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THE
MINSTREL;

OR,

THE PROGRESS OF GENIUS:

AND OTHER

POEMS.

BY JAMES BEATTIE, L.L.D.

GLASGOW:

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1823.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

January, 1777.

HAVING lately seen in print some poems ascribed to me, which I never wrote, and some of my own inaccurately copied, I thought it would not be improper to publish, in this little volume, all the verses of which I am willing to be considered as the author. Many others I did indeed write in the early part of my life; but they were in general so incorrect, that I would not rescue them from oblivion, even if a wish could do it.

SOME of the few now offered to the Public would perhaps have been suppressed, if in making this collection I had implicitly followed my own judgment. But in so small a matter who would refuse to submit his opinion to that of a friend?

IT is of no consequence to the reader to know the date of any of these little poems. But some private reasons determine the Author to add, that most of them were written many years ago, and that the greater part of the MINSTREL, which is his latest attempt in this way, was composed in the year one thousand seven hundred and sixty-eight.

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PREFACE

TO

THE MINSTREL.

THE design was, to trace the progress of a Poetical Genius, born in a rude age, from the first dawning of fancy and reason, till that period at which he may be supposed capable of appearing in the world as a MINSTREL, that is, as an itinerant Poet and Musician;—a character which, according to the notions of our forefathers, was not only respectable, but sacred.

I have endeavoured to imitate SPENCER in the measure of his verse, and in the harmony, simplicity, and variety of his composition. Antique expressions I have avoided; admitting, however, some old words, where they seemed to suit the subject: but I hope none will be found that are now obsolete, or in any degree not intelligible to a reader of English poetry.

PREFACE.

To those, who may be disposed to ask, what could induce me to write in so difficult a measure, I can only answer, that it pleases my ear, and seems, from its Gothic structure and original, to bear some relation to the subject and spirit of the Poem. It admits both simplicity and magnificence of sound and of language, beyond any other stanza that I am acquainted with. It allows the sententiousness of the couplet, as well as the more complex modulation of blank verse. What some critics have remarked, of its uniformity growing at last tiresome to the ear, will be found to hold true only when the poetry is faulty in other respects.

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THE
MINSTREL:

OR,

THE PROGRESS OF GENIUS.

BOOK I.

1

AH! who can tell how hard it is to climb
The steep where Fame's proud temple shines afar:
Ah! who can tell how many a soul sublime
Has felt the influence of malignant star,
And waged with Fortune an eternal war;
Check'd by the scoff of Pride, by Envy's frown,
And Poverty's unconquerable bar,
In life's low vale remote has pined alone,
Then dropt into the grave, unpitied and unknown!

2

And yet, the languor of inglorious days,
Not equally oppressive is to all:
Him, who ne'er listened to the voice of praise,
The silence of neglect can ne'er appal.

There are, who, deaf to mad Ambition's call,
 Would shrink to hear th' obstreperous trump of Fame;
 Supremely blest, if to their portion fall
 Health, competence, and peace. Nor higher aim
 Had He, whose simple tale these artless lines proclaim.

3

The rolls of fame I will not now explore ;
 Nor need I here describe, in learned lay,
 How forth THE MINSTREL fared in days of yore,
 Right glad of heart, though homely in array ;
 His waving locks and beard all hoary grey :
 While, from his bending shoulder, decent hung
 His harp, the sole companion of his way,
 Which to the whistling wind responsive rung :
 And ever as he went some merry lay he sung.

4

Fret not thyself, thou glittering child of pride,
 That a poor Villager inspires my strain ;
 With thee let Pageantry and Power abide :
 The gentle Muses haunt the sylvan reign ;
 Where through wild groves at eve the lonely swain
 Enraptured roams, to gaze on Nature's charms.
 They hate the sensual, and scorn the vain ;
 The parasite their influence never warms,
 Nor him whose sordid soul the love of gold alarms.

5

Though richest hues the peacock's plumes adorn,
 Yet horror screams from his discordant throat.
 Rise, sons of harmony, and hail the morn,
 While warbling larks on russet pinions float ;

Or seek at noon the woodland scene remote,
 Where the grey linnets carol from the hill.
 O let them ne'er with artificial note,
 To please a tyrant, strain the little bill,
 But sing what heav'n inspires, and wander where
 they will.

6

Liberal, not lavish, is kind Nature's hand ;
 Nor was perfection made for man below.
 Yet all her schemes with nicest art are plann'd,
 Good counteracting ill, and gladness wo.
 With gold and gems if Chilian mountains glow,
 If bleak and barren Scotia's hills arise ;
 There plague and poison, lust and rapine grow ;
 Here peaceful are the vales, and pure the skies,
 And freedom fires the soul, and sparkles in the eyes.

7

Then grieve not, thou to whom th' indulgent Muse
 Vouchsafes a portion of celestial fire ;
 Nor blame the partial Fates, if they refuse
 Th' imperial banquet, and the rich attire,
 Know thine own worth, and reverence the lyre.
 Wilt thou debase the heart which God refin'd ?
 No ; let thy heaven-taught soul to heaven aspire,
 To fancy, freedom, harmony, resign'd ;
 Ambition's grovelling crew for ever left behind.

8

Canst thou forego the pure ethereal soul
 In each fine sense so exquisitely keen,
 On the dull couch of Luxury to loll,
 Stung with disease, and stupified with spleen ;

Fain to implore the aid of Flattery's screen,
 Even from thyself thy loathsome heart to hide,
 (The mansion then no more of joy serene),
 Where fear, distrust, malevolence, abide,
 And impotent desire, and disappointed pride?

9

O how canst thou renounce the boundless store
 Of charms which Nature to her vot'ry yields!
 The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
 The pomp of groves, and garniture of fields.
 All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
 And all that echoes to the song of even,
 All that the mountain's sheltering bosom shields,
 And all the dread magnificence of heaven,
 O how canst thou renounce, and hope to be forgiven!

10

These charms shall work thy soul's eternal health,
 And love, and gentleness, and joy, impart.
 But these thou must renounce, if lust of wealth
 E'er win its way to thy corrupted heart;
 For ah! it poisons like a scorpion's dart;
 Prompting th' ungenerous wish, the selfish scheme,
 The stern resolve unmoved by pity's smart,
 The troublous day, and long distressful dream.—
 Return, my roving Muse, resume thy purposed theme.

11

There lived in Gothie days, as legends tell,
 A shepherd-swain, a man of low degree;
 Whose sires, perchance, in Fairyland might dwell,
 Sicilian groves, or vales of Arcady;

But he, I ween, was of the north countrie*:
 A nation famed for song, and beauty's charms;
 Zealous, yet modest; innocent, though free;
 Patient of toil; serene amidst alarms;
 Inflexible in faith; invincible in arms.

12

The shepherd-swain of whom I mention made,
 On Scotia's mountains fed his little flock;
 The sickle, scythe, or plough, he never sway'd;
 An honest heart was almost all his stock;
 His drink the living water from the rock;
 The milky dams supplied his board, and lent
 Their kindly fleece to baffle winter's shock;
 And he, though oft with dust and sweat besprent,
 Did guide and guard their wanderings, wheresoe'er
 they went.

13

From labor health, from health contentment springs,
 Contentment opes the source of every joy.
 He envied not, he never thought of kings;
 Nor from those appetites sustained annoy,
 That chance may frustrate, or indulgence cloy:
 Nor Fate his calm and humble hopes beguiled;
 He mourn'd no recreant friend, nor mistress coy,

* There is hardly an ancient ballad, or romance, wherein a Minstrel or Harper appears, but he is characterised, by way of eminence, to have been "OF THE NORTH COUNTRIE." It is probable, that under this appellation were formerly comprehended all the provinces to the north of the Trent. See *Percy's Essay on the English Minstrels*.

For on his vows the blameless Phœbe smiled,
And her alone he loved, and loved her from a child.

14

No jealousy their dawn of love o'ercast,
Nor blasted were their wedded days with strife :
Each season look'd delightful, as it past,
To the fond husband, and the faithful wife.
Beyond the lowly vale of shepherd life
They never roamed ; secure beneath the storm
Which in Ambition's lofty land is rife,
Where peace and love are eanker'd by the worm
Of pride, each bud of joy industrious to deform.

15

The wight whose tale these artless lines unfold,
Was all the offspring of this humble pair.
His birth no oracle or seer foretold :
No prodigy appeared in earth or air,
Nor aught that might a strange event declare.
You guess each circumstance of EDWIN'S birth ;
The parent's transport, and the parent's care ;
The gossip's prayer for wealth, and wit, and worth ;
And one long summer-day of indolence and mirth.

16

And yet poor Edwin was no vulgar boy ;
Deep thought oft seemed to fix his infant eye.
Dainties he heeded not, nor gaude, nor toy,
Save one short pipe of rudest minstrelsy.
Silent when glad ; affectionate, though shy ;
And now his look was most demurely sad,
And now he laughed aloud, yet none knew why.

The neighbours stared and sighed, yet blessed the lad;
Some deem'd him wond'rous wise, and some believed
him mad.

17

But why should I his childish feats display?
Concourse, and noise, and toil he ever fled;
Nor cared to mingle in the clamorous fray
Of squabbling imps; but to the forest sped,
Or roam'd at large the lonely mountain's head;
Or, where the maze of some bewildered stream
To deep untrodden groves his footsteps led,
There would he wander wild, till Phœbus' beam,
Shot from the western clift, released the weary team.

18

Th' exploit of strength, dexterity or speed,
To him nor vanity nor joy could bring.
His heart, from cruel sport estranged, would bleed
To work the wo of any living thing,
By trap, or net; by arrow, or by sling;
These he detested, those he scorned to wield.
He wished to be the guardian, not the king,
Tyrant far less, or traitor of the field.
And sure the sylvan reign unbloody joy might yield

19

Lo! where the stripling, wrapt in wonder, roves
Beneath the precipice o'erhung with pine;
And sees, on high, amidst the encircling groves,
From cliff to cliff the foaming torrents shine.
While waters, woods, and winds, in concert join.
And Echo swells the chorus to the skies.
Would Edwin this majestic scene resign

For aught the huntsman's puny craft supplies?
 Ah! no, he better knows great Nature's charms to
 prize.

20

And oft he traced the uplands, to survey,
 When o'er the sky advanced the kindling dawn,
 The crimson cloud, blue main, and mountain grey,
 And lake, dim gleaming on the smoky lawn;
 Far to the west the long, long vale withdrawn,
 Where twilight loves to linger for a while;
 And now he faintly kens the bounding fawn,
 And villager abroad at early toil.—
 But, lo! the sun appears! and heaven, earth, ocean,
 smile.

