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THE AGONY OF MURDER
AND
THE CONVICT'S RETURN.

EDITED BY
THE REV^d JOHN DAVIS
ORDINARY OF NEWGATE.

3/6

1st Edition

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THE
AGONY OF MURDER:

WRITTEN BY A

PRISONER DESCRIBING HIS FEELINGS

WHEN

UNDER SENTENCE OF DEATH,

AND IN MOST IMMINENT DANGER OF EXECUTION.

EDITED BY THE

REV^D JOHN DAVIS,

ORDINARY OF NEWGATE.

Should any profit arise from the sale of this Volume, it will be expended for the benefit of the Children so frequently mentioned in it.

London:

I. R. TAYLOR, 13, BROWNLOW STREET, BEDFORD ROW.

1859.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE
DAVID WILLIAMS WIRE,

Lord Mayor of the City of London;

THE LONG TRIED, HUMANE,
AND CONSISTENT FRIEND OF MISGUIDED
OFFENDERS; NO LESS READY AT ALL TIMES TO
ADVISE THEM FOR THEIR GOOD THAN TO HELP THEM IN THEIR
NECESSITIES—THIS SMALL VOLUME SO FORCIBLY
DEPICTING SOME OF THEIR MOST ACUTE
MISERIES IS RESPECTFULLY
DEDICATED

BY HIS LORDSHIP'S

Faithful Servant,

JOHN DAVIS.

October, 1859.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE

DAVID WILLIAMS WILKES

Lord Bishop of the City of London

THE LORD BISHOP OF LONDON

AND DEARLY BELIEVED BY HIS LORDSHIP

DEAR SIR, I AM PLEASED TO HEAR BY ALL THIS

THAT YOU ARE WELL AND THAT YOU ARE IN THE

POSSESSION OF YOUR HEALTH AND SPIRITS

AS USUAL AND THAT YOU ARE IN THE

POSSESSION OF YOUR PROPERTY

AS USUAL

MY DEAR SIR

I AM, SIR,

YOUR OBLIGED

DAVID WILLIAMS WILKES

1771

P R E F A C E.

THESE remarkable verses have been in my possession about two years. The feelings they express are quite natural, and there is a solemnity and serious train of thought in them that is likely to be useful to others. In the hope of doing something to impart right sentiments on these dreadful subjects, the lines are promulgated to the world. They have been seen by competent judges, and there is nothing likely to offend against public propriety or create improper notions as respects the horrible crime of Murder. There are many right sentiments modestly expressed, although the verses are not finished productions. The publication of these poems will, it is hoped, lead to the sparing of human life wherever it is compatible with the safety of society. Such gentlemen as Mr. MILNER GIBSON, M.P., and ALDERMAN ROSE, who took so warm an interest in this poor convict's fate, and ultimately prevailed to the rescue of his justly forfeited life, cannot but feel thankful that their disinterested and zealous endeavours have been crowned with so great a blessing. Of the author of the verses themselves, whose name is for the present withheld, it may

be said, that he has been ever since his imprisonment in Newgate, under deep and permanent religious impressions, and in the most distant parts of the earth writes and acts like a true penitent. As some years have passed over and these fervent expressions of grateful piety remain, there is good hope to be confident that the earnest and continued prayers of the offender may realise the promise of Scripture, that "they who sow in tears may reap in joy."

Newgate, October 1859.

THE AGONY OF MURDER.

HOURS IN NEWGATE.

THE ARRIVAL.

'Twas NIGHT! The driving rain descended fast,
Blown to and fro, by Winter's chilling blast;
The van has stopp'd, the prison bell has rung
Disturbing silence with its noisy tongue,
Within we hear the sound of falling chain,
Of shifting bolts, ere we admittance gain.
I stand in Newgate! dark ill-omened place,
Shrouded in gloom! abode of crime, disgrace,
And Death! The words of Dante fill my ear,
"Farewell to HOPE, all ye that enter here."
I bade farewell to hope for she had fled!
I felt already number'd with the dead!
A portly, florid man received my name
And entered it upon his list of shame.
While doing so, I slowly gazed around,
To find some food for Hope, but none I found;
In vain I tried to pierce the distant gloom,
Which wrapp'd all objects in this living tomb.
No sound disturbed this ominous retreat,
Save the pen's crackle on the printed sheet;
Which being signed, and my conductor gone,
My heart seems changed to lead, my frame to stone.
The outer door is closed with solemn bang,
And jars upon my nerve with dismal clang;

A warning note that I am henceforth hurl'd,
From joys without and banished from the world !
A Turnkey now appears with lantern dim,
And gruffly bids me rise and follow him.
I go with downcast eyes and flagging tread,
And watch their lengthy shadows as they spread
About our path. Anon they flit before,
As if in haste these regions to explore,
Or hap, to let some other wretches know
I have arrived within this home of woe !
The massive pillars which we walk between
Seem frowning darkly, and in ghostly mien
Demand in savage whisper, "Who am I?"
As cheerless as themselves now passing by
Upon the ear some quicker footsteps fall
And loud are echoed through this dreary hall.
My gaoler bids me bare my head, I do,
A lofty form surveys with steady view
My haggard frame ! yet speaks in kindly tone,
And seems to pity one to woe-begone,
He is the ruler here, and leads the way
Across a court-yard which in darkness lay.
The rain still patters on the stony ground,
And hails my advent with a mournful sound ;
I'm usher'd soon into a spacious room,
Partly relieved from the surrounding gloom,
By sullen flashes from a fire new lit,
Which struggles with the smoke and conquers it ;
Then throws a sickly glare upon the hearth,
Fit welcome to the cause which gave it birth.
Another warder now relieves the one
Who brought me here, when we are left alone.
He is my guardian till the morning light,
Shall chase the horrors of that dreary night ;

The fire gets brighter, and my shiv'ring frame
Feels somewhat cheered, but still a sense of shame
Holds down my tongue, I wish, but fear, to speak,
Lest I should meet some rude repulse, and seek
To read my keeper's temper in his face,
For I heard that turnkeys were a race
Peculiar : gruff and always insincere,
But rumour proved herself a liar here ;
For he and all that follow'd in his train,
To me were gentle, pitying, and humane.
He first with kindness spoke and bade me try,
And hope the best, and still on God rely ;
I thank him, and in silence try to read
The word of GOD, but cannot yet succeed
In finding comfort for my troubled soul,
The name of MURDER runs throughout the whole
Of every page, each letter seems confused,
And mem'ry hints of intellect abused ;
And thwarted vilely since my early youth,
In misinterpreting the word of Truth.
I find, indeed, that God has beckon'd some,
And Heavenly love has bid them freely come
To HIM for rest and peace, but base abandon'd I,
Instead of coming, fain would madly fly,
And hide beneath the deepest shade on earth
From all who knew me from my very birth.
From God, from conscience, from my frightened soul,
O'er which despairing billows loudly roll.
It reads the dread Anathema divine,
Of " blood for blood," 'tis written on each line ;
The very hand with which I turn the page,
Is stain'd with blood, produced in drunken rage.
My worthless life disturbs me not, 'tis when
The thread is snapp'd my soul demands where then

Throughout ETERNITY is it to dwell?
Despairing conscience plainly answers HELL.
No longer here for soothing hope I look,
I rise in horror, and I close the book;
Then wonder as I pace the cheerless room,
What tortures constitute eternal doom?
For until now my all-engrossing thought
Had been, the swift destruction I had brought
On those far dearer than my wretched life,
My helpless children, and my murder'd wife;
But now my soul demands to know *her* fate,
What is *her* portion in the future state?
Does *her* sad spirit now in torments dwell?
My startled conscience rings her fun'ral knell.
What racking anguish fills my aching heart,
Her helpless soul and mine may yet take part
In endless woe! and I the savage cause!
What punishment to me are earthly laws?
What is my loss of life compared to all
The horrors which my spirit may befall?
Such images of torment fill my mind,
That e'en the presence of my guard I find
Relief! I now should fear to be alone,
Lest reason should for ever leave her throne;
I wish to die and fear to meet the dead,
Worn out with misery I creep to bed.
But like the tyrant, "I had murder'd sleep,"
Like him in wretchedness my vigil keep!
My aged warder dozes in his chair,
The very silence seems to breed despair;
I lay and watch the steady roaring fire,
The burning embers oft displac'd inspire
Imagination with some hideous form,
Which scares the spirit even while they warm

The dismal air. My glance lights on the walls
Whereon a long unearthly shadow falls,
Of him who toil-worn slumbers, and which seems
Waiting to haunt me in my coming dreams ;
Then suddenly I think of all those men
Who one by one have suffered there, and then
I wonder if they lay where now I do
And if they felt such torments as pursue
My harass'd soul. I think of not a few
Of ghastly forms that may perhaps renew
Their visits to this loathsome resting-place,
Where Murder oft has shown her hideous face ;
What cursed mischance brought me within her ranks?
Thou ! demon cup receive thy little thanks.
O ! how I loathe thy mean debasing arts,
But *self* still more. My self-accusing darts
Pierce to my soul and fill me with disgust !
I grovel in humiliation's dust
To think that *I* to such a fiend could turn,
Who ne'er when sober wished to kill a worm !
Oh ! juggling snare that can transform the mind,
And change to devils those of human kind,
Debase some fools to silly jabbering apes,
In other minds produce distorted shapes,
Which force them o'er the edge of reasons seat,
And with returning sense their vision greet
With horrors that the damned alone can feel ;
Which human tongue or pen can ne'er reveal.
'Tis impotent to curse. I turn again,
And think of those, Intemperance has slain,
From Clitus, to the fools of modern times ;
Who to its juggle owe their many crimes,
And still amidst the filthy odious race,
My crime looms out, the darkest in disgrace ;

I think of him who on this bed the last,
His guilty form in wretchedness did cast,
And of the next, until the mind flies back,
To Thurtell's story and the murder-sack,
Which when a child I heard with dire affright,
Too fearful to be read by candle-light,
But in the shining day, ah ! happy days for me,
And long ere that, when at my grandam's knee,
My evening prayer was always duly said,
Before she placed me in my tiny bed !
And kissed the happy boy who loved her well,
(As petted grandchildren alone can tell,)
And who loved him with all her aged heart.
Blest be thy mem'ry ! for the brightest part
Of my whole life, was when in ardent glow,
Thou every morning to my school would'st go,
With happy me, in neatly plaited frill,
And pin before ; I thought nor dreamt of ill,
Nor when in jacket, collar overlaid,
Alone, my visits to the school I paid, [prize,
Pleased to bring home my hard earned, schoolboy's
And gave it thee, and saw with sparkling eyes,
The shining sixpence treasur'd in my vest,
And always look'd at with increasing zest ;
I well remember once when nearly drown'd
And brought home senseless o'er the snowy ground,
The trembling care she took to save her boy,
Lest damp or fever should his life destroy,
She would have thought it hard if I had gone
From her dear arms, but ah ! if she had known,
The woes in store for me her darling pride,
She would have prayed that I her joy had died,
That little hand which hung about her neck,
E'en in my dreams for fear the ice should break,

Again, is stained with blood! Oh! would that I
Had lost all strength to make my feeble cry,
And perished in the waters. Long I dwell
On all those days till my first shadow fell
Across my path! Ill fated day which gave,
My gentle grandam to the yawning grave,
I still remember thee and all thy show
Of mournful emblems; Pageantry of woe!
The solemn hearse and loftly nodding plume,
Were hateful mockery in thy dear old room!
I see again the pompous mourning coach,
And slowly to thy new-made grave approach,
I feel my warmest dearest friend is gone!
I am a child again and feel alone,
My pent-up sorrows burst their former bounds,
I sob aloud! at these unusual sounds
My keeper starts, and bustling up comes near,
Kindly shakes hands and bids me try and cheer
My wretched self; I hear him but in vain,
The flowing tear alone relieves the pain
Of weighty grief produced by retrospect
Of days departed? Why did I reject
The holy precepts inculcated then,
By loving hearts, and well experienced men?
In the world's bubble why not heed the truth,
So purely taught me in my earliest youth?
Why has my mind become like hell deprav'd,
And yet like hell "with good intentions pav'd,"?
IRRESOLUTION! bane of all my life,
Be thou accurs'd pregnant of bitter strife!
Parent of all my woes oft has thy voice,
With oily plausibility made choice
Of easy deviating track, which first
Seem'd parallel to virtues road! Oh! cursed

Is he, who *hesitates* when virtue leads,
And who instead of following, recedes,
Self confident he can when e'er he wills,
Redeem the past: thus Resolution kills,
With subterfuge of shadowy resolve,
With empty vapours which too soon dissolve,
And leave the votaries on the crumbling brink,
Of certain ruin, where they soon must sink,
Unless a power mightier than their own,
(Or chance as by the Atheist 'tis known,)
May save the wretches and haply may restore,
Their sliding steps to virtue's path once more.
What strange perversity induces man,
When he his chequer'd path has just began,
To slight all warnings, and entreaties too,
Of safe experience? makes him still pursue,
His own erratic route? What hope can tempt
One man to think that *he* shall be exempt
From all those ills which countless are entail'd
On folly's worshippers, when those who've sail'd
The troubled waters of alluring vice
And prov'd the worthlessness of each device
Held out to tempt the rash advent'rous youth?
Exhort him in the strongest terms of truth
To pause! or look around and see the end
Of thousands who would not their fall forefend,
But who in easy undulating pace,
From step to step arrive at death, disgrace,
Or beggary who often at one bound
Plunge in the midst of vices which surround
Their careless road, and harden'd in their sin,
Heed no reproof, nor whispers from within,
Till Wrath, resistless in its fearful force,
By sudden ruin stops the headlong course!

