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SPIRIT

OF

CONTEMPORARY POETRY.

NUMBER I.

The Vision and the Faculty divine.

WORDSWORTH.

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SELECTIONS

FROM THE

SIBYLLINE LEAVES.

OF

S. T. COLERIDGE.

HYMN

Before Sun-rise, in the Vale of Chamouny.

Besides the rivers, Arve and Arveiron, which have their sources in the foot of Mount Blanc, five conspicuous torrents rush down its sides; and within a few paces of the Glaciers, the Gentiana Major grows in immense numbers, with its "flowers of loveliest blue."

Hast thou a charm to stay the Morning-star
In his steep course? So long he seems to pause
On thy bald awful head, O sovran Blanc!
The Arve and Arveiron at thy base
Rave ceaselessly; but thou, most awful Form!
Risest from forth thy silent sea of Pines,
How silently! Around thee and above
Deep is the air and dark, substantial, black,
An ebon mass: methinks thou piercest it,
As with a wedge! But when I look again,
It is thine own calm home, thy chrystal shrine,
Thy habitation from eternity!
O dread and silent Mount! I gaz'd upon thee,
Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,
Did'st vanish from my thought: entranc'd in prayer
I worshipp'd the Invisible alone.

Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody,
So sweet, we know not we are listening to it,
Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending with my Thought,
Yea, with my Life and Life's own secret Joy :
Till the dilating Soul, enrapt, transfus'd,
Into the mighty Vision passing—there
As in her natural form, swell'd vast to Heaven !

Awake, my soul ! not only passive praise
Thou owest ! not alone these swelling tears,
Mute thanks and secret extacy ! Awake,
Voice of sweet song ! Awake, my Heart, awake !
Green Vales and icy Cliffs, all join my Hymn.

Thou first and chief, sole Sovran of the Vale !
O struggling with the Darkness all the night,
And visited all night by troops of stars,
Or when they climb the sky or when they sink :
Companion of the Morning-star at Dawn,
Thyself Earth's ROSY STAR, and of the Dawn
Co-herald ! wake, O wake, and utter praise !
Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in Earth ?
Who fill'd thy Countenance with rosy light ?
Who made thee Parent of perpetual streams ?

And you, ye five wild torrents fiercely glad !
Who call'd you forth from night and utter death,
From dark and icy caverns call'd you forth,

Down those precipitous, black, jagged Rocks
Forever shatter'd and the same forever ?
Who gave you your invulnerable life,
Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your joy,
Unceasing thunder and eternal foam ?
And who commanded, (and the silence came),
Here let the Billows stiffen and have rest ?

Ye Ice-falls ! ye that from the Mountain's brow
Adown enormous ravines slope amain—
Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty Voice,
And stopp'd at once amid their maddest plunge !
Motionless Torrents ! silent Cataracts !
Who made you glorious as the gates of Heaven
Beneath the keen full Moon ? Who bade the Sun
Cloath you with rainbows ? Who, with living flowers
Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet ?—
God ! let the Torrents like a shout of Nations
Answer ! and let the Ice-plains echo, God !
God ! sing ye meadow-streams with gladsome voice !
Ye Pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like sounds !
And they too have a voice, yon piles of Snow,
And in their perilous fall shall thunder God !

Ye living flowers that skirt th' eternal Frost !
Ye wild goats sporting round the Eagle's nest !
Ye Eagles, playmates of the Mountain-storm !
Ye Lightnings, the dread arrows of the Clouds !

Ye signs and wonders of the element !
Utter forth GOD, and fill the Hills with Praise !

Thou too, hoar Mount, with thy sky-pointing Peaks,
Oft from whose feet the Avalanche, unheard,
Shoots downward, glittering through the pure serene,
Into the depth of Clouds that veil thy breast—
Thou too again, stupendous Mountain ! thou
That as I raise my head, awhile bow'd low
In adoration, upward from thy Base
Slow-travelling with dim eyes suffus'd with tears,
Solemnly seemest, like a vapoury cloud,
To rise before me—Rise, O ever rise,
Rise like a cloud of incense from the Earth !
Thou kingly Spirit thron'd among the hills,
Thou dread Ambassador from Earth to Heaven,
Great Hierarch ! tell thou the silent Sky,
And tell the Stars, and tell yon rising Sun,
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises GOD.

TO

AN UNFORTUNATE WOMAN

At the Theatre.

Maiden, that with sullen brow
Sitt'st behind those virgins gay,
Like a scorch'd and mildew'd bough,
Leafless 'mid the blooms of May!

Him who lur'd thee and forsook,
Oft I watch'd with angry gaze,
Fearful saw his pleading look,
Anxious heard his fervid praise.

Soft the glances of the youth,
Soft his speech, and soft his sigh;
But no sound like simple truth,
But no *true* love in his eye.

Loathing thy polluted lot,
  Hie thee, Maiden, hie thee hence !
Seek thy weeping Mother's cot,
  With a wiser innocence.

Thou hast known deceit and folly,
  Thou hast *felt* that vice is wo :
With a musing melancholy
  Inly arm'd, go, Maiden ! go.

Mother sage of self-dominion,
  Firm thy steps, O Melancholy !
The strongest plume in wisdom's pinion
  Is the memory of past folly.

Mute the sky-lark and forlorn,
  While she moults the firstling plumes,
That had skimm'd the tender corn,
  Or the bean-field's odorous blooms.

Soon with renovated wing
  Shall she dare a loftier flight,
Upward to the day-star spring
  And embathe in heavenly light.

ODE

TO

THE DEPARTING YEAR.

Ιοὺ, ἰού, ὦ ὦ κακά.
Ἦπ' αὖ με δεινὸς ὀρθομαντείας πόνος
Στροβεῖ, ταράσσων φροιμίοις εφημίοις,
* * * * *
Τὸ μέλλον ἥξει. Καὶ σύ μην τάχει παρὼν
Αγαν γ' ἀληθόμαντιν μ' ἐρεῖς.

ÆSCHYL. *Agam.* 1225.

ARGUMENT.

The Ode commences with an Address to the Divine Providence, that regulates into one vast harmony all the events of time, however calamitous some of them may appear to mortals. The second Strophe calls on men to suspend their private joys and sorrows, and devote them for a while to the cause of human nature in general. The first Epode speaks of the Empress of Russia, who died of an apoplexy on the 17th of November, 1796; having just concluded a subsidiary treaty with the Kings combined against France. The first and second Antistrophe describe the Image of the Departing Year, &c. as in a vision. The second Epode prophecies, in anguish of spirit, the downfall of Great Britain.

ODE ON THE DEPARTING YEAR.*

I.

Spirit who sweepest the wild Harp of Time!
It is most hard with an untroubled ear
Thy dark inwoven harmonies to hear;
Yet, mine eye fix'd on Heaven's unchanging clime,
Long had I listen'd, free from mortal fear,
With inward stillness, and submitted mind;
When lo! its folds far waving on the wind,
I saw the train of the Departing Year!
Starting from my silent sadness
Then with no unholy madness,
Ere yet the enter'd cloud foreclos'd my sight,
I rais'd th' impetuous song, and solemniz'd his flight.

II.

Hither from the recent Tomb,
From the Prison's direr gloom,

* This Ode was composed on the 24th, 25th and 26th days of December, 1796, and was first published on the last day of that year.

From Distemper's midnight anguish ;
And thence, where Poverty doth waste and languish ;
Or where, his two bright torches blending,
Love illumines Manhood's maze ;
Or where o'er cradled infants bending
Hope has fix'd her wishful gaze.
Hither, in perplexed dance,
Ye Woes ! ye young-ey'd Joys ! advance !
By Time's wild harp, and by the hand
Whose indefatigable sweep
Raises its fateful strings from sleep,
I bid you haste, a mixt tumultuous band !
From every private bower,
And each domestic hearth,
Haste for one solemn hour ;
And with a loud and yet a louder voice,
O'er Nature struggling in portentous birth,
Weep and rejoice !
Still echoes the dread NAME, that o'er the earth
Let slip the storm, and woke the brood of Hell.
And now advance in saintly Jubilee
Justice and Truth ! They too have heard thy spell,
They too obey thy name, Divinest LIBERTY !

III.

I mark'd Ambition in his war-array !
I heard the mailed Monarch's troublous cry—

" Ah ! wherefore does the Northern Conqueress stay ?
" Groans not her chariot on its onward way ?"
Fly, mailed Monarch, fly !
Stunn'd by Death's twice mortal mace,
No more on Murder's lurid face
Th' insatiate hag shall glote with drunken eye !
Manes of th' unnumber'd slain !
Ye that gasp'd on Warsaw's plain !
Ye that erst at Ismail's tower,
When human ruin choak'd the streams,
Fell in conquest's glutted hour,
Mid women's shrieks and infants' screams !
Spirits of the uncoffin'd slain,
Sudden blasts of triumph swelling,
Oft, at night, in misty train,
Rush around her narrow dwelling !
The exterminating fiend is fled—
(Foul her life, and dark her doom)
Mighty armies of the dead,
Dance like death-fires round her tomb !
Then with prophetic song relate,
Each some tyrant-murderer's fate !

IV.

Departing Year ! 'twas on no earthly shore
My soul beheld thy vision ! Where alone,
Voiceless and stern, before the cloudy throne,
Aye Memory sits : thy robe inscrib'd with gore,

With many an unimaginable groan
Thou storied'st thy sad hours ! Silence ensued,
Deep silence o'er th' etherial multitude,
Whose locks with wreaths, whose wreaths with glories shone.
Then his eye wild ardours glancing,
From the choired Gods advancing,
The SPIRIT of the EARTH made reverence meet,
And stood up, beautiful, before the cloudy seat.

V.

Throughout the blissful throng,
Hush'd were harp and song :
Till wheeling round the throne the LAMPADS seven,
(The mystic Words of Heaven)
Permissive signal make ;
The fervent Spirit bow'd, then spread his wings and spake !
" Thou in stormy blackness throning
" Love and uncreated Light,
" By the Earth's unsolac'd groaning,
" Seize thy terrors, Arm of might !
" By Peace, with proffer'd insult scar'd,
" Masked Hate and envying Scorn !
" By Years of Havoc yet unborn !
" And Hunger's bosom to the frost-winds bar'd !
" But chief of Afric's wrongs,
" Strange, horrible and foul !
" By what deep guilt belongs
" To the deaf Synod, ' full of gifts and lies !'

" By Wealth's insensate laugh ! by Torture's howl !
" Avenger, rise !
" For ever shall the thankless Island scowl,
" Her quiver full, and with unbroken bow ?
" Speak ! from thy storm-black Heaven O speak aloud !
" And on the darkling foe
" Open thine eye of fire from some uncertain cloud !
" O dart the flash ! O rise and deal the blow !
" The Past to thee, to thee the Future cries !
" Hark ! how wide Nature joins her groans below !
" Rise, God of Nature ! rise."

VI.

The voice had ceas'd, the vision fled ;
Yet still I gasp'd and reel'd with dread.
And ever, when the dream of night
Renews the phantom to my sight,
Cold sweat-drops gather on my limbs ;
My ears throb hot ; my eye-balls start ;
My brain with horrid tumult swims ;
Wild is the tempest of my heart ;
And my thick and struggling breath
Imitates the toil of Death !
No stranger agony confounds
The Soldier on the war-field spread,
When all foredone with toil and wounds,
Death-like he dozes among heaps of dead !

(The strife is o'er, the daylight fled,
And the night-wind clamours hoarse !
See ! the starting wretch's head
Lies pillow'd on a brother's corse !)

VII.

Not yet enslav'd, not wholly vile,
O Albion ! O my mother Isle !
Thy vallies, fair as Eden's bowers,
Glitter green with sunny showers ;
Thy grassy uplands' gentle swells
Echo to the bleat of flocks ;
(Those grassy hills, those glitt'ring dells
Proudly ramparted with rocks)
And Ocean mid his uproar wild
Speaks safety to his ISLAND-CHILD !
Hence, for many a fearless age,
Has social Quiet lov'd thy shore ;
Nor ever proud Invader's rage
Or sack'd thy towers, or stain'd thy fields with gore.

VIII.

Abandon'd of Heaven ! mad Avarice thy guide,
At cowardly distance, yet kindling with pride—
Mid thy herds and thy corn-fields secure thou hast stood,
And join'd the wide yelling of Famine and Blood !

The nations curse thee, they with eager wondering
Shall hear DESTRUCTION, like a vulture, scream !
Strange-ey'd DESTRUCTION ! who with many a dream
Of central fires thro' nether seas upthund'ring
Soothes her fierce solitude ; yet as she lies
By livid fount, or red volcanic stream,
If ever to her lidless dragon-eyes,
O Albion ! thy predestin'd ruins rise,
The fiend-hag on her perilous couch doth leap,
Muttering distemper'd triumph in her charmed sleep.

IX.

Away, my soul, away !
In vain, in vain the Birds of warning sing—
And hark ! I hear the famish'd brood of prey
Flap their lank pennons on the groaning wind !
Away, my soul, away !
I, unpartaking of the evil thing,
With daily prayer and daily toil
Soliciting for food my scanty soil,
Have wail'd my country with a loud Lament.
Now I recenter my immortal mind
In the deep sabbath of meek self-content ;
Cleans'd from the vaporous passions that bedim
God's Image, sister of the Seraphim.

ANSWER TO A CHILD'S QUESTION.

Do you ask what the birds say ? The Sparrow, the Dove,
The Linnet and Thrush say, " I love and I love !"
In the winter they're silent—the wind is so strong ;
What it says I don't know, but it sings a loud song.
But green leaves, and blossoms, and sunny warm weather,
And singing, and loving—all come back together.
But the Lark is so brimful of gladness and love,
The green fields below him, the blue sky above,
That he sings, and he sings ; and forever sings he—
" I love my Love, and my Love loves me !"

THE ÆOLIAN HARP.

Composed at Clevedon, Somersetshire.

My pensive Sara ! thy soft cheek reclin'd
Thus on mine arm, most soothing sweet it is
To sit beside our cot, our cot o'ergrown
With white-flower'd Jasmin, and the broad-leav'd Myrtle,
(Meet emblems they of Innocence and Love !)
And watch the clouds, that late were rich with light,
Slow sad'ning round, and mark the star of eve
Serenely brilliant (such should wisdom be)
Shine opposite ! How exquisite the scents
Snatch'd from yon bean-field ! and the world so hush'd !
The stilly murmur of the distant Sea
Tells us of Silence.
And that simplest Lute,
Placed length-ways in the clasping casement, hark !
How by the desultory breeze caress'd,
Like some coy maid half-yielding to her lover,
It pours such sweet upbraidings, as must needs
Tempt to repeat the wrong ! And now, its strings

Boldlier swept, the long sequacious notes
Over delicious surges sink and rise,
Such a soft floating witchery of sound
As twilight Elfins make, when they at eve
Voyage on gentle gales from Fairy-land,
Where Melodies, round honey-dropping flowers,
Footless and wild, like birds of Paradise,
Nor pause, nor perch, hovering on untam'd wing!
O! the one Life, within us and abroad,
Which meets all Motion, and becomes its soul,
A Light in Sound, a sound-like power in Light,
Rhythm in all Thought, and Joyance every where—
Methinks, it should have been impossible
Not to love all things in a world so fill'd,
Where the breeze warbles and the mute still Air
Is Music slumbering on its instrument!

And thus, my love! as on the midway slope
Of yonder hill I stretch my limbs at noon,
Whilst through my half-clos'd eye-lids I behold
The sunbeams dance, like diamonds, on the main.
And tranquil muse upon tranquillity;
Full many a thought uncall'd and undetain'd,
And many idle flitting phantasies,
Traverse my indolent and passive brain,
As wild and various as the random gales
That swell and flutter on this subject lute!

And what if all of animated nature
Be but organic harps diversely fram'd,
That tremble into thought, as o'er them sweeps
Plastic and vast, one intellectual breeze,
At once the Soul of each, and God of All ?

But thy more serious eye a mild reproof
Darts, O beloved Woman ! nor such thoughts
Dim and unhallow'd dost thou not reject,
And biddest me walk humbly with my God.
Meek daughter in the family of Christ !
Well hast thou said and holily disprais'd
These shapings of the unregenerate mind,
Bubbles that glitter as they rise and break
On vain Philosophy's aye-babbling spring.
For never guiltless may I speak of Him,
Th' Incomprehensible ! save when with awe
I praise him, and with Faith that inly feels ;
Who with his saving mercies healed me,
A sinful and most miserable Man,
Wilder'd and dark, and gave me to possess
Peace, and this Cot, and Thee, heart-honor'd Maid !

