—Our ducking last night has added fire, instead of quenching the nautical ardour which produced it; and I consider it a good omen in any enterprise, that it begins in evil; as being more probable that it will end in good. I hope you have not suffered from it. I am rather feverish, but very well as to the side, whence I expected the worst consequences. I send you directions for the complete equipment of our boat, since you have so kindly promised to undertake it. In putting into execution, a little more or less expense in so trifling an affair, is to be disregarded. I need not say that the approaching season invites expedition. You can put her in hand immediately, and write the day on which we may come for her.

We expect with impatience the arrival of our false friends, who have so long cheated us with delay; and Mary unites with me in desiring, that, as some of the very few persons who will be interested in it and understand it, you should not be omitted in the expiation.

All good be with you.—Adieu. Yours faithfully, S.

LETTER XLVI.
To HENRY REVELEY, Esq.
Pisa, April 19th.

My dear Henry,—The rullock, or place for the oar, ought not to be placed where the oar-pins are now, but ought to be nearer to the mast; as near as possible, indeed, so that the rower has room to sit. In addition let a false keel be made in this shape, so as to be four inches deep at the stern, and to decrease towards the prow. It may be as thin as you please.

Tell Mr. and Mrs. G —— that I have read the Numancia, and after wading through the singular stupidity of the first act, began to be greatly delighted, and, at length, interested in a very high degree, by the power of the writer in awakening pity and admiration, in which I hardly know by whom he is excelled. There is little, I allow, in a strict sense, to be called poetry in this play; but the command of language, and the harmony of versification, is so great as to deceive one into an idea that it is poetry.

Adieu.—We shall see you soon.

Yours ever truly, S.

LETTER XLVII.
To MR. AND MRS. GISBORNE.
Bagni, Tuesday Evening, (June 5th, 1821.)

My dear Friends,—We anxiously expect your arrival at the Baths; but as I am persuaded that you will spend as much time with us as you can save from your necessary occupations before your departure, I will forbear to vex you with importunity. My health does not permit me to spend many hours from home. I have been engaged these last days in composing a poem on the death of Keats, which will shortly be finished; and I anticipate the pleasure of reading it to you, as some of the very few persons who will be interested in it and understand it. It is a highly-wrought piece of art, and perhaps better, in point of composition, than anything I have written.

I have obtained a purchaser for some of the articles of your three lists, a catalogue of which I subjoin. I shall do my utmost to get more; could you not send me a complete list of your furniture, as I have had inquiries made about chests of drawers, &c.

My unfortunate box! it contained a chaos of the elements of "Charles I." If the idea of the creator had been packed up with them, it would have shared the same fate; and that, I am afraid, has undergone another sort of shipwreck.

Very faithfully and affectionately yours, S.

LETTER XLVIII.
To JOHN GISBORNE, Esq.

My dear Friend,—I have received the heart-rending account of the closing scene of the great genius whom envy and ingratitude scourged out of the world.* I do not think that if I had seen

* The following is the account alluded to:

"Wednesday, 12th Jan., 1821."

"My dearest Friends,—I have this moment received a letter from Mr. Finch, which contains some circumstances relative to Keats. I would not delay communicating them to you, and I hope to be in time for the Procaccino, though it is already half past twelve. I hope Mr. S. received my long despatch a few days since."

"Ever yours, " J.Q."

"I hasten to communicate to you what I know about the latter period and closing scene of the pilgrimage of the original poet from whose works, hitherto unseen by me, you have favoured me with such a beautiful quotation. Almost despairing of his case, he left his native shores by sea, in a merchant vessel for Naples, where he arrived, having received no benefit during the passage, and brooding over the most melancholy and mortifying reflections; and nursing a deeply-rooted disgust to life and to the world, owing to having been infamous treated by the very persons whom his generosity had rescued from want and woe. He journeyed from Naples to Rome, and occupied, at the latter place, lodgings which I had, on former occasions, more than once inhabited. Here he soon took to his bed, from which he never rose more. His passions
it before, I could have composed my poem. The enthusiasm of the imagination would have overpowered the sentiment.

As it is, I have finished my Elegy; and this day I send it to the press at Pisa. You shall have a copy the moment it is completed. I think it will please you. I have dipped my pen in consuming fire for his destroyers; otherwise the style is calm and solemn.

Pray, when shall we see you? Or are the streams of Helicon less salutary than sea-bathing for the nerves? Give us as much as you can before you go to England, and rather divide the term than not come soon.

Mrs. wishes that none of the books, desk, &c., should be packed up with the piano; but that they should be sent, one by one, by Pepi. Address them to me at her house. She desired me to have them addressed to me, why I know not.

A droll circumstance has occurred. Queen Mab, a poem written by me when very young, in the most furious style, with long notes against Jesus Christ, and God the Father, and the king, and bishops, and marriage, and the devil knows what, is just published by one of the low booksellers in the Strand, against my wish and consent, and all the people are at loggerheads about it. H. S. gives me this account. You may imagine how much I am amused. For the sake of a dignified appearance, however, and really because I wish to protest against all the bad poetry in it, I have given orders to say that it is all done against my desire, and have directed my attorney to apply to Chancery for an injunction, which he will not get.

I am pretty ill, I thank you, just now; but I hope you are better.

Most affectionately yours, P. B. S.

Pisa. Saturday, (July 16th, 1821.)
LETTER LI.
To Mrs. SHELLEY.
(RAGNI DI PISA.)
Tuesday, Lione Bianco, Florence, (Augut, 1821.)

My dearest Love,—I shall not return this evening; nor, unless I have better success, tomorrow. I have seen many houses, but very few within the compass of our powers; and, even in those which seem to suit, nothing is more difficult than to bring the proprietors to terms. I congratulate myself on having taken the season in time, as there is great expectation of Florence being full next winter. I shall do my utmost to return to-morrow evening. You may expect me about ten or eleven o'clock, as I shall purposely be late, to spare myself the excessive heat.

The Gisbornes (four o'clock, Tuesday,) are just set out in a diligence-ond-four, for Bologna. They have promised to write from Paris. I spent three hours this morning principally in the contemplation of the Niobe, and of a favourite Apollo; all worldly thoughts and cares seem to vanish from before the sublime emotions such spectacles create; and I am deeply impressed with the great difference of happiness enjoyed by those who live at a distance from these incarnations of all that the finest minds have conceived of beauty, and those who can resort to their company at pleasure. What should we think if we were forbidden to read the great writers who have left us their works! And yet to be forbidden to live at Florence or Rome, is an evil of the same kind, of scarcely less magnitude.

I am delighted to hear that the W.’s are with you. I am convinced that Williams must persevere in the use of the doccia. Give my most affectionate remembrances to them. I shall know all the houses in Florence, and can give W. a good account of them all. You have not sent my passport, and I must get home as I can. I suppose you did not receive my note.

I grudge my sequins for a carriage; but I have suffered from the sun and the fatigue, and dare not expose myself to that which is necessary for house-hunting.

Kiss little babe, and how is he! but I hope to see him fast asleep to-morrow night. And pray, dearest Mary, have some of your novel prepared for my return.

Your ever affectionate
S.

LETTER LIII.
To Mrs. SHELLEY.
(RAGNI DI PISA.)
Bologna, August 6.