21

And oft the craggy cliff he loved to climb,
 When all in mist the world below was lost.
 What dreadful pleasure! there to stand sublime,
 Like shipwreck'd mariner on desert coast,
 And view th' enormous waste of vapor, tost
 In billows, lengthening to th' horizon round,
 Now scooped in gulfs, with mountains now embossed!
 And hear the voice of mirth and song rebound,
 Flocks, herds, and waterfalls, along the hoar pro-
 found!

22

In truth he was a strange and wayward wight,
 Fond of each gentle, and each dreadful scene.
 In darkness and in storm he found delight;
 Nor less, than when on ocean-wave serene .

The southern sun diffused his dazzling shen[†].
 Even sad vicissitude amused his soul:
 And if a sigh would sometimes intervene,
 And down his cheek a tear of pity roll,
 A sigh, a tear, so sweet, he wished not to control.

23

“ O ye wild groves, O where is now your bloom !”
 (The muse interprets thus his tender thought)
 “ Your flowers, your verdure, and your baliny gloom,
 “ Of late so graceful in the hour of drought !
 “ Why do the birds, that song and rapture brought
 “ To all your bowers, their mansions now forsake ?
 “ Ah ! why has fickle chance this ruin wrought ?
 “ For now the storm howls mournful through the
 “ brake,
 “ And the dead foliage flies in many a shapeless flake.

24

“ Where now the rill, melodious, pure, and cool,
 “ And meads with life and mirth and beauty crown’d !
 “ Ah ! see, th’ unsightly slime, and sluggish pool,
 “ Have all the solitary vale imbrown’d ;
 “ Fled each fair form, and mute each melting sound.
 “ The raven croaks forlorn on naked spray:
 “ And, hark ! the river, bursting every mound,
 “ Down the vale thunders; and, with wasteful sway,
 “ Uproots the grove, and rolls the shatter’d rocks
 “ away.

† Brightness, splendor. The word is used by some late writers, as well as by Milton:

25

" Yet such the destiny of all on earth:
 " So flourishes and fades majestic Man.
 " Fair is the bud his vernal morn brings forth,
 " And fostering gales a while the nursling fan.
 " O smile, ye heavens, serene ; ye mildews wan,
 " Ye blighting whirlwinds, spare his balmy prime,
 " Nor lessen of his life the little span.
 " Borne on the swift, though silent, wings of Time,
 " Old-age comes on apace to ravage all the clime.

26

" And be it so. Let those deplore their doom,
 " Whose hope still grovels in this dark sojourn.
 " But lofty souls, who look beyond the tomb,
 " Can smile at Fate, and wonder how they mourn.
 " Shall spring to these sad scenes no more return?
 " Is yonder wave the sun's eternal bed?
 " Soon shall the orient with new lustre burn,
 " And spring shall soon her vital influence shed,
 " Again attune the grove, again adorn the mead.

27

" Shall I be left forgotten in the dust,
 " When Fate, relenting, lets the flower revive?
 " Shall Nature's voice, to Man alone unjust,
 " Bid him, though doom'd to perish, hope to live?
 " Is it for this fair Virtue oft must strive
 " With disappointment, penury, and pain?
 " No : Heaven's immortal spring shall yet arrive ;
 " And Man's majestic beauty bloom again,
 " Bright through th' eternal year of Love's triumph-
 " ant reign."

28

This Truth sublime his simple sire had taught.
 In sooth, 'twas almost all the shepherd knew.
 No subtle nor superfluous lore he sought,
 Nor ever wish'd his Edwin to pursue.
 "Let man's own sphere (said he) confine his view,
 "Be man's peculiar work his sole delight."
 And much, and oft, he warn'd him, to eschew
 Falsehood and guile, and aye maintain the right,
 By pleasure unseduced, unawed by lawless might.

29

"And, from the prayer of Want, and plaint of Wo,
 "O never, never turn away thine ear.
 "Forlorn, in this bleak wilderness below,
 "Ah! what were man, should Heaven refuse to hear!
 "To others do (the law is not severe)
 "What to thyself thou wishest to be done.
 "Forgive thy foes; and love thy parents dear,
 "And friends, and native land; nor those alone;
 "All human weal and wo learn thou to make thine
 "own."

30

See, in the rear of the warm sunny shower,
 The visionary boy from shelter fly!
 For now the storm of summer-rain is o'er,
 And cool, and fresh, and fragrant is the sky.
 And, lo! in the dark east, expanded high,
 The rainbow brightens to the setting sun!
 Fond fool, that deem'st the streaming glory nigh,
 How vain the chace thine ardor has begun!
 'Tis fled afar, ere half thy purposed race be run.

31

Yet couldst thou learn, that thus it fares with age,
 When pleasure, wealth, or power, the bosom warm,
 This baffled hope might tame thy manhood's rage,
 And Disappointment of her sting disarm.
 But why should foresight thy fond heart alarm?
 Perish the lore that deadens young desire!
 Pursue, poor imp, th' imaginary charm,
 Indulge gay Hope, and Fancy's pleasing fire;
 Fancy and Hope too soon shall of themselves expire.

32

When the long-sounding curfew from afar
 Loaded with loud lament the lonely gale,
 Young Edwin, lighted by the evening star,
 Lingered and listening, wandered down the vale.
 There would he dream of graves, and corpses pale;
 And ghosts, that to the charnel-dungeon throng,
 And drag a length of clanking chain and wail,
 Till silenc'd by the owl's terrific song,
 Orblast that shrieks by fits the shuddering isles along.

33

Or, when the setting moon, in crimson dyed,
 Hung o'er the dark and melancholy deep,
 To haunted stream, remote from man, he hied,
 Where Fays of yore their revels wont to keep;
 And there let Fancy roam at large, till sleep
 A vision brought to his intranced sight.
 And first, a wildly murmuring wind 'gan creep,
 Shrill to his ringing ear; then tapers bright,
 With instantaneous gleam, illumed the vault of Night.

34

Anon in view a portal's blazoned arch
Arose; the trumpet bids the valves unfold;
And forth an host of little warriors march,
Grasping the diamond lance, and targe of gold.
Their look was gentle, their demeanor bold,
And green their helms, and green their silk attire;
And here and there, right venerably old,
The long-robed minstrels wake the warbling wire,
And some with mellow breath the martial pipe in-
spire.

35

With merriment, and song, and timbrels clear,
A troop of dames from myrtle bowers advance;
The little warriors doff the targe and spear,
And loud enlivening strains provoke the dance.
They meet, they dart away, they wheel askance;
To right, to left, they thrud the flying maze;
Now bound aloft with vigorous spring, then glance
Rapid along: with many-coloured rays
Of tapers, gems, and gold, the echoing forests blaze.

36

The dream is fled. Proud harbinger of day,
Who scaredst the vision with thy clarion shrill,
Fell chanticler! who oft had rest away
My fancied good, and brought substantial ill!
O to thy cursed scream, discordant still,
Let Harmony aye shut her gentle ear:
Thy boastful mirth let jealous rivals spill,
Insult thy crest, and glossy pinions tear,
And ever in thy dreams the ruthless fox appear.

37

Forbear, my Muse. Let love attune thy line.
Revoke the spell. Thine Edwin frets not so.
For how should he at wicked chance repine,
Who feels from every change amusement flow?
Even now his eyes with smiles of rapture glow,
As on he wanders through the scenes of morn,
Where the fresh flowers in living lustre blow,
Where thousand pearls the dewy lawns adorn,
A thousand notes of joy in every breeze are borne.

38

But who the melodies of morn can tell?
The wild brook babbling down the mountain side;
The lowing herd; the sheepfold's simple bell;
The pipe of early shepherd dim descried
In the low valley; echoing far and wide
The clamorous horn along the cliffs above;
The hollow murmur of the ocean-tide;
The hum of bees, the linnet's lay of love,
And the full choir that wakes the universal grove.

39

The cottage-curs at early pilgrim bark;
Crowned with her pail the tripping milkmaid sings;
The whistling ploughman stalks afield; and, hark!
Down the rough slope the ponderous waggon rings;
Through rustling corn the hare astonished springs;
Slow tolls the village-clock the drowsy hour;
The partridge bursts away on whirring wings;
Deep mourns the turtle in sequestered bower,
And shrill lark carols clear from her aerial tour.

40

O Nature, how in every charm supreme!
 Whose votaries feast on raptures ever new?
 O for the voice and fire of seraphim,
 To sing thy glories with devotion due!
 Blest be the day I 'scaped the wrangling crew,
 From Pyrrho's maze, and Epicurus' sty;
 And held high converse with the godlike few,
 Who to th' enraptured heart, and ear and eye,
 Teach beauty, virtue, truth, and love, and melody.

41

Hence! ye, who snare and stupify the mind,
 Sophists, of beauty, virtue, joy, the bane!
 Greedy and fell, though impotent and blind,
 Who spread your filthy nets in Truth's fair fane,
 And ever ply your venom'd fangs amain!
 Hence to dark Error's den, whose rankling slime
 First gave you form! hence! lest the Muse should
 deign,
 (Though loath on theme so mean to waste a rhyme)
 With vengeance to pursue your sacrilegious crime.

42

But hail, ye mighty masters of the lay,
 Nature's true sons, the friends of man and truth;
 Whose song, sublimely sweet, serenely gay,
 Amused my childhood, and informed my youth.
 O let your spirit still my bosom sooth,
 Inspire my dreams, and my wild wanderings guide?
 Your voice each rugged path of life can smooth;
 For well I know, wherever ye reside,
 There harmony, and peace, and innocence abide.

43

Ah me ! neglected on the lonesome plain,
 As yet poor Edwin never knew your lore,
 Save when against the winter's drenehing rain,
 And driving snow, the cottage shut the door.
 Then, as instructed by tradition hoar,
 Her legend when the Beldame 'gan impart,
 Or chant the old heroic ditty o'er,
 Wonder and joy ran thrilling to his heart ;
 Much he the tale admired, but more the tuneful art.

44

Various and strange was the long-winded tale,
 And halls, and knights, and feats of arms, displayed;
 Or merry swains, who quaff the nut-brown ale,
 And sing, enamoured of the nut-brown maid ;
 The moon-light revel of the fairy glade ;
 Or hags, that suckle an infernal brood,
 And ply in eaves th' unutterable trade*,
 'Midst fiends and spectres, queneh the moon in blood,
 Yell in the midnight storm, or ride th' infuriate flood.

45

But when to horror his amazement rose,
 A gentler strain the Beldame would rehearse,
 A tale of rural life, a tale of woes,
 The orphan-babes, and guardian uncle fierce.

* Allusion to SHAKESPEARE.

Macbeth. How now, ye seeret, black, and midnight hags,
 What is't you do ?

Witches. A deed WITHOUT A NAME.

Macbeth, Act 4. Scene 1.

O cruel! will no pang of pity pierce
That heart by lust of lucre seared to stone!
For sure, if aught of virtue last, or verse,
To latest times shall tender souls bemoan
Those hopeless, orphan-babes, by thy fell arts un-
done.