THE PICTURE,

Or the Lover's Resolution.

Through weeds and thorns, and matted underwood
I force my way ; now climb, and now descend
O'er rocks, or bare or mossy, with wild foot
Crushing the purple whorts ; while oft unseen,
Hurrying along the drifted forest-leaves,
The scar'd snake rustles. Onward still I toil,
I know not, ask not whither ! A new joy,
Lovely as light, sudden as summer-gust,
And gladsome as the first-born of the spring,
Beckons me on, or follows from behind,
Playmate, or guide ! The master-passion quell'd,
I feel that I am free. With dun-red bark
The fir-trees, and th' unfrequent slender oak,
Forth from this tangle wild of bush and brake
Soar up, and form a melancholy vault
High o'er me, murmuring like a distant sea.
Here Wisdom might resort, and here Remorse ;

Here too the love-lorn Man, who, sick in soul
And of this busy, human heart aweary,
Worships the spirit of unconscious life
In tree or wild-flower.—Gentle Lunatic !
If so he might not wholly cease to be,
He would far rather not be that, he is ;
But would be something that he knows not of,
In winds or waters, or among the rocks !

But hence, fond wretch ! breathe not contagion here !
No myrtle-walks are these : these are no groves
Where Love dare loiter ! If in sullen mood
He should stray hither, the low stumps shall gore
His dainty feet, the briar and the thorn
Make his plumes haggard. Like a wounded bird
Easily caught, ensnare him, O ye Nymphs,
Ye Oreads chaste, ye dusky Dryades !
And you, ye Earth-winds ! you that make at morn
The dew-drops quiver on the spiders' webs !
You, O ye wingless Airs ! that creep between
The rigid stems of heath and bitten furze,
Within whose scanty shade, at summer-noon,
The mother-sheep hath worn a hollow bed—
Ye, that now cool her fleece with dropless damp,
Now pant and murmur with her feeding lamb.
Chase, chase him, all ye Fays, and elfin Gnomes !
With prickles sharper than his darts bemock

His little Godship, making him perforce
Creep through a thorn-bush on yon hedgehog's back.

This is my hour of triumph ! I can now
With my own fancies play the merry fool,
And laugh away worse folly, being free.
Here will I seat myself, beside this old,
Hollow, and weedy oak, which ivy-twine
Cloaths as with net-work : here will couch my limbs,
Close by this river, in this silent shade,
As safe and sacred from the step of man
As an invisible world—unheard, unseen,
And listening only to the pebbly stream,
That murmurs with a dead, yet bell-like sound
Tinkling, or bees, that in the neighbouring trunk
Make honey-hoards. This breeze, that visits me,
Was never Love's accomplice, never rais'd
The tendril ringlets from the maiden's brow,
And the blue, delicate veins above her cheek ;
Ne'er play'd the wanton—never half disclos'd
The maiden's snowy bosom, scattering thence
Eye-poisons for some love-distemper'd youth,
Who ne'er henceforth may see an aspen grove
Shiver in sunshine, but his feeble heart
Shall flow away like a dissolving thing.

Sweet breeze ! thou only, if I guess aright,
Liftest the feathers of the robin's breast,

Who swells his little breast, so full of song,
Singing above me, on the mountain-ash.
And thou too, desert Stream ! no pool of thine,
Though clear as lake in latest summer-eve,
Did e'er reflect the stately virgin's robe,
Her face, her form divine, her down-cast look
Contemplative ! Ah see ! her open palm
Presses her cheek and brow ! her elbow rests
On the bare branch of half-uprooted tree,
That leans towards its mirror ! He, meanwhile,
Who from her countenance turn'd, or look'd by stealth,
(For fear is true love's cruel nurse,) he now,
With steadfast gaze and unoffending eye,
Worships the watery idol, dreaming hopes
Delicious to the soul, but fleeting, vain,
E'en as that phantom world on which he gaz'd.
She, sportive tyrant, with her left hand plucks
The heads of tall flowers that behind her grow,
Lychnis, and willow-herb, and fox-glove bells ;
And suddenly, as one that toys with time,
Scatters them on the pool ! Then all the charm
Is broken—all that phantom-world so fair
Vanishes, and a thousand circlets spread,
And each mis-shape the other. Stay awhile,
Poor youth ! who scarcely dar'st lift up thine eyes !
The stream will soon renew its smoothness, soon
The visions will return ! And lo ! he stays :

And soon the fragments dim of lovely forms
Come trembling back, unite, and now once more
The pool becomes a mirror, and behold
Each wildflower on the marge inverted there,
And there the half-uprooted tree—but where,
O where the virgin's snowy arm, that lean'd
On its bare branch ? He turns, and she is gone!
Homeward she steals through many a woodland maze
Which he shall seek in vain. Ill-fated youth !
Go, day by day, and waste thy manly prime
In mad Love-yearning by the vacant brook,
Till sickly thoughts bewitch thine eyes, and thou
Behold'st her shadow still abiding there,
The Naiad of the Mirror !

Not to thee,
O wild and desert Stream ! belongs this tale :
Gloomy and dark art thou—the crowded firs
Tower from thy shores, and stretch across thy bed,
Making thee doleful as a cavern-well :
Save when the shy king-fishers build their nest
On thy steep banks, no loves hast thou, wild stream !

This be my chosen haunt—emancipate
From passion's dreams, a freeman, and alone,
I rise and trace its devious course, O lead,
Lead me to deeper shades and lonelier glooms.

Lo ! stealing through the canopy of firs
How fair the sunshine spots that mossy rock,
Isle of the river, whose disparted waters
Dart off asunder with an angry sound,
How soon to re-unite ! And see ! they meet,
Each in the other lost and found : and, see !
Placeless, as spirits, one soft Water-sun
Throbbing within them, Heart at once and Eye !
With its soft neighbourhood of filmy Clouds,
The Stains and Shadings of forgotten Tears,
Dimness o'erswum with lustre !—Such the hour,
Of deep enjoyment, following Love's brief feuds !
And hark, the noise of a near waterfall !
I come out into light—I find myself
Beneath a weeping birch (most beautiful
Of forest-trees, the Lady of the woods),
Hard by the brink of a tall weedy rock
That overbrows the cataract. How bursts
The landscape on my sight ! Two crescent hills
Fold in behind each other, and so make
A circular vale, and land-lock'd, as might seem,
With brook and bridge, and grey stone cottages,
Half hid by rocks and fruit-trees. At my feet,
The whortle-berries are bedew'd with spray ;
Dash'd upwards by the furious waterfall.
How solemnly the pendent ivy-mass
Swings in its winnow ! All the air is calm.

The smoke from cottage-chimnies, ting'd with light,
Rises in columns : from this house alone,
Close by the waterfall, the column slants,
And feels its ceaseless breeze. But what is THIS ?
That cottage with its slanting chimney-smoke,
And close beside its porch a sleeping child,
Its dear head pillow'd on a sleeping dog—
One arm between its fore legs, and the hand
Holds loosely its small handful of wild-flowers,
Unfillcted, and of unequal lengths.
A curious picture, with a master's haste
Sketch'd on a strip of pinky-silver skin,
Peel'd from the birchen bark ! Divinest maid !
Yon bark her canvas, and those purple berries
Her pencil ! See, the juice is scarcely dried
On the fine skin ! She has been newly here ;
And lo ! yon patch of heath has been her couch—
The pressure still remains ! O blessed couch !
For this may'st thou flower early, and the Sun,
Slanting at eve, rest bright, and linger long
Upon thy purple bells ! O Isabel !
Daughter of genius ! stateliest of our maids !
More beautiful than whom Alcæus woo'd
The Lesbian woman of immortal song !
O child of genius ! stately, beautiful,
And full of love to all, save only me,
And not ungentle e'en to me ! My heart,

Why beats it thus ? Through yonder coppice-wood
Needs must the pathway turn, that leads straightway
On to her father's house. She is alone !
The night draws on—such ways are hard to hit—
And fit it is I should restore this sketch,
Dropt unawares no doubt. Why should I yearn
To keep the relique ? 'twill but idly feed
The passion that consumes me. Let me haste !
The picture in my hand which she has left ;
She cannot blame me that I follow'd her ;
And I may be her guide the long wood through.

INSCRIPTION

For a Fountain on a Heath.

This Sycamore, oft musical with Bees,—
Such Tents the Patriarchs lov'd ! O long unharm'd
May all its aged boughs o'er-canopy
The small round Basin, which this jutting stone
Keeps pure from falling leaves ! Long may the Spring
Quietly as a sleeping Infant's breath,
Send up cold waters to the Traveller
With soft and even Pulse ! Nor ever cease
Yon tiny Cone of Sand its soundless Dance,
Which at the Bottom, like a Fairy's Page,
As merry and no taller, dances still,
Nor wrinkles the smooth Surface of the Fount.
Here Twilight is and Coolness : here is Moss,
A soft Seat, and a deep and ample Shade.
Thou may'st toil far and find no second Tree.
Drink, Pilgrim, here ! Here rest ! and if thy Heart
Be innocent, here too shalt thou refresh
Thy Spirit, list'ning to some gentle Sound,
Or passing Gale, or Hum of murmuring Bees !

FROST AT MIDNIGHT.

The Frost performs its secret ministry,
Unhelp'd by any wind. The owlet's cry
Came loud—and hark, again ! loud as before.
The inmates of my cottage, all at rest,
Have left me to that solitude, which suits
Abstruser musings : save that at my side
My cradled infant slumbers peacefully.
'Tis calm indeed ! so calm, that it disturbs
And vexes meditation with its strange
And extreme silentness. Sea, hill, and wood,
This populous village ! Sea, and hill, and wood,
With all the numberless goings on in life,
Inaudible as dreams ! the thin blue flame
Lies on my low burnt fire, and quivers not ;
Only that film, which flutter'd on the grate,
Still flutters there, the sole unquiet thing.
Methinks, its motion in this hush of nature
Gives it dim sympathies with me who live,
Making it a companionable form,
To which the living spirit in our frame,
That loves not to behold a lifeless thing,
Transfuses its own pleasures, its own will.

How oft, at school, with most believing mind,
Presageful, have I gaz'd upon the bars,
To watch the fluttering *stranger* ! and as oft
With unclos'd lids, already had I dreamt
Of my sweet birth-place, and the old church-tower
Whose bells, the poor man's only music, rang
From morn to evening, all the hot Fair-day,
So sweetly, that they stirr'd and haunted me
With a wild pleasure, falling on mine ear
Most like articulate sounds of things to come !
So gaz'd I, till the soothing things, I dreamt,
Lull'd me to sleep, and sleep prolong'd my dreams !
And so I brooded all the following morn,
Awe'd by the stern preceptor's face, mine eye
Fix'd with mock study on my swimming book :
Save if the door half open'd, and I snatch'd
A hasty glance, and still my heart leapt up,
For still I hop'd to see the *stranger's* face,
Townsman, or aunt, or sister more belov'd,
My play-mate when we both were cloth'd alike !

Dear Babe, that sleepest cradled by my side,
Whose gentle breathings, heard in this deep calm,
Fill up the interspersed vacancies
And momentary pauses of the thought !
My Babe so beautiful ! it thrills my heart
With tender gladness, thus to look at thee,
And think that thou shalt learn far other lore

And in far other scenes ! For I was rear'd
In the great city, pent mid cloisters dim,
And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.
But *thou*, my babe ! shalt wander like a breeze
By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags
Of ancient mountain, and beneath the clouds
Which image in their bulk both lakes and shores
And mountain crags ; so shalt thou see and hear
The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible
Of that eternal language, which thy God
Utters, who from eternity doth teach
Himself in all, and all things in himself.
Great universal Teacher ! he shall mould
Thy spirit, and by giving make it ask.

Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee,
Whether the summer clothe the general earth
With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing
Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch
Of mossy apple-tree, while the nigh thatch
Smokes in the sun-thaw ; whether the eve-drops fall,
Heard only in the trances of the blast,
Or if the secret ministry of frost
Shall hang them up in silent icicles,
Quietly shining to the quiet Moon.

DEJECTION :

An Ode.

Late, late yestreen I saw the new Moon,
With the old Moon in her arms ;
And I fear, I fear, my Master dear !
We shall have a deadly storm.

Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence.

I.

Well ! If the Bard was weather-wise, who made
The grand old ballad of Sir Patrick Spence,
This night, so tranquil now, will not go hence
Unrous'd by winds, that ply a busier trade
Than those which mould yon clouds in lazy flakes,
Or the dull sobbing draft, that moans and rakes
Upon the strings of this Æolian lute,
Which better far were mute.
For lo ! the New-moon winter-bright !
And overspread with phantom-light,
(With swimming phantom-light o'erspread
But rimm'd and circled by a silver thread)

I see the old Moon in her lap, foretelling
  The coming on of rain and squally blast.
And oh ! that even now the gust were swelling,
  And the slant night-shower driving loud and fast !
Those sounds which oft have rais'd me, whilst they aw'd,
    And sent my soul abroad,
Might now perhaps their wonted impulse give,
Might startle this dull pain, and make it move and live !

II.

A grief without a pang, void, dark, and drear,
  A stifled, drowsy, unimpassion'd grief,
  Which finds no natural outlet, no relief,
    In word, or sigh, or tear—
O Lady ! in this wan and heartless mood,
To other thoughts by yonder throstle woo'd,
  All this long eve, so balmy and serene,
Have I been gazing on the western sky,
  And its peculiar tint of yellow green :
And still I gaze—and with how blank an eye !
And those thin clouds above, in flakes and bars,
That give away their motion to the stars ;
Those stars, that glide behind them, or between,
Now sparkling, now bedimm'd, but always seen ;
Yon crescent Moon, as fix'd as if it grew
In its own cloudless, starless lake of blue ;

I see them all so excellently fair,
I see, not feel how beautiful they are !

III.

My genial spirits fail,
And what can these avail,
To lift the smoth'ring weight from off my breast ?
It were a vain endeavor,
Though I should gaze forever
On that green light that lingers in the west :
I may not hope from outward forms to win
The passion and the life, whose fountains are within.

IV.

O Lady ! we receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does nature live :
Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud !
And would we aught behold, of higher worth,
Than that inanimate cold world allow'd
To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,
Ah ! from the soul itself must issue forth,
A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
Enveloping the Earth—
And from the soul itself must there be sent
A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,
Of all sweet sounds the life and element !

V.

O pure of heart ! thou need'st not ask of me
What this strong music in the soul may be !
What, and wherein it doth exist,
This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist,
This beautiful, and beauty-making power.
  Joy, virtuous Lady ! Joy that ne'er was given,
Save to the pure, and in their purest hour,
Life, and life's effluence, Cloud at once and Shower,
Joy, Lady ! is the spirit and the power,
Which wedding Nature to us gives in dow'r,
  A new Earth and new Heaven,
Undreamt of by the sensual and the proud—
Joy is the sweet voice, Joy the luminous cloud—
      We in ourselves rejoice !
And thence flows all that charms or ear or sight,
  All melodies the echoes of that voice,
All colours a suffusion from that light.

VI.

There was a time, when though my path was rough,
  This joy within me dallied with distress,
And all misfortunes were but as the stuff
  Whence Fancy made me dreams of happiness ;
For hope grew round me, like the twining vine,
And fruits, and foliage, not my own, seem'd mine.

But now afflictions bow me down to earth :
Nor care I that they rob me of my mirth,
But oh ! each visitation
Suspends what nature gave me at my birth,
My shaping spirit of Imagination.
For not to think of what I needs must feel,
But to be still and patient, all I can ;
And haply by abstruse research to steal
From my own nature all the natural Man—
This was my sole resource, my only plan :
Till that which suits a part infects the whole,
And now is almost grown the habit of my Soul.

VII.

Hence, viper thoughts, that coil around my mind,
Reality's dark dream !
I turn from you, and listen to the wind,
Which long has rav'd unnotic'd. What a scream
Of agony by torture lengthen'd out
That lute sent forth ! Thou Wind that rav'st without,
Bare crag, or mountain-tairn,* or blasted tree,
Or pine-grove whither woodman never clomb,
Or lonely house, long held the witches' home,

* Tairn is a small lake, generally if not always applied to the lakes up in the mountains, and which are the feeders of those in the vallies. This address to the Storm-wind will not appear extravagant to those who have heard it at night and in a mountainous country.