Dearest mine,—I am at Bologna, and the carriage is ordered for Ravenna. I have been detained, by having made an embarrassing and inexplicable arrangement, more than twelve hours; or I should have arrived at Bologna last night instead of this morning.

Though I have travelled all night at the rate of two miles and a half an hour, in a little open calæsse, I am perfectly well in health. One would think that I were the spaniel of Destiny, for the more she knocks me about, the more I fawn on her. I had an overturn about day-break; the old horse stumbled, and threw me and the fat vetturino into a slope of meadow, over the hedge. My angular figure stuck where it was pitched; but my vetturino’s spherical form rolled fairly to the bottom of the hill, and that with so few symptoms of reluctance in the life that animated it, that my ridicule (for it was the drollest sight in the world) was suppressed by my fear that the poor devil had been hurt. But he was very well, and we continued our journey with great success.

My love to the Williams’s. Kiss my pretty one, and accept an affectionate one for yourself from me. The chaise waits. I will write the first night from Ravenna at length. Yours ever, S.

LETTER LIII.
To Mrs. SHELLEY.
Ravenna, August 7, 1821.

My dearest Mary,—I arrived last night at ten o’clock, and sat up talking with Lord Byron until five this morning. I then went to sleep, and now awake at eleven, and having despatched my breakfast as quick as possible, mean to devote the interval until twelve, when the post departs, to you.

Lord Byron is very well, and was delighted to see me. He has in fact completely recovered his health, and lives a life totally the reverse of that which he led at Venice. He has a permanent sort of liaison with Contessa Guiccioli, who is now at Florence, and seems from her letters to be a very amiable woman. She is waiting there until some thing shall be decided as to their emigration to Switzerland or stay in Italy; which is yet undetermined on either side. She was compelled to escape from the Papal territory in great haste, as measures had already been taken to place her in a convent, where she would have been unrelent-
Ly confining marriage contract, as existing in the laws and opinions of Italy, though less frequently exercised, is far severer than that of England. I tremble to think of what poor Emilia is destined to.

Lord Byron had almost destroyed himself in Venice: his state of debility was such that he was unable to digest any food, he was consumed by hectic fever, and would speedily have perished, but for this attachment, which has reclaimed him from the excesses into which he threw himself from carelessness and pride, rather than taste. Poor fellow! he is now quite well, and immersed in politics and literature. He has given me a number of the most interesting details on the former subject, but we will not speak of them in a letter. Fletcher is here, and as if like a shadow, he waxed and waned with the substance of his master: Fletcher also has recovered his good looks, and from amidst the unseasonable grey hairs, a fresh harvest of flaxen locks put forth.

We talked a great deal of poetry, and such matters last night; and as usual differed, and I think more than ever. He affects to patronise a system of criticism fit for the production of mediocrity, and although all his fine poems and passages have been produced in defiance of this system, yet I recognise the pernicious effects of it in the Doge of Venice; and it will cramp and limit his future efforts however great they may be, unless he gets rid of it. I have read only parts of it, or rather he himself read them to me, and gave me the plan of the whole.

Lord Byron has also told me of a circumstance that shocks me exceedingly; because it exhibits a degree of desperate and wicked malice for which I am at a loss to account. When I hear such things my patience and my philosophy are put to a severe proof, whilst I refrain from seeking out some obscure hiding-place, where the countenance of man may never meet me more.

* * * * Imagine my despair of good, imagine how it is possible that one of so weak and sensitive a nature as mine can run further the gauntlet through this hellish society of men. You should write to the Hoppners a letter refuting the charge, in case you believe, and know, and can prove that it is false; stating the grounds and proofs of your belief. I need not dictate what you should say; nor, I hope, inspire you with warmth to rebut a charge, which you only can effectually rebut. If you will send the letter to me here, I will forward it to the Hoppners. Lord Byron is not up, I do not know the Hoppners' address, and I am anxious not to lose a post.

My dearest Mary,—I wrote to you yesterday, and I begin another letter to-day, without knowing exactly when I can send it, as I am told the post only goes once a week. I dare say the subject of the latter half of my letter gave you pain, but it was necessary to look the affair in the face, and the only satisfactory answer to the calumny must be given by you, and could be given by you alone. This is evidently the source of the violent denunciations of the Literary Gazette, in themselves contemptible enough, and only to be regarded as effects, which show us their cause, which until we put off our mortal nature, we never despise—that is, the belief of persons who have known and seen you, that you are guilty of crimes.

After having sent my letter to the post yesterday, I went to see some of the antiquities of this place; which appear to be remarkable. This city was once of vast extent, and the traces of its remains are to be found more than four miles from the gate of the modern town. The sea, which once came close to it, has now retired to the distance of four miles, leaving a melancholy extent of marshes, interspersed with patches of cultivation, and towards the seashore with pine forests, which have followed the retrocession of the Adriatic, and the roots of which are actually washed by its waves. The level of the sea and of this tract of country correspond so nearly, that a ditch dug to a few feet in depth, is immediately filled up with sea water. All the ancient buildings have been choked up to the height of from five to twenty feet by the deposit of the sea, and of the inundations, which are frequent in the winter. I went in L. B.'s carriage, first to the Chiesa San Vitale, which is certainly one of the most ancient churches in Italy. It is a rotunda, supported upon buttresses and pilasters of white marble; the ill effect of which is somewhat relieved by an interior row of columns. The dome is very high and narrow. The whole church, in spite of the elevation of the soil, is very high for its breadth, and is of a very peculiar and striking construction. In the section of one of the large tables of marble with which the church is lined, they showed me the perfect figure, as perfect as if it had been painted, of a capuchin friar, which resulted merely from the shadings and the position of the stains in the marble. This is what may be called a pure anticipated cognition of a Capuchin.

I then went to the Tomb of Theodosius, which
has now been dedicated to the Virgin, without, however, any change in its original appearance. It is about a mile from the present city. This building is more than half overwhelmed by the elevated soil, although a portion of the lower story has been excavated, and is filled with brackish and stinking waters, and a sort of vaporous darkness, and troops of prodigious frogs. It is a remarkable piece of architecture, and without belonging to a period when the ancient taste yet survived, bears, nevertheless, a certain impression of that taste. It consists of two stories; the lower supported on Doric arches and pilasters, and a simple entablature. The other circular within, and polygonal outside, and roofed with one single mass of ponderous stone, for it is evidently one, rough-wrought within by the chisel, from which the Northern conquerors tore the plates of silver that adorned it, and polished without, with things like handles appended to it, which were also wrought out of the solid stone, and to which I suppose the ropes were applied to draw it up. You ascend externally into the second story by a flight of stone steps, which are modern.

The next place I went to, was a church called la chiesa di Sunt' Appolinare, which is a Basilica, and built by one, I forget whom, of the Christian Emperors; it is a long church, with a roof like a barn, and supported by twenty-four columns of the finest marble, with an altar of jasper, and four columns of jasper, and giallo antico, supporting the roof of the tabernacle, which are said to be of immense value. It is something like that church (I forget the name of it) we saw at Rome, fuore delle mura.* I suppose the emperor stole these columns, which seem not at all to belong to the place they occupy. Within the city, near the church of San Vitale, there is to be seen the tomb of the Empress Galla Placidia, daughter of Theodosius the Great, together with those of her husband Constantius, her brother Honorius and her son Valentinian—all Emperors. The tombs are masy cases of marble, adorned with rude and tasteless sculpture of lambs, and other Christian emblems, with scarcely a trace of the antique. It seems to have been one of the first effects of the Christian religion to destroy the power of producing beauty in art. These tombs are placed in a sort of vaulted chamber, wrought over with rude mosaic, which is said to have been built in 1300. I have yet seen no more of Ravenna.