The cause of all is inward stubborn PRIDE,
Which bids its victim virtue's voice deride.
Satan beholds with fiendish base delight
HIS offspring cherished by the heedless wight !
Who hears complacently the warning note,
But still *thinks* danger is from him remote,
Thinks he can best arrange his own affairs,
And wishes other people would mind theirs.
He is a man and surely *ought* to know,
Where he should stop—when he should further go,
Others have fallen ! True ! no reason why,
He also should. He's sure he can rely
On his own judgment when and how to act,
And these self pleasing thoughts are always back'd
By visions of superior strength of mind
And stern resolve ! Equally well defin'd,
Are groups of prudences and self-control,
And phantom fortitudes. This perfect whole,
By gossamer of good intent, and will,
Is neatly bound with most consummate skill,—
And sounds in *conversation* like, the truth,
But meeting strong temptations rush in youth
Will vanish ; and he tries to reconcile
His loss with fate, or may himself beguile,
With specious sophistry, or as *he* thinks,
Sound argument, till recklessly he sinks
Into a slough of intricate distress,
And perishes in utter hopelessness.—
Quite wearied with reflection I despair,
And memory grows faint, when through the air,
Is borne the sound of old Sepulchre's chime,
Announcing mournfully the flight of time.
'Tis morning, four o'clock, the sound awakes,
Remembrances of death and recollection takes

Another horrid form ! that solemn bell,
 Reminds me of the wretched murd'rer's knell !
 The filthy hangman who adjusts the rope,
 Still hesitates to loose the fatal drop
 Till that has sounded ; now the agile mind
 Flies on, leaves trial, sentence, all behind,
 And vividly pourtray's *my turn to die*,
 Fancy beholds the fatal moment nigh,
 The slow procession leaves some quite unnerved.
 I go, to meet my doom so well deserved,
 The door of Newgate opens ! we are out,
 I hear the roar of voices and the shout
 Of rabble mirth, which greets my startled ears,
 Staggering the soul with nerve-destroying fears,
 I mount the steps, and faintly give around
 My parting look on earth ! the shouts resound,
 And then subside. A solemn hollow pause,
 Succeeds this monstrous roar and this the cause,*
 The thirsty blood-hounds cease, for fear the noise,
 Should dissipate or perhaps obstruct the joys,
 Which they anticipate in seeing me
 In my death-struggle ; now I trembling see
 Law's vilest functionary stand before
 His prey ! I shudder, and can think no more,
 But, like the Jewish king, turn to the wall
 And try to pray to Him who orders all
 The actions of his creatures here on earth.
 Alas ! my prayer is smothered in its birth
 By shame and fear ! 'Tis long since I have pray'd,
 And now my wand'ring thoughts and words have
 stray'd

* This was actually the case when * * * suffered for his wife
 and three children. I was there on that dreadful morning. No one
 knew what I felt on that occasion.

Beyond my grasp! Humbly I try to say
Our Lord's own Prayer, and my lips obey;
But tremblingly my startled soul pours forth
Her prayers for mercy from the dreaded wrath
To come; in poor, imperfect, broken cries,
With heaving sobs and overflowing eyes,
Exhausted then the weary, harass'd frame,
Sinks into slumber, or in slumber's name
Would fain seek rest, but still the hateful bed
Scares the refreshing sleep, and in its stead
A dozing dream of HOME! Next blood appears
And then the naked scaring gibbet rears
Its lofty arm, and at my shrinking feet
A thousand hideous forms my visions greet,
Yelling and gibing with Satanic grin,
While loud above the fierce outlandish din
My hated name is heard with mocking cries;
I wake and gaze around with straining eyes,
Trembling in agony. In these alarms
This dreary chamber even hath its charms.
I doze again, but still the feverish start
And half-closed eye betoken inward smart
Of soul—at last the hazy dawn appears
And banishes with winter's night my fears;
For it is daylight and to me relief;
Some of my horrors, like the sneaking thief,
Disperse, scared by the light of day! Slowly
The sun appears, yet disdaining wholly
To gladden this abode of dire distress
Peeps in, as if to mock my wretchedness.
Now dreary Newgate by degrees awakes,
And from itself its gloomy slumber shakes,
Till morning service dull the hours drag on:
The Chapel then I enter, faint and wan,

Some anxious thoughts of comfort from the word
Have roused my torpid self, some hope is stirred :
Poor sickly Hope ! I am the food for all
The staring looks and smother'd words which fall
From those around. My seat is placed apart,
Where deadly shame now fills my aching heart,
That I should be the worst of all this crew
Of fallen men, who furtively renew
Their sidelong glances at my guilty face,
So oft, that willingly I leave the place,
And eagerly I reach my room, for there
I've only one to witness my despair !
But who can say how drearily the time,
With leaden wing, drops by when clogg'd by crime !
That day pass'd on, and brought its dismal night,
I felt an outcast and abandon'd quite !
The prison rules were strict, no friend could see
That day the pris'ner, 'twas the law's decree ;
Tormented with a host of thoughts so drear
Of coming evils, and gigantic fear
Lest my poor babes have met with sudden ill,
And fresh alarms my harass'd bosom fill,
All I can do is still to offer prayer
(Such as it is) that God would kindly spare
Their baby heads, and let the wretch alone
Who caused the evil for the crime atone !
As for myself all inward hope is lost !
The timid soul, chill'd by the deadly frost
Of fell Despair, now mopes in silent woe,—
That woe which murderers alone can know.
The night wanes on, another morn arrives,
And with the morn my struggling soul derives
Throughout the horrors of my bitter grief
One ray of comfort to my great relief.

'Twas but a letter, but to those who wait
 In deep suspense, with all its gloomy state,
 'Twas welcome as the advent of Noah's dove,
 Delightful messenger, from God above !
 It spoke of pardon for the guilty wretch
 Who to his Saviour would his arms outstretch
 In penitence, and trust to HIM alone,
 Who e'en the dying thief did not disown !
 'Twas thou,* kind matron, who the missive wrought,
 But 'twas God's Spirit who gave thee the thought,
 And guided, though unseen, thy willing hand,
 With Mercy's message from the spirit land.
 A spark of Hope, just like the dawn's first ray,
 Broke on my heart and gave the golden way.
 I read and read again, and thought the news
 Still sweeter fell, like gentle evening dews.
 It spoke of sins, which, though of scarlet dye,
 Through Jesus' blood could driven snow outvie,
 But mine still seemed to wear the deepest stain—
 And through the Holy Book I range again
 To find some passage that may suit us three,—
 "Manasseh," and the "dying thief," and "me."
 The miser, counting o'er his greedy pile,
 With gloating eyes and trembling fingers, while
 He fears to lose one grain, with joy distraught,
 Was dull and slow compared to me, who sought
 The pearl of price, the only fountain where
 This blood-stained hand could cleanse this hateful
 glare :
 'Twould fail to tell the thousand doubts that rose
 When trembling Hope her solace would expose ;
 Haply the morning came and saw me firm,
 Then night brought back the never-dying worm !

* My friend's mother.

The voice in sleep that spoke in mournful tone,
 Or died away in distant, feeble moan!
 Not seldom have I heard her well-known voice,
 And inwardly, in sleep, would oft rejoice
 That all these horrors were a dream! the past
 A fearful vision, which not long would last,
 And in my slumbers turn, and gently speak.
 I wake! Then have I felt each horror sneak
 Fast round my beating heart, and chill the blood,
 And drown my sleeping joys in their dark flood
 Of misery most keen! Oh! dreary hours!
 When Memory would put forth her sadd'ning powers,
 When Memory, thou showman of the mind,
 What messengers hast thou of ev'ry kind!—
 A sound, faint as the far-off tinkling bell,
 Will bring a host of joys remember'd well,
 Each rushing in and *will* be recognis'd;
 Each in its turn has once been dearly priz'd,
 And now much more so; but others receive
 A heavy weight, thy wand cannot relieve:
 Although fresh images thou bringest in,
 Thou canst not move the load of grief and sin.
 Shew me that dreadful hour! shew me the whole
 Of my dark mind, when Murder fiercely stole
 To my distorted brain! Long have I laid,
 And with thee through that sad, dark ev'ning stray'd.
 'Tis chaos all! Dark faces, shrieks, and cries,
 And blood, and many thousand staring eyes
 Glaring at me, some flying high in air,
 But all on me still fix their savage stare,
 And all are pointing, and with fury shout,
 Then all is darkness
 Now I have thee fast
 Dark memory! Since then I trace the past,

The streaming lantern, and the sudden shake,
The stern official, and the order "Wake!"
I do awake, and in a prison cell!
What avalanche of horrors quickly fell!
Yet I had slept! a prison rug thrown o'er
My loathsome form! yet thus the wretch has slept,
And soundly too! Alas, this scene has crept
Into my mind with abject, stealthy pace,
That e'en my dungeon walls might sadly trace
The vivid blush of shame that stain'd my cheek
When none were nigh! If my lone cell could
speak

What tales could it unfold of self-disgust!
Of canker at the soul! a filthy rust!
Of rottenness! a crawling sense of sin
Most loathsome! only to the fiends akin.
A grovelling thought to prostrate thus the mind
Of man below the beast! yet so refin'd
And subtle are thy arts, Intemperance,
Each downward step serves but to enhance
Thy treach'rous joys! The paltry coward seeks
Thy aid, and in his drunken valour speaks
Of doughty deeds, done by his mighty arm,
Which e'en a tale of goblins would alarm!
The orator, and poet, sip from thee
In hope thy spell will set their fancies free
From this dull earth, and conjure in their brain
Some glorious image, or some lofty strain;
The whining lover, dup'd by some false jade,
Hails with delight thy tempting proffer'd aid,
And seeks in thee and Dissipation's snare
Some solace from the frowns of haughty fair;
The ruin'd tradesman, and the rake enthrall'd,
By Debt's foul web, or with usury gall'd,

Drinks at thy fount, and in thy mocking voice
Hears melody, and drowns in thy loud voice
The cries of clam'rous duns (or thinks he does),
And tries to stifle mem'ry's inward throes.
Poor fools ! the morning brings the same old tale,
And added horrors to their own prevail !
Then, blind Infatuation hears again
Thy honied whisper, thy deluding strain ;
Again the treach'rous glass is gaily toss'd,
And former horrors in its strength are lost ;
The social board resounds with laugh and jest,
And hollow mirth deceives the empty breast !
The former bugbears which disturb'd their peace
Are food for laughter, and their woes decrease
Till morning dawns :—and thus the endless round
Of unreal joys and grim Despair is found
Revolving still, till Death or workhouse door
Receives the slave, and he is seen no more.
Of all the servants of thy master, Death ;
Thou surely art the chosen, for thy breath
Is lov'd by all : the wretch worn down by care
Flies to thy arms and seeks to drown Despair
In thy embrace, and of thy draught drinks deep
To drown the images which round him creep.
His cry is still for more, and drinks again
To slay the tortures of his madden'd brain,
Then crawls in rags another draught to crave,
And drops, an idiot, in some obscure grave.
Sometimes with joy, when long-lost absent friends
Gladly return, fond hearts would make amends
For pains of separation in the bowl
And festive mirth, and then each gladden'd soul
Would happy be ; but thou, foul fiend, stalk'st in
At once the joyous heart is changed within !