46

Behold with berries smeared, with brambles torn*,
The babes now famished lay them down to die,
Amidst the howl of darksome woods forlorn,
Folded in one another's arms they lie ;
Nor friend, nor stranger, hears their dying cry ;
" For from the town the man returns no more."
But thou, who Heaven's just vengeance dar'st defy,
This deed with fruitless tears shalt soon deplore,
When Death lays waste thy house, and flames con-
sume thy store.

47

A stifled smile of stern vindictive joy
Brightened one moment Edwin's starting tear.
" But why should gold man's feeble mind decoy,
" And Innocence thus die by doom severe ?"
O Edwin! while thy heart is yet sincere,
'Th' assaults of discontent and doubt repel ;
Dark even at noontide is our mortal sphere ;
But let us hope ; to doubt, is to rebel ;
Let us exult in hope, that all shall yet be well.

* See the fine old ballad, called, THE CHILDREN IN THE WOOD.

48

Nor be thy generous indignation checked,
 Nor checked the tender tear to Misery given ;
 From Guilt's contagious power shall that protect,
 This soften and refine the soul for heaven.
 But dreadful is their doom, whom doubt has driven
 To censure Fate, and pious Hope forego ;
 Like yonder blasted boughs by lightning riven,
 Perfection, beauty, life, they never know,
 But frown on all that pass, a monument of woe.

49

Shall he, whose birth, maturity, and age,
 Scarce fill the circle of one summer-day,
 Shall the poor gnat with discontent and rage
 Exclaim that Nature hastens to decay,
 If but a cloud obstruct the solar ray,
 If but a momentary shower descend !
 Or shall frail man Heaven's dread decree gainsay,
 Which bade the series of events extend
 Wide through unnumbered worlds, and ages without
 end.

50

One part, one little part, we dimly scan
 Through the dark medium of life's feverish dream ;
 Yet dare arraign the whole stupendous plan,
 If but that little part incongruous seem.
 Nor is that part perhaps what mortals deem ;
 Oft from apparent ill our blessings rise.
 O then renounce that impious self-esteem,
 That aims to trace the secrets of the skies :
 For thou art but of dust ; be humble, and be wise.

51

Thus Heaven enlarged his soul in riper years.
For Nature gave him strength, and fire, to soar
On Fancy's wing, above this vale of tears ;
Where dark cold-hearted sceptics, creeping, pore
Through microscope of metaphysic lore :
And much they grope for truth, but never hit.
For why ? their powers, inadequate before,
This idle art makes more and more unfit ;
Yet deem they darkness light, and their vain blun-
ders wit.

52

Nor was this ancient Dame a foe to mirth.
Her ballad, jest, and riddle's quaint device
Of cheered the shepherds round their social hearth ;
Whom levity or spleen could ne'er entice
To purchase chat or laughter at the price
Of decency. Nor let it faith exceed,
That Nature forms a rustic taste so nice.
Ah ! had they been of court or city breed
Such delicacy were right marvellous indeed.

53

Of when the winter-storm had ceased to rave,
He roamed the snowy waste at even, to view
The cloud stupendous, from th' Atlantic wave
High-towering, sail along th' horizon blue ;
Where, 'midst the changeful ever new,
Fancy a thousand wondrous forms descries,
More wildly great than ever pencil drew,
Rocks, torrents, gulfs, and shapes of giant size,
And glitt'ring cliffs on cliffs, and fiery ramparts rise.

54

Thence musing onward to the sounding shore,
 The lone enthusiast oft would take his way,
 Listening with pleasing dread to the deep roar
 Of the wide-weltering waves. In black array
 When sulphurous clouds rolled on th' autumnal day,
 Ever then he hastened from the haunt of man,
 Along the trembling wilderness to stray,
 What time the lightning's fierce career began,
 And o'er Heaven's rending arch the rattling thunder
 ran.

55

Responsive to the sprightly pipe when all
 In sprightly dance the village youth were joined,
 Edwin, of melody aye held in thrall,
 From the rude gambol far remote reclined,
 Soothed with the soft notes warbling in the wind.
 Ah then, all jollity seemed noise and folly,
 To the pure soul by Fancy's fire refined,
 Ah what is mirth but turbulence unholy,
 When with the charm compared of heavenly melan-
 choly!

56

Is there a heart that music cannot melt?
 Alas! how is that rugged heart forlorn!
 Is there, who ne'er those mystic transports felt
 Of solitude and melancholy born?
 He needs not woo the Muse; he is her scorn.
 The sophist's rope of cobweb he shall twine;
 Mope o'er the schoolman's peevish page; or mourn
 And delve for life in Mammon's dirty mine;
 Sneak with the scoundrel fox, or grunt with glutton
 swine.

57

For Edwin, Fate a nobler doom had planned ;
 Song was his favorite and first pursuit.
 The wild harp rang to his advent'rous hand,
 And languished to his breath the plaintive flute.
 His infant muse, though artless, was not mute :
 Of elegance as yet he took no care ;
 For this of time and culture is the fruit ;
 And Edwin gain'd at last this fruit so rare :
 As in some future verse I purpose to declare.

58

Meanwhile, whate'er of beautiful, or new,
 Sublime, or dreadful, in earth, sea, or sky,
 By chance, or search, was offered to his view,
 He scanned with curious and romantic eye.
 Whate'er of lore tradition could supply
 From gothic tale, or song, or fable old,
 Roused him, still keen to listen and to pry.
 At last, though long by penury controlled,
 And solitude, her soul his graces 'gan unfold.

59

Thus on the chill Lapponian's dreary land,
 For many a long month lost in snow profound †,
 When Sol from Cancer sends the season bland,
 And in their northern cave the storms are bound ;

† Spring and Autumn are hardly known to the Laplanders. About the time the sun enters Cancer, their fields, which a week before were covered with snow, appear on a sudden full of grass and flowers. *Scheffer's History of Lapland, p. 16.*

From silent mountains, straight, with startling sound,
Torrents are hurled; green hills emerge; and lo,
The trees with foliage, cliffs with flowers are crowned;
Pure rills through vales of verdure warbling go;
And wonder, love, and joy, the peasant's heart o'er-
flow.

60

Here pause, my gothic lyre, a little while.
The leisure hour is all that thou canst claim.
But on this verse if MONTAGUE should smile,
New strains ere long shall animate thy frame.
And her applause to me is more than fame;
For still with truth accords her taste refined.
At lucre or renown let others aim,
I only wish to please the gentle mind,
Whom Nature's charms inspire, and love of human-
kind.

THE
MINSTREL:

OR,

THE PROGRESS OF GENIUS.

BOOK II.

1

OF chance or change O let not man complain,
Else shall he never never cease to wail ;
For, from the imperial dome, to where the swain
Rears the lone cottage in the silent dale,
All feel th' assault of Fortune's fickle gale ;
Art, empire, earth itself, to change are doomed ;
Earthquakes have raised to heaven the humble vale,
And gulphs the mountain's mighty mass entomb'd,
And where th' Atlantic rolls wide continents have
bloom'd †.

† See Plato's *Timeus*.

2

But sure to foreign climes we need not range,
 Nor search the ancient records of our race,
 To learn the dire effects of time and change,
 Which in ourselves, alas! we daily trace.
 Yct at the darkened eye, the withered face,
 Or hoary hair, I never will repine :
 But spare, O Time, whate'er of mental grace,
 Of candor, love, or sympathy divine,
 Whate'er of fancy's ray, or friendship's flame is mine.

3

So I, obsequious to Truth's dread command,
 Shall here without reluctance change my lay,
 And smite the gothic lyre with harsher hand ;
 Now when I leave that flowery path for aye
 Of childhood, where I sported many a day,
 Warbling and sauntering carelessly along ;
 Where every face was innocent and gay,
 Each vale romantic, tuneful every tongue,
 Sweet, wild, and artless all, as Edwin's infant song.

4

"Perish the lore that deadens young desire,"
 Is the soft tenor of my song no more.
 Edwin, tho' loved of Heaven, must not aspire
 To bliss, which mortals never knew before.
 On trembling wings let youthful fancy soar,
 Nor always haunt the sunny realms of joy :
 But now and then the shades of life explore ;
 Tho' many a sound and sight of wo annoy,
 And many a qualm of care his rising hopes destroy.

5

Vigor from toil, from trouble patience grows.
The weakly blossom, warm in summer bower,
Some tints of transient beauty may disclose;
But soon it withers in the chilling hour.
Mark yonder oaks! Superior to the power
Of all the warring winds of heaven they rise,
And from the stormy promontory tower,
And toss their giant arms amid the skies,
While each assailing blast increase of strength supplies.

6

And now the downy cheek and deepened voice
Gave dignity to Edwin's blooming pride;
And walks of wider circuit were his choice,
And vales more mild, and mountains more sublime.
One evening, as he framed the careless rhyme,
It was his chance to wander far abroad,
And o'er a lonely eminence to climb,
Which heretofore his foot had never trode;
A vale appeared below, a deep retired abode.

7

'Thither he lied, enamor'd of the scene.
For rocks on rocks piled, as by magic spell,
Here scorched with lightning, there with ivy green,
Fenced from the north and east this savage dell.
Southward a mountain rose with easy swell,
Whose long long groves eternal murmur made:
And toward the western sun a streamlet fell,
Where, thro' the cliffs, the eye, remote, surveyed
Blue hills, and glittering waves, and skies in gold arrayed.

8.

Along this narrow valley you might see
 The wild deer sporting on the meadow ground,
 And, here and there, a solitary tree,
 Or mossy stone, or rock with woodbine crown'd.
 Oft did the cliffs reverberate the sound
 Of parting fragments tumbling from on high ;
 And from the summit of that craggy mound
 The perching eagle oft was heard to cry,
 Or on resounding wings to shoot athwart the sky.

9

One cultivated spot there was, that spread
 Its flowery bosom to the noonday beam,
 Where many a rose-bud rears its blushing head,
 And herbs for food with future plenty teem.
 Sooth'd by the lulling sound of grove and stream,
 Romantic visions swarm on Edwin's soul :
 He minded not the sun's last trembling gleam,
 Nor heard from far the twilight curfew toll ;
 When slowly on his ear these moving accents stole.

10

“ Hail, awful scenes, that calm the troubled breast,
 “ And woo the weary to profound repose !
 “ Can passion's wildest uproar lay to rest,
 “ And whisper comfort to the man of woes !
 “ Here Innocence may wander, safe from foes.
 “ And Contemplation soar on seraph wings.
 “ O Solitude ! the man who thee forgoes,
 “ When lucre lures him, or ambition stings,
 “ Shall never know the source whence real grandeur
 “ springs.