* San Paolo fuore delle mura—burnt down, and its beautiful columns calcined by the fire, in 1062—now rebuilt.

We ride out in the evening, through the pine forests which divide this city from the sea. Our way of life is this, and I have accommodated myself to it without much difficulty:—L. B. gets up at two; breakfasts; we talk, read, &c., until six; then we ride, and dine at eight; and after dinner sit talking till four or five in the morning. I get up at twelve, and am now devoting the interval between my rising and his, to you.

L. B. is greatly improved in every respect. In genius, in temper, in moral views, in health, in happiness. The connexion with la Guiccioli has been an inestimable benefit to him. He lives in considerable splendour, but within his income, which is now about £1000 a year; £100 of which he devotes to purposes of charity. He has had mischievous passions, but these he seems to have subdued, and he is becoming what he should be, a virtuous man. The interest which he took in the politics of Italy, and the actions he performed in consequence of it, are subjects not fit to be written, but are such as will delight and surprise you. He is not yet decided to go to Switzerland—a place, indeed, little fitted for him: the gossip and the cabals of those anglicised coteries would torment him, as they did before, and might exasperate him into a relapse of libertinism, which he says he plunged into not from taste, but despair. La Guiccioli and her brother (who is L. B.'s friend and confidant, and acquiesces perfectly in her connexion with him,) wish to go to Switzerland; as L. B. says, merely from the novelty of the pleasure of travelling. L. B. prefers Tuscany or Lecce, and is trying to persuade them to adopt his views. He has made me write a long letter to her to engage her to remain—an odd thing enough for an utter stranger to write on subjects of the utmost delicacy to his friend's mistress. But it seems destined that I am always to have some active part in every body's affairs whom I approach. I have set down in lame Italian, the strongest reasons I can think of against the Swiss emigration—to tell you truth, I should be very glad to accept, as my fee, his establishment in Tuscany. Ravenna is a miserable place; the people are barbarous and wild, and their language the most infernal patois that von can imagine. He would be, in every respect, better among the Tuscans. I am afraid he would not like Florence, on account of the English there. There is Lecce, Florence, Pisa, Siens, and I think nothing more. What think you of Prato, or Pistoia, for him?—no Englishman approaches those towns; but I am afraid no house could be found good enough for him in that region.

He has read to me one of the unpublished cantos
of Don Juan, which is astonishingly fine. It sets him not only above, but far above, all the poets of the day—every word is stamped with immortality. I despair of rivalling Lord Byron, as well I may, and there is no other with whom it is worth contending. This canto is in the style, but totally, and sustained with incredible ease and power, like the end of the second canto. There is not a word which the most rigid asserter of the dignity of human nature would desire to be cancelled. It fulfils, in a certain degree, what I have long preached of producing—something wholly new and relative to the age, and yet surpassingly beautiful. It may be vanity, but I think I see the trace of my earnest exhortations to him to create something wholly new. He has finished his life up to the present time, and given it to Moore, with liberty for Moore to sell it for the best price he can get, with condition that the bookseller should publish it after his death. Moore has sold it to Murray for two thousand pounds. I have spoken to him of Hunt, but not with a direct view of demanding a contribution; and, though I am sure that if asked it would not be refused—yet there is something in me that makes it impossible. Lord Byron and I are excellent friends, and were I reduced to poverty, or were I a writer who had no claims to a higher station than I possess— or did I possess a higher than I deserve, we should appear in all things as such, and I would freely ask him any favour. Such is not the case. The demon of mistrust and pride lurks between two persons in our situation, poisoning the freedom of our intercourse. This is a tax, and a heavy one, which we must pay for being human. I think the fault is not on my side, nor is it likely, I being the weaker. I hope that in the next world these things will be better managed. What is passing in the heart of another, rarely escapes the observation of one who is a strict anatomist of his own.

Write to me at Florence, where I shall remain a day at least, and send me letters, or news of letters. How is my little darling? And how are you, and how do you get on with your book? Be severe in your corrections, and expect severity from me, your sincere admirer. I flatter myself you have composed something unequalled in its kind, and that, not content with the honours of your birth and your hereditary aristocracy, you will add still higher renown to your name. Expect me at the end of my appointed time. I do not think I shall be detained. Is C. with you, or is she coming? I have you heard anything of my poor Emilia, from whom I got a letter the day of my departure, saying, that her marriage was deferred for a very short time, on account of the illness of her sposo. How are the Williams’s, and Williams especially! Give my very kindest love to them.

Lord B. has here splendid apartments in the house of his mistress’s husband, who is one of the richest men in Italy. She is divorced, with an allowance of 1200 crowns a year, a miserable pitance from a man who has 120,000 a year.—Here are two monkeys, five cats, eight dogs, and ten horses, all of whom, (except the horses), walk about the house like the masters of it. Tita the Venetian is here, and operates as my valet; a fine fellow, with a prodigious black beard, and who has stabbed two or three people, and is one of the most good-natured looking fellows I ever saw.

We have good rumours of the Greeks here, and a Russian war. I hardly wish the Russians to take any part in it. My maxim is with Eschylus: τὸ δυσαίσθην—μητρὶ μὲν πλίσον ναίτες, σφετέρῳ δεῖκστα γέννη. There is a Greek exercise for you. How should slaves produce anything but tyranny— even as the seed produces the plant!

Adieu, dear Mary. Yours affectionately, S.

LETTER LV.
To Mrs. SHELLEY.

Saturday—Ravenna.

My dear Mary,—You will be surprised to hear that L. B. has decided upon coming to Pisa, in case he shall be able, with my assistance, to prevail upon his mistress to remain in Italy, of which I think there is little doubt. He wishes for a large and magnificent house, but he has furniture of his own, which he would send from Ravenna. Inquire if any of the large palaces are to be let. We discussed Prato, Pistoia, Lucca, &c, but they would not suit him so well as Pisa, to which, indeed, he shows a decided preference. So let it be! Florence he objects to, on account of the prodigious influx of English.

I don’t think this circumstance ought to make any difference in our own plans with respect to this winter in Florence, because we could easily reassume our station with the spring, at Pugnano or the baths, in order to enjoy the society of the noble lord. But do you consider this point, and write to me your full opinion, at the Florence post-office.

I suffer much to-day from the pain in my side, brought on, I believe, by this accursed water. In other respects, I am pretty well, and my spirits are much improved; they had been improving, indeed, before I left the baths, after the deep dejection of the early part of the year.

I am reading “Austasiai.” One would think that
L. B. had taken his idea of the three last cantos of Don Juan from this book. That, of course, has nothing to do with the merit of this latter, poetry having nothing to do with the invention of facts. It is a very powerful, and very entertaining novel, and a faithful picture, they say, of modern Greek manners. I have read L. B.'s Letter to Bowles: some good things—but he ought not to write prose criticism.

You will receive a long letter, sent with some of L. B.'s, express to Florence. I write this in haste.

Yours most affectionately, S.

LETTER LVII.
To Mrs. SHELLEY.

Wednesday, Ravenna.