Methinks were fitter instruments for thee,
Mad Lutanist! who in this month of show'rs,
Of dark brown gardens, and of peeping flow'rs,
Mak'st Devils' yule, with worse than wintry song,
The blossoms, buds, and tim'rous leaves among.
Thou Actor, perfect in all tragic sounds!
Thou mighty Poet, e'en to Frenzy bold!
What tell'st thou now about?
'Tis of the Rushing of a Host in rout,
With groans of trampled men, with smarting wounds—
At once they groan with pain, and shudder with the cold!
But hush! there is a pause of deepest silence!
And all that noise, as of a rushing crowd,
With groans, and tremulous shudderings—all is over—
It tells another tale, with sounds less deep and loud!
A tale of less affright,
And temper'd with delight,
As Otway's self had fram'd the tender lay—
'Tis of a little child
Upon a lonesome wild,
Not far from home, but she hath lost her way:
And now moans low in bitter grief and fear,
And now screams loud, and hopes to make her mother hear.

VIII.

'Tis midnight, but small thoughts have I of sleep:
Full seldom may my friend such vigils keep!

Visit her, gentle Sleep ! with wings of healing,
And may this storm be but a mountain-birth,
May all the stars hang bright above her dwelling,
Silent as though they watch'd the sleeping Earth !
With light heart may she rise,
Gay fancy, cheerful eyes,
Joy lift her spirit, joy attune her voice :
To her may all things live, from Pole to Pole,
Their life the eddying of her living soul !
O simple spirit, guided from above,
Dear Lady ! friend devoutest of my choice,
Thus may'st thou ever, evermore rejoice.

LOVE.

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I
Live o'er again that happy hour,
When midway on the mount I lay,
Beside the ruin'd tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene,
Had blended with the lights of eve ;
And she was there, my hope, my joy,
My own dear Genevieve !

She leant against the armed man,
The statue of the armed knight ;
She stood and listen'd to my lay,
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,
My hope ! my joy ! my Genevieve !
She loves me best whene'er I sing
The songs that make her grieve.

I play'd a soft and doleful air,
I sang an old and moving story—
An old rude song, that suited well
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listen'd with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace ;
For well she knew I could not choose
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand ;
And that for ten long years he woo'd
The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pin'd ; and ah !
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I sang another's love,
Interpreted my own.

She listen'd with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace ;
And she forgave me that I gaz'd
Too fondly on her face !

But when I told the cruel scorn
That craz'd that bold and lovely Knight,
And that he cross'd the mountain-woods,
Nor rested day nor night ;

That sometimes from the savage den,
And sometimes from the darksome shade,
And sometimes starting up at once
In green and sunny glade,

There came and look'd him in the face
An angel beautiful and bright ;
And that he knew it was a fiend,
This miserable Knight !

And that unknowing what he did,
He leap'd amid a murderous band,
And sav'd from outrage worse than death,
The Lady of the Land !

And how she wept and clasp'd his knees ;
And how she tended him in vain—
And ever strove to expiate
The scorn that craz'd his brain.

And that she nurs'd him in a cave ;
And how his madness went away,
When on the yellow forest-leaves
A dying man he lay.

His dying words—but when I reach'd
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,
My faultering voice and pausing harp
Disturb'd her soul with pity !

All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrill'd my guileless Genevieve ;
The music and the doleful tale,
The rich and balmy eve ;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,
An undistinguishable throng,
And gentle wishes long subdued,
Subdued and cherish'd long !

She wept with pity and delight,
She blush'd with love, and virgin shame ;
And like the murmur of a dream,
I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heav'd—she stept aside,
As conscious of my look she stept—
Then suddenly, with timorous eye
She fled to me and wept.

She half enclos'd me with her arms,
She press'd me with a meek embrace ;
And bending back her head, look'd up
And gaz'd upon my face.

'Twas partly Love, and partly Fear,
And partly 'twas a bashful art,
That I might rather feel, than see,
The swelling of her heart.

I calm'd her fears, and she was calm,
And told her love with virgin pride.
And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous bride.

SPIRIT

OF

CONTEMPORARY POETRY.

NUMBER II.

CONTAINING THE

Rime of the Ancient Mariner,

WITH OTHER POEMS.

The Vision and the Faculty divine.

WORDSWORTH.

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The Rime

of the

Ancient Mariner.

IN SEVEN PARTS.

THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER.

The longest poem in the collection of the Sibylline Leaves, is the *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*—and to our feeling, it is by far the most wonderful also—the most original—and the most touching of all the productions of its author. To speak of it at all is extremely difficult; above all the poems with which we are acquainted in any language—it is a poem to be felt—cherished—mused upon—not to be talked about—not capable of being described—analyzed—or criticised. It is the wildest of all the creations of genius—it is not like a thing of the living, listening, moving world—the very music of its words is like the melancholy mysterious breath of something sung to the sleeping ear—its images have the beauty—the grandeur—the incoherence of some mighty vision.—The loveliness and the terror glide before us in turns—with, at one moment, the awful shadowy dimness—at another, the yet more awful distinctness, of a majestic dream.

Dim and shadowy, and incoherent, however, though it be—how blind, how wilful, or how foolishly blind must they have been who refused to see any meaning or purpose in the Tale of the Mariner! The imagery, indeed, may be said to be heaped up to superfluity—and so it is—the language to be redundant—and the narative confused. But surely those who cavilled at these things, did not consider into whose mouth the poet has put his ghastly story. A guest is proceeding to a bridal—the sound of the merry music is already in his ears—and the light shines clearly from the threshold to guide him to the festival. He is arrested on his way by an old man, who constrains him to listen—he seizes him by the hand—that he shakes free—but the old man has a more inevitable spell, and he holds him, and will not be silent.

In the beginning of the Mariner's narrative, the language has all the impetus of a storm—and when the ship is suddenly locked among the polar ice, the change is as instantaneous as it is awful.

All the miseries of the crew are represented by the poet as having been the consequences of the Mariner's violation of the charities of sentiment; and these are the same miseries which the critics have spoken of, as being causeless and unmerited! We have no difficulty in confessing, that the ideas on which the intent of this poem hinges, and which to us seem to possess all beauty and pathos, may, after all, have been selected by the poet with a too great

neglect of the ordinary sympathies. But if any one will submit himself to the magic that is around him, and suffer his senses and his imagination to be blended together, and exalted by the melody of the charmed words, and the splendour of the unnatural apparitions with which the mysterious scene is opened, surely he will experience no revulsion towards the centre and spirit of this lovely dream. There is the very essence of tenderness in the remorseful delight with which the Mariner dwells upon the image of the "pious bird of omen good," as it

Every day, for food or play,
Came to the Mariner's hollo!

And the conclusive shudder with which he narrates the treacherous issue, bespeaks to us no pangs more than seem to have followed justly on that inhospitable crime. It seems as if the very spirit of the universe had been stunned by the wanton cruelty of the Mariner—as if earth, sea, and sky, had all become dead and stagnant in the extinction of the moving breath of love and gentleness.

Had the ballad been more interwoven with sources of prolonged emotion extending throughout—and had the relation of the imagery to the purport and essence of the piece been a little more close—it does not seem to us that any thing more could have been desired in a poem such as this. As it is, the effect of the wild wandering magnificence of imagination in the details of the dream-like story is a thing that cannot be forgotten. It is as if we had seen real spectres, and were for ever to be haunted. The unconnected and fantastic variety of the images that have been piled up before us works upon the fancy, as an evening sky made up half of lurid castellated clouds—half of clear unpolluted azure—would upon the eye. It is like the fitful concert of fine sounds which the Mariner himself hears after his spirit has been melted, and the ship has begun to sail homewards.

The conclusion has always appeared to us to be happy and graceful in the utmost degree. The actual surface-life of the world is brought close into contact with the life of sentiment—the soul that is as much alive, and enjoys, and suffers as much in dreams and visions of the night as by daylight. One feels with what a heavy eye the Ancient Mariner must look and listen to the pomps and merry-makings—even to the innocent enjoyments—of those whose experience has only been of things tangible. One feels that to him another world—we do not mean a supernatural, but a more exquisitely and deeply natural world—has been revealed—and that the repose of his spirit can only be in the contemplation of things that are not pass to away. The sad and solemn indifference of his mood is communicated to his hearer—and we feel that even after reading what he had heard, it were better to "turn from the bridegroom's door."—*Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine.*

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.

PART THE FIRST.

An ancient Mariner meeteth three Gallants bidden to a wedding-feast, and detaineth one.

It is an ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three.
" By thy long grey beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me ?

The bridegroom's doors are open'd wide,
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set:
May'st hear the merry din."

He holds him with his skinny hand,
" There was a ship," quoth he.
" Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard loon!"
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

The wedding-guest is spell-bound by the eye of the old sea-faring man, and constrained to hear his tale.

He holds him with his glittering eye—
The wedding guest stood still,
And listens like a three years' child:
The Mariner hath his will.

The wedding-guest sat on a stone:
He cannot chuse but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

"The ship was cheer'd, the harbour clear'd,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the light-house top.

The Mariner tells how the ship sailed southward with a good wind and fair weather, till it reached the Line.

The sun came up upon the left,
Out of the sea came he;
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon—"
The wedding-guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The wedding-guest heareth the bridal music; but

The bride hath pac'd into the hall,
Red as a rose is she;

Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

the mariner continueth his tale.

The wedding-guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot chuse but hear ;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

" And now the STORM-BLAST came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong :
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chas'd us south along.

The ship drawn by a storm toward the south pole.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roar'd the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold :
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

And through the drifts the snowy clift
Did send a dismal sheen :

The land of ice, and of fearful sounds, where

no living thing was to be seen.

Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around :
It crack'd and growl'd, and roar'd and howl'd,
Like noises in a swound !

Till a great sea-bird, called the Albatross, came through the snow-fog, and was received with great joy and hospitality.

At length did cross an Albatross :
Thorough the fog it came ;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hail'd it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit ;
The helmsman steer'd us through !

And lo ! the Albatross proveth a bird of good omen, and followeth the ship as it returned northward, through fog and floating ice.

And a good south wind sprung up behind ;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the Mariner's hollo !

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perch'd for vespers nine ;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
Glimmer'd the white Moon-shine."

" God save thee, ancient Mariner !
From the fiends that plague thee thus !—
Why look'st thou so ?"—" With my cross-bow
I shot the ALBATROSS !"

The ancient Mariner inhospitably killeth the pious bird of good omen.

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.

PART THE SECOND.

"The sun now rose upon the right:
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day for food or play,
Came to the Mariners' hollo!

His shipmates cry out against the ancient Mariner for killing the bird of good luck.

And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work 'em wo:
For all averr'd, I had kill'd the bird
That made the breeze to blow.
'Ah wretch!' said they, 'the bird to slay
That made the breeze to blow!'

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
The glorious Sun uprist ;
Then all averr'd, I had kill'd the bird
That brought the fog and mist.
' 'Twas right,' said they, ' such birds to slay,
That bring the fog and mist.'

But when the fog cleared off, they justify the same, and thus make themselves accomplices in the crime.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow* stream'd off free :
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

The fair breeze continues : the ship enters the Pacific Ocean, and sails northward, even till it reaches the Line.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
'Twas sad as sad could be ;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea !

The ship hath been suddenly becalmed.

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

* In the former edition the line was

The furrow follow'd free ;

but I had not been long on board a ship before I perceived that this was the image as seen by a spectator from the shore, or from another vessel. From the ship itself, the *Wake* appears like a brook flowing off from the stern.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion,
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

And the Albatross begins to be avenged.

Water, water, every where,
And all the boards did shrink ;
Water, water, every where,
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot : O Christ !
That ever this should be !
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danc'd at night ;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue and white.

A spirit had followed them ; one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither departed souls nor angels ; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Con-

And some in dreams assured were
Of the spirit that plagued us so :
Nine fathom deep he had follow'd us
From the land of mist and snow.

And every tongue through utter drought,
Was wither'd at the root ;

We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choak'd with soot.

stantinopolitan, Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more.

Ah ! well a-day ! what evil looks
Had I from old and young !
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung."

The shipmates, in their sore distress, would fain throw the whole guilt on the ancient Mariner : in sign whereof, they hang the dead sea-bird round his neck.

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.

PART THE THIRD.

"THERE pass'd a weary time. Each throat
Was parch'd, and glaz'd each eye.
A weary time! a weary time!
How glaz'd each weary eye!
The ancient Mariner beholdeth a sign in the element afar off.
When looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

At first it seem'd a little speck,
And then it seem'd a mist:
It mov'd and mov'd, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!
And still it near'd and near'd:

And as if it dodg'd a water sprite,
It plung'd and tack'd and veer'd.

With throat unslak'd, with black lips bak'd,
We could nor laugh nor wail;
Through utter drought all dumb we stood!
I bit my arm, I suck'd the blood,
And cried, 'A sail! a sail!'

At its nearer approach it seemeth him to be a ship; and at a dear ransom he freeth his speech from the bonds of thirst.

With throat unslak'd, with black lips bak'd,
Agape they heard me call:
Gramercy! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.

A flash of joy.

'See! see!' I cried, 'she tacks no more!
Hither to work us weal;
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steddies with upright keel!'

And horror follows. For can it be a *ship* that comes onward without wind or tide?

The western wave was all a-flame.
The day was well nigh done!
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright sun;
When that strange shape drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the sun.

It seemeth him but the skeleton of a ship.

And straight the sun was fleck'd with bars,
(Heaven's mother send us grace !)
As if through a dungeon-grate he peer'd,
With broad and burning face.

Alas ! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
How fast she nears and nears !
Are those *her* sails that glance in the sun,
Like restless gossameres !

And its ribs are seen as bars on the face of the setting Sun.

Are those *her* ribs through which the sun
Did peer, as through a grate ?
And is that woman all her crew ?

The spectre-woman and her death-mate, and no other on board the skeleton ship.

Is that a DEATH ? and are there two ?
Is DEATH that woman's mate ?

Like vessel, like crew !

Her lips were red, her looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold :
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Night-mair LIFE-IN-DEATH was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

DEATH and LIFE-IN-DEATH have diced for the ship's crew, and she, (the latter) winneth the ancient Mariner.

The naked hulk alongside came,
And the twain were casting dice ;
'The game is done ! I 've won, I 've won !'
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

A gust of wind sterte up behind
And whistled through his bones;
Through the holes of his eyes and the hole of
his mouth,
Half whistles and half groans.

The sun's rim dips; the stars rush out:
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

We listen'd and look'd sideways up!
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seem'd to sip!
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleam'd white;
From the sails the dews did drip—
Till clombe above the eastern bar — At the rising of the Moon,
The horned moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

One after one, by the star-dogg'd moon — One after another,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turn'd his face with a ghastly pang,
And curs'd me with his eye.

His ship-mates drop down dead,

Four times fifty living men,
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropt down one by one.

But LIFE-IN-DEATH begins her work on the ancient Mariner.

The souls did from their bodies fly,—
They fled to bliss or wo!
And every soul, it pass'd me by,
Like the whiz of my CROSS-BOW!"

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.

PART THE FOURTH.

The wedding-guest feareth that a spirit is talking to him ;

"I FEAR thee, ancient Mariner !
I fear thy skinny hand !
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
As is the ribb'd sea-sand.*

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand, so brown."
"Fear not, fear not, thou wedding-guest !
This body dropt not down.

But the ancient Mariner assureth him of his bodily life, and proceedeth to relate his horrible penance.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide, wide sea !

*For the two last lines of this stanza, I am indebted to Mr. WORDSWORTH. It was on a delightful walk from Nether Stowey to Dulverton, with him and his sister, in the Autumn of 1797, that this poem was planned, and in part composed.

And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

He despiseth the creatures of the calm,

The many men, so beautiful !
And they all dead did lie :
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Liv'd on ; and so did I.

And envieth that *they* should live, and so many lie dead.

I look'd upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away ;
I look'd upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

I look'd to Heaven, and tried to pray ;
But or ever a prayer had gusht,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

I clos'd my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat ;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky
Lay, like a load, on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

But the curse liveth for him in the eye of the dead men.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they :

The look with which they look'd on me
Had never pass'd away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high :
But oh ! more horrible than that
Is the curse in a dead man's eye !
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

The moving moon went up the sky,
And no where did abide :
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside—

In his loneliness and fixedness, he yearneth towards the journeying Moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward ; and every where the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country, and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected, and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

Her beams bemock'd the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread ;
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmed water burnt alway
A still and awful red.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watch'd the water-snakes :
They mov'd in tracks of shining white,

By the light of the Moon he beholdeth God's creatures of the great calm.

And when they rear'd, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watch'd their rich attire :
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coil'd and swam ; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

Their beauty and their happiness.