Some long-forgotten slight, perhaps, is named,
And ev'ry cause but drink is wrongly blamed ;
The hasty word and epithet arise,
And each, his friend, in fury then defies !
The sword leaps from the scabbard and is cross'd,
Friendship and love in drunken rage are lost ;
The hand consigns its friend to sudden grave,
Whom in the morning he'd have died to save.
The wily libertine, with thy bright glass,
Seeks to betray the unsuspecting lass
Unus'd in thy imaginative arts,
And to the poison which thy fire imparts,
Her feeble mind, in glowing colours, views
The subtle offers which her foe renews ;
Bewilder'd, half unknowingly, she yields,
And, when betray'd, in thy bare bosom shields
Her blushing face in thy gay stream to drown,
The sting of mem'ry and the world's dark frown ;
The bloom of youth, which should display her charms,
Beholds her sinking in thy Master's arms.
The ruined inmates which around I see,
Ascribe their downward course, foul fiend, to thee ;
To thee belongs the palm ! thou art the cause
Although remote, which broke, for them, the laws !
To them thou camest in such a tempting shape,
That they ensnared ne'er ventur'd to escape ;
Lur'd on by thee, each new device they hail,
Till nothing checks them but this yawning jail !
Where now, in vain, they impotently curse
Their headlong folly and their empty purse ;
Yet if their prison doors were open now,
How many at thy altar still would bow !
Fresh from their prison to thy arms they'd run,
And end their ruin where it first begun !

Should any hapless wretch peruse these lines,
Within whose breast some misery reclines,
Some grief, which, to the world cannot be told,
But which each year still twines its deadly fold
Around thy heart, to others never known,
But in thy bosom gnaws its way alone
Despising troubles, which to others seem
A load of ills! to thee, a silly dream,
A childish shadow, which thy stronger mind
Would shame, were not this dark spot left behind,
Seek not with any vain debasing art
Of gay Intemperance to heal thy smart!
Nor thou, poor wretch, who, buffeted along
By storms of mis'ry, render'd doubly strong,
By knowledge that thyself hast rais'd the gale
Which howls around, and filling ev'ry sail
Of thy poor shatter'd bark with hideous roar,
Threatens to hurl it on Destruction's shore;
Be not like those who in the sinking ship,
Kiss the full bottle with their dying lip,
And fall desponding in the treach'rous wave,
Just as some outstretched hand was held to save!
Nor thou, gay stripling, who hast just began
To be a beast, to prove thyself a "Man!"
Boast not to other fools that thou hast kept
The bottle moving whilst thy comrades slept!
Nor think in throbbing head, and bloodshot eyes,
And stagg'ring gait, a world of glory lies!
Or stragg'ling home, 'twixt midnight and the morn,
Disturbing honest men to share their scorn;
Think not thou art *then* on the road to Fame,
Tho' midst thy fellows thou may'st boast the name
Of merry comrade! boon companion too!
And for this flimsy praise wilt thou pursue

This ceaseless whirl of mock'ry which must fade,
 Though ling'ring on, to haunt the wreck its made;
 Be wise in time, let these words fill thine heart,
 "RELIGION ONLY CAN TRUE JOYS IMPART!"

Religion is the pure and spotless spouse,
 Intemperance the gaudy harlot! Vain carouse,
 Or drunken riot, or the stealthy glass,
 Are Satan's snares, which other snares surpass
 In wily cunning for thy fleeting soul.

What though the waves of worldly sorrow roll
 Around thy luckless head, and all the ills
 Of fallen man are thine! when each day fills
 Thy breaking heart with added weight of woes,
 Religion *always* can some help disclose,
 No matter what thy *cause* of inward care,
 Be it through crime or other's woes you share;
 Be it a wounded heart by love betray'd,
 Or blasted hopes which slowly have decay'd,
 Or sudden ruin thou could'st not prevent,
 God, in religion, has a solace sent!

—Canst thou be worse than I, whoe'er thou art?
 An outcast murderer, with a broken heart!
 Bereft of all I dearly love on earth,
 Of friends and those who owe to me their birth;
 No human heart have I in solitude
 To tell my struggles with my fate so rude!
 One FRIEND I have, and HE the dearest one!
 Who, in the darkness, is my glorious sun!
 Who hears the story of my thousand cares,
 And all my mis'ry with gladness shares;
 Who lifts the drooping spirit from the dust,
 And kindly bids it to his mercy trust,
 Who hails the contrite sinner with delight,
 And cheers his broken heart with the glad sight

Of His dear form and that poor wounded side,
Where even murderers their face may hide,
And in the flowing stream from that dear breast
Be washed from crime and share eternal rest ;
Who with the lonely pris'ner oft will dwell,
And fill with happiness his whitewashed cell ;
Who lifts the heart from all the joys of earth
To REAL happiness, of nobler worth ;
Who, smiling, holds His loving gracious arms
To shield the wand'rer from this world's alarms ;
Who kindles in his heart so bright a flame
Of trusting love, consuming guilty shame,
That prison walls are air ! captivity a name !
Who warms the bosom with a gentle glow,
Of sweet delight, and bids the heart o'erflow
With deepest gratitude and love combin'd,
And with delightful visions fills the mind,
That the glad soul should sing from morn till eve
With joy and rapture where it once would grieve ;
And, from a quiet prison cell's retreat,
Pity the world still struggling at his feet !
Toiling and fretting for the fleeting dross,
And all the bubbles which to gain is loss.
The never-ending harass of their lives,
Is fed on hoped-for bliss which ne'er arrives,
Their joy exists at most a few brief years,
And then begin again their hopes and fears ;
Fresh gew-gaws next they strive in vain to reach,
The past no lesson to their mind can teach ;
Still struggling on they toil and miss the main,
The only happiness they might obtain ;
Religion is that blessing rich in peace,
That can the anxious from their cares release.

This once (in truth) possess'd, the soul looks down
On earthly pleasures and the world's renown ;
His eyes are fixed on those undying joys
Which well reward the loss of earthly toys !
He calmly waits the moment of release,
When he with other saints shall dwell in peace ;
Where all the troubles of this world are o'er,
And sorrow's plaintive wail is heard no more !
—Seek thou THIS PEARL, enshrine it in thine heart,
And, firmly seated, it will ne'er depart :
'Twill be thy truest friend in youth or age,
Whatever conflicts may thy soul engage ;
Be warned by one who many joys has seen,
In this proud city in its brightest sheen ;
The pomp of royalty, a glitt'ring crowd
Of titled nobles who in homage bow'd !
The mightiest warriors of the present day
Have passed in state along in grand array ;
The flow of eloquence or sparkling wit,
The proud patrician, or the well-fed cit. ;
Old England's geniuses I've seen and heard,
And dwelt with rapture on each flowing word,
As they in turn have listened or have spoke
The repartee so smart and lively joke !
The midnight revel, or the social boards,
Such vain delights a life in town affords !
The crowded play-house in temptation strong,
The gay saloon and its voluptuous throng,
The brilliant op'ra, and the ball-room rout,
The glitt'ring race-course, and the winning shout,
The stolen rendezvous, and masquerade,
Where guilty love has hid beneath its shade ;
The charms of music, or the song divine,
In endless variation have been mine :

All that a reckless, daring, harass'd mind
Of miscall'd pleasure in this life could find
Was mine; but still the jaded soul could feel
This round of gaiety was all unreal:
No solid happiness was e'er obtained,
Some gliding spectre still the banquet stained!
Those hours which should have brought the purest joy
Were always tainted by some foul alloy
Belonging to the past or future day,
And so life's current slowly ebb'd away,
Till the avenging arrow swiftly came,
And sunk me to the lowest depths of shame.
There in the midst of self-engendered strife
I found the ONLY treasure in this life,
And which was always at my hand; yet I
Pursued a phantom for the peace so nigh.
Whoe'er thou art that now these lines may read,
Examine well thy *heart*, and take good heed
Thy steps are firm, that thou the pearl hast found,
Lest to thy ear the harsh unwelcome sound
Of gloomy Death should suddenly be brought,
Then wilt thou miss the hope thou should'st have sought
In days gone by, and then this warning will
Rise in thy mind and all excuses kill!
Nor think because thou'rt not so vile as I,
Thou may'st, perchance, on some good deeds rely;
Or in MORALITY may take thy stand,
And wait admittance to the promised land;
Or trust to saints long dead to plead thy cause,
Or rev'rend monk to move his pious jaws
For thy lost soul, when thou art once accursed,
To say the pray'rs thou should'st have said at first;
Dare not insult the Majesty of God,
Who gave his SON to save thee from the rod;

Through HIM alone and in HIS holy name
In humble penitence put forth thy claim :
There stands the *Cross*, in faith lift up thine eye
And hold the hope of them that never die.
For I, within the shadow of the tomb,
Foretell to thee thy fast approaching doom.
Brave not the voice of God which stirs within,
Go to the fount and cleanse thyself from sin :
That sacred form was crucified for thee,
If thou reject it, whither canst thou flee ?
In vain are howlings of the fiends in hell,
So take this *warning* from a *prison cell* !

THE TRIAL.

THUS day succeeded day, a dismal chain
Of weary hours, each linked by mental pain :
Sometimes the friendly visit would disperse
The hideous gloom, the mind would then rehearse
Each look or accent it had seen or heard,
The cheering glance, the tender parting word ;
Oft, through the lattice-work, which stood between
My face and theirs, have I beheld the keen
And anxious glance they strove in vain to hide,
By cheering words which their sad face denied,
Yet they have tried to deck it with a smile
Of threadbare hope my sorrows to beguile :
Alas ! the tremor of their voice betray'd
To me how deep this heavy burden laid
At their fond hearts ! the pallid quiv'ring lip,
Or smother'd sigh, would in a moment strip
The well-meant mask from each dear face ; then stole,
Unconsciously, the tear in grief of soul !

The wistful glance at parting, when the eye,
Strain'd to the last my features to descry,
Remains upon my mind's fond thought till now,
And will continue wheresoe'er I go.
But ah! how bitter was the fear to me,
That I had oped the floodgates of this sea
Of lasting misery on all so dear,
On those I love, on those I still revere.
Who can foretell th' effects of that one blow?
Who can describe the catalogue of woe?
And future sorrows which may yet entail?
What unborn anguish time may yet unveil!
—Society's is like a vast machine,
Some parts of which are dress'd in gold and green
With outward show, while uncouth hidden wheels
Produce the motion which the framework feels:
If but a simple cog is once displac'd
By ruthless hand, how soon a dreary waste
Of desolation may be seen around!
Then, midst the crash, some skilful hands are found
With loving hearts, who, 'mongst the ruins try
To build a smaller edifice, and dry
The tears of those who yet are left behind:
And in this gen'rous act the workmen find
Their own reward! each Christian's breast is cheer'd
By knowledge that his soul is thus endear'd
To HIM who orders all; and here, alas!
All human aid must cease, whate'er may pass
Within the hearts of those who still must grieve
In silent woe; these hands cannot relieve
Nor heal the wounds they share with him who made
A desert where fond hearts had once pourtrayed
A smiling landscape, and an autumn clear
From worldly harass in some future year;