My dearest Love,—I write, though I doubt whether I shall not arrive before this letter; as the post only leaves Ravenna once a week, on Saturdays, and as I hope to set out to-morrow evening by the courier. But as I must necessarily stay a day at Florence, and as the natural incidents of travelling may prevent me from taking my intended advantage of the couriers, it is probable that this letter will arrive first. Besides, as I will explain, I am not yet quite my own master. But that by and bye. I do not think it necessary to tell you of my impatience to return to you and my little darling, or the disappointment with which I have prolonged my absence from you. I am happy to think that you are not quite alone.

Lord Byron is still decided upon Tuscany: and such is his impatience, that he has desired me—as if I should not arrive in time—to write to you to inquire for the best unfurnished palace in Pisa, and to enter upon a treaty for it. It is better not to be on the Lung' Arno; but, in fact, there is no such hurry, and as I shall see you so soon, it is not worth while to trouble yourself about it.

I told you I had written by L. B.'s desire to la Guiccioli, to dissuade her and her family from Switzerland. Her answer is this moment arrived, and my representation seems to have reconciled them to the unfitness of that step. At the conclusion of a letter, full of all the fine things she says she has heard of me, is this request, which I transcribe:—"Signore—la vostra bontà mi fa ardir di chiedervi un favore—me lo accordereste voi? Non partite da Ravenna senza Milord." Of course, being now, by all the laws of knighthood, captive to a lady's request, I shall only be at liberty on my parole, until Lord Byron is settled at Pisa. I shall reply, of course, that the boon is granted, and that if her lover is reluctant to quit Ravenna, after I have made arrangements for receiving him at Pisa, I am bound to place myself in the same situation as now, to assist him with importunities to rejoin her. Of this there is, fortunately, no need; and I need not tell you there is no fear that this chivalric submission of mine to the great general laws of antique courtesy, against which I never rebel, and which is my religion, should interfere with my quick returning, and long remaining with you, dear girl.

I have seen Dante's tomb, and worshipped the sacred spot. The building and its accessories are comparatively modern, but, the urn itself, and the tablet of marble, with his portrait in relief, are evidently of equal antiquity with his death. The countenance has all the marks of being taken from his own; the lines are strongly marked, far more than the portraits, which, however, it resembles; except, indeed, the eye, which is half closed, and reminded me of Pacchiani. It was probably taken after death. I saw the library, and some specimens of the earliest illuminated printing from the press of Faust. They are on vellum, and of an execution little inferior to that of the present day.

We ride out every evening as usual, and practise pistol-shooting at a pumpkin; and I am not sorry to observe, that I approach towards my noble friend's exactness of aim. The water here is vil-lanous, and I have suffered tortures; but I now drink nothing but alcaliescent water, and am much relieved. I have the greatest trouble to get away; and L. B., as a reason for my stay, has urged, that, without either me or the Guiccioli, he will certainly fall into his old habits. I then talk, and he listens to reason; and I earnestly hope that he is too well aware of the terrible and degrad-
ing consequences of his former mode of life, to be in danger from the short interval of temptation that will be left him. L. B. speaks with great kindness and interest of you, and seems to wish to see you.

_Thursday, Ravenna._

I HAVE received your letter with that to Mrs. Hoppner. I do not wonder, my dearest friend, that you should have been moved. I was at first, but speedily regained the indifference which the opinion of anything, or anybody, except our own consciousness, amply merits; and day by day shall more receive from me. I have not recopied your letter; such a measure would destroy its authenticity, but have given it to Lord Byron, who has engaged to send it with his own comments to the Hoppners. People do not hesitate, it seems, to make themselves panders and accomplices to slander, for the Hoppners had exacted from Lord Byron that these accusations should be concealed from me. Lord Byron is not a man to keep a secret, good or bad; but in openly confessing that he has not done so, he must observe a certain delicacy, and therefore wished to send the letter himself, and indeed this adds weight to your representations. Have you seen the article in the Literary Gazette on me? They evidently allude to some story of this kind—however cautious the Hoppners have been in preventing the calumnies which we led until last winter, are like a family tree flourishes not. People who lead the lives which we led until last winter, are like a family of Wahabee Arabs, pitching their tent in the midst of London. We must do one thing or the other—for yourself, for our child, for our existence. The calumnies, the sources of which are probably deeper than we perceive, have ultimately, for object, the depriving us of the means of security and subsistence. You will easily perceive the interests of that society. Our roots never struck so deeply as at Pisa, and the transplanted tree flourishes not. People who lead the lives which we led until last winter, are like a family of Wahabee Arabs, pitching their tent in the midst of London. We must do one thing or the other—for yourself, for our child, for our existence. The calumnies, the sources of which are probably deeper than we perceive, have ultimately, for object, the depriving us of the means of security and subsistence. You will easily perceive the gradations by which calumny proceeds to pretext, pretext to persecution, and persecution to the ban of fire and water. It is for this, and not because this or that fool, or the whole court of fools, curse and rail, that calumny is worth refuting or chastising.
LETTER LVIII.
To LEIGH HUNT, Esq.

Pisa, August 26th, 1821.

My dearest Friend,— Since I last wrote to you, I have been on a visit to Lord Byron at Ravenna. The result of this visit was a determination, on his part, to come and live at Pisa; and I have taken the finest palace on the Lung' Arno for him. But the material part of my visit consists in a message which he desires me to give you, and which, I think, ought to add to your determination—for such a one I hope you have formed, of restoring your shattered health and spirits by a migration to these "regions mild of calm and serene air."

He proposes that you should come and go shares with him and me, in a periodical work, to be conducted here; in which each of the contracting parties should publish all their original compositions, and share the profits. He proposed it to Moore, but for some reason it was never brought to bear. There can be no doubt that the profits of any scheme in which you and Lord Byron engage, must, from various, yet co-operating reasons, be very great. As for myself, I am, for the present, only a sort of link between you and him, until you can know each other, and effectuate the arrangement; since (to entrust you with a secret which, for your sake, I withhold from Lord Byron) nothing would induce me to share in the profits, and still less, in the borrowed splendour of such a partnership. You and he, in different manners, would be equal, and would bring, in a different manner, but in the same proportion, equal stocks of reputation and success. Do not let my frankness with you, nor my belief that you deserve it more than Lord Byron, have the effect of deterring you from assuming a station in modem literature, which the universal voice of my contemporaries forbids me either to stoop or to aspire to. I am, and I desire to be, nothing.

I did not ask Lord Byron to assist me in sending a remittance for your journey; because there are men, however excellent, from whom we would never receive an obligation, in the worldly sense of the word; and I am as jealous for my friend as for myself; but I suppose that I shall at last make up an impudent face, and ask Horace Smith to add to the many obligations he has conferred on me. I know I need only ask.

I think I have never told you how very much I like your "Amyntas;" it almost reconciles me to translations. In another sense I still demur. You might have written another such poem as the "Nymphs," with no great access of efforts. I am full of thoughts and plans, and should do something, if the feeble and irritable frame which incloses it was willing to obey the spirit. I fancy that then I should do great things. Before this you will have seen "Adonais." Lord Byron, I suppose from modesty, on account of his being mentioned in it, did not say a word of "Adonais," though he was loud in his praise of "Prometheus," and, what you will not agree with him in, censure of "the Cenci." Certainly, if "Marino Faliero" is a drama, "the Cenci" is not—but that between ourselves. Lord Byron is reformed, as far as gallantry goes, and lives with a beautiful and sentimental Italian lady, who is as much attached to him as may be. I trust greatly to his intercourse with you, for his creed to become as pure as he thinks his conduct is. He has many generous and exalted qualities, but the canker of aristocracy wants to be cut out.