11

" Vain man, is grandeur given to gay attire ?
 " Then let the butterfly thy pride upbraid :
 " To friends, attendants, armies, bought with hire ?
 " It is thy weakness that requires their aid ;
 " To palaces, with gold and gems inlayed ?
 " They fear the thief, and tremble in the storm ;
 " To hosts, thro' earnage who to conquest wade ?
 " Behold the victor vanquished by the worm !
 " Behold, what deeds of wo the locust can perform !

12

" True dignity is his, whose tranquil mind
 " Virtue has raised above the things below ;
 " Who, every hope and fear to Heaven resigned,
 " Shrinks not, tho' Fortune aim her deadliest blow."
 This strain from 'midst the rocks was heard to flow,
 In solemn sounds. New beamed the evening star :
 And from embattled clouds emerging slow
 Cynthia came riding on her silver ear ;
 And hoary mountain-cliffs shone faintly from afar :

13

Soon did the solemn voice its theme renew ;
 (While Edwin wrapt in wonder listening stood)
 " Ye tools and toys of tyranny, adieu,
 " Scorned by the wise and hated by the good !
 " Ye only can engage the servile brood
 " Of Levity and Lust, who all their days,
 " Ashamed of truth and liberty, have wooed,
 " And hugged the chain, that glittering on their gaze
 " Seems to outshine the pomp of heaven's empyreal
 " blaze.

" Like them, abandoned to Ambition's sway,
 " I sought for glory in the paths of guile;
 " And fawned and smiled, to plunder and betray,
 " Myself betrayed and plundered all the while;
 " So gnawed the viper the corroding file;
 " But now with pangs of keen remorse I rue
 " Those years of trouble and debazement vile.
 " Yet why should I this cruel theme pursue!
 " Fly, fly, detested thoughts, for ever, from my view.

15

" The gusts of appetite, the clouds of care,
 " And storms of disappointment, all o'erpast,
 " Henceforth no earthly hope with heav'n shall share
 " This heart, where peace serenely shines at last.
 " And if for me no treasure be amassed,
 " And if no future age shall hear my name,
 " I lurk the more secure from fortune's blast,
 " And with more leisure feed this pious flame,
 " Whose rapture far transcends the fairest hopes of
 " fame.

16

" The end and the reward of toil is rest.
 " Be all my prayer for virtue and for peace,
 " Of wealth and fame, of pomp and power possessed,
 " Who ever felt his weight of wo decrease!
 " Ah! what avails the lore of Rome and Greece,
 " The lay heaven-prompted, and harmonious string,
 " The dust of Ophir, or the Tyrian fleece,
 " All that art, fortune, enterprise, can bring,
 " If envy, scorn, remorse, or pride the bosom wring!

17

“ Let Vanity adorn the marble tomb
“ With trophies, rhymes, and scutchcons of renown,
“ In the deep dungeon of some gothic dome,
“ Where night and desolation ever frown.
“ Mine be the breezy hill that skirts the down ;
“ Where a green grassy turf is all I crave,
“ With here and there a violet bestrown,
“ Fast by a brook, or fountain’s murmuring wave ;
“ And many an evening sun shine sweetly on my
“ grave.

18

“ And thither let the village swain repair ;
“ And, light of heart, the village maiden gay,
“ To deck with flowers her half-dishevelled hair,
“ And celebrate the merry morn of May.
“ There let the shepherd’s pipe the live-long day
“ Fill all the grove with love’s bewitching wo ;
“ And when mild Evening comes in mantle grey,
“ Let not the blooming band make haste to go ;
“ No ghost nor spell my long and last abode shall
“ know.

19

“ For though I fly to ’scape from Fortune’s rage,
“ And bear the scars of envy, spite, and scorn,
“ Yet with mankind no horrid war I wage,
“ Yet with no impious spleen my breast is torn :
“ For virtue lost, and ruined man, I mourn.
“ O Man ! creation’s pride, Heaven’s darling child,
“ Whom Nature’s best divinest gifts adorn,
“ Why from thy home are truth and joy exiled,
“ And all thy favourite haunts with blood and tears
“ defiled.

20

" Along yon glittering sky what glory streams !
 " What majesty attends Night's lovely queen !
 " Fair laugh our vallies in the vernal beams ;
 " And mountains rise, and oceans roll between,
 " And all conspire to beautify the scene.
 " But, in the mental world, what chaos drear !
 " What forms of mournful, loathsome, furious mien !
 " O when shall that Eternal Morn appear,
 " These dreadful forms to chase, this chaos dark to
 " clear !

21

" O Thou, at whose creative smile, yon heaven,
 " In all the pomp of beauty, life, and light,
 " Rose from th' abyss; when dark Confusion, driven
 " Down, down the bottomless profound of night,
 " Fled, where he ever flies thy piercing sight !
 " O glance on these sad shades one pitying ray,
 " To blast the fury of oppressive might,
 " Melt the hard heart to love and mercy's sway,
 " And cheer the wandering soul, and light him on
 " the way !"

22

Silence ensued : and Edwin raised his eyes
 In tears, for grief lay heavy at his heart.
 " And is it thus in courtly life, (he cries),
 " That man to man acts a betrayer's part !
 " And dares he thus the gifts of heaven pervert,
 " Each social instinct, and sublime desire ?
 " Hail poverty ! if honor, wealth, and art,
 " If what the great pursue, and learned admire,
 " Thus dissipate and quench the soul's ethereal fire !"

23

He said, and turned away ; nor did the Sage
 O'erhear, in silent orisons employed.
 The Youth, his rising sorrow to assuage,
 Home as he hied, the evening scene enjoyed :
 For now no cloud obscures the starry void ;
 The yellow moonlight sleeps on all the hills* ;
 Nor is the mind with startling sounds annoyed ;
 A soothing murmur the lone region fills,
 Of groves, and dying gales, and melancholy rills.

24

But he from day to day more anxious grew.
 The voice still seemed to vibrate on his ear.
 Nor durst he hope the Hermit's tale untrue ;
 For man he seemed to love, and heaven to fear ;
 And none speaks false, where there is none to hear.
 " Yet, can man's gentle heart become so fell !
 " No more in vain conjecture let me wear
 " My hours away, but seek the Hermit's cell ;
 " 'Tis he my doubt can clear, perhaps my care dispel."

25

At early dawn the Youth his journey took,
 And many a mountain passed, and valley wide,
 Then reached the wild ; where in a flowery nook,
 And seated on a mossy stone, he spied
 An ancient man ; his harp lay him beside,

* How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank.