These wither'd hopes will still remain to prove
Within their hearts how lasting was their love.
All these, unseen, with melancholy strive,
Though other cares may fade, *these* will survive ;
No friendly hand with utmost skill can heal
The gnawing pain so many deeply feel :
A thousand various scenes the mind will raise,
And bend on each a ling'ring hopeless gaze
Of what might have been realized, had not
This gloomy cloud o'erspread his future lot !
For all these ruin'd hopes, I've keenly felt
For each fond heart, in bitterness I've knelt
In constant pray'r that God would give them strength
With me to struggle thro' this weary length
Of deepest anguish, and of inward care,
Without God's help, too much for man to bear !
—Mysterious future ! who can penetrate
The veil of sorrows or of joys which wait
My onward course ! Some distant day may dawn
And add fresh griefs to those already borne !
Some dreadful stroke in wisdom may be sent,
Which no far-seeing friendship could prevent !
This rebel heart another blow may need
Before it can be called the Lord's indeed !
Those HE receiveth HE must needs chastise,
And through affliction's waters reach the skies ;
Or, haply, some kind solace may be brought,
Which my poor spirit ne'er had hop'd or sought ;
Some glad delight may cheer my aged head,
And love and friendship yet their joys may spread
Around some lowly fireside, hid from all
The noise of cities and the judgment-hall,
Where loving eyes may watch my wrinkled face ;
Where Death is creeping with her stealthy pace ;

A few fond hearts the world's disdain may brave,
And kindly follow to the peaceful grave
The silent ashes of a long-lov'd friend,
Whose woes by pitying heaven have an end.
Some faithful heart, at misery who weeps,
May raise a tomb 'neath which the murd'rer sleeps.
—Or, in Almighty wisdom's just decree
The fate I dealt may yet *return to me*.
Some fatal moment may behold me low,
Struck to the earth by God's avenging blow ;
Some fearful accident, or ocean tomb,
Or other shape may sudden death assume.
Most solemn thought ! within an instant die,
And stand before the throne of God on high !
A pardon'd sinner, aye, with him to dwell !
Or blood-stain'd rebel, doom'd to groan in hell !
What sayest thou my soul ? art thou prepar'd
To meet thy God ? are all thy sins declared
To HIM who knows them all ? who can alone
Redeem thee from thy doom : who can atone
For all that thou hast done ! Dost thou believe ?
Or dost thou but thy wicked self deceive ?
With fancied hopes for pardon for the past ?
Dost live as though each moment were thy last ?
Art thou still striving for the golden crown ?
Are all thy errors at the cross laid down ?
Is thy base heart opposed to thee as such ?
Canst thou trace Sin, in ev'ry worldly touch ?
Dost fear that *tears*, although thou weep'st a flood,
Can never save thy soul ? That Jesu's blood,
And that alone, can wash thy guilt away ?
Dost thou for his blest Spirit hourly pray
To hold thee up, lest thy deceitful heart,
Should, Judas-like, betray ? Wilt thou take part

With true Religion, midst the motley crew
 Of harden'd sinners, who may oft renew
 Their jibes and sneers at thee, and oft abuse
 Thy gracious Lord? Say, wilt thou always choose
 Reproach for Jesus, and the world's foul scorn,
 With joy, through love to him who once hast borne
 Thy sins thy soul to save? Wilt thou do this,
 And watchful keep, so that thou ne'er may'st miss
One effort to proclaim the wondrous *Cross*?
 Though it should bring thee shame and worldly loss?
 If thou canst cling to this, then boldly stand,
 Defying Satan and his fiendish band!
 Thy Lord will keep thee, and will hold thee up,
 And mix His favour with thy bitter cup.
 But if thou, like some recreant knave, draw'st back,
 And slid'st, like Demas, to thy former track,
 Thou knowest well, my soul, what pains await
 No Queen's reprieve can change thy future state.
 Down on thy knees, and pray for grace from high,
 Lest thou should'st fall, and, in thy falling, die;
 Lay bare thy heart, keep Jesus for thy friend,
 Then sleep in peace, and leave to HIM the end!

* * * * *

At last the day so long expected came,
 Stamped in my heart in blazonry of shame!
 What feelings strove within me as I saw
 The solemn, last tribunal of the law
 With gloomy presage; shadow of the past,
 For life or death the die will soon be cast;
 But not for me alone, another wretch
 Stands by, o'er whom stern Justice soon will stretch
 Her sword, which, emblem, threat'ning hangs before
 And warns the guilty of the fate in store,

If thus, too clearly proved ! My luckless mate
Stands unconcerned, nor cares what ills await,
Deformed as well in body as in mind,*
No cares for death before nor blood behind.
How many eyes upon me bent their gaze,
As in my features some dark signs to trace ;
And, worse than all, that gentle women, too,
Should, in such scenes a morbid taste pursue.
Vile curiosity ! thou fatal bane !
How many of the sex thy snare has slain !
Parent of sin, of human race the curse,
First peeps, then dares, then falls from bad to worse ;
To things forbidden or exciting turns,
And common Prudence, as too common, spurns !
—And now the crier, while still silence hung,
The jury summons with stentorian lung
And tone monotonous ; each takes his place,
And tries to find his verdict in my face !
(Or thus I think), as oft they scrutinize
My careworn visage, with intruding eyes :
The solemn Judge next takes his stately seat,
And busy counsellors mingle at his feet,
Unroll huge briefs, and proudly scan the court
With haughty gaze, with self-importance fraught,
With thoughts redundant in their teeming brain,
Tho' oft defeated, fall, to rise again !
In wordy battle wrestle with the laws,
To save their client with some hidden clause,
And, to the last, the laws decree resist !
Amongst the names which throng the guilty list
Mine foremost stands, and is the first arraigned :
I plead "Not guilty," with my features stained

* The Prisoner alluded to was humpbacked.

With burning shame : the trial now begins
For MURDER ! deepest, deadliest of sins !
Fatal disturber of my soul's repose
On earth ! Now the opposing counsel rose
With frothy, legal flourish, and began
The leading features of my crime to scan,
With forcible exactness and with stress,
Which but increased my inward wretchedness.
The witnesses were called : friends of my youth
Compelled, alas ! to speak the dreadful truth ;
What misery for those who lov'd me well,
The horrid details of the deed to tell !
With what reluctance came each fatal word
From their pale lips ;—by me, with horror heard,
Almost extorted, by the Advocate
For Justice, for the dead ! At what quick rate
Their palpitating bosoms beat, are known
To me by that swift pulse which moved my own.
On each fond face I read the hopes and fears,
The anxious glance, quick darting through their tears
Before the Judge, when'er some point would rise
Which hope would magnify to their fond eyes
In my behalf ! and then the sudden thrill
Of sad foreboding which would fiercely fill
Their gentle breasts, as the balance veer'd,
And all the worst in darker shades appear'd.
Alas ! what dismal see-saw Mind had there,
From eager Hope to saturnine Despair.
And when the surgeon !—ah ! shut out his breath !
Within that dock I died a double death !
Her mangled form professionally laid
Before the court—and I compelled to wade
Through all the dark minuteness of the blows
My ruffian hand had struck—unheard of woes !

Remorse, despair, foul shame, and mis'ry keen !
Welcome the gibbet, rather than this scene !
Should some mad savage, 'neath a burning sun,
Or wild Malay, with frenzied poignard run
To such a deed, a thousand hands would rise,
And sweep the miscreant from beneath the skies.
And yet 'twas wretched I, whom some call man,
Then, man no longer, since fiend-like he ran
On helpless woman—monster he became,
And monster was ! a man alone in name.
What loathsome feeling now pervades my breast,
And stinging shame again becomes its guest,
As now I hid, or tried to hide my face,
But still my soul read infamy, disgrace,
And scorn in ev'ry honest heart around.
Alas ! no greater cause could well be found,
In vain kind hearts would palliate the act,
And try the deeper horrors to extract
From this foul deed, by pointing to the cause ;
No cause should e'er have been, my conscience wars
Against this plea ; why from the man descend
To be the beast, nay, worse, the savage fiend !
Myself I execrate and not the cup,
Though grief effeminate at times starts up,
And whines and gnashes at the odious snare.
Still all excuse is empty, vain as air.
Vainly my counsel, filled with eloquence,
Harangu'd the solemn twelve in my defence,
I'd heard enough—I wish'd that all was o'er,
My life was ready, law could do no more,
Within the judge's cool collected eye,
I read my doom ! I felt condemned to die,
And reason, conscience, whisper'd " It is just,
Thy life for hers, whom thou hast vilely thrust

Into eternity." The counsel's loud harangue
Fell on my ears unheeded, for there rang
A loud alarm in my tortured mind
Of starving children I should leave behind ;
I would have given worlds to weep, to moan,
My wretched fate, my wife's, and their's alone.
The counsel ceas'd, a murmur of applause
Announced his task was o'er ! amidst the pause,
The judge with true forensic acumen summ'd up
The damning evidence and fill'd my cup
To over-flowing with the loathsome tale
O'er which I prayed for death to draw the veil !
Then came suspense, that many edged sword,
Future's abortion, by all men abhorr'd,
Despair and hope combin'd a nauseous draught,
Which all in turns in bitterness have quaff'd,
A sinuous reptile with chameleon hues—
Protean demon—which the mind pursues
Through ev'ry chamber of the halls of thought
Wherein their varying tints are swiftly brought :
First, rosy hope, enlivening the whole,
And for a moment lifting up the soul ;
Then vanishing, while dark despair holds sway,
That fell magician hope must fain obey ;
Then, when the soul is plunged in deepest gloom,
Like sickly moonbeams o'er some haunted tomb.
HOPE darts again, and then again is lost,
As wretched seamen in their barque are toss'd,
One moment in the air the vessel rides,
Then like an arrow sinks midst mountain tides.
How many aching hearts hung on one word
In keen intensity of HOPE deferr'd
" Guilty or Not " the crier now demands,
" And expectation on her tiptoe stands,"

The o'er-strained eye, the quickly heaving breast,
The mournful sympathy of *all* attest,
"GUILTY" the verdict, and the smother'd shriek
Of pitying listeners their compassion speak.
Now through the judgment hall nor breath nor noise
Of timid whisper sounds! The judge's voice
In solemn accents, breaks the stilly air,
With cypress garland crowns the fiend despair.
E'en at that moment mem'ry's far off chime.
Rang in my ears some notes of by-gone time,
When I as mimic judge had set o'er fools,
And hung the table with forensic rules;
With mock heroics as the laws high priest,
And mix'd the forum with the jovial feast,
With studied gravity my sentence gave,
And seal'd the verdict with judicial wave
Of jewell'd finger as the fine I drew
Amidst the laughter of the giddy crew.
Alas, how changed the scene—no mockery here,
Too true the gibbet and the murd'ers bier!
No loud applause from jovial comrade greets
My joyous ear—no laughing visage meets
My sparkling eye! The clear and solemn breath
Of laws dread umpire, speaks its sentence, "DEATH
Hang'd by the neck," alas! the horrid thrill
Which I felt then, vibrates within me still
As I remember how my blood ran cold,
While all the details of my doom were told;
How glad was I when I my room regain'd,
And all my pent up feelings unrestrain'd
Burst forth in words to those I fondly lov'd,
For ever from my sight to be remov'd.
Quick flew the pen and fill'd the ample sheet,
'Twas some relief, their eyes my woes to meet,

Though they, alas, already fill'd the skies
 With bitter wailings and despairing cries !
 Sad was the night of that eventful day,
 Though in my dungeon I could still pourtray,
 From house to house the fatal tidings borne,
 And ev'ry loving heart with anguish torn ;
 My aged sire with upturned eyes I saw,
 Resigned to holy will, for 'twas his law,
 The loving pair who once the stripling rear'd,
 To whom the nephew still remain'd endear'd,
 In spite of all my vices wept for me,
 Who oft in childhood climb'd their yielding knee ;
 My father's heart, deep-stricken by despair,
 My brothers who their sisters suff'rings share,
 Like lightning flashes darting through the night,
 Each friendly bosom bared before my sight
 Its inward grief. Ah ! wretchedest of men,
 To feel so many hearts were bleeding then
 For one degraded and as lost as I.
 For wicked me now gazed the frenzied eye
 Around for hope—no matter whence it came,
 So that 'twas brought in hope's upholding name !
 Then one by one I saw them seek for rest,
 And try with sleep to cheat the aching breast,
 Until the morn which might some solace bring,
 For then I tried to threadbare hope to cling,
 While on my couch night spread her sable wing.

THE REPRIEVE.

My hour is named ! Death's messengers are gone !
 But fourteen days and then a world unknown !
 Farewell for ever to my native earth,
 E'er thirty summers numbered from my birth !