O happy living things ! no tongue
Their beauty might declare ;
A spring of love gush'd from my heart,

He blesseth them in his heart.

And I bless'd them unaware !
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I bless'd them unaware.

The spell begins to break.

The self same moment I could pray :
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea."

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.

PART THE FIFTH.

" O SLEEP ! it is a gentle thing,
Belov'd from pole to pole !
To Mary Queen the praise be given !
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
That slid into my soul.

The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remain'd,
I dreamt that they were fill'd with dew ;
And when I awoke it rain'd.

By grace of the holy Mother, the ancient Mariner is refreshed with rain.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank ;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

I mov'd, and could not feel my limbs :
I was so light—almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessed ghost.

He heareth sounds, and seeth strange sights and commotions in the sky and the element.

And soon I heard a roaring wind :
It did not come anear ;
But with its sound it shook the sails,
That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life !
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
To and fro they were hurried about ;
And to and fro, and in and out,
The wan stars danc'd between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,
And the sails did sigh like sedge ;
And the rain pour'd down from one black cloud ;
The moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
The moon was at its side :
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag,
A river steep and wide.

The loud wind never reach'd the ship,
Yet now the ship mov'd on!
Beneath the lightning and the moon
The dead men gave a groan.

The bodies of the ship's crew are inspirited, and the ship moves on;

They groan'd, they stirr'd they all uprose,
Nor spake nor mov'd their eyes;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steer'd, the ship mov'd on;
Yet never a breeze up blew;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do:
They rais'd their limbs like lifeless tools—
We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee to knee:
The body and I pull'd at one rope,
But he said nought to me."

"I fear thee, ancient Mariner!"
"Be calm thou wedding guest!
'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
Which to their corses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest:

But not by the souls of the men, nor by dæmons of earth or middle air, but by a blessed troop of angelic spirits, sent down by the

invocation of the guardian saint.

For when it dawn'd—they dropp'd their arms,
And cluster'd round the mast;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,
And from their bodies pass'd.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the sun;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mix'd, now one by one,

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the sky-lark sing;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seem'd to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the Heavens be mute.

It ceas'd; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sail'd on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe :
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Mov'd onward from beneath.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The spirit slid : and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

The lonesome spirit from the south pole carries on the ship as far as the line, in obedience to the angelic troop, but still requireth vengeance.

The sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixt her to the ocean ;
But in a minute she 'gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion—
Backwards and forwards half her length,
With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound :
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swound.

How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare ;
But ere my living life return'd,

The Polar Spirit's fellow-dæmons, the invisible inhabitants of the element,

take part in his wrong; and two of them relate, one to the other, that penance long and heavy for the ancient Mariner hath been accorded to the Polar Spirit, who returneth southward.

I heard and in my soul discern'd
Two VOICES in the air.

'Is it he?' quoth one, 'Is this the man?
By him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low,
The harmless Albatross.

The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He lov'd the bird that lov'd the man
Who shot him with his bow.'

The other was a softer voice,
And soft as honey dew:
Quoth he, 'The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do.'"

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.

PART THE SIXTH.

FIRST VOICE.

" ' But tell me, tell me ! speak again,
Thy soft response renewing—
What makes that ship drive on so fast ?
What is the OCEAN doing ?'

SECOND VOICE.

' Still as a slave before his lord,
The OCEAN hath no blast ;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the moon is cast—

If he may know which way to go;
For she guides him smooth or grim.
See, brother, see! how graciously
She looketh down on him.'

FIRST VOICE.

The Mariner hath been cast into a trance; for the angelic power causeth the vessel to drive northward faster than human life could endure.

'But why drives on that ship so fast,
Without or wave or wind?'

SECOND VOICE.

'The air is cut away before.
And closes from behind.

Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
Or we shall be belated:
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner's trance is abated.'

The supernatural motion is retarded; the Mariner awakes, and his penance begins anew.

I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather:
'Twas night, calm night, the moon was high;
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
All fix'd on me their stony eyes,
That in the moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never pass'd away:
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

The curse is finally expiated.

And now this spell was snapt: once more
I view'd the ocean green,
And look'd far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen—

Like one, that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turn'd round, walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows, a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breath'd a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

It rais'd my hair, it fann'd my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring—
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly, flew the ship,
Yet she sail'd softly too;
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—
On me alone it blew.

And the ancient Mariner beholdeth his native country.

Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed
The light-house top I see?
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
Is this mine own countree?

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
And I with sobs did pray—
O let me be awake my God!
Or let me sleep alway.

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn!
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,
That stands above the rock;
The moonlight steep'd in silentness
The steady weathercock.

The angelic spirits leave the dead bodies,

And the bay was white with silent light,
Till rising from the same,

Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colours came.

A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were :
I turn'd my eyes upon the deck—
Oh, Christ ! what saw I there !

And appear in their own forms of light.

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood !
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each wav'd his hand :
It was a heavenly sight !
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light :

This seraph-band, each wav'd his hand,
No voice did they impart—
No voice ; but oh ! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the pilot's cheer ;
My head was turn'd perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

The pilot, and the pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast:
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third—I heard his voice:
It is the hermit good!
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood.
He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away
The Albatross's blood."

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.

PART THE SEVENTH.

"This hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
He loves to talk with marineres
That come from a far countree.

The Hermit of the Wood,

He kneels at morn, and noon and eve—
He hath a cushion plump:
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

The Skiff-boat near'd: I heard them talk,
'Why this is strange, I trow!
Where are those lights so many and fair,
That signal made but now?'

Approacheth the ship with wonder.

'Strange, by my faith!' the hermit said—
'And they answer'd not our cheer!
The planks look warp'd! and see those sails,
How thin they are and sere!
I never saw ought like to them,
Unless perchance it were

Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along:
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf's young.'

'Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look—'
(The pilot made reply)
'I am a-fear'd'—'Push on, push on!'
Said the hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirr'd;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard.

The ship suddenly sinketh.

Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread:
It reach'd the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead.

The ancient Mariner is saved in the pilot's boat.

Stunn'd by that loud and dreadful sound,
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that hath been seven days drown'd,
My body lay afloat;
But swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

I mov'd my lips—the pilot shriek'd
And fell down in a fit;
The holy hermit rais'd his eyes,
And pray'd where he did sit.

I took the oars: the pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laugh'd loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
'Ha! ha!' quoth he, 'full plain I see,
The devil knows how to row.'

And now, all in my own countree
I stood on the firm land!

The hermit stepp'd forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

The ancient Mariner earnestly entreateth the hermit to shrieve him; and the penance of life falls on him.

'O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!'
The hermit cross'd his brow.
'Say quick,' quoth he, 'I bid thee say—
What manner of man art thou?'

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrench'd
With a woful agony,
Which forc'd me to begin my tale;
And then it left me free.

And ever and anon throughout his future life an agony constraineth him to travel from land to land,

Since then at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns;
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns.

I pass like night, from land to land;
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me:
To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from that door!
The wedding-guests are there;

But in the garden-bower the bride
And bride-maids singing are ;
And hark the little vesper bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer !

O wedding-guest ! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide, wide sea :
So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seemed there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company !—

To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay !

Farewell, farewell ! but this I tell
To thee, thou wedding-guest !
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

And to teach, by his own example, love and reverence to all things that God made and loveth.

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone; and now the wedding-guest
Turn'd from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunn'd,
And is of sense forlorn:
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn.

THE KEEP-SAKE.

The tedded hay, the first fruits of the soil,
The tedded hay and corn-sheaves in one field,
Shew summer gone, ere come. The fox-glove tall
Sheds its loose purple bells, or in the gust,
Or when it bends beneath the up-springing lark,
Or mountain-finch alighting. And the rose
(In vain the darling of successful love)
Stands, like some boasted beauty of past years,
The thorns remaining, and the flowers all gone.
Nor can I find, amid my lonely walk
By rivulet, or spring, or wet road-side,
That blue and bright-eyed flowret of the brook,
Hope's gentle gem, the sweet Forget-me-not !*
So will not fade the flowers which Emmeline
With delicate fingers on the snow-white silk
Has work'd, (the flowers which most she knew I lov'd,)
And, more belov'd than they, her auburn hair.

*One of the names, (and meriting to be the only one) of the *Myosotis Scorpioides Palustris*, a flower from six to twelve inches high, with blue blossom and bright yellow eye. It has the same name over the whole empire of Germany (*Vergissmein nicht*), and we believe, in Denmark and Sweden.

In the cool morning twilight, early wak'd
By her full bosom's joyous restlessness,
Leaving the soft bed to her sleeping sister,
Softly she rose and lightly stole along,
Down the slope coppice to the woodbine bower,
Whose rich flowers, swinging in the morning breeze,
Over their dim, fast-moving shadows hung,
Making a quiet image of disquiet
In the smooth, scarcely moving river-pool.
There, in that bower where first she own'd her love,
And let me kiss my own warm tear of joy
From off her glowing cheek, she sate and stretch'd
The silk upon the frame, and work'd her name
Between the Moss-Rose and Forget-me-not—
Her own dear name, with her own auburn hair !
That, forc'd to wander till sweet spring return,
I yet might ne'er forget her smile, her look,
Her voice, (that even in her mirthful mood
Has made me wish to steal away and weep,)
Nor yet th' entrancement of that maiden kiss
With which she promis'd that, when spring return'd,
She would resign one half of that dear name,
And own thenceforth no other name but mine !

THE VIRGIN'S CRADLE HYMN.

Copied from a Print of the Virgin, in a Catholic Village in Germany.

Dormi, Jesu ! Mater ridet,
Quæ tam dulcem somnum videt,
Dormi, Jesu ! blandule !
Si non dormis, Mater plorat,
Inter fila cantans orat
Blande, veni, somnule.

ENGLISH.

Sleep, sweet babe, my cares beguiling :
Mother sits beside thee smiling :
Sleep, my darling, tenderly !
If thou sleep not, mother mourneth,
Singing as her wheel she turneth :
Come, soft slumber, balmily !

ODE

TO

TRANQUILLITY.

Tranquillity ! thou better name
Than all the family of Fame !
Thou ne'er wilt leave my riper age
To low intrigue, or factious rage :
For oh ! dear child of thoughtful Truth,
To thee I gave my early youth,
And left the bark, and blest the stedfast shore,
Ere yet the Tempest rose and scar'd me with its roar.

Who late and lingering seeks thy shrine,
On him but seldom, power divine,
Thy spirit rests ! Satiety
And sloth, poor counterfeits of thee,
Mock the tired worldling. Idle Hope
And dire Remembrance interlope,
To vex the feverish slumbers of the mind :
The bubble floats before, the spectre stalks behind.

But me thy gentle hand will lead
At morning through the accustom'd mead;
And in the sultry summer's heat
Will build me up a mossy seat!
And when the gust of Autumn crowds
And breaks the busy moonlight-clouds,
Thou best the thought canst raise, the heart attune,
Light as the busy clouds, calm as the gliding Moon.

The feeling heart, the searching soul,
To thee I dedicate the whole!
And while within myself I trace
The greatness of some future race,
Aloof with hermit-eye I scan
The present works of present man—
A wild and dream-like trade of blood and guile,
Too foolish for a tear, too wicked for a smile!

THE NIGHTINGALE ;

A Conversation Poem.—Written in April, 1798.

No cloud, no relic of the sunken day
Distinguishes the West, no long thin slip
Of sullen light, no obscure trembling hues.
Come, we will rest on this old, mossy bridge !
You see the glimmer of the stream beneath,
But hear no murmuring : it flows silently
O'er its soft bed of verdure. All is still,
A balmy night ! and though the stars be dim,
Yet let us think upon the vernal showers
That gladden the green earth, and we shall find
A pleasure in the dimness of the stars.
And hark ! the Nightingale begins its song,
* " Most musical, most melancholy" Bird !

* " *Most musical, most melancholy.*"] This passage in Milton possesses an excellence far superior to that of mere description. It is spoken in the character of the melancholy man, and has therefore a dramatic propriety. The author makes this remark, to rescue himself from the charge of having alluded with levity, to a line in Milton : a charge than which none could be more painful to him, except perhaps that of having ridiculed his Bible.

A melancholy Bird ? Oh ! idle thought !
In nature there is nothing melancholy.
But some night-wandering man, whose heart was pierc'd
With the remembrance of a grievous wrong,
Or slow distemper, or neglected love,
(And so poor Wretch ! fill'd all things with himself
And made all gentle sounds tell back the tale
Of his own sorrow) he, and such as he,
First nam'd these notes a melancholy strain :
And many a poet echoes the conceit ;
Poet who hath been building up the rhyme
When he had better far have stretch'd his limbs
Beside a brook in mossy forest-dell,
By Sun or Moon-light, to the influxes
Of shapes and sounds and shifting elements
Surrendering his whole spirit, of his song
And of his fame forgetful ! so his fame
Should share in Nature's immortality,
A venerable thing ! and so his song
Should make all Nature lovelier, and itself
Be lov'd like Nature ! But 'twill not be so ;
And youths and maidens most poetical,
Who lose the deep'ning twilights of the spring
In ball-rooms and hot theatres, they still
Full of meek sympathy must heave their sighs
O'er Philomela's pity-pleading strains.

My Friend, and thou, our Sister ! we have learnt
A different lore : we may not thus profane
Nature's sweet voices, always full of love
And joyance ! 'Tis the merry Nightingale
That crowds, and hurries, and precipitates
With fast thick warble his delicious notes,
As he were fearful that an April night
Would be too short for him to utter forth
His love-chant, and disburthen his full soul
Of all its music !

And I know a grove
Of large extent, hard by a castle huge,
Which the great lord inhabits not ; and so
This grove is wild with tangling underwood,
And the trim walks are broken up, and grass,
Thin grass and king-cups grow within the paths.
But never elsewhere in one place I knew
So many Nightingales ; and far and near,
In wood and thicket, over the wide grove,
They answer and provoke each other's songs—
With skirmish and capricious passagings,
And murmurs musical and swift jug jug,
And one low piping sound more sweet than all—
Stirring the air with such a harmony,
That should you close your eyes, you might almost

Forget it was not day ! On moonlight bushes,
Whose dewy leaflets are but half disclos'd,
You may perchance behold them on the twigs,
Their bright, bright eyes, their eyes both bright and full,
Glistening, while many a glow-worm in the shade
Lights up her love-torch.

A most gentle Maid,
Who dwelleth in her hospitable home
Hard by the castle, and at latest eve
(Even like a Lady vow'd and dedicate
To something more than Nature in the grove)
Glides through the pathways ; she knows all their notes,
That gentle Maid ! and oft a moment's space,
What time the Moon was lost behind a cloud,
Hath heard a pause of silence : till the Moon
Emerging, hath awaken'd earth and sky
With one sensation, and these wakeful Birds
Have all burst forth in choral minstrelsy,
As if one quick and sudden Gale had swept
A hundred airy harps ! And she hath watch'd
Many a Nightingale perch giddily
On blos'my twig still swinging from the breeze,
And to that motion tune his wanton song,
Like tipsy joy that reels with tossing head.

Farewell, O Warbler! till to morrow eve,
And you, my friends! farewell, a short farewell!
We have been loitering long and pleasantly,
And now for our dear homes.—That strain again?
Full fain it would delay me! My dear babe,
Who, capable of no articulate sound,
Mars all things with his imitative lisp,
How he would place his hand beside his ear,
His little hand, the small forefinger up,
And bid us listen! And I deem it wise
To make him Nature's Play-Mate. He knows well
The evening-star; and once, when he awoke
In most distressful mood (some inward pain
Had made up that strange thing, an infant's dream)
I hurried with him to our orchard-plot,
And he beheld the Moon, and, hush'd at once,
Suspends his sobs, and laughs most silently,
While his fair eyes, that swam with undropt tears
Did glitter in the yellow moon-beam! Well!—
It is a father's tale: But if that Heaven
Should give me life, his childhood shall grow up
Familiar with these songs, that with the night
He may associate joy! Once more farewell,
Sweet Nightingale! Once more, my friends! farewell.

LINES

Written in the Album at Elbingerode, in the Hartz Forest.

I stood on *Brocken's sovran height, and saw
Woods crowding upon woods, hills over hills,
A surging scene, and only limited
By the blue distance. Heavily my way
Downward I dragg'd through fir-groves evermore,
Where bright green moss heaves in sepulchral forms
Speckled with sunshine ; and, but seldom heard,
The sweet bird's song became a hollow sound ;
And the breeze, murmuring indivisibly,
Preserv'd its solemn murmur most distinct
From many a note of many a waterfall,
And the brook's chatter ; 'mid whose islet stones
The dingy kidling with its tinkling bell
Leapt frolicsome, or old romantic goat
Sat, his white beard slow waving. I mov'd on

* The highest mountain in the Hartz, and indeed in North Germany.