Shakspeare.

~~~~~

A stag sprung from the pasture at his call,  
 And, kneeling, licked the withered hand that tied  
 A wreath of woodbine round his antlers tall,  
 And hung his lofty neck with many a flowret small.

## 26

And now the hoary sage arose, and saw  
 The wanderer approaching; innocence  
 Smiled on his glowing cheek, but modest awe  
 Depressed his eye, that feared to give offence.  
 "Who art thou, courteous stranger? and from whence?  
 "Why roam thy steps to this sequestered dale?"  
 "A shepherd-boy, (the Youth replied), far hence  
 "My habitation; hear my artless tale;  
 "Nor levity nor falsehood shall thine ear assail.

## 27

"Late as I roamed, intent on Nature's charms,  
 "I reached at eve this wilderness profound;  
 "And leaning where yon oak expands her arms,  
 "Heard these rude cliffs thine awful voice rebound,  
 "(For in thy speech I recognise the sound).  
 "You mourned for ruined man, and virtue lost,  
 "And seemed to feel of keen remorse the wound,  
 "Pondering on former days, by guilt engrossed,  
 "Or in the giddy storm of dissipation tossed.

## 28

"But say, in courtly life can craft be learned,  
 "Where knowledge opens, and exalts the soul;  
 "Where Fortune lavishes her gifts unearned,  
 "Can selfishness the liberal heart control?"

" Is glory there achieved by arts, as foul  
 " As those that felons, fiends, and furies plan ?  
 " Spiders ensnare, snakes poison, tygers prowl ;  
 " Love is the godlike attribute of man.  
 " O teach a simple youth this mystery to scan.

## 29

" Or else the lamentable strain disclaim,  
 " And give me back the calm, contented mind ;  
 " Which, late, exulting, viewed, in Nature's frame,  
 " Goodness untainted, wisdom unconfined,  
 " Grace, grandeur, and utility combined.  
 " Restore those tranquil days, that saw me still  
 " Well pleased with all, but most with humankind ;  
 " When Fancy roamed thro' Nature's works at will,  
 " Unchecked by cold distrust, and uninformed of  
 " ill."

## 30

" Wouldst thou (the sage replied) in peace return  
 " To the gay dreams of fond romantic youth,  
 " Leave me to hide, in this remote sojourn,  
 " From every gentle ear the dreadful truth :  
 " For if my desultory strain with ruth  
 " And indignation make thine eyes o'erflow,  
 " Alas ! what comfort could thy anguish sooth,  
 " Shouldst thou th' extent of human folly know.  
 " Be ignorance thy choice where knowledge leads  
 " to wo.

## 31

" But let untender thoughts afar be driven ;  
 " Nor venture to arraign the dread decree :  
 " For know, to man, as candidate for heaven,  
 " The voice of the Eternal said, Be free :

" And this divine prerogative to thee  
 " Does virtue, happiness, and heaven convey ;  
 " For virtue is the child of liberty,  
 " And happiness of virtue ; nor can they  
 " Be free to keep the path who are not free to stray.

## 32

" Yet leave me not. I would allay that grief,  
 " Which else might thy young virtue overpower ;  
 " And in thy converse I shall find relief,  
 " When the dark shades of melancholy lower :  
 " For solitude has many a dreary hour,  
 " Even when exempt from grief, remorse, and pain ;  
 " Come often then ; for, haply, in my bower,  
 " Amusement, knowledge, wisdom, thou may'st gain ;  
 " If I one soul improve, I have not lived in vain."

## 33

And now, at length, to Edwin's ardent gaze  
 The Muse of History unrolls her page.  
 But few, alas ! the scenes her art displays,  
 To charm his fancy, or his heart engage.  
 Here chiefs their thirst of power in blood assuage,  
 And straight their flames with tenfold fierceness burn ;  
 Here smiling Virtue prompts the patriot's rage,  
 But lo, ere long, is left alone to mourn,  
 And languish in the dust, and clasp th' abandoned urn.

## 34

" Ambition's slippery verge shall mortals tread,  
 " Where ruin's gulph unfathomed yawns beneath !  
 " Shall life, shall liberty be lost, (he said),  
 " For the vain toys that Pomp and Power bequeath !

" The car of victory, the plume, the wreath,  
 " Defend not from the bolt of fate the brave:  
 " No note the clarion of Renown can breathe,  
 " T' alarm the lone night of the lonely grave,  
 " Or check the headlong haste of Time's o'erwhelm-  
 " ing wave.

## 35

" Ah, what avails it to have traced the springs  
 " That whirl of empire the stupendous wheel!  
 " Ah, what have I to do with conquering kings,  
 " Hands drenched in blood, and breasts begirt with  
 " steel!  
 " To those whom Nature taught to think and feel,  
 " Heroes, alas! are things of small concern.  
 " Could History man's secret heart reveal,  
 " And what imports a heaven-born mind to learn,  
 " Her transcripts to explore what bosom would not  
 " yearn!

## 36

" This praise, O Cheronean Sage†, is thine.  
 " (Why should this praise to thee alone belong!)  
 " All else from Nature's moral path decline,  
 " Lured by the toys that captivate the throng;  
 " To herd in cabinets and camps, among,  
 " Spoil, carnage, and the cruel pomp of pride;  
 " Or chaunt of heraldry the drowsy song,  
 " How tyrant blood, o'er many a region wide,  
 " Rolls to a thousand thrones its execrable tide.

---

† Plutarch.

## 37

" O who of man the story will unfold,  
 " Ere victory and empire wrought annoy,  
 " In that elysian age (misnamed of gold)  
 " The age of love, and innocence, and joy,  
 " When all were great and free ! man's sole employ  
 " To deck the bosom of his parent earth ;  
 " Or toward his bower the murmuring stream decoy,  
 " To aid the floweret's long-expected birth,  
 " And lull the bed of peace, and crown the board  
 " of mirth.

## 38

" Sweet were your shades, O ye primeval groves,  
 " Whose boughs to man his food and shelter lent,  
 " Pure in his pleasures, happy in his loves,  
 " His eyes still smiling, and his heart content.  
 " Then, hand in hand, Health, Sport, and Labor went,  
 " Nature supplied the wish she taught to crave,  
 " None prowled for prey, none watched to circum-  
 " vent,  
 " To all an equal lot Heaven's bounty gave :  
 " No vassal feared his lord, no tyrant feared his slave.

## 39

" But ah ! th' Historic Muse has never dared  
 " To pierce those hallowed bowers; 'tis Fancy's beam  
 " Poured on the vision of the enraptured Bard,  
 " That paints the charms of that delicious theme.  
 " Then hail sweet Fancy's ray ! and hail the dream  
 " That weans the weary soul from guilt and woe !  
 " Careless what others of my choice may deem,  
 " I long where Love and Fancy lead to go,  
 " And meditate on heaven ; enough of earth I  
 " know."



## 40

" I cannot blame thy choice, (the Sage replied),  
 " For soft and smooth are Fancy's flowery ways.  
 " And yet, even there, if left without a guide,  
 " The young adventurer unsafely plays.  
 " Eyes dazzled long by Fiction's gaudy rays  
 " In modest Truth no light nor beauty find.  
 " And who, my child, would trust the meteor-blaze,  
 " That soon must fail, and leave the wanderer blind,  
 " More dark and helpless far, than if it ne'er had  
 " shined?

## 41

" Fancy enervates, while it soothes, the heart,  
 " And, while it dazzles, wounds the mental sight;  
 " To joy each heightening charm it can impart,  
 " But wraps the hour of wo in tenfold night.  
 " And often, where no real ills affright,  
 " Its visionary fiends, an endless train,  
 " Assail with equal or superior might,  
 " And through the throbbing heart, and dizzy brain,  
 " And shivering nerves, shoot stings of more than  
 " mortal pain.

## 42

" And yet, alas! the real ills of life,  
 " Claim the full vigor of a mind prepared,  
 " Prepared for patient, long, laborious strife,  
 " Its guide Experience, and Truth its guard.  
 " We fare on earth as other men have fared.  
 " Were they successful? Let not us despair.  
 " Was disappointment oft their sole reward?  
 " Yet shall their tale instruct, if it declare,  
 " How they have borne the load ourselves are doom-  
 " ed to bear.

## 43

" What charms th' Historic Muse adorn, from spoils,  
 " And blood, and tyrants, when she wings her flight,  
 " To hail the patriot Prince, whose pious toils  
 " Sacred to science, liberty, and right,  
 " And peace, through every age divinely bright  
 " Shall shine the boast and wonder of mankind!  
 " Sees yonder sun, from his meridian height,  
 " A lovelier scene, than Virtue thus enshrined  
 " In power, and man with man for mutual aid com-  
 " bined?

## 44

" Hail sacred Polity, by Freedom reared!  
 " Hail sacred Freedom, when by Law restrained!  
 " Without you what were man? A grovelling herd  
 " In darkness, wretchedness, and want enchained.  
 " Sublimed by you, the Greek and Roman reigned  
 " In arts unrivalled; O, to latest days,  
 " In Albion may your influence unprofaned  
 " To godlike worth the generous bosom raise,  
 " And prompt the Sage's lore, and fire the Poet's lays.

## 45

" But now let other themes our care engage,  
 " For lo, with modest yet majestic grace,  
 " To curb Imagination's lawless rage,  
 " And from within the cherished heart to brace,  
 " Philosophy appears. The gloomy race  
 " By Indolence and moping Fancy bred,  
 " Fear, Discontent, Solitude give place,  
 " And Hope and Courage brighten in their stead,  
 " While on the kindling soul her vital beams are shed.

## 46

" Then waken from long lethargy to life\*  
 " The seeds of happiness, and powers of thought,  
 " Then jarring appetites forego their strife,  
 " A strife by ignorance to madness wrought.  
 " Pleasure by savage man is dearly bought  
 " With fell revenge, lust that defies control  
 " With gluttony and death. The mind untaught  
 " Is a dark waste, where fiends and tempests howl ;  
 " As Phœbus to the world, is Science to the soul.

## 47

" And Reason now thro' Number, Time, and Space,  
 " Darts the keen lustre of her serious eye,  
 " And learns, from facts compared, the laws to trace,  
 " Whose long progression leads to Deity.  
 " Can mortal strength presume to soar so high !  
 " Can mortal sight, so oft bedimmed with tears.  
 " Such glory bear ! for lo, the shadows fly  
 " From Nature's face ; Confusion disappears,  
 " And Order charms the eyes, and Harmony the ears.

## 48

" In the deep windings of the grove, no more  
 " The hag obscene, and grisly phantom dwell ;  
 " Nor in the fall of mountain-stream, or roar  
 " Of winds, is heard the angry spirit's yell ;

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\* The influence of the Philosophic Spirit, in humanizing the mind, and preparing it for intellectual exertion and delicate pleasure ;—in exploring, by the help of geometry, the system of the universe ;—in banishing superstition ;—in promoting navigation, agriculture, medicine, and moral and political science :—from Stanza 46. to Stanza 56.

" No wizard mutters the tremendous spell,  
 " Nor sinks convulsive in prophetic swoon ;  
 " Nor bids the noise of drums and trumpets swell,  
 " To ease of fancied pangs the laboring moon,  
 " Or chase the shade that blots the blazing orb of noon.

## 49

" Many a long lingering year, in lonely isle,  
 " Stunned with th' eternal turbulence of waves,  
 " Lo, with dim eyes, that never learned to smile,  
 " And trembling hands, the famished native craves  
 " Of heaven his wretched fare ; shivering in caves,  
 " Or scorched on rocks, he pines from day to day ;  
 " But Science gives the word ; and lo, he braves  
 " The surge and tempest, lighted by her ray,  
 " And to a happier land wafts merrily away.

## 50

" And even where Nature loads the teeming plain  
 " With the full pomp of vegetable store,  
 " Her bounty, unimproved, is deadly bane ;  
 " Dark woods and rankling wilds from shore to shore  
 " Stretch their enormous gloom ; which to explore  
 " Even Fancy trembles, in her sprightliest mood ;  