LETTER LIX.
To HORATIO SMITH, Esq.

Pisa, Sept. 14th, 1821.

My dear Smith,— I cannot express the pain and disappointment with which I learn the change in your plans, no less than the afflicting cause of it. Florence will no longer have any attractions for me this winter, and I shall contentedly sit down in this humdrum Pisa, and refer to hope and to chance the pleasure I had expected from your society this winter. What shall I do with your packages, which have now, I believe, all arrived at Guebhard's at Leghorn? Is it not possible that a favourable change in Mrs. Smith's health might produce a corresponding change in your determinations, and would it, or would it not, be premature to forward the packages to your present residence, or to London? I will pay every possible attention to your instructions in this regard.

I had marked down several houses in Florence, and one especially on the Arno, a most lovely place, though they asked rather more than perhaps you would have chosen to pay—yet nothing approaching to an English price.—I do not yet entirely give you up.—Indeed, I should be sorry not to hope that Mrs. Smith's state of health would not soon become such, as to remove your principal objection to this delightful climate. I have not, with the exception of three or four days, suffered in the least from the heat this year. Though, it is but fair to confess, that my temperament approaches to that of the salamander.

We expect Lord Byron here in about a fortnight. I have just taken the finest palace
in Pisa for him, and his luggage, and his horses, and all his train, are, I believe, already on their way hither. I dare say you have heard of the life he led at Venice, rivalling the wise Solomon almost, in the number of his concubines. Well, he is now quite reformed, and is leading a most sober and decent life, as cavaliere servente to a very pretty Italian woman, who has already arrived at Pisa, with her father and her brother, (such are the manners of Italy,) as the jackals of the lion. He is occupied in forming a new drama, and, with views which I doubt not will expand as he proceeds, is determined to write a series of plays, in which he will follow the French tragedians and Alfieri, rather than those of England and Spain, and produce something new, at least, to England. This seems to me the wrong road; but genius like his is destined to lead and not to follow. He will shake off his shackles as he finds they cramp him. I believe he will produce something very great; and that familiarity with the dramatic power of human nature, will soon enable him to soften down the severe and unharmonising traits of his "Marino Faliero." I think you know Lord Byron personally, or is it your brother! If the latter, I know that he wished particularly to be introduced to you, and that he will sympathise, in some degree, in this great disappointment which I feel in the change, or, as I yet hope, in the prorogation of your plans.

I am glad you like "Adonais," and, particularly, that you do not think it metaphysical, which I was afraid it was. I was resolved to pay some tribute of sympathy to the unhonoured dead, but I wrote, as usual, with a total ignorance of the effect that I should produce.---I have not yet seen your pastoral drama; if you have a copy, could you favour me with it? It will be six months before I shall receive it from England. I have heard it spoken of with high praise, and I have the greatest curiosity to see it.

The Gisbornes promised to buy me some books in Paris, and I had asked you to be kind enough to advance them what they might want to pay for them. I cannot conceive why they did not execute this little commission for me, as they knew how very much I wished to receive these books by the same conveyance as the filtering-stone. Dare I ask you to do me the favour to buy them! A complete edition of the works of Calderon, and the French translation of Kant, a German Faust, and to add the Nympholept! I am indifferent as to a little more or less expense, so that I may have them immediately. I will send you an order on Paris for the amount, together with the thirty-two francs you were kind enough to pay for me.

All public attention is now centred on the wonderful revolution in Greece. I dare not, after the events of last winter, hope that slaves can become freemen so cheaply; yet I know one Greek of the highest qualities, both of courage and conduct, the Prince Mavrocordato, and if the rest be like him, all will go well.---The news of this moment is, that the Russian army has orders to advance.

Mrs. S. unites with me in the most heartfelt regret, and I remain, my dear Smith,

Most faithfully yours,

P. B. S.

If you happen to have brought a copy of Clarke's edition of Queen Mab for me, I should like very well to see it.---I really hardly know what this poem is about. I am afraid it is rather rough.

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LETTER LX.

To JOHN GISBORN, Esq.

Pisa, October 22, 1821.

My dear Gisborne,—At length the post brings a welcome letter from you, and I am pleased to be assured of your health and safe arrival. I expect with interest and anxiety the intelligence of your progress in England, and how far the advantages there, compensate the loss of Italy. I hear from Hunt that he is determined on emigration, and if I thought the letter would arrive in time, I should beg you to suggest some advice to him. But you ought to be incapable of forgiving me the fact of depriving England of what it must lose when Hunt departs.

Did I tell you that Lord Byron comes to settle at Pisa, and that he has a plan of writing a periodical work in conjunction with Hunt! His house, Madame Felichi's, is already taken and fitted up for him, and he has been expected everyday these six weeks. La Guiccioli, who awaits him impatiently, is a very pretty, sentimental, innocent Italian, who has sacrificed an immense fortune for the sake of Lord Byron, and who, if I know anything of my friend, of her and of human nature, will hereafter have plenty of leisure and opportunity to repent her rashness. Lord Byron is, however, quite cured of his gross habits, as far as habits; the perverse ideas on which they were formed, are not yet eradicated.

We have furnished a house at Pisa, and mean to make it our head-quarters. I shall get all my books out, and entrench myself like a spider in a web. If you can assist P. in sending them to Leghorn, you would do me an especial favour; but do not buy me Calderon, Faust, or Kant, as H. S. promises to send them me from Paris, where I
LETTER LXI.
To J. SEVERN, Esq.
Pisa, November 9th, 1821.

MY DEAR SIR,—I send you the elegy on poor Keats—and I wish it were better worth your acceptance. You will see, by the preface, that it was written before I could obtain any particular account of his last moments; all that I still know, was communicated to me by a friend who had derived his information from Colonel Finch; I have ventured to express, as I felt, the respect and admiration which your conduct towards him demands.

In spite of his transcendent genius, Keats never was, nor ever will be, a popular poet; and the total neglect and obscurity in which the astonishing remnants of his mind still lie, was hardly to lie dissipated by a writer, who, however he may differ from Keats in more important qualities, at least resembles him in that accidental one, a want of popularity.

I have little hope, therefore, that the poem I send you will excite any attention, nor do I feel assured that a critical notice of his writings would find a single reader. But for these considerations, it had been my intention to have collected the remnants of his mind still lie, and to have published them with a life and criticism.—Has he left any poems or writings of whatsoever kind, and in whose possession are they? Perhaps you would oblige me by information on this point.

Many thanks for the picture you promise me: I shall consider it among the most sacred relics of the past.

For my part, I little expected, when I last saw Keats at my friend Leigh Hunt’s, that I should survive him.

Should you ever pass through Pisa, I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you, and of cultivating an acquaintance into something pleasant, begun under such melancholy auspices.

Accept, my dear sir, the assurances of my sincere esteem, and believe me, Your most sincere and faithful servant, PERCY B. SHELLEY.

Do you know Leigh Hunt! I expect him and his family here every day.

LETTER LXII.
To JOHN GISBORNE, Esq.
Pisa, April 10th, 1822.