In low and languid mood : for I had found
That outward Forms, the loftiest, still receive
Their finer influence from the Life within :
Fair Cyphers of vague import, where the Eye
Traces no spot, in which the Heart may read
History or Prophecy of Friend, or Child,
Or gentle Maid, our first and early love,
Or Father, or the venerable name
Of our adored Country ! O thou Queen,
Thou delegated Deity of Earth,
O dear, dear England ! how my longing eye
Turn'd westward, shaping in the steady clouds
Thy sands and high white cliffs !

My native Land !
Fill'd with the thought of thee this heart was proud,
Yea, mine eye swam with tears : that all the view
From sovran Brocken, woods and woody hills,
Floated away, like a departing dream,
Feeble and dim ! Stranger, these impulses
Blame thou not lightly ; nor will I profane,
With hasty judgment or injurious doubt,
That man's sublimer spirit, who can feel
That God is every where ! the God who fram'd
Mankind to be one mighty Family,
Himself our Father, and the World our Home.

RECOLLECTIONS OF LOVE.

How warm this woodland wild Recess !
  Love surely hath been breathing here.
  And this sweet bed of heath, my dear !
Swells up, then sinks with faint caress,
  As if to have you yet more near.

Eight springs have flown, since last I lay
  On sea-ward Quantock's healthy hills,
  Where quiet sounds from hidden rills
Float here and there, like things astray,
  And high o'er head the sky-lark shrills.

No voice as yet had made the air
  Be music with your name : yet why
  That asking look ? That yearning sigh ?
That sense of promise every where ?
  Beloved ! flew your spirit by ?

As when a mother doth explore
The rose-mark on her long lost child,
I met, I lov'd you, maiden mild !
As whom I long had lov'd before—
So deeply had I been beguil'd.

You stood before me like a thought,
A dream remember'd in a dream.
But when those meek eyes first did seem
To tell me, Love within you wrought—
O Greta, dear domestic stream !

Has not, since then, Love's prompture deep,
Has not Love's whisper evermore,
Been ceaseless, as thy gentle roar ?
Sole voice, when other voices sleep,
Dear under-song in Clamor's hour.

SONNET TO THE RIVER OTTER.

Dear native Brook ! wild Streamlet of the West !
How many various-fated years have past,
What happy, and what mournful hours, since last
I skimm'd the smooth thin stone along thy breast,
Numbering its light leaps ! yet so deep impresst
Sink the sweet scenes of childhood, that mine eyes
I never shut amid the sunny ray,
But strait with all their tints their waters rise,
Thy crossing plank, thy marge with willows grey,
And bedded sand that vein'd with various dies
Gleam'd through thy bright transparence ! On my way,
Visions of childhood ! oft have ye beguil'd
Lone manhood's cares, yet waking fondest sighs.
Ah ! that once more I were a careless child !

SPIRIT OF CONTEMPORARY POETRY.

THE object of this publication, is, to collect, in a series of numbers, choice specimens from that class of British Poetry, the intrinsic value of which is enhanced by the present impossibility of obtaining it on this side the Atlantic. The eagerness with which the American public *lie in wait* for the emanations of the English press is proverbial; yet many of our mother country's eminent poets are known to us by little else than their names. Their writings have been like jewels of extraordinary rarity,—all know their scarcity and worth from report, while but a favoured few can appreciate their value from actual observation. Coleridge, for thirty years placed by common consent apart from the host of writers who have appeared and fluttered away their noisy and ephemeral existence during that time, has been presented to *us* in only one ordinary edition of his Christabelle. The names of Barry Cornwall, Keats, Shelley,—the distinguished friend of Byron,—Croly, Bowles, Lamb, Henry Neele, and of other gifted spirits of the same rank, are equally familiar on our lips, and their literary efforts equally unknown. It is not in the expectation of retrieving the labour of such men from oblivion that this prospectus is issued, for they have stamped their seal of remembrance on the hearts of their countrymen, and breathed their music in strains too sweet to be forgotten; but, in the hope of familiarizing our community with productions worthy to be cherished among our memories of the bright and blessed things of existence.

The proposed work will embrace a collection of genuine poetry from the writings of the authors above named, and probably from those of several others not included in that enumeration. Each number will consist of from forty to sixty octavo pages, of elegant letter-press printing.

The price to subscribers will be thirty-seven and a half cents for each number, and the first series will be completed in *six numbers*.

The third number will contain selections from BARRY CORNWALL'S works.

SPIRIT

OF

CONTEMPORARY POETRY.

NUMBER III.

CONTAINING

A SICILIAN STORY, THE FALCON, THE BROKEN HEART, WITH OTHER POEMS,

BY BARRY CORNWALL

The Vision and the Faculty divine.

WORDSWORTH.

BOSTON:
Printed by True and Greene.
.....
1827.

A SICILIAN STORY,

WITH OTHER POEMS.

BY BARRY CORNWALL.

PREFACE.

Cornwall's style is chiefly moulded, and his versification modulated on the pattern of Shakspeare, and the other dramatists of that glorious age—particularly Marlow, Beaumont and Fletcher, and Massinger. He has also copied something from Milton and Ben Johnson, and the amorous cavaliers of the Usurpation—and then passing disdainfully over all the intermediate writers, has flung himself fairly into the arms of Lord Byron, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Leigh Hunt. —This may be thought, perhaps, rather a violent transition; and likely to lead to something of an incongruous mixture. But the materials really harmonize very tolerably; and the candid reader of the work will easily discover the secret of this amalgamation.

In the *first* place, Mr Cornwall is himself a poet—and one of no mean rate;—and not being a maker of parodies or centos, he does not imitate by indiscriminately caricaturing the prominent peculiarities of his models, or crowding together their external or mechanical characteristics—but merely disciplines his own genius in the school of theirs—and tinges the creatures of his fancy with the coloring which glows in theirs. In the *next* place, and what is much more important, it is obvious that a man may imitate Shakspeare and his great compeers, without presuming to rival their variety or universality, and merely by endeavouring to copy one or two of their many styles and excellences.—This is the case with Mr C. He does not meddle with the thunders and lightnings of the mighty poet; and still less with his boundless humour and fresh-springing merriment. He has nothing to do with Falstaff or Silence; and does not venture himself in the lists with Macbeth, or Lear, or Othello. It is the tender, the sweet, and the fanciful only, that he aspires to copy—the girlish innocence and lovely sorrow of Juliet, Imogen, Perdita, or Viola—the enchanted solitude of Prospero and his daughter—the ethereal loves and jealousies of Osberon and Titania, and those other magical scenes, all perfumed with love and poetry, and breathing the spirit of a celestial spring, which lie scattered in every part of his writings.—The genius of Fletcher, perhaps, is more akin to Mr C.'s muse of imitation, than the soaring and 'extravagant spirit' of Shakspeare; and we think we can trace, in more places than one, the impression which his fancy has received from the patient suffering and sweet desolation of Aspatia, in his Maid's tragedy. It is the youthful Milton only that he has presumed to copy—the Milton of Lycidas and Comus, and the Arcades, and the Seraphic Hymns—not the lofty and austere Milton of the Paradise. From Johnson, we think, he has imitated some of those exquisite songs and lyrical pieces that lie buried in the rubbish of his masks, and which continued to be the models for all such writings, down to the period of the Restoration. There are no traces, we think

of Dryden, or Pope, or Young,—or of any body else indeed, till we come down to Lord Byron, and our other tuneful contemporaries.—From what we have already said, it will be understood, that Mr C. has not thought of imitating all Byron, any more than all Shakspeare. He leaves untouched the mockery and misanthropy, as well as much of the force and energy of the noble Lord's poetry—and betakes himself only to its deep sense of beauty, and the grace and tenderness that are so often and so strangely interwoven with those less winning characteristics.—It is the poetry of Manfred, of Parisina, of Haidee and Thyrsa, that he aims at copying, and not the higher and more energetic tone of the Corsair, or Childe Harold, or Don Juan.—He has indeed borrowed the manner of this last piece in two of the poems in this little volume—but has shown no great aptitude for wit or sarcasm, and has succeeded only in the parts that are pathetic and tender. There is a great deal of the diction of Wordsworth and Coleridge, and some imitation of their beauties: But we think the natural bent of his genius is more like that of Leigh Hunt than any other author.—He has the same play of fancy, and the same capacity of deep and delicate feeling, together with the same relish for the old Italian poetry, and the plain and simple pathos of Dante and Boccacio.—We doubt, however, whether he has equal force of original talent, or whether he could have written any thing so good, on the whole, as the beautiful story of Rimini: But he has better taste and better judgment—or, what perhaps is but saying the same thing, he has less affectation, and far less conceit. He has scarcely any other affectation, indeed, than is almost necessarily implied in a sedulous imitator of difficult models—and no visible conceit at all. On the contrary, we cannot help supposing him to be a very natural and amiable person, who has taken to write poetry, more for the love he bears it, than the fame to which it may raise him—who cares nothing for the sects and factions into which the poetical world may be divided—but, regarding himself as a debtor to every writer who has given him pleasure, desires nothing better than to range freely over the whole Parnassian garden, 'stealing and giving odour' with a free spirit and a grateful and joyous heart.

It is this apparent devotion to the purer part of his art—and the total exclusion of all contentious and dogmatical matter, that constitutes the great charm of his writing. The fever of party spirit, and the bitterness of speculative contention, have of late years infected all our literature; and Poetry itself, instead of being the balm and anodyne of minds hurt and ruffled with the rugged tasks and angry struggles of the world, has too often been made the vehicle of moral and political animosity, religious antipathy and personal offence. We cannot always, with all our philosophy, escape the soil and tarnish of those contagious pursuits; but it is delightful to turn from them awhile, to the unalloyed sweets of such poetry as Mr Cornwall's; and to refresh our fancies, and strengthen and compose our good affection, among the images of love and beauty, and gentle sympathy and sorrow, with which it every where presents us.—*Edinburgh Review.*

A SICILIAN STORY.

" Nunc scio quid sit amor."

I.

There is a spirit within us, which arrays,
The thing we doat upon with colorings
Richer than roses—brighter than the beams
Of the clear sun at morning, when he flings
His showers of light upon the peach, or plays
With the green leaves of June, and strives to dart
Into some great forest's heart,
And scare the sylvan from voluptuous dreams.
There is a spirit that comes upon us when
Boyhood is gone,—before we rank as men,
Before the heart is canker'd and before
We lose or cast away that innocent feeling
That gives life all its freshness. Never more
May I feel this, and yet the times have been
I have seen love in burning beauty stealing
O'er a young cheek and run the bright veins through,

And light up, like a heaven, eyes of such blue
As in the summer skies was never seen.
I was an idler then, and life was green,
And so I lov'd, and languish'd, and became
A worshipper of the boy-god's fickle flame,
And did abase myself before him : he
Laugh'd outright at my fierce credulity.

II.

And yet, at times, the recollection 's sweet,
And the same thought that pleas'd me haunts me still,
Chief at the hour when day and evening meet
And twilight, shadowy magician ! calls
Shapes unsubstantial from his cloudy halls,
And ranks them out before us 'till they fill
The mind with things forgotten. Valley and hill,
The air, the dashing ocean, the small rill,
The waving wood and the evanishing sky.
Tow'rd this subduing of the soul, ally
Their pow'rs, and stand forth a resistless band.
If then the elements league against us, and
The heart rebel against the mind's command,
Why, we must sink before these sickly dreams
Until the morning comes, and sterner themes
Do fit us through this stormy world to sail,
Farewell to love,—and yet, 'tis woven in my tale.

III.

A story (still believ'd through Sicily,)
Is told of one young girl who chose to die
For love. Sweet ladies, listen and believe,
If that ye can believe so strange a story,
That woman ever could so deeply grieve,
Save she who from Leucadia's promontory
Flung herself headlong for the Lesbian boy,
(Ungrateful he to work her such annoy ;)
But time hath, as in sad requital, given
A branch of laurel to her, and some bard
Swears that a heathen god or goddess gave
Her swan-like wings wherewith to fly to heaven :
And now, at times, when gloomy tempests roar
Along the Adriatic, in the wave
She dips her plumes, and on the watery shore
Sings as the love-craz'd Sappho sung of yore.

VI.

One night a mask was held within the walls
Of a Sicilian palace : the gayest flowers
Cast life and beauty o'er the marble halls,
And, in remoter spots, fresh waterfalls
That stream'd half hidden by sweet lemon bowers
A low and silver-voiced music made :
And there the frail perfuming woodbine stray'd

Winding its slight arms 'round the cypress bough,
And as in female trust seem'd there to grow,
Like woman's love 'midst sorrow flourishing :
And every odorous plant and brighter thing
Born of the sunny skies and weeping rain,
That from the bosom of the spring
Starts into life and beauty once again,
Blossom'd ; and there in walks of evergreen,
Gay cavaliers and dames high-born and fair,
Wearing that rich and melancholy smile
That can so well beguile
The human heart from its recess, were seen.
And lovers full of love or studious care
Wasting their rhymes upon the soft night air,
And spirits that never till the morning sleep.
And, far away, the mountain Ætna flung
Eternally its pyramid of flame
High as the Heav'ns, while from its heart there came
Hollow and subterranean noises deep,
And all around the constellations hung
Their starry lamps, lighting the midnight sky,
As to do honor to that revelry.

V.

Yet there was one in that gay shifting crowd
Sick at the soul with sorrow ; her quick eye

Ran restless through the throng, and then she bow'd
Her head upon her breast, and one check'd sigh
Breath'd sweet reproach 'gainst her Italian boy,
The dark-ey'd Guido whom she lov'd so well ;
(O how *he* lov'd Sicilian Isabel !)
Why came he not that night to share the joy
That sate on every face, and from her heart
Bid fear and all, aye, all but hope, depart—
For hope is present happiness : Shapes and things
That wear a beauty like th' imperial star
Of Jove, or sunset clouds, or floating dews,
And like an arch of promise shine afar,
When near cast off their skiey colorings,
And all their rainbow-like and radiant hues
Are shadowy mockeries and deceptive fire.
But Hope ! the brightest of the passionate choir
That through the wide world range,
And touch with passing fingers that most strange
And various instrument, the human heart,—
Ah ! why didst thou so soon from Isabel depart ?

VI.

Dark Guido came not all that night, while she
(His young and secret bride) sate watching there,
Pale as the marble columns. She search'd around
And 'round, and sicken'd at the revelry,
But if she heard a quick or lighter bound

Half 'rose and gaz'd, and o'er her tearful sight
Drew her white hand to see his raven hair
Come down in masses like the starless night,
And 'neath each shorten'd mask she strove the while
To catch his sweet inimitable smile,
Opening such lips as the boy Hylas wore ;
(He whom the wild and wanton nymphs of yore
Stole from Alcmena's son :) but one and then
Another pass'd, and bow'd, and pass'd again.
She look'd on all in vain : at last more near
A figure came and, whispering in her ear,
Ask'd in a hoarse, and quick, and bitter tone,
Why there she sate alone,
The mistress of the feast, while all pass'd by
Unwelcom'd even by her wand'ring eye ?
It was her brother's voice—Leoni !—no
It could not be that *he* would jeer her so.
He breath'd a name ; 'twas ' Guido' : tremblingly
She sate and shrank from his enquiring eye,
But hid the mighty secret of her soul.
Again—ah ! then she heard her terrible doom
Sound like a prophecy, and to her room
Like a pale solitary shade she stole.

VII.

And now to tell of him whose tongue had gain'd
The heart of Isabel. 'Twas said, he came

(And he was of a line of fame)
From Milan where his father perished.
He was the last of all his race, and fled
To haughty Genoa where the Dorias reigned:
A mighty city once, though now she sleeps
Amidst her amphitheatre of hills,
Or sits in silence by her dashing deeps,
And not a page in living story fills.
He had that look which poets love to paint,
And artists fashion, in their happier mood,
And budding girls when first their dreamings faint
Shew them such forms as maids may love. He stood
Fine as those shapely spirits heaven-descended,
Hermes or young Apollo, or whom she
The moon-lit Dian, on the Latmian hill,
When all the woods and all the winds were still,
Kiss'd with the kiss of immortality.
And in his eye where love and pride contended,
His dark deep-seated eye, there was a spell
Which they who love and have been lov'd can tell.
And she—but what of her, his chosen bride,
His *own*, on whom he gaz'd in secret pride,
And lov'd almost too much for happiness?
Enough to say that she was born to bless;
She was surpassing fair: her gentle voice
Came like the fabled music that beguiles

The sailor on the waters, and her smiles
Shone like the light of heaven, and said 'rejoice !'