'Tis just ; and yet how sad this loathsome end,
My ghastly eyes unclos'd by gentle friend ;
No weeping children gather round my bed,
No sister's care shall soothe my dying head,
No matron's skill the stiff'ning limb shall lay,
While feeble tapers shed their faintest ray ;
No watchful eye shall take its farewell view
Of my sad dust, and bid a last adieu ;
No fingers soft my shrivell'd hand shall press,
No fond embrace my aged form caress ;
No kindred dear shall follow to the grave,
The one long lov'd they vainly tried to save ;
Nor to my tomb in after years may hie,
No stone relate my death to passers by.
Ah, yes, unwittingly my grave I've seen,
Amidst the passages which intervene
Betwixt the judgment hall and my sad room,
A narrow archway shrouded deep in gloom,
Reveals the tombs of all the gibbet's dead,
Midst which their doom'd successors fain must tread.
One small initial marks the loathsome spot,
Where murder in her charnel house must rot.
I marvelled why my keeper hasten'd by,
Nor gave response to my enquiring eye,
As through the lonesome avenue we paced,
Sad resting place for men although debas'd.
Soon shall my letter blotch the charnel wall,
And my dark body fill the ghostly hall ;
Soon shall some shudd'ring curious eye be told,
Who lies beneath, beside his brethren cold.
In my vicissitudes I've mixed with men
In halls palatial and in murky den ;
In midnight riot heard the frenzied howl,
With quiet grey beard mingled cheek by jowl ;

With folly laughed, anon with sorrow wept,
On many a thorny couch I've often slept.
But in my roving mind no thought would creep
With this dark brotherhood I e'er should sleep.
This form so oft in tender love's embrace,
Shall mix with theirs, and share their resting place.
What hideous gathering, Pandemonium ring,
Could scarce a more unsightly vision bring.
But ah ! that thought brings back the seal again,
Which to eternity its eyes would strain,
And learn the secret death alone can tell,
Its future home, in heaven or in hell.
Ye philosophic drivellers sublime,
Who speculate with dreams and sport with time,
With subtle jargon mystify the soul,
Pronouncing chaos as its final goal.
Why this demur at parting from the clay ?
Why is my soul reluctant to obey ?
Sad is this death, yet if it hides the whole,
It should be welcome to the harass'd soul.
Why not remorseful melt away in tears,
And in oblivion drown these thousand fears ?
If this frail tenement alone has sinn'd,
Then let it suffer, cast it to the wind,
So let its tortures make the past serene,
And with the gibbet end the dismal scene—
A sign while grimly dangling in the air,
That crime and punishment are ended there.
Vain ideality—not all the race
Of philosophic scoffers man can trace,
From lofty Sadducee in holy page,
To modern infidels of later age,
Have any solid argument to stay
The startled mind while nature fades away ;

Whilst man (proud spirit) free and uncontroll'd,
Can tread his native dust, though blind, yet bold.
He boasts his wisdom, and can well arrange
Creation's story, which to some seems strange;
By regulations eloquent and terse,
Which in his judgment guides the universe;
Distorts the truth, or else the whole denies,
And boldly names it well concocted lies;
Looks on the Christian as of feeble mind,
A harmless specimen of weak mankind;
Pities the creature, and with hidden jeer,
Derides that Saviour whom His saints revere;
Smiles at religion as a vain pretence,
And boasts at heart of his superior sense;
Demands of Christians, "If so well beloved,
"Why are not sorrows from their path remov'd?"
And mocks at miracles from God's own hand,
Which ne'er were meant for him to understand.
Let but the grave extend its ready jaw,
How soon this boastful courage 'gins to thaw;
Poor stifled conscience then begins to wake,
And all its thunders in his ear to shake:
Some strange misgivings pass in dim review,
That Christian hope may after all be true!
Then proud philosophy is called, dismay'd,
Who creeps in threadbare garment to his aid,
And fain would struggle like a wounded snake,
And to the last some futile effort make;
'Till the duped soul no longer will be fool'd,
And mourns the folly which so long has rul'd:
Then pleads with agony for some delay,
Some time to think, a month! a week! a day!
Struggles in vain some middle course to shape,
And through some avenue would fain escape

From all the fury of a Saviour's wrath,
But Death's attendants fasten ev'ry path.
The rolling eye looks round in vain for time,
The awe-struck ear receives hell's dismal chime ;
The spirit flutters at the gate of breath,
Then leaves the clay an offering for death ;
The stiff'ning fingers grasp the coverlid,
While with the fiends the tortured soul is hid.
Come ye who still deride a Saviour's love,
Despising warnings which the stones might move,
Come, stand in Newgate, count the rolling hours,
And try their worldly wisdom 'gainst the pow'rs
Of certain death and gloomy hell combin'd,
And weigh them jointly in the startled mind ;
Come forth gaunt usurer come thou whited wall,
The wide-world's clog, the pest of Leadenhall !
Foresee thy fate, one moment stand with me,
And see death leering 'neath the gibbet tree !
Where now thy shining dross, thy bulky purse,
Filled with thy schemings, and the spendthrift's curse,
Who must perforce *seem* to believe thy lies,
While smother'd scorn is gleaming from his eyes ;
Where now the issue of a lifetime's pains,
Thy closely hoarded wealth, thy pent up gains.
Those shrivell'd fingers which thy god would clutch,
Must play with worms within thy narrow hutch ;
Thy gloating eyes which glisten on thy gold,
No more with rapture shall their joy behold ;
The fawning tongue no more proclaim the tale,
" You know my terms, the money or the gaol !"
Soon shall thy hoards become the legal prey,
Of wasteful heirs who lavish day by day
Thy ill-got gains to sweeten all the past
And thank their stars that thou art gone at last.

Where now thy houses and the mortgage deed,
Torn from some starvling in his direst need ?
Where now the signature thou loved'st to view,
Of some sure placeman in the I.O.U. ?
Not all thy glittering dust in mountains piled,
Can make the King of Terrors reconciled !
His dart unerring at thy heart is laid,
Now ask thy soul is its full ransom paid :
If not, go howl beneath the wrath divine,
And curse the hour ye knelt at Mammon's shrine.
And thou his dupe who barterest life away,
For its false glare would'st sell *eternal* day,
Who seek'st at any price the sordid pelf,
To bring destruction on thy wretched self !
Where now the nights in gay debauch laid out,
The noisy laughter and the vacant shout,
The "sparkling bowl," by Bacchanalian sung,
The jovial chorus which thy voice has rung,
The empty mirth that vanishes with morn,
Like painted harlot of her lustre shorn ?
Come hither spendthrift of thy treasure, *Time*
And to the edge of this dark chasm climb ;
Within the confines of this dismal room,
Anticipate the horrors of thy doom :
In death's embrace refill the flowing cup,
On hell's dark tortures bid thy conscience sup.
And thou, adulterer, where are now thy schemes ?
Thy guilt is fact, thou would'st it were but dreams.
Thy feet no more thy wretched path pursue,
To scenes like this thou'st bid thy last adieu.
No more the fading twilight screens thy face,
Nor lamps nocturnal light thy culprit pace ;
Thy form in wickedness so oft caress'd,
In death's dark panoply must soon be dress'd.

The slimy reptile for thy bosom mate,
Shall on thy breast in gloating dalliance wait;
No more the resting-place of shame and sin,
Where guilty thoughts were cherished long within.
Those arms the plaited shroud must soon embrace,
And worms shall fatten on thy fulsome face;
That honied tongue which poisoned as it spoke,
No more shall filthiness in whispers cloak;
Nor shall it weave its subtle myths again,
Nor darken conscience with a hideous stain;
Those lips that heaven once graced with promise fair,
Shall mutter soon some long-forgotten pray'r;
But then in vain the passing bell shall toll,
And fiends exulting seize thy shrinking soul.
And thou proud Pharisee with icy heart,
Who in disguise wouldst play the Christian's part,
To please the world the church must needs attend,
But thy Religion at the porch must end.
With pompous rattle help to fill the plate,
And scorn the sinner as beneath thy state.
Thou painted sepulchre—thou dupe of hell—
Who for the shadow would the substance sell;
Of what avail thy shining broad-cloth now,
To which so many poorer fools would bow,
As thy sleek form, with stately strut, would march,
By pride inflated 'neath the sacred arch.
Thou base polluter of the Christian name,
At once the scoffer's and the Christian's shame.
"Look," cries the scoffer, "how he kneels and prays,
Yet scorns to stoop a fallen man to raise,
In stern morality enshrouds his face,
And shudders at the thought of such disgrace."
If this is tender love and Christian care,
Give me Humanity that all may share.

That dainty hand, where jewell'd rings abound,
Was never meant to heal a poor man's wound,
Let some great name but head the printer's sheet,
How soon beneath, his glaring name you meet.
"Ah!" cries the world, "how kind that man must be,"
Not so the Christian, who the cheat can see,
Who gives his mite in secret and unasked,
And sadly mourns religion thus is masked.
Of true Religion's enemies thou art,
In their chief's hands a sure and poisonous dart ;
The wily serpent takes thee for his tool
To teach his dupes to enter hell by rule.
A man so moral sure can ne'er be wrong,
Most bright example, cries the blinded throng ;
With fulsome praise bedaub their Juggernaut,
Till Death in ambush has their idol caught.
Where now the trumpet thou was wont to blow ?
Of what avail thy loud alms-giving now ?
Thy fair-self-righteousness ? thy Sunday seat ?
Where, all but Christians, thou could'st easy cheat ?
Canst thou in thy good works a passport see
To heaven, when from thy dust the soul is free ?
Hast thou through all thy life, whate'er its length,
Loved God with all thy heart, and soul, and strength ?
And though thou didst bestow thy noisy pelf,
Did'st ever love thy neighbour as thyself ?
Did'st ever feel within thy pompous breast,
Some soft emotion for the wretch distress'd ?
Did'st ever feel another's woes thine own,
And for his succour seek the holy throne ?
While from thine eye the pleading tear would start,
Did Charity e'er dwell within thy heart ?
If thou had'st all the virtues ever known,
Without this one, thy heart is but a stone.

Could'st thou for Jesus clasp the burning stake,
And thus in heaven triumphant entry make ?
Not thou ! thy sanctimonious face would turn
To any God ! before a hair should burn.
'Twas not such stuff as thou that martyrs made,
No hypocrite e'er on the rack was laid.
Stand here in filthy rags of righteousness,
And let cold Death thy bloated form undress :
Where now thy works, thy gifts, thy upturned eye,
Thy string of horrors at the passer by ;
See where the tempter, who has thee beguil'd,
Clasps to his arms his sin-begotten child !
Behold thy recompense deserved so well,
Go, share with hypocrites their deepest hell.
May God fend such fearful doom for me,
Be witness all created, earth, and sea ;
Ye holy angels who in reverence bow,
Whose spreading pinions hide each glorious brow,
Who with adoring homage bend the knee,
Before the Holy uncreated Three ;
Ye principalities and mighty powers,
Who share with saints the joy of endless hours ;
Ye host illimitable, who surround
The Great Eternal with unceasing sound
Of holy harmony in God's own hall,
Freed by the Lamb from Satan's hellish thrall :
Now let your souls with grateful ardour burn,
Be witness of the prodigal's return ;
Be witness that to Christ, and Christ alone,
He yields his soul no more to be his own,
But to be kept by God until that day
When worlds shall fade, and heaven shall pass away.
If Jesus, who on Calvary was slain,
Be not sufficient to erase this stain ;

If there remains no virtue in his blood
 To cleanse my soul from this dark crimson flood
 Then let me perish, for to him I cling
 To Him my crimes and all my sorrows bring ;
 By Him alone content I stand or fall,
 He gave me life, and He can give me all.