MY DEAR GISBONE,—I have received Helias, which is pretty printed, and with fewer mistakes

* The original of this letter is in the possession of the REV. T. WILKINSON.

suppose you had not time to procure them. Any other books you or Henry think would accord with my design, Ollier will furnish you with. I should like very much to hear what is said of my “Adonais,” and you would oblige me by cutting out, or making Ollier cut out, any respectable criticism on it and sending it me; you know I do not mind a crown or two in postage. The Epipsychidion is a mystery; as to real flesh and blood, you know that I do not deal in those articles; you might as well go to a gin-shop for a leg of mutton, as expect anything human or earthly from me. I desired Ollier not to circulate this piece except to the avvtroi, and even they, it seems, are inclined to approximate me to the circle of a servant girl and her sweetheart. But I intend to write a Symposium of my own to set all this right. I am just finishing a dramatic poem, called Helias, upon the contest now raging in Greece—a sort of imitation of the Persae of Eschylus, full of lyrical poetry. I try to be what I might have been, but am not successful. I find that (I dare say I shall quote wrong,) “Den herrlichsten, den sich der Geist erprift Drängt immer fremd und fremder Stuffsich an.”

The Edinburgh Review lies. Godwin’s answer to Malthus is victorious and decisive; and that it should not be generally acknowledged as such, is full evidence of the influence of successful evil and tyranny. What Godwin is, compared to Plato and Lord Bacon, we well know; but compared with these miserable sciolists, he is a vulture to a worm.

I read the Greek dramatists and Plato for ever. You are right about Antigone; how sublime a picture of a woman! and what think you of the choruses, and especially the lyrical complaints of the godlike victim and the menaces of Tiresias, and their rapid fulfilment? Some of us have, in a prior existence, been in love with an Antigone, and that makes us find no full content in any mortal tie. As to books, I advise you to live near the British Museum, and read there. I have read, since I saw you, the “Jungfrau von Orleans” of Schiller,—a fine play, if the fifth act did not fall off. Some Greeks, escaped from the defeat in Wallachia, have passed through Pisa to re-embark at Leghorn for the Morea; and the Tuscan Government allowed them, during their stay and passage, three lire each per day and their lodging; that is good. Remember me and Mary most kindly to Mrs. Gisborne and Henry, and believe me,

Yours most affectionately,

P. B. S.
I greatest philosopher, and Calderon the greatest it to oblivion, and me to my accustomed failure? You for the revision of the press or who acted positionexcites. It deepens the gloom and aug seem to me an unfit study for any person who is good we can attain in our present state, seems a prey to the reproaches of memory, and the a supposition is not more absurd, and is certainly less demoniacal, than that of Wordsworth, where he says—

"This earth, Which is the world of all of us, and where We find our happiness, or not at all."

As if, after sixty years' suffering here, we were to be roasted alive for sixty million more in hell, or charitably annihilated by a coup de grâce of the bungler who brought us into existence at first! I have read Calderon's Magico Prodigioso! I find a striking singularity between Faust and this drama, and if I were to acknowledge Coleridge's distinction, should say Goethe was the greatest philosopher, and Calderon the greatest poet. Cyprians evidently furnished the germ of Faust, as Faust may furnish the germ of other poems; although it is as different from it in structure and plan as the acorn from the oak. I have—imagine my presumption—translated several scenes from both, as the basis of a paper for our journal. I am well content with those from Calderon, which in fact gave me very little trouble; but those from Faust—I feel how imperfect a representation, even with all the licence I assume to figure to myself how Goethe would have written in English, my words convey. No one but Coleridge is capable of this work.

We have seen here a translation of some scenes, and indeed the most remarkable ones, accompanying those astonishing etchings which have been published in England from a German master. It is not bad—and faithful enough—but how weak! how incompetent to represent Faust! I have only attempted the scenes omitted in this translation, and would send you that of Walpurgisnacht, if I thought Ollier would place the postage to my account. What etchings those are! I am never satiated with looking at them; and, I fear, it is the only sort of translation of which Faust is susceptible. I never perfectly understood the Hartz Mountain scene, until I saw the etching; and then, Margaret in the summer-house with Faust! The artist makes one envy his happiness that he can sketch such things with calmness, which I only dared look upon once, and which made my brain swim round to touch the leaf on the opposite side of which I knew that it was figured. Whether it is that the artist has surpassed Faust, or that the pencil surpasses language in some subjects, I know not, or that I am more affected by a visible image, but the etching certainly excited me far more than the poem it illustrated. Do you remember the fifty-fourth letter of the first part of the "Nouvelle Héloïse!" Goethe, in a subsequent scene, evidently had that letter in his mind, and this etching is an idealism of it. So much for the world of shadows!

What think you of Lord Byron's last volume! In my opinion it contains finer poetry than has appeared in England since the publication of Paradise Regained. Cain is apocalyptic—it is a revelation not before communicated to man. I write nothing but by fits. I have done some of Charles I.; but although the poetry succeeded very well, I cannot seize on the conception of the subject as a whole, and seldom now touch the canvas. You know I don't think much about Reviews, nor of the fame they give, nor that they take away. It is absurd in any Review to criticise Adonais, and still more to pretend that the verses are bad. Prometheus was never intended for more than five or six persons. And how are you getting on! Do your plans still want success! Do you regret Italy! or any thing that Italy contains! And in case of an entire failure in your expectations, do you think of returning here! You see the first blow has been made at funded property;—do you intend to confide and invite a second! You would already have saved something per cent., if you had invested your property in Tuscan land. The next best thing would be to invest it in English, and
reside upon it. I tremble for the consequences, to you personally, from a prolonged confidence in the funds. Justice, policy, the hopes of the nation and renewed institutions, demand your ruin, and I, for one, cannot bring myself to desire what is in itself desirable, till you are free. You see how liberal I am of advice; but you know the motives that suggest it. What is Henry about, and how are his prospects? Tell him that some adventurers are engaged upon a steam-boat at Leghorn, to make the trajet we projected. I hope he is charitable enough to pray that they may succeed better than we did.

Remember me most affectionately to Mrs. Gisborne, to whom, as well as to yourself, I consider that this letter is written. How is she, and how are you all in health? And pray tell me, what are your plans of life, and how Henry succeeds, and whether he is married or not? How can I send you such small sums as you may want for postages, &c, for I do not mean to tax with my unreasonable letters both your purse and your patience! We go this summer to Spezzia; but direct as ever to Pisa,— Mrs. will forward our letters. If you see anything which you think would particularly interest me, pray make Ollier pay for sending it out by post. Give my best and affectionate regards to H,— to whom I do not write at present, imagining that you will give him a piece of this letter.

Ever most faithfully yours, P. B. S.

LETTER LXIII

To • • Esq.

Pisa, April 11th, 1824.

My dear • •— I have, as yet, received neither the • •, nor his metaphysical companions—Time, my Lord, has a wallet on his back, and I suppose he has bagged them by the way. As he has had a good deal of alma for oblivion out of me, I think he might as well have favoured me this once; I have, indeed, just dropped another mite into his treasury, called Hellas, which I know not how to send to you; but I dare say, some fury of the Hades of authors will bring one to Paris. It is a poem written on the Greek cause last summer—a sort of lyrical, dramatic, nondescript piece of business.