 " For there, each eye-ball gleams with lust of gore,  
 " Nestles each murderous and each monstrous brood,  
 " Plague lurks in every shade, and streams from  
 " every flood.

## 51

" 'Twas from Philosophy man learned to tame  
 " The soil by plenty to intemperance fed.  
 " Lo, from the echoing-ax, and thundering flame,  
 " Poison and plague and yelling rage are fled.

" The waters, bursting from their slimy bed,  
 " Bring health and melody to every vale :  
 " And, from the breezy main, and mountain's head,  
 " Ceres and Flora, to the sunny dale,  
 " To fan their glowing charms; invite the fluttering  
 " gale.

## 52

" What dire necessities on every hand  
 " Our art, our strength, our fortitude require !  
 " Of foes intestine what a numerous band  
 " Against this little throb of life conspire !  
 " Yct Science can elude their fatal ire  
 " A while, and turn aside Death's levelled dart,  
 " Sooth the sharp pang, allay the fever's fire,  
 " And braee the nerves once more, and cheer the heart,  
 " And yet a few soft nights and balmy days impart.

## 53

" Nor less to regulate man's moral frame  
 " Science exerts her all-composing sway.  
 " Flutters thy breast with fear or pants for fame,  
 " Or pines to Indolence and Spleen a prey,  
 " Or Avarice, a fiend more fierce than they?  
 " Flee to the shade of Aeademus' grove ;  
 " Where eares molest not, diseord melts away  
 " In harmony, and the pure passions prove  
 " How sweet the words of truth, breathed from the  
 " lips of Love.

## 54

" What cannot Art and Industry perform,  
 " When Science plans the progress of their toil !

" They smile at penury, disease, and storm ;  
 " And oceans from their mighty mounds recoil.  
 " When tyrants scourge, or demagogues embroil  
 " A land, or when the rabble's headlong rage  
 " Order transforms to anarchy and spoil,  
 " Deep-versed in man the philosophic Sage  
 " Prepares with lenient hand their phrenzy to assuage.

## 55

" 'Tis he alone, whose comprehensive mind,  
 " From situation, temper, soil, and clime  
 " Explored, a nation's various powers can bind,  
 " And various orders, in one form sublime  
 " Of policy, that, midst the wrecks of time,  
 " Secure shall lift its head on high, nor fear  
 " Th' assault of foreign or domestic crime,  
 " While public faith, and public love sincere,  
 " And industry and law maintain their sway severe."

## 56

Enraptured by the Hermit's strain, the Youth  
 Proceeds the path of Science to explore.  
 And now, expanding to the beams of Truth,  
 New energies, and charms unknown before,  
 His mind discloses: Fancy now no more  
 Wantons on fickle pinion thro' the skies ;  
 But, fix'd in aim, and conscious of her power,  
 Sublime from cause to cause exults to rise,  
 Creation's blended stores arranging as she flies.

## 57

Nor love of novelty alone inspires,  
 Their laws and nice dependencies to scan ;

For, mindful of the aids that life requires,  
 And of the services man owes to man,  
 He meditates new arts on Nature's plan ;  
 The cold desponding breast of Sloth to warm,  
 The flame of Industry and Genius fan,  
 And Emulation's noble rage alarm,  
 And the long hours of Toil and Solitude to charm.

## 58

But She, who set on fire his infant heart,  
 And all his-dreams, and all his wanderings shared,  
 And blessed the Muse, and her celestial art,  
 Still claim th' Enthusiast's fond and first regard.  
 From Nature's beauties variously compared  
 And variously combined, he learns to frame  
 Those forms of bright perfection †, which the Bard,  
 While boundless hopes and boundless views inflame,  
 Enamoured consecrates to never-dying fame.

## 59

Of late, with cumbersome, though pompous show,  
 Edwin would oft his flowery rhyme deface,  
 Through ardor to adorn ; but Nature now  
 To his experienced eye a modest grace  
 Presents, where ornament the second place  
 Holds, to intrinsic worth and just design  
 Subservient still. Simplicity apace  
 Tempers his rage : he owns her charm divine,  
 And clears th' ambiguous phrase, and lops th' un-  
 wieldy line.

† General ideas of excellence, the immediate archetypes of sublime imitation, both in painting and in poetry. See Aristotle's *Poetics*, and the *Discourses* of Sir Joshua Reynolds.



## 60

Fain would I sing (much yet unsung remains)  
 What sweet delirium o'er his bosom stole,  
 When the great Shepherd of the Mantuan plains\*  
 His deep majestic melody 'gan roll;  
 Fain would I sing, what transport stormed his soul,  
 How the red current throbb'd his veins along,  
 When, like Pelides, bold beyond control,  
 Without art graceful, without effort strong,  
 Homer raised high to heaven, the loud, th' impetuous  
 song.

## 61

And now his lyre, though rude her first essays,  
 Now skilled to sooth, to triumph, to complain,  
 Warbling at will through each harmonious maze,  
 Was taught to modulate the artful strain,  
 I fain would sing; but ah! I strive in vain.  
 Sighs from a breaking heart my voice confound.  
 With trembling step, to join yon weeping train,  
 I haste, where gleams funeral glare around,  
 And, mix'd with shrieks of woe, the knells of death  
 resound.

## 62

Adieu, ye lays, that Fancy's flowers adorn,  
 The soft amusement of the vacant mind!  
 He sleeps in dust, and all the Muses mourn,  
 He, whom each virtue fired, each grace refined,  
 Friend, teacher, pattern, darling of mankind†!

\* Virgil.

† This excellent person, died suddenly on the 10th of February 1773. The conclusion of the poem was written a few days after.



---

He sleeps in dust Ah, how shall I pursue  
My theme! To heart-consuming grief resigned  
Here on his recent grave I fix my view,  
And pour my bitter tears. Ye flowery lays, adieu!

## 63

Art thou, my GREGORY, for ever fled!  
And am I left to unavailing woe!  
When fortune's storms assail this weary head,  
Where cares long since have shed untimely snow,  
Ah, now for comfort whither shall I go!  
No more thy soothing voice my anguish cheers;  
'Thy placid eyes with smiles no longer glow,  
My hopes to cherish, and allay my fears,  
'Tis meet that I should mourn: flow forth afresh my  
tears.

POEMS

ON

SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

RETIREMENT.

1758.

**W**HEN in the crimson cloud of Even  
The lingering light decays,  
And Hesper on the front of heaven  
His glittering gem displays;  
Deep in the silent vale, unseen,  
Beside a lulling stream,  
A pensive Youth of placid mien  
Indulged his tender theme.

Ye cliffs, in hoary grandeur piled  
High o'er the glimmering dale;  
Ye woods, along whose windings wild  
Murmurs the solemn gale;

---

Where Melancholy strays forlorn,  
And Wo retires to weep,  
What time the wan moon's yellow horn  
Gleams on the western deep:

To you, ye wastes, whose artless charms  
Ne'er drew Ambition's eye,  
Scaped a tumultuous world's alarms,  
To your retreats I fly.  
Deep in your most sequestered bower  
Let me at last recline,  
Where Solitude, mild, modest Power,  
Leans on her ivyed shrine.

How shall I woo thee, matchless fair!  
'Thy heavenly smile how win!  
Thy smile, that smooths the brow of Care,  
And stills the storm within.  
O wilt thou to thy favorite grove  
Thine ardent votary bring,  
And bless his hours, and bid them move,  
Serene, on silent wing.

Oft let remembrance sooth his mind  
With dreams of former days,  
When in the lap of Peace reclined  
He framed his infant lays;  
When Fancy roved at large, nor Care  
Nor cold Distrust alarmed,  
Nor Envy with malignant glare  
His simple youth had harmed.

'Twas then, O Solitude, to thee  
His early vows were paid,

---

From heart sincere, and warm and free,  
Devoted to the shade.

Ah why did Fate his steps decoy  
In stormy paths to roam,  
Remote from all congenial joy !  
O take the Wanderer home.

Thy shades, thy silence, now be mine,  
Thy charms my only theme ;  
My haunt the hollow cliff, whose pine  
Waves o'er the gloomy stream,  
Whence the scared owl, on pinions grey,  
Breaks from the rustling boughs,  
And down the lone vale sails away  
To more profound repose.

O while to thee the woodland pours  
Its wildly warbling song,  
And balmy from the bank of flowers  
The zephyr breathes along ;  
Let no rude sound invade from far,  
No vagrant foot be nigh,  
No ray from Grandeur's gilded car,  
Flash on the startled eye.

But if some pilgrim thro' the glade,  
Thy hallowed bowers explore,  
O guard from harm his hoary head,  
And listen to his lore ;  
For he of joys divine shall tell  
That wean from earthly wo,  
And triumph o'er the mighty spell  
That chains this heart below.

---

For me no more the path invites  
Ambition loves to tread ;  
No more I climb those toilsome heights  
By guileful Hope misled ;  
Leaps my fond fluttering heart no more  
To Mirth's enlivening strain ;  
For present pleasure soon is o'er,  
And all the past is vain.

---

## ELEGY.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1758.

Still shall unthinking man substantial deem  
The forms that fleet thro' life's deceitful dream ?  
Till at some stroke of Fate the vision flies,  
And sad realities in prospect rise ;  
And, from elysian slumbers rudely torn,  
The startled soul awakes, to think, and mourn.

O ye, whose hours in jocund train advance,  
Whose spirits to the song of gladness dance,  
Who flowery plains in endless pomp survey,  
Glittering in beams of visionary day ;  
O, yet while Fate delays th' impending wo,  
Be roused to thought, anticipate the blow ;

Lest, like the lightning's glance, the sudden ill  
Flash to confound, and penetrate to kill ;  
Lest, thus encompassed with funereal gloom,  
Like me, ye bend o'er some untimely tomb,  
Pour your wild ravings in Night's frighted ear,  
And half pronounce Heaven's sacred doom severe.

Wise, Bounteous, Good ! O every grace combined,  
That charms the eye, or captivates the mind !  
Fresh as the floweret opening on the morn ;  
Whose leaves bright drops of liquid pearl adorn !  
Sweet, as the downy-pinioned gale, that roves  
To gather fragrance in Arabian groves !  
Mild, as the melodies at close of day,  
That heard remote, along the vale decay !  
Yet, why with these compared ? - What tints so fine,  
What sweetness, mildness, can be matched with  
thine ?

Why roam abroad ! Since recollection true  
Restores the lovely form to Fancy's view ?  
Still let me gaze, and every care beguile,  
Gaze on that cheek, where all the Graces smile ;  
That soul-expressing eye, benignly bright,  
Where Meekness beams ineffable delight ;  
That brow, where Wisdom sits enthroned serene,  
Each feature forms, and dignifies the mien :  
Still let me listen, while her words impart  
The sweet effusions of the blameless heart,  
Till all my soul, each tumult charmed away,  
Yields, gently led, to Virtue's easy sway.

By thee inspired, O Virtue, Age is young,  
And music warbles from the faltering tongue :

---

Thy ray creative cheers the clouded brow,  
And decks the faded cheek with rosy glow,  
Brightens the joyless aspect, and supplies  
Pure heavenly lustre to the languid eyes ;  
But when Youth's living bloom reflects thy beams,  
Resistless on the view the glory streams,  
Love, Wonder, Joy, alternately alarm,  
And Beauty dazzles with angelic charm.

Ah whither fled ! Ye dear illusions stay ;  
Lo, pale and silent lies the lovely clay.  
How are the roses on that cheek decayed,  
Which late the purple light of youth displayed !  
Health on her form each sprightly grace bestowed ;  
With life and thought each speaking feature glowed.  
Fair was the blossoms, soft the vernal sky ;  
Elate with hope we deemed no tempest nigh ;  
When lo, a whirlwind's instantaneous gust  
Left all its beauties withering in the dust.

Cold the soft hand, that soothed Woe's weary head!  
And quenched the eye, the pitying tear that shed !  