* * * * *

A week has gone ; but seven days remain,
 Sweet Hope once came, but scared, soon fled again ;
 One night, as on my sleepless couch I laid,
 Around my heart, she, for a moment play'd,
 Spoke of the future in the word " Repent,"
 And live, of grace, to be a monument :
 Pleased with this thought, the jaded soul reviv'd,
 And for a moment on this nectar thriv'd.
 When heavy footsteps echoed in the night,
 And 'neath my doorsill gleam'd a shaded light,
 The sick'ning sound of shifting bolts and keys,
 Brought down the hands, and shook the feeble knees.
 Another wretch now enters o'er my head,
 To this sad tenement by Murder led !
 Farewell to hope ! 'tis lost in horror's flood,
 Now Satan holds high carnival of blood :
 Three wretched beings, who one time were men,
 Now share the horrors of this dismal den.
 One savage drunkard on his helpmate ran ;
 One hunchback'd dotard slays his fellow-man ;
 A third, his wife and children levels low,
 In peaceful slumber strikes the deadly blow.
 Not man alone his cup of guilt has fill'd,
 Two wretched women have their offspring killed.
 Was ever such a list of horrors known ?
 Poor Hope and smiling Mercy both have flown !

E'en soft-eyed Pity hides her gentle face,
And languidly forsakes the hateful place.
Now doubly hollow every sound appears,
Now rage again the multitude of fears,
Now gliding spectres fill the loathsome hall,
And "blood for blood" is written on the wall.
Loud laugh the fiends! with hellish pleasure seized,
Insatiate Moloch even smiles, appeased:
High jubilee in hell triumphant reigns,
Demons one hour forget their fiery chains,
While mine are rivetted with tenfold force,
And fell Despair pursues his noisome course;
Within my heart, he, regal State maintains,
And, till the morn, his fearful power sustains;
Throws o'er my soul his robes of gloomy jet,
And downward drags me deeper, deeper yet,
Till Mercy, weeping, turned aside the rod,
And to my dungeon sent the man of God!
How beautiful the step of those who bring
The sounds of Peace from Zion's gracious King,
How bright the fountain whence those streamlets flow,
How sweet those tidings to the child of woe:
Nor is the Messenger forgot by me,
Who, for the sinner, bent the prayerful knee,
Thy kindness in this heart remains till now,
Though guilt may brand this pallid aching brow;
Thou heard'st my tale of misery and shame,
And gave my sorrows Pity's willing claim,
Taught me to Christ to lift my tearful eye,
Showed me the cross, and taught me how to die.
Nor thou, true Christian, robed in Sheriff's garb,
Who from my bosom tried to draw the barb,
Which conscience deep into my vitals thrust,
And laid my spirit helpless in the dust;

Who as a Christian would the wound explore,
 And left proud dignity outside the door ;
 Thy gentle voice still echoes in my ear,
 And finds response where thou still art most dear :
 Some day, when both have long forgotten me,
 A voice shall reach you o'er the distant sea,
 Some stricken wretch who has his Saviour found,
 Shall to your ears proclaim the joyful sound,
 And giving praise to whom the praise is due,
 Though taught by me, shall send his thanks to you.

* * * * *

Swift fly the hours, still sweeter life appears,
 For me now flow a boundless sea of tears ;
 Unworthy me by one sad act to make
 So many loving hearts to bleed and ache.
 Now pale anxiety flows to and fro,
 In search of hope yet knows not where to go,
 Reckons each moment, counts the fleeting hours,
 Defying sleep to exercise its powers.
 Fast beat their hearts, quick fly their agile feet,
 Petitions now the royal vision greet ;
 Mercy abashed still hides her drooping head,
 While for her presence many a prayer is shed :
 Some glad report at times their ear may reach,
 Like most reports its impotence to teach ;
 Meanwhile my dungeon witnesses my sighs,
 My silent prayers, my ever up-turned eyes.
 To me the trifling pang of death is nought,
 'Tis after death which fills the soul with thought.
 Like gamesters who stake all on one last throw,
 Bankrupt or Cræsus from the table go,
 So have I staked my all on him who died,
 Who for the sinner shows his wounded side ;

There stands my plea, and there my trust remains,
 Still unbelief at times in triumph reigns,
 Finds out some flaw and down my castle throws,
 And shows a future formed of endless woes ;
 Now longs the soul for Christ and yet would fain,
 A little longer on this earth remain ;
 One moment anxious joyous to be gone.
 The next drawn backward by this heart of stone :
 Thus vacillates the mind throughout each day,
 By turns in hope, then to despair a prey.
 The shrill toned bell proclaims the flight of time,
 As if in haste how clearly falls each chime,
 No leaden wing now fastens on his side,
 But fast and lengthy is each giant stride.
 Soon will my sands, already counted, pass,
 Soon will be seen the useless empty glass.
 One fearful trial yet awaits my soul,
 Like burning diadem to crown the whole,
 My children from their father must be torn,
 Four orphan wanderers through the world to mourn.
 Soon will the moment come when in my sight,
 For one brief hour they torture yet delight,
 And then for ever leave their wretched sire,
 And with their exit bid all hope expire.

* * * * *

Alas, the suit for mercy has not thriv'd,
 The last sad hour of parting has arrived,
 The outer gate is open'd and the throng
 Of anxious kindred trembling move along :
 I see them coming, and I fain would fly
 To each embrace, and while embracing die,
 But oh ! what misery in each sad face,
 How clearly I the work of grief can trace ;

In that brief glance I saw the harass'd mind,
Where poignant woe had left its seal behind.
With funeral step they cross the gloomy yard,
Each intervening door I hear unbarr'd ;
They enter, and the searching glance around
Is followed by deep sorrow's wailing sound.
Each clings to me as though their hand could save,
Their guilty kinsman from his yawning grave.
No word of murmur or of harsh reproach—
Nor gentle censure on my ears encroach—
No sounds but pitying love tho' clothed in grief,
That their fond hearts could bring me no relief.
E'en now they talked of Hope, and would not hear
My weak apology for every tear
That on this shipwreck I had caused to flow—
For having heaped this avalanche of woe.
There stood my aged grandsire bathed in tears,
The loving guardian of my infant years ;
There stood his son who loved me as his own,
Whom this sad scene had petrified to stone ;
And there my gentle aunt who tried to soothe,
The hapless wretch she'd loved from early youth :
These reared the outcast once their joyous pride,
Now like some monster to the fiends allied ;
And yet they lov'd him still, not all the shame
Could break that band or weaken pity's claim.
There stood my father, weeping o'er his boy,
His eldest offspring, once his brightest joy.
Blest be that God who took my mother first,
Ere this sad drama on her vision burst,
Or twice the passing bell would sadly toll,
I then should have two murders on my soul.
And there my brothers gazing on my face,
With straining eyes each lineament to trace

How keen the stab sharp mem'ry gave me then,
Of bad example I had set to them.
Close to my side my darling sisters clung,
And on their ruffian brother's bosom hung !
Wiped off the tears that left my blood-shot eyes
With tenderest cares, and thus their woes disguis'd.
There stood my friend, God knows how great a friend,
From sad commencement to this fatal end :
Careworn he gaz'd, though clinging fast to Hope,
Nor yet despaired to save me from the rope.
And here those loving souls who knew the lad
With buoyant heart, with spirits ever glad !
Whose merry laugh had shook their jocund walls,
Whose joyous songs had filled their welcome halls,
Whose mirthful story once was heard with glee,
Whose happy features 'twas their pride to see.
Their flowing tears spoke more than words could speak,
And wrote their story on each bloodless cheek.
Had these been all, it were enough to crush
The soul, and make it to destruction rush ;
Or wish for some dark sepulchre, alone
To yield convulsive one expiring groan.
But, see ! this childish group of weeping love,
Who, from my sight, stern Fate must soon remove :
Behold my eldest daughter's anxious face,
Who, barely comprehending this disgrace,
Mourns her poor mother ! yet for me still weeps,
As through her mind the fearful vision creeps
Of my sad death, while, sobbing on my breast,
Her panting bosom to my heart she press'd,
And cried, " Dear father, I will always pray,
And love my sisters more and more each day ;
Don't fret, my father, for I love you too,
And wish that I could die instead of you

My father! oh, my father! must you die?
Oh, my poor father!" and the anxious eye
Looked in my own, and spoke a world of love,
Then both alike impelled to God above
Our vision turned; and though no sound was heard,
Our beating hearts pronounced the imploring word,
That both might meet in yonder peaceful sky,
And with her mother live no more to die!
My second infant held my fev'rish hand,
And though unable all to understand,
Yet her full eyes shed forth their briny flood,
As 'twixt my knees in helplessness she stood;
Some lurking horror of the loathsome place
In her young heart my eye could sadly trace:
We gazed bewildered midst the thick'ning gloom,
Which filled each face and clothed the dreary room:
That loving bosom, erst no care had known,
Was now the soil where grief's dark seeds were sown;
That smiling mouth, which prattled once with love,
Was now transfix'd, save when her lips may move
In lisping accents, as in tears she bears
Some childish solace to her sister's ears.
But they, sweet babes, knew not the dreary tale
Of guilt and sorrow which must soon prevail;
Their infant hearts knew not their cruel loss,
No fearful future yet their eyes engross,
Clasped in my arms, their little sparkling orbs
Peered in my face, nor knew what woe absorbs
The writhing bosom of their guilty sire,
While each endearment fuel adds to fire.
Alas! they knew me not—much less my grief,
Unhappy father! death would be relief;
Those tiny forms which once my vision cheered,
Cooed in my face, and stroked their father's beard

In playful innocence, now did the same,
But knew not he who bore a father's name;
In bitter agony I looked around,
While on my ear there fell the doleful sound
Of choking sobs, of smother'd grief and sighs,
As each read anguish in the others eyes.
I vainly sought for comfort, but despair
On ebon pinions filled the gloomy air,
And o'er his victims hovered, while below
Leered foul intemperance, cause of all this woe,
And in the darkest shade there stood the fiend,
Exulting in the horrors he'd convened;
Pleased with his work, yet grudging death's delay,
He gloats with rapture o'er his wretched prey.
Ah! what to me was public odium then—
Or all the scribbling of censorious men!
The whole vocabulary of abuse,
Which polished hirelings are allow'd to use,
Like blunted arrows on the hardened skin,
Disturbed me not, the wound lay deep within;
The world's opprobrium in its strongest force,
Is but a vapour to the worm remorse!
When tried for life I wished that all was o'er,
Nor thought this wretched bosom could bear more;
Then busy mind each sufferer's woe descried,
Now I beheld their woe personified:
Old age here writhed beneath this heavy load,
Which helped to force him further on his road;
The frost of time, though it had clothed his brow,
Had ne'er been tinged with deadly shame till now;
And manhood's prime now felt his courage reel,
Nor cared his manly sorrow to conceal.
The happy boy he'd carried many a mile,
And felt rewarded by his rosy smile,

Must soon be swaddled in the hangman's shroud,
A legal scarecrow to a lawless crowd !
Her tender woman felt her heartstrings break,
That guilty form which quivered on her neck
Was still the same, who, many years before,
Hail'd with delight her summons at the door ;
Who eager ran, with nimble schoolboy pace,
To be the first to greet her smiling face.
Here gentle sisterhood and friendship wept,
And closer to each other sadly crept,
As if in union to discover strength,
To help them through this misery's sad length.
Huddled in groups my younger kindred gazed,
Each eye, alas ! by hopeless sorrow glazed ;
And here sweet childhood, shorn of rosy bloom,
Pale as the snowdrop, shiver'd in the gloom,
Heirs to the scandal of their sire's disgrace,
The world's poor pity, or its proud grimace ;
The broken heart, or every weary head,
Some short-lived Charity or workhouse shed :
This sad inheritance was doubtless theirs,
With all the female orphan's bitter cares.
This was their legacy ! most noble one !
This was my work ! and well the work was done !
If at that moment I had been alone,
My body to no gibbet would have gone ;
Oft did the tempter bring again this view,
And all its horrors to my soul renew ;
But God was good, his tender love prevail'd,
And sooth'd the anguish which my soul impaled.
All seem'd exhausted ! Grief enjoyed its scope,
Each trembling eye beheld the fatal rope.
One voice then rose defying dark Despair,
And broke the silence with the sound of prayer.