VIII.

That morn they sat upon the sea-beach green ;
For in that land the sward springs fresh and free
Close to the ocean, and no tides are seen
To break the glassy quiet of the sea :
And Guido, with his arm 'round Isabel,
Unclasp'd the tresses of her chestnut hair,
Which in her white and heaving bosom fell
Like things enamor'd, and then with jealous air
Bade the soft amorous winds not wanton there ;
And then his dark eyes sparkled, and he wound
The fillets like a coronet around
Her brow, and bade her rise and be a queen.
And oh ! 'twas sweet to see her delicate hand
Press'd 'gainst his parted lips, as though to check
In mimic anger all those whispers bland
He knew so well to use, and on his neck
Her round arm hung, while half as in command
And half entreaty did her swimming eye
Speak of forbearance, 'till from her pouting lip
He snatch'd the honey dews that lovers sip,
And then in crimsoning beauty, playfully

She frown'd, and wore that self-betraying air
Which women lov'd and flatter'd love to wear.

IX.

Oft would he, as on that same spot they lay
Beneath the last light of a summer's day,
Tell (and would watch the while her steadfast eye,)
How on the lone Pacific he had been,
When the Sea Lion on his watery way
Went rolling through the billows green,
And shook that ocean's dead tranquillity :
And he would tell her of past times, and where
He rambled in his boyhood far away,
And spoke of other worlds and wonders fair
And mighty and magnificent, for he
Had seen the bright sun worshipp'd like a god
Upon that land where first Columbus trod ;
And travell'd by the deep Saint Lawrence' tide,
And by Niagara's cataracts of foam,
And seen the wild deer roam
Amongst interminable forests, where
The serpent and the savage have their lair
Together. Nature there in wildest guise
Stands undebas'd and nearer to the skies ;
And 'midst her giant trees and waters wide
The bones of things forgotten, buried deep,

Give glimpses of an elder world, espied
By *us* but in that fine and dreamy sleep,
When Fancy, ever the mother of deep truth,
Breathes her dim oracles on the soul of youth.

X.

Her sleep that night was fearful,—O, that night!
If it indeed was sleep: for in her sight
A form (a dim and waving shadow) stood,
And pointed far up the great Ætna's side,
Where, from a black ravine, a dreary wood
Peeps out and frowns upon the storms below,
And bounds and braves the wilderness of snow.
It gaz'd awhile upon the lonely bride
With melancholy air and glassy eye,
And spoke—"Awake and search yon dell, for I,
Though risen above my old mortality,
Have left my mangled and unburied limbs
A prey for wolves hard by the waters there,
And one lock of my black and curled hair,
That one I vow'd to thee, my beauty, swims
Like a mere weed upon the mountain river;
And those dark eyes you us'd to love so well
(They lov'd you dearly, my own Isabel,)
Are shut, and now have lost their light forever.
Go then unto yon far ravine, and save

Your husband's heart for some more quiet grave
Than what the stream and withering winds may lend,
And 'neath the basil-tree we planted, give
The fond heart burial, so that tree shall live
And shed a solace on thy after days:
And thou—but oh! I ask thee not to tend
The plant on which thy Guido lov'd to gaze,
For with a spirit's power I see thy heart."
He said no more, but with the dawning day
Shrunk, as the shadows of the clouds depart
Before the conquering sun-beams, silently.
Then sprung she from the pillow where she lay,
To the wild sense of doubtful misery:
And when she 'woke she did obey the dream,
And journey'd onwards to the mountain stream
Tow'rd which the phantom pointed, and she drew
The thorns aside which there luxuriant grew,
And with a beating heart descended, where
The waters wash'd, it said, its floating hair.

XI.

It was a spot like those romancers paint,
Or painted when of dusky knights they told
Wandering about in forests old,
When the last purple color was waxing faint
And day was dying in the west:—the trees

(Dark pine and chestnut, and the dwarfed oak
And cedar,) shook their branches, 'till the shade
Look'd like a living spirit, and, as it play'd,
Seem'd holding dim communion with the breeze:
Below, a tumbling river roll'd along,
(Its course by lava rocks and branches broke)
Singing for aye its fierce and noisy song;
And there on shatter'd trunks the lichens grew
And cover'd, with their golden garments,—Death:
And when the tempest of November blew
The Winter trumpet, 'till its failing breath
Went moaning into silence, every green
And loose leaf of the piny boughs did tell
Some trembling story of that mountain dell.

XII.

That spirit is never idle that doth 'waken
The soul to sights and contemplations deep,
Even when from out the desert's seeming sleep
A sob is heav'd that but the leaves are shaken;
But when across its frozen waste there comes
A rushing wind, that chills the heart and bears
Tidings of ruin from those icy domes,
The cast and fashion of a thousand years,
It is not for low meanings that the soul
Of Nature, starting from her idlesse long,

Doth walk abroad with Death, and sweep among
The valleys where the avalanches roll,
'Tis not to speak of 'Doubt' that her great voice,
Which in the plains doth bid the heart rejoice,
Comes sounding like an oracle. Amidst men
There are no *useless* marvels : Ah ! why then
Cast on the wonder-working nature shame,
Or deem that, like a noisy braggart, she
(In all things else how great, and freed from blame)
Once in an age should shout 'A mystery !'

XIII.

But to my story. Down the slippery sod
With trembling limbs, and heart that scarcely beat,
And catching at the brambles, as her feet
Sunk in the crumbling earth, the poor girl trod ;
And there she saw—Oh ! till that moment none
Could tell (not she) how much of hope the sun
And cheerful morning, with its noises, brought
And how she from each glance a courage caught ;
For light and life had scatter'd half her fright,
And she could almost smile on the past night ;
So, with a buoyant feeling, mix'd with fear
Lest she might scorn Heav'n's mission'd minister,
She took her weary way and search'd the dell
And there she saw him—dead. Poor desolate child

Of sixteen summers, had the waters wild
No pity on the boy you lov'd so well !
There stiff and cold the dark-ey'd Guido lay,
His pale face upwards to the careless day,
That smil'd as it was wont ; and he was found,
His young limbs mangled on the rocky ground,
And 'midst the weltering weeds and shallows cold,
His black hair floated as the phantom told,
And like the very dream his glassy eye
Spoke of gone mortality.

XIV.

She stared and laugh'd aloud like one whose brain
Is shock'd o' the sudden : then she look'd again :
And then she wept. At last—but wherefore ask
How—tremblingly, she did her bloody task ?
She took the heart and wash'd it in the wave
And bore it home and plac'd it 'midst wild flowers,
Such as he lov'd to scent in happier hours,
And 'neath the basil-tree she scoop'd a grave,
And therein plac'd the heart, to common earth
Doom'd like a thing that own'd not human birth.

XV.

And the tree grew and grew, and brighter green
Shot from its boughs than she before had seen,

And softly with its leaves the west winds play'd :
And she did water it with her tears, and talk
As to a living spirit, and in the shade
Would place it gently when the sun did walk
High in his hot meridian, and she prest
The boughs (which fell like balm) upon her breast.
She never pluck'd a leaf, nor let a weed
Within the shadow of its branches feed,
But nurs'd it as a mother guards her child,
And kept it shelter'd from the ' winter wild :'
And so it grew beyond its fellows, and
Tower'd in unnatural beauty, waving there
And whispering to the moon and midnight air,
And stood a thing unequall'd in the land.

XVI.

But never more along her favourite vale,
Or by the village paths or hurrying river,
Or on the beach, when clouds are seen to sail
Across the setting sun, while waters quiver
And breezes rise to bid the day farewell—
No more in any bower she once lov'd well,
Whose sound or silence to the ear could tell
Aught of the passionate past, the pale girl trod :
Yet Love himself, like an invisible god,

Haunted each spot, and with his own rich breath
Fill'd the wide air with music sweet and soft,
Such as might calm or conquer Death, (if Death
Could e'er be conquer'd,) and from aloft
Sad airs, like those she heard in infancy,
Fell on her soul and fill'd her eyes with tears,
And recollections came of happier years
Thronging from all the cells of memory.
All her heart's follies she remember'd then,
How coy and rash—how scornful she had been,
And then how tender, and how coy again,
And every shifting of the burning scene
That sorrow stamps upon the helpless brain.

XVII.

Leoni—(for this tale had ne'er been told
By her who knew alone her brother's guilt,)
Leoni, timorous lest the blood he spilt
Should rise in vengeance from its secret hold,
And come abroad and claim a sepulchre ;
Or, haplier, fancying that the lie he swore
" That Guido sail'd and would return no more"
Was disbelievʼd and not forgot by her ;
Or that she had discover'd where he lay
Before his limbs had wither'd quite away,
Or—but whate'er it was that mov'd him then,

He dug and found the heart, unperished ;
For she, to keep it unlike the common dead,
Had wound it round with many a waxen line,
And bath'd it with a curious medicine :
He found it where, like a dark spell, it lay,
And curs'd and cast it to the waves away.

XVIII.

That day the green tree wither'd, and she knew
The solace of her mind was stol'n and gone :
And then she felt that she was quite alone
In the wide world ; so, to the distant woods
And cavern'd haunts, and where the mountain floods
Thunder unto the silent air, she flew.
She flew away, and left the world behind,
And all that man doth worship, in her flight ;
All that around the beating heart is twin'd ;
Yet, as she look'd farewell to human kind,
One quivering drop arose and dimm'd her sight,
The last that frenzy gave to poor distress.
And then into the dreary wilderness
She went alone, a craz'd heart-broken thing :
And in the solitude she found a cave
Half hidden by the wild-brier blossoming,
Whereby a black and solitary pine,
Struck by the fiery thunder, stood, and gave
Of power and death a token and a sign :

And there she liv'd for months : She did not heed
The seasons or their change, and she would feed
On roots and berries as the creatures fed
Which had in woods been bred and nourished.

XIX.

Once, and once only was she seen, and then
The chamois hunter started from his chace,
And stopp'd to look a moment on her face,
And could not turn him to his sports again.
Thin Famine sate upon her hollow cheek,
And settled Madness in her glazed eye
Told of a young heart wrong'd and nigh to break
And, as the spent winds waver ere they die,
She to herself a few wild words did speak,
And sung a strange and broken melody ;
And ever as she sung she strew'd the ground
With yellow leaves that perish'd ere their time,
And well their fluttering fall did seem to chime
With the low music of her song :—the sound
Came like a dirge filling the air around,
And this (or like) the melancholy rhyme.

1

There is a spirit stands by me :
It comes by night, it comes by day.

And when the glittering lightnings play,
Its look is pale and sad to see.
'Tis he to whom my brother gave
A red unconsecrated grave.

2

I hear him when the breezes moan,
And, when the rattling thunders talk,
I hear him muttering by me walk,
And tell me I am ' quite alone.'
It is the dæmon of the dead,
For all that 's good hath upwards fled.

3

It is the dæmon which the wave
Hath cast abroad to scare my soul ;
Yet wherefore did the waters roll
So idly o'er his hasty grave ?
Was the sad prayer I utter'd then
Unheard,—or is it due again ?

4

Is 't not enough that I am here,
Brainstruck and cold and famished,
A mean remove above the dead,—
But must my soul be wild with fear

As sorrow, now that hope is gone
And I am lost and left alone ?

5

They told me, when my days were young,
That I was fair and born to reign,
That hands and hearts were my domain,
And witchery dwelt upon my tongue :
And now—but what is this to me
Struck on the rock of memory ?

6

And yet at times I dream—aye yet,
Of vanish'd scenes and golden hours,
And music heard in orange bowers,
(For madness cannot *quite* forget)
And love, breath'd once to me alone,
In sighs, and many a melting tone.

7

Then curious thoughts, and floating things
Sav'd from the deluge of the brain,
Pass with perplexity and pain ;
Then darkness, deaths, and murderings,—
And then unto my den I hie,
And vainly, vainly pray to die.

XX.

At last she wander'd home. She came by night.
The pale moon shot a sad and troubled light
Amidst the mighty clouds that mov'd along.
The moaning winds of Autumn sang their song,
And shook the red leaves from the forest trees ;
And subterranean voices spoke. The seas
Did rise and fall, and then that fearful swell
Came silently which seamen know so well ;
And all was like an Omen. Isabel
Pass'd to the room where, in old times, she lay,
And there they found her at the break of day ;
Her look was smiling, but she never spoke
Or motion'd, even to say—her heart was broke :
Yet, in the quiet of her shining eye
Lay death, and something we are wont to deem
(When we discourse of some such mournful theme,)
Beyond the look of mere mortality.

XXI.

She died—yet scarcely can we call it Death
When Heaven so softly draws the parting breath—
She was translated to a finer sphere,
For what could match or make her happy here !
She died, and with her gentle death there came
Sorrow and ruin, and Leoni fell

A victim to that unconsuming flame,
That burns and revels on the heart of man ;
Remorse.—This the tale of Isabel,
And of her love the young Italian.

THE FALCON.

A DRAMATIC SKETCH.

" Frederigo, of the Alberighi family, loved a gentlewoman, and was not requited with like love again. But, by bountiful expenses, and over liberal invitations, he wasted all his lands and goods, having nothing left him but a Hawk or Faulcon. His unkind mistress happeneth to come to visit him, and he, not having any other food for her dinner, made a dainty dish of his Faulcon for her to feed on. Being conquered by this exceeding kind courtesie, she changed her former hatred towards him, accepting him as her husband in marriage, and made him a man of wealthy possessions."

Boccaccio. (Old translation.) Fifth day: novel 9.

THE FALCON.

Scene I. *Outside of a cottage.—Sunset.*

Frederigo *alone.*

Oh ! Poverty. And have I learnt at last
Thy bitter lesson ? Thou forbidding thing
That hath such sway upon this goodly earth,
Stern foe to comfort, sleep's disquieter,
What have I done that thou should'st press me thus ?
Let me not say how I did bear me in
Prosperity ; much of the good we do
Lies in its secret—but away with this,
For here are skiey themes to dwell upon.
—Now do I feel my spirit hath not quite
Sunk with my fortunes.—'Tis the set of sun,
How like a hero who hath run his course
In glory doth he die. His parting smile
Hath somewhat holy in it, and doth stir
Regret, but soft and unallied to pain,

To see him quietly sink and sink away,
Until on yonder western mountain's top
Lingering he rests at last, and leaves a look
More beautiful than e'er he shed before :
A parting present, felt by all that lov'd
And flourish'd in his warm creative smile.
Nor unattended does he quit the world,
For there's a stillness in this golden hour
Observable by all ; the birds that trill'd
And shook their ruffled plumes for joy to see
His coming in the morning, sing no more :
Or if a solitary note be heard,
Or the deep lowing of the distant beast,
'Tis but to mark the silence. Like to this,
In the great city the cathedral clock
Lifting its iron tongue, doth seem to stay
Time for a moment, while it calls aloud
To student's or to sick man's watchful ear,
" Now goes the midnight." Then, I love to walk,
And, hearkning to the Church memorial, deem
That sometimes it may sound a different tale,
And upwards to the stars and mighty moon
Send hollow tidings from this dreaming world,
Proclaiming all below as calm as they.
The sunlight changes, and the tints are now
Darken'd to purple. Ha ! a step : who's there ?
A lady—O Giana !

GIANA *and her Maid enter.*

Gia. Yes, sir : you
Have cause to be surpris'd.
Fred. Not so, dear lady ;
Honour'd I own, that my poor dwelling should
Receive so fair a guest.
Gia. You do forget
Past times.
Fred. No, madam, no ; those times still live
Like blossomings of the memory, kept apart
For holier hours, and shelter'd from the gaze
Of rude uncivil strangers ; and—and they
Are now my only comfort ; so lest they
Should fade, I use 'em gently, very gently,
And water 'em all with tears.
Gia. Your poverty
Has made you gloomy, Signior Frederigo.
Fred. Pardon me, madam : 'twas not well, indeed,
To meet a guest like you with sorrow : you
Were born for happiness.
Gia. Alas ! I fear not.
Fred. Oh ! yes, yes : and you well become it, well.
May grief ne'er trouble you, nor heavier hours
Weigh on so light a heart.
Gia. You well reprove me :
Light means unfeeling.