And mute the voice, whose pleasing accents stole,  
Infusing balm, into the rankled soul !  
O death, why arm with cruelty thy power,  
And spare the idle weed, yet lop the flower !  
Why fly thy shafts in lawless error driven !  
Is Virtue then no more the care of Heaven !  
But peace, bold thought ! be still my bursting heart!  
We, not ELIZA, felt the fatal dart.  
Escaped the dungeon docs the slave complain,  
Nor bless the friendly hand that broke the chain ?  
Say, pines not Virtue for the lingering morn,

---

On this dark wild condemned to roam forlorn ?  
Where Reason's meteor-rays, with sickly glow,  
O'er the dun gleam a dreadful glimmering throw ?  
Disclosing dubious to th' affrighted eye  
O'erwhelming mountains tottering from on high,  
Black billowy deeps in storms perpetual tossed,  
And weary ways in wildering labyrinths lost.  
O happy stroke, that bursts the bonds of clay,  
Darts through the rending gloom the blaze of day,  
And wings the soul with boundless flight to soar,  
Where dangers threat, and fears alarm no more.

Transporting thought ! here let me wipe away  
The tear of grief, and wake a bolder lay.  
But ah ! the swimming eye o'erflows anew,  
Nor check the sacred drops to pity due ;  
Lo, where in speechless, hopeless anguish, bend  
O'er her loved dust, the Parent, Brother, Friend !  
How vain the hope of man ! But cease thy strain,  
Nor Sorrow's dread solemnity profane ;  
Mixed with yon drooping Mourners, on her bier  
In silence shed the sympathetic tear.

---



## ODE TO HOPE.

## I. 1.

O THOU, who glad'st the pensive soul,  
More than Aurora's smile the swain forlorn,  
Left all night long to mourn  
Where desolation frowns, and tempests howl ;  
And shrieks of Woe, as intermits the storm,  
Far o'er the monstrous wilderness resound,  
And cross the gloom darts many a shapeless form,  
And many a fire-eyed visage glares around.  
O come, and be once more my guest.  
Come, for thou oft thy suppliant's vow hast heard,  
And oft with smiles indulgent cheered  
And soothed him into rest.

## I. 2.

Smit by thy rapture-beaming eye  
Deep flashing thro' the midnight of their mind,  
The sable bands combine,  
Where Fear's black banner bloats the troubled sky,  
Appalled retire. Suspicion hides her head,  
Nor dares th' obliquely gleaming eye-ball raise ;  
Despair, with gorgon figured veil o'erspread,  
Speeds to dark Phlegethon's detested maze.  
Lo, startled at the heavenly ray,  
With speed unwonted Indolence upsprings,  
And, heaving, lifts her leaden wings,  
And sullen glides away :

## I. 3.

Ten thousand forms, by pining Fancy viewed,  
 Dissolve.—Above the sparkling flood  
 When Phœbus rears his awful brow,  
 From lengthened lawn and valley low  
 The troops of fen-born mists retire.  
 Along the plain  
 The joyous swain  
 Eyes the gay villages again,  
 And gold-illumined spire ;  
 While on the billowy ether borne  
 Floats the loose lay's jovial measure ;  
 And light along the fairy Pleasure,  
 Her green robes glittering to the morn,  
 Wantons on silken wing. And goblins all  
 To the damp dungeon shrink, or hoary hall,  
 Or westward, with impetuous flight,  
 Shoot to the desert realms of their congenial Night.

## II. 1.

When first on Childhood's eager gaze  
 Life's varied landscape, stretched immense around,  
 Starts out of night profound,  
 Thy voice incites to tempt th' untrodden maze.  
 Fond he surveys thy mild maternal face,  
 His bashful eye still kindling as he views,  
 And, while thy lenient arm supports his pacc,  
 With beating heart the upland path pursues :  
 The path that leads, where, hung sublime,  
 And seen afar, youth's gallant trophies, bright  
 In Fancy's rainbow ray, invite  
 His wingy nerves to climb.

## II. 2.

Pursue thy pleasurable way,  
Safe in the guidance of thy heavenly guard,  
While melting airs are heard,  
And soft-eyed cherub forms around thee play :  
Simplicity, in careless flowers arrayed,  
Prattling amusive in his accent meek ;  
And Modesty, half turning as afraid,  
The smile just dimpling on his glowing cheek ;  
Content and Leisure, hand in hand  
With Innocence and Peace, advance and sing  
And Mirth, in many a mazy ring,  
Frisks o'er the flowery land.

## II. 3.

Frail man, how various is thy lot below !  
To-day tho' gales propitious blow,  
And Peace soft gliding down the sky  
Lead Love along and Harmony,  
To-morrow the gay scene deforms ;  
Then all around  
The thunder's sound  
Rolls rattling on thro' heaven's profound,  
And down rush all the storms,  
Ye days, that balmy influence shed,  
When sweet Childhood, ever sprightly,  
In paths of pleasure sported lightly,  
Whither, ah whither are ye fled !  
Ye cherub train, that brought him on his way,  
O leave him not midst tumult and dismay ;  
For now youth's eminence he gains :  
But what a weary length of lingering toil remains !

## III. 1.

They shrink, they vanish into air.  
 Now Slander taints with pestilence the gale ;  
 And mingling cries assail,  
 The wail of Woe, and groan of dim Despair.  
 Lo, wizard Envy from his serpent eye  
 Darts quick destruction in each baleful glance ;  
 Pride, smiling stern, and yellow Jealousy,  
 Frowning Disdain, and Haggard Hate advance ;  
 Behold, amidst the dire array,  
 Pale wither'd Care his giant-stature rears,  
 And lo, his iron hand prepares  
 To grasp its feeble prey.

## III. 2.

Who now will guard bewildered youth  
 Safe from the fierce assaults of hostile rage ?  
 Such war can Virtue wage,  
 Virtue, that bears the sacred shield of Truth ?  
 Alas ! full oft on Guilt's victorious car  
 The spoils of Virtue are in triumph borne ;  
 While the fair captive, marked with many a scar,  
 In lone obscurity, oppressed, forlorn,  
 Resigns to tears her angel form.  
 Ill-fated youth, then whither wilt thou fly ?  
 No friend, no shelter now is nigh,  
 And onward rolls the storm.

## III. 3.

But whence the sudden beam that shoots along !  
 Why shrink aghast the hostile throng ?  
 Lo, from amidst Affliction's night,  
 Hope bursts all radiant on the sight :

---

Her words the troubled bosom sooth.

“ Why thus dismayed ?

“ Though foes invade,

“ Hope ne'er is wanting to their aid,

“ Who tread the path of truth.

“ 'Tis I, who smooth the rugged way,

“ I, who close the eyes of Sorrow,

“ And with glad visions of to-morrow

“ Repair the weary soul's decay.

“ When Death's cold touch thrills to the freezing  
“ heart,

“ Dreams of heaven's opening glories I impart,

“ Till the freed spirit springs on high

“ In rapture too severe for weak mortality.

## PYGMÆO-GERANO-MACHIA,

THE

## BATTLE OF THE PYGMIES AND CRANES.

FROM THE LATIN OF ADDISON.

1762.

THE Pygmy-people, and the feathered train,  
 Mingling in mortal combat on the plain,  
 I sing. Ye Muses, favor my designs,  
 Lead on my squadrons, and arrange the lines;  
 The flashing swords and fluttering wings display,  
 And long bills nibbling in the bloody fray;  
 Cranes darting with disdain on tiny foes,  
 Conflicting birds and men, and war's unnumbered  
 woes.

The wars and woes of heroes six feet high  
 Have oft resounded in Pierian song.  
 Who has not heard of Colcho's golden fleece;  
 And Argo manned with all the flower of Greece?  
 Of Thebes' fell brethren, Theseus stern of face,  
 And Peleus' son unrivalled in the race,  
 Eneas, founder of the Roman line,  
 And William glorious on the banks of Boyne?  
 Who has not learned to weep at Pompey's woes,  
 And over Blackmore's Epic page to doze?

---

'Tis I, who dare attempt unusual strains,  
Of hosts unsung, and unfrequented plains ;  
The small shrill trump, the chiefs of little size,  
And armies rushing down the darkened skies.  
Where India reddens to the early dawn,  
Winds a deep vale from vulgar eye withdrawn :  
Bosomed in groves the lowly region lies,  
And rocky mountains round the border rise.  
Here, till the doom of fate its fall decreed,  
The empire flourished of the pygmy-breed ;  
Here Industry performed, and Genius planned,  
And busy multitudes o'erspread the land.  
But now to these lone bounds if pilgrim stray,  
Tempting through craggy cliffs the desperate way,  
He finds the puny mansion fallen to the earth,  
Its godlings mouldering on the abandoned hearth ;  
And starts, where small white bones are spread around,  
" Or little footsteps lightly print the ground ;"  
While the proud crane her nest securely builds,  
Chattering amid the desolated fields.

But different fates befel her hostile rage,  
While reigned, invincible through many an age,  
The dreaded Pygmy : roused by war's alarms  
Forth rushed the madding Mannikin to arms.  
Fierce to the field of death the hero flies ;  
The faint crane fluttering flaps the ground, and dies ;  
And by the victor borne (o'erwhelming load !)  
With bloody bill loose-dangling marks the road.  
And oft the wily dwarf in ambush lay,  
And often made the callow young his prey ;  
With slaughtered victims heaped his board and smiled  
To avenge the parent's trespass on the child.

Oft, where his feathered foe had reared her nest,  
 And laid her eggs and household gods to rest,  
 Burning for blood, in terrible array,  
 The eighteen-inch militia burst their way.  
 All went to wreck; the infant foeman fell,  
 When scarce his chirping bill had broke the shell.

Loud uproar hence, the rage of arms arose,  
 And the fell rancor of encountering foes;  
 Hence dwarfs and cranes one general havock whelms,  
 And Death's grim visage scares the pygmy realms.  
 Not half so furious blazed the warlike fire  
 Of Mice, high theme of the Meonian lyre;  
 When bold to battle marched th' accoutered frogs,  
 And the deep tumult thundered thro' the bogs.  
 Pierced by the javelin-bulrush on the shore  
 Here agonizing rolled the mouse in gore;  
 And there the frog (a scene full sad to see!)  
 Shorn of one leg slow sprawled along on three;  
 He vaults no more with vigorous hops on high,  
 But mourns in hoarsest croaks his destiny.  
 And now the day of woe drew on apace,  
 A day of woe to all the pygmy race,  
 When dwarfs were doomed (but penitence was vain)  
 To rue each broken egg, and chicken slain.  
 For roused to vengeance by repeated wrong  
 From distant climes the long-billed legions throng.  
 From Strymon's lake, Cayster's plashy meads,  
 And fens of Scythia, green with rustling reeds;  
 From where the Danube winds through many a land,  
 And Mareotis laves th' Egyptian strand,  
 To rendezvous they waft on eager wing,  
 And wait assembled the returning spring.



---

Meanwhile they trim their plumes for length of  
flight,  
Whet their keen beaks, and twisting claws, for fight ;  
Each crane the pygmy power in thought o'erturns,  
And every bosom for the battle burns.

When genial gales the frozen air unbind,  
The screaming legions wheel, and mount the wind.  
Far in the sky they form their long array,  
And land and ocean stretched immense survey  
Deep deep beneath ; and, triumphing in pride,  
With clouds and winds commixed, innumeros  
ride ;

'Tis wild obstreperous clangor all, and heaven  
Whirls, in tempestuous undulation driven.  
Nor less the alarm that shook the world below,  
Where marched in pomp of war th' embattled foe ;  
Where mannikins with haughty step advance,  
And grasp the shield, and couch the quivering lance.  
To right and left the lengthening lines they form,  
And ranked in deep array await the storm.

High in the midst the chieftain-dwarf was seen,  
Of giant stature, and imperial mien.  
Full twenty inches tall he strode along,  
And viewed with lofty eye the wondering throng ;  
And, while with many a scar his visage frown'd,  
Bared his broad bosom rough with many a wound  
Of beaks and claws, disclosing to their sight  
The glorious meed of high heroic might.  
For with insatiate vengeance, he pursued,  