You will have heard of a row we have had here, which, I dare say, will grow to a serious size before it arrives at Paris. It was, in fact, a trifling piece of business enough, arising from an insult of a drunken dragoon, offered to one of our party, and only serious, because one of Lord B.'s servants wounded the fellow dangerously with a pitchfork. He is now, however, recovering, and the echo of the affair will be heard long after the original report has ceased.

Lord Byron has read me one or two letters of Moore to him,* in which Moore speaks with great kindness of me; and of course I cannot but feel flattered by the approbation of a man, my inferiority to whom I am proud to acknowledge. Amongst other things, however, Moore, after giving Lord B. much good advice about public opinion, &c., seems to deprecate my influence on his mind, on the subject of religion, and to attribute the tone assumed in "Cain" to my suggestions. Moore cautions him against my influence on this particular, with the most friendly zeal; and it is plain that his motive springs from a desire of benefiting Lord B., without degrading me. I think you know Moore. Pray assure him that I have not the smallest influence over Lord Byron, in this particular, and if I had, I certainly should employ it to eradicate from his great mind the delusions of Christianity, which, in spite of his reason, seem perpetually to recur, and to lay in ambush for the hours of sickness and distress. "Cain" was conceived many years ago, and begun before I saw him last year at Ravenna. How happy should I not be to attribute to myself, however indirectly, any participation in that immortal work!— I differ with Moore in thinking Christianity useful to the world; no man of sense can think it true; and the alliance of the monstrous superstitions of the popular worship with the pure doctrines of the Theism of such a man as Moore, turns to the profit of the former, and makes the latter the fountain of its own pollution. I agree with him, that the doctrines of the French, and Material Philosophy, are as false as they are pernicious; but still they are better than Christianity, inasmuch as anarchy is better than despotism; for this reason, that the former is for a season, and that the latter is eternal. My admiration of the character, no less than of the genius of Moore, makes me rather wish that he should not have an ill opinion of me.

Where are you? We settle this summer near Spezzia; Lord Byron at Leghorn. May not I hope to see you, even for a trip in Italy! I hope your wife and little ones are well. Mine grows a fine boy, and is quite well.

I have contrived to get my musical oars at Newcastle itself.—My dear • • believe me,

Faithfully yours, P. B. S.

* For Mr. Moore's account of this incident, and his own feelings and opinions on the subject—those imputed to him by Shelley being purely conjectural—see Moore's Life of Byron, Vol. II. p. 384, first edition.
LETTER LXIV.
To Mrs. SHELLEY.
(AT SPEZZIA.)

[At Lerici, Sunday, April 29th, 1822.]

DEAREST MARY,—I am this moment arrived at Lerici, where I am necessarily detained, waiting the furniture, which left Pisa last night at midnight; and as the sea has been calm, and the wind fair, I may expect them every moment. It would not do to leave affairs here in an impiccio, great as is my anxiety to see you.—How are you, my best love! How have you sustained the trials of the journey? Answer me this question, and how my little babe and C are.

Now to business:—Is the Magni House taken if not, pray occupy yourself instantly in finishing the affair, even if you are obliged to go to Sarzana, and send a messenger to me to tell me of your success. I, of course, cannot leave Lerici, to which place the boats (for we were obliged to take two,) are directed. But you can come over in the same boat that brings this letter, and return in the evening.

I ought to say that I do not think that there is accommodation for you all at this inn; and that, even if there were, you would be better off at Spezzia; but if the Magni House is taken, then there is no possible reason why you should not take a row over in the boat that will bring this—but don’t keep the men long. I am anxious to hear from you on every account. Ever yours, S.

* * * * *

I insert a few extracts from the Journal of Williams, as affording a picture of Shelley’s habits during these last months of his life. How full he was of hope, life and love, when lost to us forever!

Dear Mr. Smith,—It is some time since I have heard from you; are you still at Versailles? Do you still cling to France, and prefer the arts and conveniences of that over-civilised country to the beautiful nature and mighty remains of Italy? As to me, like Anacreon’s swallow, I have left my Nile, and have taken up my summer quarters here, in a lonely house, close by the sea-side, surrounded by the soft and sublime scenery of the gulf of Spezzia. I do not write; I have lived too long near Lord Byron, and the sun has extinguished the glow-worm; for I cannot hope, with St. John, that “the light came into the world, and the world knew it not.”

The object of my present letter is, however, a request, and as it concerns that most odious of all subjects, money, I will put it in the shortest shape—Godwin’s law-suit, he tells us, is decided against him; and he is adjudged to pay £400. He writes, of course, to his daughter in the greatest distress; but we have no money except our income, nor any means of procuring it. My wife has sent him her novel, which is now finished, the copyright of which will probably bring him £300 or £400—as Ollier offered the former sum for it, but as he required a considerable delay for the payment, she rejected his offer. Now, what I wish to know is, whether you could with conve-

LETTER LXV.
To HORATIO SMITH, Esq.
(VERSAILLES.)

[At Lerici, May, 1822.]

MY DEAR SMITH,—It is some time since I have heard from you; are you still at Versailles? Do you still cling to France, and prefer the arts and conveniences of that over-civilised country to the beautiful nature and mighty remains of Italy? As to me, like Anacreon’s swallow, I have left my Nile, and have taken up my summer quarters here, in a lonely house, close by the sea-side, surrounded by the soft and sublime scenery of the gulf of Spezzia. I do not write; I have lived too long near Lord Byron, and the sun has extinguished the glow-worm; for I cannot hope, with St. John, that “the light came into the world, and the world knew it not.”

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* * * * *

“Fine. Arrive at Lerici at 1 o’clock—the harbour-master called. Not a house to be had. On our telling him we had brought our furniture, his face lengthened considerably, for he informed us that the dogana would amount to £300 English, at least. Dined, and resolved on sending our things back without unloading—in fact, found ourselves in a devil of a mess. S. wrote to Mary, whom we heard was at Spezzia.

“Monday, May 1st.

“Cloudy. Accompanied the harbour-master to the chief of the customs at Spezzia. Found him exceedingly polite, and willing to do all that lay in his power to assist us. He will, therefore, take on himself to allow the furniture to come on shore when the boats arrive, and then consider our house as a sort of depot, until further leave from the Genoa government. Returned to Lerici somewhat calmed. Heard from Mary at Sarzana, that she had concluded for Casa Magni—but for ourselves no hope.

“Wednesday, May 1st.

“Cloudy, with rain. Came to Casa Magni after breakfast; the Shelleys having contrived to give us rooms. Without them, heaven knows what we should have done. Employed all day putting the things away. All comfortably settled by four. Passed the evening in talking over our folly and our troubles.

“Saturday, May 4th.

“Fine. Kept awake the whole night by a heavy swell, which made a noise on the beach like the discharge of heavy artillery. Tried with Shelley to launch the small flat-bottomed boat through the surf; we succeeded in pushing it through, but shipped a sea on attempting to land. Walk to Lerici along the beach, by a winding path on the mountain’s side. Delightful evening—the scenery most sublime.
nience lend me the £400 which you once dedi-
cated to this service, and allow Godwin to have it,
under the precautions and stipulations which I
formerly annexed to its employment. You could
not obviously allow this money to lie idle waiting
for this event, without interest. I forgot this part
of the business till this instant, and now I reflect
that I ought to have assured you of the regular
payment of interest, which I omitted to mention,
considering it a matter of course. I
can easily imagine that circumstances may
have arisen to make this loan inconvenient or im-
possible. In any case, believe me,
My dear Smith,
Yours very gratefully and faithfully,
P. B. SHELETT.
LETTER LXVI.