The holy accents of the man of God,
Rose for assistance 'neath this heavy rod,
His aid besought who ne'er was asked in vain,
To ease the weight of murder's dismal chain;
To give all strength who suffered here with me,
To bow with reverence to his wise decree.
If Wisdom chose this bitter cup to drain,
Then might my soul in his dear hands remain;
Yet if it pleased Him I should yet be spared,
To cheer the infant and the silver-hair'd,
Then would the humble praise of all arise,
And grateful blessings reach beyond the skies.
Whate'er the end our task was to obey,
And in submission wait the fearful day;
The earnest supplication cease, and then
Each heart responded with a deep "Amen,"
And now the gently opened door announced,
The last adieu on earth must be pronounced.
But all my soul's deep anguish who can tell,
As one by one each muttered the farewell:
The close embrace, the burning anxious eye,
The quiv'ring lip which feared to say "Good bye;"
The slow reluctant step, the clay-cold hand
Of youthful love! The tears of all the band
Poured forth again, and bathed each pallid face,
As, clothed in grief, they left the hateful place.
Some gentle hand amidst these friends so lov'd,
My helpless babes with tender care remov'd;
One voice I heard behind the closing door,
"Me never see poor father any more."
That form I still can see, that voice I hear,
No form, nor voice, to this lone heart so dear;
I to the window flew, and tried to speak,
But grief like mine left its poor slave too weak;

I saw them turn, and then could see no more,
 Drunken with woe, I sank upon the floor.
 Kind Mapperson, who'er shall read these lines,
 Shall know, within thy bosom brightly shines
 Dear Sympathy and sweet Compassion mild,
 'Twas thou, kind heart, my wretched grief beguil'd ;
 With fond solicitude and anxious care
 In all my sorrows took the lion's share.
 Thou prince of janitors ! I would that men
 Proud in morality had seen thee then.
 'Tis not forgotten, honest heart, by me,
 And till my death must still remembered be.
 The Christian heart shall yet rejoice again,
 With happy tidings from the distant main ;
 Of him who in affliction's darkest hour
 Felt from thy hand compassion's mighty power :
 'Twas thou who helped the prostrate soul to rise,
 And to his Saviour rais'd the drooping eyes,
 Handled his wounds with Friendship's tenderest skill,
 With loving caution and with ready will ;
 Then sweetly read the Holy Word with care,
 And with the sinner shared the sinner's prayer.

* * * * *

Brief moments fly, and swiftly on their wing
 Eternity's tremendous issues bring ;
 Her herald's loud and deep-toned bell will chime
 How precious then appears the gift of Time ;
 How low the spirit sinks at thought of all
 The opportunities beyond recall.
 Of what avail to mourn the loss of these
 So oft neglected, but which sorrow sees
 With downcast eye, shamefully unseen, [keen.
 In time to spare the stab with Memory's poignard

Oh! safe experience, but too often scorn'd
By headstong youth whom thou hast kindly warned ;
How oft thy upraised finger has been shook
In gentle caution, and, thy pleading look
On former griefs significantly bent !
How oft postponed the Christian's course " Repent !"
How many hours in midnight revel slain
O'er ruby bowl (volcanoes to the brain)
In stern array now challenge my repose,
And all their bleeding bosoms, bare, disclose,
By me thus pierced ! But now the shaft recoils,
The reckless spendthrift in the ruthless toils
Of grim remorse, now mourns his waste profuse
Of by-gone Time and profligate abuse
Of daring mind ! Why have I basely stooped,
And year by year on Time's dead-line have loop'd ?
Another knot to measure that deep slough
Of bare-born pleasures, which poor fools allow ?
In which I've wallowed, like the grovelling swine,
And wasted hours which should make man divine.
What if those moments in the midnight song
Had been directed to the countless throng
Of sparkling gems which deck the azure plains
Endless revolving ! and whose song sustains
Incessant chorus through the boundless sphere,
In god-like music to the listening ear.
Majestic symbols of the Omnipotent !
Eternity's bright messengers, and sent
To warn the puny insect—lord of earth—
His life is but a span, a ling'ring birth,
A preparation for a nobler state
Of bliss immortal ! joys perpetuate !
Bright emblems of the glorious host beyond,
Who, ceaseless, circle round the High Enthron'd.

What noble pastime, thus to range with thee
The boundless summits of th' ethereal sea!
To measure worlds! to track the meteor's flight,
To range at will the empire of the night?
Sweet Night! dear shelter of the harass'd mind,
Cradle of genius! Nurse of thoughts refin'd,
Thy velvet mantle deck'd with glittering gems,
The Christian justifies, the fool condemns!
Where is the idiot, who, with upturned eyes
Can stand unmov'd and watch the starlit skies!
Are all those endless revolutions made
In regular precision, but to aid
The gay debauchee in his midnight way,
Or e'en the honest man whose route may lay
Through night's dark shadows to his distant home,
Is it for this He spangled Nature's dome?
Preposterous thought; millions of worlds for one
And that one smaller than their smallest sun;
Thus very few e'er read this book aright,
But with a shudder greet the dreary night,
Or hail it but in barefaced wantonness,
To plunge in riot or in foul excess?
Methinks if such gay revellers stood here,
Their festive turbulence would fail to cheer.
Each fool imagines death a distance off,
And hence at dark eternity can scoff,
Nor stays to think each loud and boisterous breath,
Serves but to bring him to his bugbear death!
How soon must I behold him face to face,
A few short hours must close my earthly race.
How solemn are these moments to my soul?
How many billows through my bosom roll?
How empty now the world, how vain its joys?
How cold its pleasures and its mirthful noise?

How hollow now its fulsome varying breath
When whisper'd to the leaden ear of death?
E'en to this moment hope has tried to thrive,
In spite of all still struggling to survive;
But tenderly the reverend man of God,
Has tried to ease the fast descending rod;
By warning me in privacy alone,
That justice only occupies the throne;
That all appeals to mercy are declined,
And softly praying bids me be resigned;
For soon the official tidings will proclaim
To my sad ear the doom—a death of shame!
Again he's gone, again my prayers arise
For humble entrance to the holy skies.
I have no hope but Christ; he is my prayer,
On Christ alone my soul casts all its care;
I know I've sinned, I know that Christ has died,
I know for sinners he was crucified,
And that was all I knew, that knowledge small
Was my soul's safety and my all in all,
"If I am saved on Christ alone I trust,
If I'm condemned, my condemnation's just."
This was my creed, my humble faithful creed,
And this sustained me in my direst need.
I write farewell to soothe the hearts of those
Who feared my safety, made my pen disclose,
The truth. Already had I filled the sheet,
That after my sad death their eyes should meet,
With glad assurance that I died prepared,
That thus their tortured bosoms might be spared;
The thought that soul and body both must die,
And this might keep their burning eyelids dry.
I hear the heavy tread of men once more,
And see again the gently opened door:

It moves me not, I am prepared to hear,
The morning sun must close my brief career.
Three forms approach, by me remember'd well,
Whose kindness now illumines my lonely cell,
The gentle ruler of the sad domain,
Whose tender pity cheered the pris'ner's chain,
The Christian sheriff whose endearing voice,
Had often made this aching heart rejoice.
The man of God who soothed my riven heart
By cheering those who in my woes had part.
These now approached, and I expectant stood,
Waiting to hear the legal doom of blood ;
With gentle caution then he kindly said,
My earnest friends one more appeal had made,—
Bade me be calm, and listen well prepared,
To God's own message, for **MY LIFE WAS SPARED !**
I heard him—and I heard him not—my soul
Flew up to God and thanked HIM for the whole
While yet he spoke ! and then flew back to all
Who suffered with me in my dreadful fall.
God is my witness that I thought of them,
And all the grief this joyful news would stem ;
For I had passed myself, I stood amazed,
The sudden joy my harrass'd brain had crazed :
I tried to thank the messenger of God,
But felt o'er-whelmed beneath the joyful flood.
Whate'er I said I know not—they were gone,
My jailor and myself were left alone.
Was it a dream ? and was I not to die ?
Could I indeed on their good news rely ;
We clasped each other to our grateful breast,
And mix'd our sobbings as our hearts we press'd.
Glad were the true thanksgivings that arose,
From that dark room, the scene of untold woes ;

Glad were the tears which drenched each joyous cheek,
Each happy heart too full of love to speak.
Some incoherent words to each were said,
Then both to Him who saved the sinner pray'd :
If e'er the prayers of gratitude were heard,
Our humble voices heaven's echo stirred.
The weight of years that moment seemed relieved,
And all the horrors which so long had grieved ;
At once the mighty love of God appeared,
At once my soul could feel that love endeared,
And cherished as a long lost, welcome guest,
Within that heart its absence had distress'd.
How sweet is life ! How good the God who gave
His only son that he my life might save ;
In one glad moment how the scene was changed,
Now in my bosom what bright visions range.
My children, kindred, friends, all smiled once more,
And for an instant glisten'd as of yore.
No Newgate held me now ! my soul was free,
What was a prison or its chains to me,
Had I not Jesus ! was I not alive ?
Had not I that sweet boon no man can give ?
I trod that dungeon floor with more delight,
Than many kings their halls on that glad night,
And so did many more for miles around,
When once they heard delightful mercy's sound.
Hail ! brightest jewel in Old England's crown,
Worthy indeed of all the world's renown,
True ornament of queenly diadem,
Peerless and brightest inimitable gem,
Adored by all, beloved by every soul,
From swarth Yoruba to the icy pole :
'Twas well for me a female bosom reign'd,
Or else dear mercy's suit had been disdain'd,

But if the seraph e'er could find abode,
'Tis surely in a woman—and in God.
Blest be her name, for ever doubly blest,
Tho' in this heart unworthily it rest ;
Yet it shall there be cherished and with joy,
When other names long absence shall destroy ;
To grant her homage Britons ne'er deny,
Tho' none can have a right to praise like I ;
Long may she reign, and every British heart
With mercy and her handmaiden take part.
Now joys the soul, endowed with holy strength,
On vivid pinions flies Creation's length.
Oh ! for some eminence by man ne'er trod.
To speak to nature, and to nature's God,
Unheard, unseen, by mortal ear or eye,
To mingle with the denizens of sky,
To shout with joy 'neath heaven's spangled hall,
" My crucified Redeemer made you all."
With tears of love, with smiles of heartfelt joys,
To add my twitter to the warbling noise ;
On giant fancy midst the starry host,
Excited wander till this earth is lost,
'Till distant space shall presently absorb,
This puny earth and its attendant orb ;
To land at will on each revolving world,
Unseen, exulting, in its path be whirled ;
To mix with its inhabitants, and know
How far superior they to us below ;
Hear them descant upon man's fatal loss,
While glorying in the story of the cross ;
And shudder if I thought their minds perceiv'd,
The stranger guest their glorious orb received ;
To hear them marvel, how the monster SIN,
In this bright universe could first begin ;

To cast her fertile seed and wonder yet
When death shall die and time shall pay his debt ;
To hear them grieve o'er all these world's destroy'd
Through our fair earth with deadly sin alloy'd ;
To hear them mourn o'er senseless fallen man,
Who seeks the ruin which his foe began.
Most deadly foe—and I of dupes the worst,
But now no longer hence thou fiend accurs'd,
The hollow fabric thou for years has't rais'd,
Which hid the views on which I would have gazed.
Thy dark philosophy and subtle schemes
Have vanished, and the whole creation seems
Alive with love, with God, and smiling truth,
Again I feel the buoyancy of youth :
Well might thou strive my spirit to ensnare,
By every lure my ruin to prepare.
'Canst read the future ? then thou knowest well
This hand shall rescue many a soul from hell.
Not for myself was this poor life restored,
But that a gracious God should be ador'd ;
By those whom long the galling chain has bound,
That in their ears the welcome notes should sound,
Of mercy to the basest of them all :
And through my efforts hear their glad recall
To happiness, to love, to God's own arms ;
No more the slaves of thy soul-damning charms.
Oh ! help me gracious God this foe to slay,
Who but for thee would triumph o'er his prey ;
Give me thy armour, and thy spirit's sword,
Teach me to wield the weapon of Thy Word ;
Let me not fall, nor let my footsteps slide,
Be with me through all ills that may betide ;
Give me thy love, for that alone I ask,
Once having that how sweet the holy task.