Fred. Yet I meant not so,
Giana ! let me perish by your hate
If ever I reproach you : what am I,
Struck by misfortune, and the chilling touch
Of Poverty, an outcast from my fortunes
Lavish'd and lost by folly—

Gia. 'Twas for me.

Fred. Oh ! no, no : I had many faults whereof
The burthen rests with me : then what am I,
That I should dare reproach you ? think no more on 't :
Know me your truest servant, only that,
And bound to live and die for you.

Gia. No more,
But let's enjoy the present.

Maid. My lady, sir,
Is come to feast with you.

Gia. 'Tis even so.

Fred. I am too honour'd : can you then put up
With my, (so poor a) welcoming ? If the heart
Indeed could lavish entertainment, I
Would feast you like a queen : but as it is,
You will interpret kindly ?

Gia. Oh ! I come
To grace a bachelor's table ; that is never
Stor'd but with common viands. Now we'll go,
And rest us in your orchard, Signior :

The evening breezes must be pleasant there ;
So, for an hour, farewell.

Fred. Farewell, dear Madam :
I hope you'll find there some—ah ! 'ware the step.

Gia. 'Tis but an awkward entrance, Sir, indeed.

Fred. You'll find some books in the arbor, on the shelf,
Half hid by wandering honeysuckle : they
Are books of poetry. If I remember
You lov'd such stories once, thinking they brought
Man to a true and fine humanity,
Though silly folks are wont to jeer them, now.

Gia. You 've a good memory Signior, that must be—
Stay, let me count : aye, some six years ago.

Fred. About the time.

Gia. You were thought heir, by many,
Then, to the Count Filippo : you displeas'd him :
How was 't ?

Fred. Oh ! some mere trifle : I forget.

Gia. Nay, tell me ; for some said you were ungrateful.

Fred. I could not marry to his wish.

Gia. Was it so ?

Fred. Thus simply : nothing more, believe it.

Gia. I knew not this before. Adieu ! [*Exit.*

Fred. She comes to dine—to dine with me, who am
A beggar. Now, what shall I do to give
My Idol entertainment ? not a coin :
Not one, by Heav'n ! and not a friend to lend

The veriest trifle to a wretch like me.
And she's descended from her pride too—no ;
No, no, she had no pride.—Now if I give
Excusings, she will think I'm poor indeed,
And say misfortune starv'd the spirit hence
Of an Italian gentleman. No more :
She must be feasted. Ha ! no, no, no, no,
Not that way : Any way but that. Bianca !

Enter Bianca.

This Lady comes to feast.
Bia. On what, Sir ? There
Is scarce a morsel : fruits perhaps—
Fred. Then I
Must take my gun and stop a meal i' the air :
Bia. Impossible : there is no time. Old Mars, you know,
Frights every bird away.
Fred. Ah ! villain.
Shall die for 't. Bring him hither.
Bian. Sir !
The Falcon ?
Fred. Aye, that murderous kite. How oft
Hath he slain innocent birds : now he shall die.
'Tis fit he should, if 'twere but in requital :
And he for once shall do me service—Once !
Hath he not done it oft ? no matter : Now

I'll wring his cruel head, and feast my queen
Worthily.

Bia. He is here, Sir.

Fred. Where? vile bird,
There—I'll not look at him.

Bia. Alas! he 's dead:
Look, look! ah! how he shivers.

Fred. Fool! Begone.
Fool! am not I a fool—a selfish slave?
I am, I am. One look: ah! there he lies
By heav'n, he looks reproachingly; and yet
I lov'd thee, poor bird, when I slew thee. Hence.

[*Exit* Bianca.

Mars! my brave bird, and have I kill'd thee, then,
Who was the truest servant—fed me, lov'd,
When all the world had left me?—Never more
Shall thou and I in mimic battle play,
Nor thou pretend to die, (to die, alas!)
And with thy quaint and frolic tricks delight
Thy master in his solitude. No more,
No more, old Mars! (thou wast the god of birds)
Shalt thou rise fiercely on thy plumed wing,
And hunt the air for plunder: thou could'st ride,
None better, on the fierce and mountain winds
When birds of lesser courage droop'd. I've seen
Thee scare the wandering eagle on his way,
(For all the wild tribes of these circling woods

Knew thee and shunn'd thy beak,) and through the air
Float like a hovering tempest fear'd by all.
Have I not known thee bring the wild swan down
For me, thy cruel master: aye, and stop
The screaming vulture in the middle air,
And mar his scarlet plumage—all for me,
Who kill'd thee—*murder'd* thee poor bird; for thou
Wast worthy of humanity, and I
Feel with these shaking hands, as I had done
A crime against my race.

Scene II. *A Room.*

Frederigo. Giana.

Gia. You think it strange that I should visit you?
Fred. No, madam, no.
Gia. You must: ev'n I myself
(Yet I've a cause) must own the visit strange.
Fred. I am most grateful for it.
Gia. Hear me, first.
What think you brought me hither? I've a suit
That presses and I look to you to grant it.
Fred. 'Tis but to name it, for you may command
My fullest service. Oh! but you know this:
You injure when you doubt me.

Gia. That I think:
So to my errand. Gentle Signior, listen.
I have a child: no mother ever lov'd
A son so much: but that you know him, I
Would say how fair he was, how delicate:
But oh! I need not tell his sweet ways to you:
You know him, Signior, and your heart would grieve,
I feel 't, if you should see the poor child die,
And now he 's very ill,—If you could hear
How he asks after you, and says he loves you
Next to his mother, Signior—
Fred. Stay your tears.
Can I do aught to soothe your pretty boy?
I love him as my own.
Gia. Sir?
Fred. I forget.
And yet I love him lady: does that ask
Forgiveness? Is my love—
Gia. Now you mistake me,
I thank you for your love.
Fred. Giana! How!
Gia. To my poor child: he pines and wastes away.
There is but one thing in the world he sighs for,
And that—I cannot name it.
Fred. Is it mine?

Gia. It is, it is : I shame to ask it, but
What can a mother do ?
Fred. 'Tis your's Giana :
Aye, though it be my head.
Gia. It is—the falcon.
Ah : pardon me : I see how dear the bird
Is to you, and I know how little I
Have right to ask it. Pardon me.
Fred. Alas !
I do, from—from my soul.
Gia. I feel my folly.
You shall not part with your poor faithful friend.
No more of it : I was cruel to request it.
Signior, I will not take it, for the world.
I will not rob you, Sir.
Fred. Oh ! that you could :
Poor Mars ! Your child, Madam, will grieve to hear
His poor old friend is dead.
Gia. Impossible.
I saw it as I entered.
Fred. It is dead.
Be satisfied dear madam that I say it :
The bird is dead.
Gia. Nay this is not like you.
I do not need excuses.

Fred. Gracious lady,
Believe me not so poor : the bird is dead.
Nay then, you doubt me still, I see. Then listen.
Madam, you came to visit me—to feast :
It was my barest hour of poverty.
I had not one poor coin to purchase food.
Could I for shame confess this unto you ?
I saw the descending beauty whom I lov'd
Honouring my threshold with her step, and deign
To smile on one whom all the world abandon'd.
Once I had been her lover, how sincere
Let me not say—my name was high and princely :
My nature had not quite forgot its habits :
I lov'd you still : I felt it—*Could* I stoop
And say how low and abject was my fortune,
And send you fasting home ? Your servant would
Have scorn'd me. Lady, even then I swore
That I would feast you daintily ; I did.
My noble Mars, thou wast a glorious dish
Which Juno might have tasted.

Gia. What is this ?

Fred. We feasted on that matchless bird, to which
The fabulous Phœnix would have bow'd. Brave bird !
He has redeem'd my credit.

Gia. *(After a pause.)*—You have done
A princely thing, Frederigo. If I e'er

Forget it may I not know happiness.
Signior, you have a noble delicate mind,
And such as in an hour of pain or peril
Methinks I could repose on.

Fred. Oh! Giana!

Gia. I have a child who loves you; for his mother,
You've work'd a way into her inmost heart.
Can she requite you?

Fred. How! what mean you? oh!
Giana, sweet Giana, do not raise
My wretched heart so high, too high, lest it
Break on its falling.

Gia. But it shall not fall,
If I can prop it, or my hand requite
Your long and often tried fidelity.
I come, Frederigo, not as young girls do,
To blush and prettily affect to doubt
The heart I know to be my own. I feel
That you have lov'd me well. Forgive me now,
That circumstance, which some day I'll make known,
Kept me aloof so long. My nature is
Not hard, although it might seem thus to you.

Fred. What can I say?

Gia. Nothing. I read your heart.

Fred. It bursts, my love: but 'tis with joy, with joy,
Giana! *my* Giana! we will have

Nothing but halcyon days : Oh ! we will live
As happily as the bees that hive their sweets,
And gaily as the summer fly, but wiser :
I'll be thy servant ever ; yet not so.
Oh ! my own love, divinest, best, I'll be
Thy sun of life, faithful through every season,
And thou shalt be my flower perennial,
My bud of beauty, my imperial rose,
My passion flower, and I will wear thee on
My heart, and thou shalt never, never fade.
I'll love thee mightily, my queen, and in
The sultry hours I'll sing thee to thy rest
With music sweeter than the wild birds' song :
And I will swear thine eyes are like the stars,
(They are, they are, but softer,) and thy shape
Fine as the vaunted nymphs, who, poets feign'd
Dwelt long ago in woods of Arcady.
My gentle deity ! I'll crown thee with
The whitest lilies, and then bow me down,
Love's own idolater, and worship thee.
And thou *wilt* then be mine ? my love, love !
How fondly will we pass our lives together ;
And wander, heart-link'd, through the busy world
Like birds in eastern story.

Gia. Oh ! you rave.

Fred. I'll be a miser of thee : watch thee ever ;
At morn, at noon, at eve, and all the night.
We will have clocks that with their silver chime
Shall measure out the moments : and I'll mark
The time, and keep love's pleasant calendar.
To-day I'll note a smile : to-morrow how
Your bright eyes spoke—how saucily ; and then
Record a kiss pluck'd from your currant lip,
And say how long 'twas taking : then, thy voice
As rich as stringed harp swept by the winds
In Autumn, gentle as the touch that falls
On serenader's moonlit instrument—
Nothing shall pass unheeded. Thou shalt be
My household goddess—nay smile not, nor shake
Backwards thy clustering curls, incredulous :
I swear it shall be so : it shall, my love.

Gia. Why, now thou 'rt mad indeed : mad.

Fred. Oh ! not so.
There was a statuary once who lov'd
And worshipp'd the white marble that he shap'd ;
Till, as the story goes, the Cyprus' queen,
Or some such fine kind-hearted deity,
Touch'd the pale stone with life, and it became
At last, Pygmalion's bride ; but thee—on whom
Nature had lavish'd all her wealth before,
Now love has touch'd with beauty : doubly fit

For human worship thou, thou—let me pause.
My breath is gone.

Gia. With talking.

Fred. With delight.
But I may worship thee in silence, still.

Gia. The evening's dark ; now I must go : farewell
Until to-morrow.

Fred. Oh ! not yet, not yet.
Behold ! the moon is up, the bright-eyed moon.
And seems to shed her soft delicious light
On lovers re-united. Why, she smiles
And bids you tarry : will you disobey
The lady of the sky ? beware.

Gia. Farewell.
Nay, nay, I must go.

Fred. We will go together.

Gia. It must not be to-night : my servants wait
My coming at the fisher's cottage.

Fred. Yet,
A few more words, and then I'll part with thee,
For one long night : to-morrow bid me come
(Thou hast already with thine eyes) and bring
My load of love and lay it at thy feet.
—Oh ! ever while those floating orbs look bright,
Shalt thou to me be a sweet guiding light.
Once, the Chaldean from his topmost tower

Did watch the stars, and then assert their power
Throughout the world : so, dear Giana, I
Will vindicate my own idolatry.
And in the beauty and the spell that lies
In the dark azure of thy love-lit eyes ;
In the clear veins that wind thy neck beside,
'Till in the white depths of thy breast they hide,
And in thy polish'd forehead, and thy hair
Heap'd in thick tresses on thy shoulders fair ;
In thy calm dignity ; thy modest sense ;
In thy most soft and winning eloquence ;
In woman's gentleness and love (now bent
On me, so poor,) shall lie my argument.

A VISION.

The night was gloomy. Through the skies of June
Roll'd the eternal moon,
'Midst dark and heavy clouds, that bore
A shadowy likeness to those fabled things
That sprung of old from man's imaginings.
Each seem'd a fierce reality : some wore
The forms of sphinx and hippogriff, or seem'd
Nourish'd among the wonders of the deep,
And wilder than the poet ever dream'd :
And there were cars—steeds with their proud necks bent,
Tower, and temple, and broken continent :
And all, as upon a sea,
In the blue ether floated silently.
I lay upon my bed, and sank to sleep :
And then I fancied that I rode upon
The waters, and had power to call
Up people who had liv'd in ages gone,
And scenes and stories half forgot, and all

That on my young imagination
Had come like fairy visions, and departed.
And ever by me a broad current pass'd
Slowly, from which at times upstarted
Dim scenes and ill-defined shapes. At last
I bade the billows render up their dead,
And all their wild inhabitants ; and I
Summon'd the spirits who perished,
Or took their stations in the starry sky,
When Jove himself bow'd his Saturnian head
Before the One Divinity.

First, I saw the landscape fair
Towering in the clear blue air,
Like Ida's woody summits and sweet fields,
Where all that Nature yields
Flourishes. Three proud shapes were seen,
Standing upon the green
Like Olympian queens descended.
One was unadorn'd, and one
Wore her golden tresses bound
With simple flowers ; the third was crown'd,
And from amidst her raven hair,
Like stars, imperial jewels shone.
—— Not one of those figures divine
But might have sate in Juno's chair,

And smil'd in great equality
On Jove, though the blue skies were shaken ;
Or, with superior aspect, taken
From Hebe's hand, nectarean wine.
And that Dardanian boy was there
Whom pale Ænone lov'd : his hair
Was black, and curl'd his temples 'round ;
His limbs were free and his forehead fair,
And as he stood on a rising ground,
And back his dark locks proudly toss'd,
A shepherd youth he look'd, but trod
On the green sward like a god ;
Most like Apollo when he play'd
('Fore Midas,) in the Phrygian shade,
With Pan, and to the Sylvan lost.

And now from out the watery floor
A city rose, and well she wore
Her beauty, and stupendous walls,
And towers that touch'd the stars, and halls
Pillar'd with whitest marble, whence
Palace on lofty palace sprung ;
And over all rich gardens hung,
Where, amongst silver waterfalls,
Cedars and spice-trees and green bowers,
And sweet winds playing with all the flowers

Of Persia and of Araby,
Walk'd princely shapes : some with an air
Like warriors, some like ladies fair
Listening, and, amidst all, the king
Nebuchadnezzar rioting
In supreme magnificence.
—— This was famous Babylon.

That glorious vision passed on,
And then I heard the laurel branches sigh,
That still grow where the bright-ey'd muses walk'd :
And Pelion shook his piny locks, and talk'd
Mournfully to the fields of Thessaly.
And there I saw, piercing the deep blue sky,
And radiant with his diadem of snow,
Crowned Olympus : and the hills below
Look'd like inferior spirits tending round
His pure supremacy ; and a sound
Went rolling onwards through the sunny calm,
As if immortal voices then had spoken,
And, with rich noises, broken
The silence which that holy place had bred.
I knelt—and as I knelt, haply in token
Of thanks, there fell a honey'd shower of balm ;
And the imperial mountain bow'd his hoary head.

And then came one who on the Nubian sands
Perish'd for love, and with him the wanton queen
Egyptian, in her state was seen :
And how she smil'd and kiss'd his willing hands,
And said she would not love, and swore to die,
And laugh'd upon the Roman Antony.
Oh, matchless Cleopatra ! never since
Has one, and never more
Shall one like thee tread on the Egypt shore,
Or lavish such royal magnificence :
Never shall one laugh, love, or die like thee
Or own so sweet a witchery :
And, brave Mark Antony, that thou couldst give
Half the wide world to live
With that enchantress, did become thee well ;
For Love is wiser than Ambition.——
Queen and thou, lofty triumvir, fare ye well.

And then I heard the sullen waters roar,
And saw them cast their surf upon the strand,
And then rebounding toward some far-seen land,
They wash'd and wash'd its melancholy shore :
And the terrific spirits, bred
In the sea-caverns, mov'd by those fierce jars,
Rose up, like giants from their watery bed,
And shook their silver hair against the stars.