To *.

Lerici, June 29th, 1822.

My dear * *— Pray thank Moore for his obliging message. I wish I could as easily convey my sense of his genius and character. I should have written to him on the subject of my late obliging message. I wish I could as easily convey to explain who and what we were. Upon this, the fellow's doing so; although, indeed, Lord Byron made no letter, but that I doubted how far I was justified in secret of his communication to me. It seems to me that things have now arrived at such a crisis as requires every man plainly to utter his sentiments on the inefficacy of the existing religion, no less than political systems, for restraining and guiding mankind. Let us see the truth, whatever that may be. The destiny of man can scarcely be so degraded, that he was born only to die; and if

when the fellow brought down two old muskets, and we prepared our pistols, which he no sooner saw we were determined to use, than he called our servant to the beach, and desiring him to hold the paper about a yard from him, he suffered two gentlemen who were bathing near the place to come changed from presumption to the most cowardly

fawning, and we proceeded to Massa, unmolested. Slept at Massa, about three miles inland.

"Friday, June 7th.

"Left Massa at half-past five—a dead calm, the atmosphere hot and oppressive. At eight a breeze sprung up, which enabled us to lie up to Msgra Point. Beat round the point and reached home at half-past two.

"Wednesday, June 12th.

"Launched the little boat, which answered our wishes and expectations. She is 68 lbs. English weight, and stows easily on board. Sailed in the evening, but were besailed by the wind in the offing, and left there with a long ground-swell, which made Jane little better than dead. Hoisted out our little boat and brought her on shore. Her landing attended by the whole village.

"Thursday, June 13th.

"Fine. At nine, saw a vessel between the straits of Porto Venere, like a man-of-war brig. She proved to be the Bolivar, with Roberts and Trelawny on board, who are taking her round to Livorno. On meeting them we were saluted by six guns. Sailed together to try the vessels—in speed no chance with her, but I think we keep as good a wind. She is the most beautiful craft I ever saw, and will do more for her size. She costs Lord Byron 2750, clear off and ready for sea, with provisions and conveniences of every kind.

"Wednesday, June 19th.

"Fine. The swell continues, and I am now the more persuaded that the moon influences the tides here, particularly the new moon, on the first week before she makes her appearance. Took the ballast out and hauled the boat on the beach. Cleaned and greased her.

"Thursday, June 20th.

"Fine. Shelley hears from Hunt that he is arrived at Genoa: having sailed from England on the 13th May.

"Saturday, June 22nd.

"Calm. Heat overpowering, but in the shade refreshed by the sea-breeze. At seven launched our boat with all her ballast in. She floats three inches lighter than before. This difference is caused, I imagine, by her planks having dried while on shore.

"Thursday, June 27th.

"Fine. The heat increases daily, and prayers are offering for rain. At Parma it is now so excessive, that the labourers are forbidden to work in the fields after ten and before five, fearful of an epidemic.

such should be the case, delusions, especially the gross and preposterous ones of the existing religion, can scarcely be supposed to exalt it. If every man said what he thought, it could not subsist a day. But all, more or less, subdue themselves to the element that surrounds them, and contribute to the evils they lament by the hypocrisy that springs from them.

England appears to be in a desperate condition, Ireland still worse; and no class of those who subsist on the public labour will be persuaded that their claims on it must be diminished. But the government must content itself with less in taxes, the landholder must submit to receive less rent, and the fundholder a diminished interest, or they will all get nothing. I once thought to study these affairs, and write or act in them. I am glad that my good genius said, refrain. I see little public virtue, and I foresee that the contest will be one of blood and gold, two elements which however much to my taste in my pockets and my veins, I have an objection to out of them.

Lord Byron continues at Leghorn, and has just received from Genoa a most beautiful little yacht, which he caused to be built there. He has written two new cantos of Don Juan, but I have not seen them. I have just received a letter from Hunt, who has arrived at Genoa. As soon as I hear that he has sailed, I shall weigh anchor in my little schooner, and give him chase to Leghorn, when I must occupy myself in some arrangements for him with Lord Byron. Between ourselves, I greatly fear that this alliance will not succeed; for I, who could never have been regarded as more than the link of the two thunderbolts, cannot now consent to be even that; and how long the alliance may continue, I will not prophesy. Pray do not hint my doubts on the subject to any one, or they might do harm to Hunt; and they may be groundless.

I still inhabit this divine bay, reading Spanish dramas, and sailing, and listening to the most enchanting music. We have some friends on a visit to us, and my only regret is that the summer must ever pass, or that Mary has not the same predilection for this place that I have, which would induce me never to shift my quarters.

Farewell.—Believe me ever your affectionate friend,

P. B. SHELLEY.

LETTER LXVII.

To Mrs. WILLIAMS.

(CASA MAGN.)

Pisa, July 4, 1822.

You will probably see Williams before I can disentangle myself from the affairs with which I

"Calm and clear. Rose at 4 to get the top-sails altered. At 11 a fine breeze from the westward tempted
am now surrounded. I return to Leghorn to-night, and shall urge him to sail with the first fair wind, without expecting me. I have thus the pleasure of contributing to your happiness when deprived of every other, and of leaving you no other subject of regret, but the absence of one scarcely worth regretting. I fear you are solitary and melancholy at Villa Magni, and, in the intervals of the greater and more serious distress in which I am compelled to sympathise here, I figure to myself the countenance which had been the source of such consolation to me, shadowed by a veil of sorrow.

How soon those hours passed, and how slowly they return, to pass so soon again, perhaps for ever, in which we have lived together so intimately, so happily! Adieu, my dearest friend! I only write these lines for the pleasure of tracing what will meet your eyes. Mary will tell you all the news. S.

LETTER LXVIII.
To Mrs. SHELLEY.
(CASA MAGNI.)
Pisa, July 4, 1821.

My dearest Mary,—I have received both your letters, and shall attend to the instructions they convey. I did not think of buying the Bolivar; Lord B. wishes to sell her, but I imagine would prefer ready money. I have as yet made no inquiries about houses near Pugnano— I have no moment of time to spare from Hunt's affairs; I us to weigh for Leghorn. At 2 stretched across to Lerici to pick up Roberts; and at half-past found ourselves in the offing, with a side wind. At half-past 9 arrived at Leghorn—a run of forty-five to fifty miles in seven hours and a half. Anchored astern the Bolivar, from which we procured cushions and made up for ourselves a bed on board, not being able to get on shore after sunset, on account of the health-office being shut at that hour.

"Tuesday, 2d." Fine weather. We heard this morning that the Bolivar was about to sail for Genoa, and that Lord Byron was quitting Tuscany, on account of Count Gambas's family having again been exiled thence. This, on reaching the shore, I found really to be the case; for they had just left the police-office, having there received the order. Met Lord Byron at Dunn's, and took leave of him. Was introduced to Mr. Leigh Hunt, and called on Mrs. Hunt. Shopped and strolled about all day. Met Lieutenant Marsham, of the Rochefort, an old school-fellow and shipmate.

"Wednesday, 3d." Fine strong sea-breeze.

"Thursday, 4th." Fine. Processions of priests and religious have for several days been active in their prayers for rain; but the gods are either angry, or nature is too powerful.

I have found the translation of the Symposium. THE END.