Up, spirit, up ! behold a view sublime,
 Use well thy moments, seize the fleeting time,
 Care thou for nought, look thou to Christ alone,
 And know no summit, but his gracious throne.
 'Tis he alone hath made thy heart rejoice,
 'Tis he shall make men hear the convict's voice,
 Arise, my soul ! no longer be the slave
 Of blood-stained memory thou'rt saved, now save ;
 Receive him as thy guardian friend and guide,
 The world, the devil, and the flesh deride ;
 Let memory be thy monitor no more,
 A beacon pointing to a dangerous shore ;
 Know nought but Christ, and know him crucified,
 Cling to that Christ who for thy spirit died ;
 To him alone whose out-stretched bleeding hand
 The glass reversed and checked the flowing sand,
 Whose pitying finger stayed the fatal pen,
 Which would have doomed the wickedest of men,
 And which his sad death warrant would have signed,
 Had not his love the royal ear inclined
 To mercy's voice, and bade the sinner live
 And hide the warrant 'neath the glad *Reprieve*.

THE CONVICT'S RETURN !

See ! the sun has gone down by the old village church,
 Which is empty, for service is o'er ;
 A few of the neighbours shake hands in the porch,
 And the rest scatter over the moor.
 A widow and daughter are bidding " Good bye "
 To a grey-headed man, who has bade
 His usual farewell, with a bow and a sigh,
 And is lost in the deepening shade !

Dear mother, pray who is that elderly man,

Who sits by himself in the pew ?

“ Seeming always to me,” says the child as she ran,

“ Like a person whom nobody knew !

It is only to us that I e'er hear him say

Good morrow, or ask how we are ;

Yet he does not seem cross, is it only his way ;

Does he live from the church very far ?”

“ My dear little child,” said the mother, “ some day

When a year or two older you've grown,

I will tell you the cause of his going away,

And the reason he sits all alone ;

But now let us haste, for the wind's getting high,

And see ! 'tis beginning to rain,”

Then soon they were hid by the dark'ning sky,

And the trees that grew over the lane.

Old Time travels on, and again there's a throng

Gazing in at the old church door ;

At the coffin of one, who is now borne along,

O'er the threshold he'd oft trod before.

And soon he is laid in his cold earthy bed,

In a corner where grass used to wave ;

But some children he taught, will still lingering

tread

Round their schoolmaster's lonely grave !

“ Dear mother, now tell me the name of your friend ?”

Said the girl, who much older had grown ;

As they sat near his grave, by the grey gable-end

Of the church, on an old tomb-stone.

“ Alas ! my dear child, he ne'er told his true name,

And the reason I'll now give to thee ;

'Tis a narrative sad of sin, sorrow, and shame,

From which now his spirit is free.

It is turn'd seven years since he came to the town,
Which you see as you look o'er the moor,
Quite weary with wand'ring he there settled down,
When in years he was nearly three-score.

He there saw your father, each other they knew,
For oft times abroad they had met ;
He took his advice, a short lease to renew
Of the school-house, which then was to let.

You scarce recollect your dear Father who died
From the wounds he receiv'd in the fight !
But you've play'd with his sword as it hung by the side
Of his bed in its scabbard so bright ;
And oft as he lay our old pilgrim has come,
His Bible to read and to pray,
That in heaven above they might all find a home,
Whom so far time had drifted away.

It is many years since, at one Christmas-tide,
When most human hearts are light,
That a few happy friends put their troubles aside,
And resolv'd to have one merry night,
The table is spread, and they laugh in high glee,
All but one—whose fierce rolling eye
Betokens a mind far from misery free,
Which the guests to their sorrow descry !

For their mirth in a moment is chang'd into woe !
First a shriek—then an outcry is heard—
The maniac through drink, has inflicted a blow,
Ere the guests from their seats can have stirr'd.
'Twas his poor helpless wife whom the wretched man
slew,
And wounded a few of his friends ;
Though he slept in a prison, the drunkard scarce knew
What horror the morning attends !

But as soon as the fumes of the liquor dispersed,
The wretched man's intellect clears,
And the witnesses the tearful story rehearsed,
Which a mountain of sorrow appears !
His children bereft must be turn'd in the street,
Four orphans are left without care ;
Their mother, unready, her God sent to meet,
Not a moment allowed to prepare ! !
With a spirit quite crush'd to the goal he was borne,
Many days for his trial to wait,
With what varied emotions his mind was there torn,
'Tis too painful for me to relate :
For no soul but his own, and that Saviour so kind,
To whom all his troubles were told,
Could the agony tell that distracted his mind,
Or his wretchedness ever unfold !
At last came the day when the friends whom he saw
All the horrible truth must reveal,
Compelled by the sternest injunction of law
Not a fact nor a word to conceal !
A moment's suspence now seems lengthen'd to
years,
For his life merely hangs on their breath—
The verdict of " Guilty " agrees with the fears,
And the terrible sentence is " Death ! "
In despair to his cell he is back again sent,
On earth a brief space to remain ;
And to *him* there was given a time to repent,
Who *gave none* to the one that was slain ! ! !
After this came the sorrowful parting from those
Who clung like his life to his heart ;
What a history sad could that dungeon disclose !
What a terrible lesson impart !

But the sinner belong'd to a true-hearted band,
Who for sympathy ever were famed;
To provide for his children each held out his hand,
As a duty they eagerly claimed.
He pray'd that such bounty might ne'er know distress,
While he patiently waited his doom;
Beseeching his Saviour his children to bless,
Though *he* lay in a murderer's tomb!

But the mercy of God, is beyond human ken,
To all sinners who truly believe,
Through exertions of some of the kindest of men,
There suddenly came a reprieve!
Unspeakable joy took the place of despair,
As the penitent wretch, on his knees,
His God tried to thank, and to utter a pray'r
He would teach him his Saviour to please.

He thought of his friends, for no man ever had
So many, so kind, and so true,
He knew in their hearts how each one would be glad,
And rejoice when the tidings they knew;
And he earnestly hoped they the lesson would learn,
On their Saviour alone to rely;
For the God of all mercy is equally stern,
Unto those who his mercy defy!

His life was thus spared, but the rest of his days
Were in banishment doom'd to be spent,
Still he never complan'd, but to God gave all praise,
And besought Him to make him content.
Many years roll'd away, when a pardon was brought,
It told him again he was free!
With a heart full of thanks to his Saviour, he
thought
Of beloved ones he shortly would see.

More than one score of years had passed off since
he'd been

Removed from the land of his birth ;
He found that Old Time had quite alter'd the scene,
And had scatter'd the groups on the hearth ;
Of all he then knew a few only remain'd,
And those he lov'd dearest of all
Could nowhere be found, so his tears unrestrain'd
At a sense of his loneliness, fall.

His children he sought, and was told two were dead,
And the others he never could trace,
Many miles he had travell'd, by false rumours led,
In the search for their true resting-place ;
His kindred were scatter'd abroad far and wide ;
Of his sisters, no mortal could tell :
And the one that he lov'd, even she, too, had died !
There he stood as if bound by a spell !

For one that had been more than brother or friend,
Even he from the old place had gone ;
And he felt that his days, like a stranger's must end,
And his grave be for ever unknown !
It was then that he came to the town, there beyond,
Where he quietly kept the old school :
For, of children he said he had always been fond :
To be kind was his principal rule."

"Oh, mother, why did you not let me go there ?
I his pupil would gladly have been."

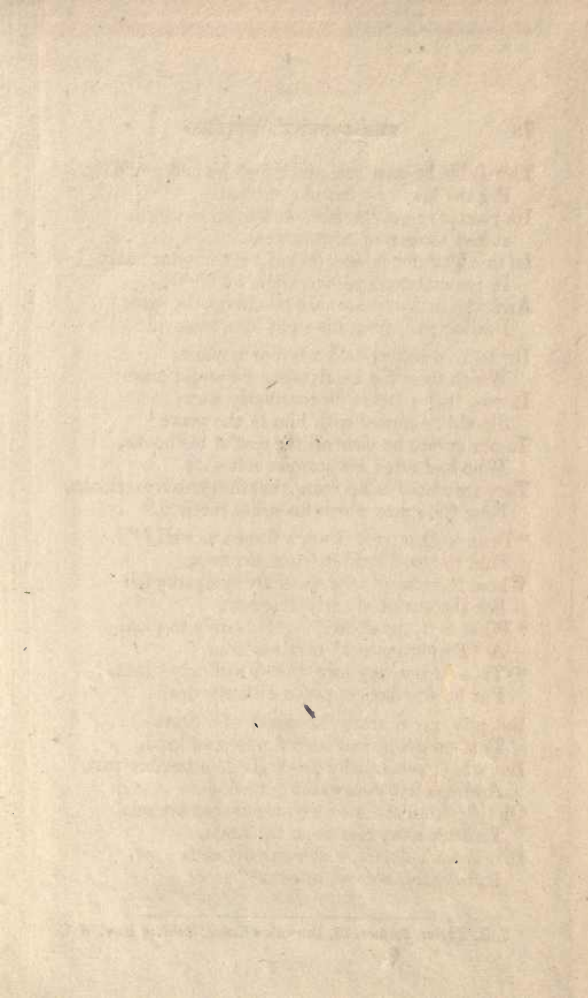
"You then would have added, although unaware,
To his sorrow already so keen.

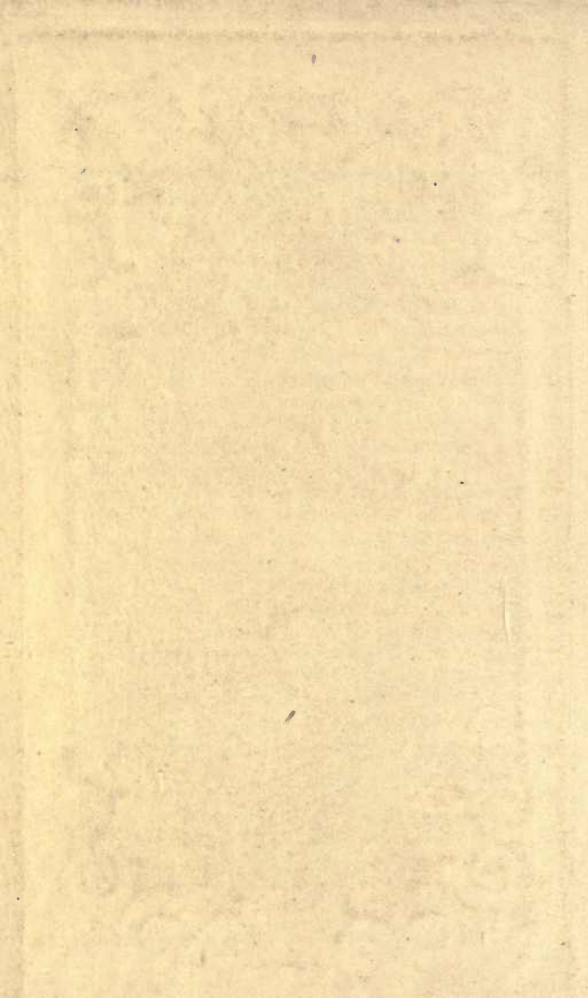
For he had a daughter, like you, christen'd Jane,
With long curling hair and dark eyes ;
Whenever he saw you his heart fill'd with pain,
And a sigh from his breast would arise !

This Bible he gave me, and which he had priz'd
 For the sake of a friend ever dear,
 Its precepts he'd cherish'd and never despis'd,
 It had comforted many a year.
 In this Testament, see, he has written your name
 In remembrance of her whom he lov'd ;
 And who in *his* eyes would be always the same,
 Darling girl, from his sight long remov'd !
 He said, in return he'd a favour implore,
 Which from my hands alone he would crave :
 It was, that a locket he constantly wore,
 Should be buried with him in the grave !
 To our curate he gave all the rest of his books,
 Who had often his sorrows reliev'd ;
 They are placed in his room, that the church overlooks,
 Near the grave which his ashes receiv'd."

" Dear mother, may I ask a favour as well ? "
 Said the girl, looking up in her face,
 Where the tear of true womanly sympathy fell
 For the victim of early disgrace :
 " What is it, my child ? " " It is only to plant
 A ' Forget-me-not ' over his head,"
 " 'Tis a favour, my love, that I willingly grant,
 For he slumbers in peace with the dead !

But pity, my dearest, the wreck of a heart
 That no doubt had been tender and kind,
 But when poisoned by *drink* play'd a terrible part,
 And has left us a warning behind.
 Oh ! fly from the man who the tavern attends
 To drive away care from the brain,
 It is Satan's device, and assuredly ends
 In beggary, sorrow, or pain ! "





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