Then, bursts like thunder—joyous outcries wild—
Sounds as from trumpets, and from drums,
And music, like the lulling noise that comes
From nurses when they hush their charge to sleep,
Came in confusion from the deep.
Methought one told me that a child
Was that night unto the great Neptune born ;
And then old Triton blew his curled horn,
And the Leviathan lash'd the foaming seas,
And the wanton Nereides
Came up like phantoms from their coral halls,
And laugh'd and sung like tipsy Bacchanals,
Till all the fury of the Ocean broke
Upon my ear.———I trembled and awoke.

THE LAST SONG.

Must it be ?—then farewell,
Thou whom my woman's heart cherish'd so long :
Farewell, and be this song
The last, wherein I say "I lov'd thee well."

Many a weary strain
(Never yet heard by thee) hath this poor breath
Utter'd, of Love and Death,
And maiden grief, hidden and chid in vain.

Oh ! if in after years
The tale that I am dead shall touch thy heart,
Bid not the pain depart ;
But shed, over my grave, a few sad tears.

Think of me—still so young,
Silent, though fond, who cast my life away,
Daring to disobey
The passionate spirit that around me clung.

Farewell again ; and yet,
Must it indeed be so—and on this shore
Shall you and I no more
Together see the sun of summer set ?

For me, my days are gone :
No more shall I, in vintage times, prepare
Chaplets to bind my hair,
As I was wont : oh 'twas for you alone.

But on my bier I'll lay
Me down in frozen beauty, pale and wan,
Martyr of love to man,
And, like a broken flower, gently decay.

THE BROKEN HEART.

A DRAMATIC SKETCH.

This sketch is founded upon a tale of Boccaccio. The story is this:—Jeronymo was sent from Italy to Paris in order to complete his studies. He was detained there two years, his mother being fearful lest he should marry a poor and beautiful girl, (Sylvestra,) with whom he had been brought up from his infancy. During his absence, his mother contrived to have Sylvestra married He returned, and, after wandering about her dwelling, succeeded in getting into her chamber, conversed with her (her husband being asleep,) and, at last, died on the bed before her.

THE BROKEN HEART.

Scene I.—*A Room.*

Jeronymo. His Mother.

Moth. Pr'ythee, take comfort, child; why, how you look—
Speak, dear Jeronymo!
Jeron. *You* have done this?
Mother. 'Twas for your good.
Jeron. Oh! mother, mother; you
Have broke the fondest heart in Italy.
My good—what's that? Is 't good that I shall die?
Is 't good that I shall pine, and waste away,
And shrink within my natural compass, and
In melancholy idlesse, haunt the nest
Where my white dove lies guarded—
Mother. Patience—nay—
Jeron. Until I die, good mother? I *shall* die
(Mark me, and think my words a prophesy,)
Before you, day by day.—My head feels light:
But then my heart 's gone, so it matters not.

Sylvestra, sweet Sylvestra !

Mother. Name her not.

Oh she 's the cause of all our sorrow—all.
You must not think of her now.

Jeron. No ? not now ?

Mother. No ; for she 's married.

Jeron. Ha, ha, ha ! good mother.
Shame ! at your time to jest.

Mother. I told you this
Before ; she 's married—*married.*

Jeron. Pshaw ! I know it :
Am I not——broken-hearted ?

Mother. Oh ! sweet heavens !
Jeronymo !

Jeron. Well.

Mother. Why do you talk thus ?
So strangely, dear, to me ? my own boy—think
On me, sweet.

Jeron. Surely : for you thought of me,
Even in absence : therefore I'll be grateful,
And do you a good turn, mother, pray believe 't ;
I'll make you heir of all my father's lands,
Chattels, and gold, and floating argosies,
With not a widow or child to share 'em with you :
Here's gratitude. I'll swear 't : By noisy Jove,
Red Mars and bearded Saturn—

Mother. Pr'ythee cease.

Jeron. Oh! you're grown modest since my father died,
And will not court the gods. By Venus then,
(You 'll like her, for she—cheated all the world,)
Or Juno, radiant Juno: she took note
Of great Jove's pranks, when absent; and you know,
Strangled the innocent passion love, at times,
And marr'd poor damsels' happiness—as you did:
By——

Mother. Do not talk thus. Oh! if not for me,
For your dear father's sake, Jeronymo,
Spare me.

Jeron. My father? out, alas! he 's dead.

Mother. He temper'd the warm feelings of his heart
(Which else, perhaps, had led to strife or ruin)
By draughts of that divine philosophy——

Jeron. Aye, that's the drink I love. At Paris, madam.
There we had flasks of it; cork'd as tight as though
It were a conjuror's secret, and I drank,
And drank and drank, the livelong day and night,
And chew'd the bitter laurel for my food,
Whose roots are water'd, as the poets tell,
By the immortal wells of Castaly.
I wish'd for Ambrosia, but the gods are grown
Economists, and hoard it for the good
And great in after times.

Mother. Alas, alas !

Jeron. Why that looks well.

Mother. What ?

Jeron. Oh ! to see you weep,
Although your husband died so long ago.

Mother. I do not weep for him.

Jeron. Not weep for him ?
Then shame seal up your mouth. Was he not kind
And good ? you told me so : and yet you weep not :
Weep you for widowhood ? Oh ! you may gain
Another husband yet.

Mother. I do not wish it.
I cannot match the last.

Jeron. You cannot, madam.
No, though you gaze when Hesper comes, until
The last star sinks below the western heavens,
You cannot match him. Oh ! he was a man :
How few there are such ! and how he did joy
To mark his look in my poor sickly face,
And lov'd and did caress me as I had been
Fair as the god Apollo ; but he died :
And how he fear'd, (do you remember that ?)
Lest I should sink, and leave no name behind me ;
No child who might inherit, and transmit
Our noble name to far posterity :
Do you remember this, good mother ? I

Am the last scion of a gracious tree,
And you—aye, *you* have struck me to the root,
And wither'd all my branches. Now farewell.
Sylvestra !—Mighty mother, you have broke
Your wand at last.

Mother. Farewell, farewell.

Jeron. Farewell.
Yet stay—Ah ! mother, bless you. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II.—*Sylvestra's Chamber.*

Jeronymo. Sylvestra.

Jeron. So, all is hush'd at last. Hist ! there she lies,
Who should have been my own : Sylvestra ! No ;
She sleeps ; and from her parted lips there comes
A fragrance such as April mornings draw
From the awakening flowers. There lies her arm,
Stretch'd out like marble on the quilted lid,
And motionless. What if she lives not ?——Oh !
How beautiful she is ! How far beyond
Those bright creations, which the fabling Greeks
Plac'd on their white Olympus. That great queen,
Before whose eye Jove's starry armies shrank
To darkness, and the wide and billowy seas
Grew tranquil, was a spotted leper to her ;

And never in such pure divinity
Could sway the wanton blood, as she did—Hark !
She murmurs like a cradled child. How soft 'tis.
Sylvestra !

Sylv. Ha ! who's there ?

Jeron. 'Tis I.

Sylv. Who is it ?

Jeron. Must I then speak, and tell my name to you ?
Sylvestra, fair Sylvestra ! know me now :
Not now ? and is my very voice so chang'd
By wretchedness, that you—*you* know me not ?
Alas !

Sylv. Begone. I'll wake my husband, if
You tread a step. Begone.

Jeron. Jeronymo.

Sylv. Ha ! speak.

Jeron. Jeronymo.

Sylv. Oh !

Jeron. Hide your eyes :
Aye, hide them, married woman—lest you see
This wreck of him that lov'd you.

Sylv. Not *me*.

Jeron. Yes.
Lov'd you like life ; like heaven and happiness :
Lov'd you, and kept your name against his heart
(Ill boding amulet) 'till death.

Sylv. Alas !

Jeron. And now I come to bring your wandering thoughts
Back to their innocent home. Thus, as 'tis said,
Do spirits quit their leaden urns, to tempt
Wretches from sin. Some have been seen o' nights
To stand and point their rattling finger at
The red moon as it rose ; (perhaps to turn
Man's thoughts on high.) Some their lean arms have stretch'd
'Tween murderers and their victims : some have laugh'd
Ghastly, upon—the bed of wantonness,
And touch'd the limbs with death.

Sylv. You will not harm me ?

Jeron. Why should I not ?—No, no, poor girl ! I come not
To mar your delicate limbs with outrage. I
Have lov'd too well for that. Had you but lov'd—

Sylv. I did, I did.

Jeron. Away—my brain is well,
(Though late 'twas hot ;) You lov'd ? Away, away ;
This to a dying man ?

Sylv. Oh ! you will live
Long, aye, and happily : will wed perhaps—

Jeron. Nay, pr'ythee cease, Sylvestra ! you and I
Were children here some few short springs ago,
And lov'd like children : I the elder ; you
The loveliest girl that ever tied her hair
Across a sunny brow of Italy.
I still remember how your delicate foot

Tripp'd on the lawn at vintage times, and how,
When others ask'd you, you would only give
Your hand to me.

Sylv. Alas! Jeronymo.

Jeron. Aye, that's the name : you had forgot.

Sylv. Oh! no.

Can I forget the many hours we've spent,
When care had scarce begun to trouble us ?
How we were wont, on Autumn nights, to stray,
Counting the clouds that pass'd across the moon—

Jeron. Go on.

Sylv. And figuring many a shape grotesque ;
Camels and caravans, and mighty beasts,
Hot prancing steeds, and warriors plum'd and helm'd,
All in the blue sky floating.

Jeron. What is this ?

Sylv. I thought you lik'd to hear of it.

Jeron. I do.

Sylv. Then wherefore look so sadly ?

Jeron. Fair Sylvestra,
Can I do aught to comfort you ?

Sylv. Away,
You do forget yourself.

Jeron. Not so. Can I
Do aught to serve you ? Speak ! my time is short,
For death has touch'd me.

Sylv. Now you're jesting.

Jeron. Girl !

Now, I am—dying. Oh ! I feel my blood
Ebb slowly ; and before the morning sun
Visits your chamber through those trailing vines,
I shall lie here, here in your chamber, dead,
Dead, dead, dead, dead : Nay, shrink not.

Sylv. Pr'ythee go.
You fright me.

Jeron. Yet I'd not do so, Sylvestra :
I will but tell you, you have us'd me harshly,
(That is not much,) and die : nay, fear me not.
I would not chill, with this decaying touch,
That bosom where the blue veins wander 'round,
As if enamour'd and loth to leave their homes
Of beauty : nor should this thy white cheek fade
From fear at me, a poor heart-broken wretch :
Look at me. Why, the winds sing through my bones.
And children jeer me, and the boughs that wave
And whisper loosely in the summer air,
Shake their green leaves in mockery, as to say
" These are the longer livers."

Sylv. How is this ?

Jeron. I've numbered eighteen summers. Much may lie
In that short compass : but *my* days have been
Not happy. Death was busy with our house

Early, and nipp'd the comforts of my home,
And sickness pal'd my cheek, and fancies (like
Bright but delusive stars) came wandering by me.
There's one you know of : that—no matter—that
Drew me from out my way, (a perilous guide)
And left me sinking. I had gay hopes too,
What needs the mention,—they are vanished.

Sylv. I—

I thought,—(speak softly, for my husband sleeps,)
I thought, when you did stay abroad so long,
And never sent nor ask'd of me or mine,
You'd quite forgotten Italy.

Jeron. Speak again.
Was 't so indeed ?

Sylv. Indeed, indeed.

Jeron. Then be it.
Yet, what had I done Fortune, that she could
Abandon me so entirely ? Never mind't :
Have a good heart, Sylvestra : they who hate
Can kill us, but no more, that's comfort. Oh !
The journey is but short, and we can reckon
On slumbering sweetly with the freshest earth
Sprinkled about us. There no storms can shake
Our secure tenement ; nor need we fear,
Though cruelty be busy with our fortunes,
Or scandal with our names.

Sylv. Alas ! alas !

Jeron. Sweet ! in the land to come we'll feed on flowers.
Droop not, my beautiful child. Oh ! we will love
Then without fear ; no mothers there ; no gold,
Nor hate, nor paltry perfidy, none, none ;
We have been doubly cheated. Who'll believe
A mother could do this ? but let it pass :
Anger suits not the grave. Oh ! my own love,
Too late I see thy gentle constancy :
I wrote, and wrote, but never heard ; at last,
Quitting that place of pleasure, home I came
And found you married : Then—

Sylv. Alas !

Jeron. Then I
Grew moody, and at times I fear my brain
Was fever'd ; but I could not die, Sylvestra,
And bid you no farewell.

Sylv. Jeronymo !
Break not my heart thus : they—they did deceive me.
They told me that the girls of France were fair,
And you had scorn'd your poor and childish love ;
Threaten'd, and vow'd, cajol'd, and then—I married.

Jeron. Oh !

Sylv. What 's the matter ?

Jeron. Soft ! The night wind sounds
A funeral dirge for me, sweet. Let me lie

Upon thy breast ; I will not chill't my love.
It is a shrine where Innocence might die :
Nay, let me lie there once ; for once Sylvestra.
Sylv. Pity me !
Jeron. So I do.
Sylv. Then talk not thus :
Though but a jest it makes me tremble.
Jeron. Jest ?
Look in my eye, and mark how true the tale
I've told you : On its glassy surface lies
Death, my Sylvestra. It is Nature's last
And beautiful effort to bequeath a fire
To that bright ball on which the spirit sate
Through life ; and look'd out, in its various moods,
Of gentleness and joy and love and hope,
And gain'd this frail flesh credit in the world.
It is the channel of the soul : it's glance
Draws and reveals that subtle power, that doth
Redeem us from our gross mortality.
Sylv. Why, now you're cheerful.
Jeron. Yes ; 'tis thus I'd die
Sylv. Now *I* must smile.
Jeron. Do so, and I'll smile too.
I do ; albeit—Ah ! now my parting words
Lie heavy on my tongue ; my lips obey not,
And—speech—comes difficult from me. While I can,
Farewell. Sylvestra ! where's your hand ?

Sylv. Ah ! cold.

Jeron. 'Tis so : but scorn it not, my own poor girl.
They've us'd us hardly : bless 'em though. Thou wilt
Forgive them, One's a mother, and may feel,
When that she knows me dead. Some air—more air ;
Where are you ?—I am blind—my hands are numb'd,
This is a wintry night.—So,—cover me. [*Dies.*

SONNET.

Perhaps the lady of my love is now
Looking upon the skies. A single star
Is rising in the east, and from afar
Sheds a most tremulous lustre : silent night
Doth wear it like a jewel on her brow :
But see, it motions, with its lovely light,
Onwards and onwards through those depths of blue,
To its appointed course stedfast and true,
So, dearest, would I fain be unto thee,
Stedfast for ever,—like yon planet fair ;
And yet more like art thou a jewel rare.
Oh ! brighter than the brightest star, to me,
Come hither, my young love ; and I will wear
Thy beauty on my breast delightedly.

PROPOSALS

FOR

PUBLISHING A WORK

TO BE ENTITLED,

SPIRIT OF CONTEMPORARY POET

THE object of this publication, is, to collect, in a series of n choice specimens from that class of British Poetry, the intrinsic which is enhanced by the present impossibility of obtaining it on the Atlantic. The eagerness with which the American public *lie* for the emanations of the English press is proverbial; yet our n other country's eminent poets are known to us by little e their names. Their writings have been like jewels of extra rarity,—all know their scarcity and worth from report, whi favoured few can appreciate their value from actual obs Coleridge, for thirty years placed by common consent apart host of writers who have appeared and fluttered away their ephemeral existence during that time has been presented only one ordinary edition of his Christabelle. The names of Barry Cornwall, Keats, Shelley,——the distinguished friend of Byron,— Croly, Bowles, Lamb, Henry Neele, and of other gifted spirits of the same rank, are equally familiar on our lips, and their literary efforts equally unknown. It is not in the expectation of retrieving the labour of such men from oblivion that this Prospectus is issued, for they have stamped their seal of remembrance on the hearts of their countrymen, and breathed their music in strains too sweet to be forgotten; but, in the hope of familiarizing our community with productions worthy to be cherished among our memories of the bright and blessed things of existence.

The proposed work will embrace a collection of genuine poetry from the writings of the authors above named, and probably from those of several others not included in that enumeration. Each number will consist of from thirty to forty-eight octavo pages, of elegant letter-press printing, a specimen of which will accompany this Prospectus.

The price to subscribers will be fifty cents for each number, payable on delivery.

If sufficient encouragement should be received the publication will be continued once in *two months.*

The second number will contain Coleridge's "**Rime of The Ancient Mariner.**"