And never-ending hate, the feathery brood.

Unhappy they, confiding in the length  
 Of horney beak, or talon's crooked strength,  
 Who durst abide his rage; the blade descends,  
 And from the panting trunk the pinion rends.  
 Laid low in dust the pinion waves no more,  
 The trunk disfigured stiffens in its gore.  
 What hosts of heroes fell beneath his force!  
 What heaps of chicken carnage marked his course!  
 How oft, O Strymon, thy lone banks along,  
 Did wailing echo waft the funeral song!

And now from far the mingling clamors rise,  
 Loud and more loud rebounding thro' the skies.  
 From skirt to skirt of heaven, with stormy sway,  
 A cloud rolls on, and darkens all the day.  
 Near and more near descends the dreadful shade,  
 And now in battailous array displayed,  
 On sounding wings, and screaming in their ire,  
 The cranes rush onward, and the fight require.

The pygmy warriors eye with fearless glare  
 The host thick swarming o'er the burthened air;  
 Thick swarming now, but to their native land  
 Doomed to return a scanty straggling band.—  
 When sudden, darting down the depth of heaven,  
 Fierce on th' expecting foe the cranes are driven.  
 The kindling phrensy every bosom warms,  
 The region echoes to the crash of arms;  
 Loose feathers from the encountering armies fly,  
 And in careering whirlwinds mount the sky.  
 To breathe from toil upsprings the panting crane,  
 Then with fresh vigor downward darts again.

---

Success in equal balance hovering hangs.  
Here, on the sharp spear, mad with mortal pangs,  
The bird transfixed in bloody vortex whirls,  
Yet fierce in death the threatening talon curls;  
There, while the life-blood bubbles from his wound,  
With little feet the pygmy beats the ground ;  
Deep from his breast the short short sob he draws,  
And dying curses the keen-pointed claws.  
Trembles the thundering field, thick covered o'er  
With falchions, mangled wings, and streaming gore.  
And pygmy arms, and beaks of ample size,  
And here a claw, and there a finger lies.

Encompassed round with heaps of slaughtered foes,  
All grim in blood the pygmy champion glows.  
And on th' assailing host impetuous springs,  
Careless of nibbling bills, and flapping wings :  
And midst the tumult wheresoe'er he turns,  
The battle with redoubled fury burns ;  
From every side th' avenging cranes amain  
Throng, to o'erwhelm this terror of the plain.  
When suddenly (for such the will of Jove)  
A fowl enormous, sousing from above,  
The gallant chieftain clutched, and, soaring high,  
(Sad chance of battle !) bore him up the sky.  
The cranes pursue, and, clustering in a ring,  
Chatter triumphant round the captive king.  
But ah ! what pangs each pygmy bosom wrung,  
When, now to cranes a prey, on talons hung,  
High in the clouds they saw their helpless lord,  
His wriggling form still lessening as he soared.

Lo yet again with unabated rage,  
In mortal strife the mingling hosts engage.  
The crane with darted bill assaults the foe,  
Hovering; then wheels aloft to 'scape the blow:  
The dwarf in anguish aims the vengeful wound;  
But whirls in empty air the fateful round.  
Such was the scene, when midst the loud alarms  
Sublime th' Eternal Thunderer rose in arms.  
When Briareus, by mad ambition driven,  
Heaved Pelion huge, and hurled it high at heaven.  
Jove rolled redoubling thunders from on high,  
Mountains and bolts encountered in the sky;  
Till one stupendous ruin whelmed the crew,  
Their vast limbs weltering wide in brimstone blue.

But now at length the pygmy legions yield,  
And winged with terror fly the fatal field.  
They raise a weak and melancholy wail,  
All in distraction scattering o'er the vale,  
Prone on their routed rear the cranes descend;  
Their bills bite furious, and their talons rend:  
With unrelenting ire they urge the chase,  
Sworn to exterminate the hated race.

'Twas thus the Pygmy Name, once great in war,  
For spoils of conquered cranes renowned afar,  
Perished. For, by the dread decree of heaven,  
Short is the date to earthly grandeur given,  
And vain are all attempts to roam beyond  
Where Fate has fixed the everlasting bound.  
Fallen are the trophies of Assyrian power,  
And Persia's proud dominion is no more;

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Yea, though to both superior far in fame,  
Thine empire, Latium is an empty name.  
And now with lofty chiefs of ancient time  
The pygmy heroes roam the Elysian clime.  
Or, if belief to matron-tales be due,  
Full oft, in the belated shepherd's view,  
Their frisking forms, in gentle green arrayed,  
Gambol secure along the moonlight glade.  
Secure, for no alarming cranes molest,  
And all their woes in long oblivion rest,  
Down the deep vale, and narrow winding way,  
They foot it featly, ranged in ringlets gay:  
'Tis joy and frolic all, where'er they rove,  
And Fairy-people is the name they love.

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## EPISTLE

## TO THE HONOURABLE C. B.

WHEN B\*\*\* invites me, and inviting sings,  
 Instant I'd fly, (had heaven vouchsafed me wings),  
 To hail him in that calm sequestered seat,  
 Whence he looks down with pity on the great ;  
 And, midst the groves retired, at leisure woos  
 Domestic love, contentment, and the Muse.  
 I wish for wings and winds to speed my course ;  
 Since B-----t and the fates refuse a horse.

Where now the Pegasus of ancient time,  
 And Ippogrifo famed in modern rhyme ?  
 O where that wooden steed, whose every leg  
 Like lightning flew, obsequious to the peg ;  
 The waxen wings by Dedalus designed,  
 And China waggons wafted by the wind ?  
 A Spaniard reached the moon, upborn by geese ;  
 (Then first 'twas known that she is made of cheese.)  
 A fiddler on a fish through waves advanced,  
 He twanged his catgut, and the Dolphin danced.  
 Hags rode on broom-sticks, heathen-gods on clouds ;  
 Ladies on rams and bulls have dared the floods.  
 Much famed the shoes Jack Giant-killer wore,  
 And Fortunatus' hat is famed much more,  
 Such vehicles were common once, no doubt,  
 But modern versemen must even trudge on foot,  
 Or doze at home, expectants of the gout. }

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Hard is the task, indeed 'tis wondrous hard  
 To act the Hirer\*, yet preserve the Bard.  
 "Next week by —— (but 'tis a sin to swear)  
 "I give my word, Sir, you shall have my mare;  
 "Sound wind and limb, as any ever was,  
 "And rising only seven years old next grass.  
 "Four miles an hour she goes, nor needs a spur;  
 "A pretty piece of flesh, upon my conscience, Sir."

This speech was B——t's; and tho' mean in phrase,  
 The nearest thing to prose, as Horace says,  
 (Satire the fourth, and forty-second line)  
 'Twill intimate that I propose to dine  
 Next week with B\*\*\*. Muse lend thine aid a while;  
 For this great purpose claims a lofty style.

Ere yonder sun, now glorious in the west,  
 Has thrice three times reclined on 'Thetis' breast;  
 Ere thrice three times, from old 'Tithonus' bed,  
 Her charms all glowing with celestial red,  
 The balmy Morn shall rise to mortal view,  
 And from her bright locks shake the pearls of dew,  
 These eyes, O B\*\*\*, shall hail thy opening glades,  
 These ears shall catch the music of thy shades;  
 This cherish'd frame shall drink the gladsome gales,  
 And the fresh fragrance of thy flowery vales.  
 And (for I know the Muse will come along)  
 To B\*\*\* I mean to meditate a song:  
 A song, adorned with every rural charm,  
 Trim as thy garden, ample as thy farm,

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\* One who keeps horses to let is so called in Scotland.  
 See *Johnson's Dictionary*.

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Sweet as thy milk, and brisk as bottled beer,  
Wholesome as mutton, and as water clear,  
In wild flowers fertile, as thy fields of corn,  
And frolicsome as lambs, or sheep new shorn.

I ask not Ortolans, or Chian wine,  
The fat of rams or quintessence of swine.  
Her spicy stores let either India keep,  
Nor El Dorado vend her golden sheep.  
And to the mansion-house, or council-hall,  
Still on her black splay feet may the huge tortoise  
crawl.

Not PARSON's butt my appetite can move,  
Nor, BELL, thy beer; nor even thy nectar, Jove.  
If B\*\*\* be happy, and in health, his guest,  
Whom wit and learning charms, can wish no better  
feast.

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## THE HARES.

## A FABLE.

YES, yes, I grant the sons of earth  
Are doom'd to trouble from their birth.  
We all of sorrow have our share ;  
But say, is your's without compare ?  
Look round the world ; perhaps you'll find  
Each individual of our kind  
Press'd with an equal load of ill,  
Equal at least. Look further still,  
And own your lamentable ease  
Is little short of happiness.  
In yonder hut that stands alone,  
Attend to Famine's feeble moan ;  
Or view the couch where Sickness lies,  
Mark his pale cheek, and languid eyes.  
His frame by strong convulsion torn,  
His struggling sighs, and looks forlorn.  
Or see, transfixed with keener pangs,  
Where o'er his hoard the miser hangs.  
Whistles the wind ; he starts, he stares,  
Nor Slumber's balmy blessings shares ;  
Despair, Remorse, and Terror, roll  
Their tempests on his harass'd soul.

But here perhaps it may avail  
To enforce our reasoning with a tale.

Mild was the morn, the sky serene,  
 The jolly hunting band convene,  
 The beagle's breast with ardour burns,  
 The bounding steed the champaign spurns,  
 And fancy oft the game deseries  
 Thro' the hounds' nose, and huntsman's eyes.

Just then, a council of the Hares  
 Had met, on national affairs.  
 The chiefs were set; while o'er their head  
 The furze its frizzled covering spread.  
 Long lists of grievances were heard,  
 And general discontent appear'd.  
 " Our harmless race shall every savage  
 " Both quadruped and biped ravage?  
 " Shall horses, hounds, and hunters still  
 " Unite their wits to work us ill?  
 " The youth, his parent's sole delight,  
 " Whose tooth the dewy lawns invite,  
 " Whose pulse in every vein beats strong,  
 " Whose limbs leap light the vales along,  
 " May yet ere noontide meet his death,  
 " And lie dismember'd on the heath.  
 " For youth, alas, nor cautious age,  
 " Nor strength, nor speed, eludes their rage.  
 " In every field we meet the foe,  
 " Each gale comes fraught with sounds of woe;  
 " The morning but awakes our fears,  
 " The evening sees us bathed in tears.  
 " But must we ever idly grieve,  
 " Nor strive our fortunes to relieve?  
 " Small is each individual force,  
 " To stratagem be our recourse;

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“ And then, from all our tribes combined,  
“ The murderer to his cost may find  
“ No foes are weak, whom Justice arms,  
“ Whom Concord leads, and Hatred warms.  
“ Be roused ; or liberty acquire,  
“ Or in the great attempt expire.”

He said no more, for in his breast  
Conflicting thoughts the voice suppress'd :  
The fire of vengeance seem'd to stream  
From his swollen eyeball's yellow gleam.

And now the tumults of the war,  
Mingling confus'dly from afar,  
Swell in the wind. Now louder cries  
Distinct of hounds and men arise.  
Forth from the brake, with beating heart,  
Th' assembled Hares tumultuous start,  
And, every straining nerve on wing,  
Away precipitately spring.  
The hunting band, a signal given,  
Thick thundering o'er the plain are driven ;  
O'er cliff abrupt, and shrubby mound,  
And river broad, impetuous bound ;  
Now plunge among the forest shades,  
Glance thro' the openings of the glades ;  
Now all the level valley sweep,  
Now with short steps strain up the steep,  
While backward from the hunter's eyes  
The landscape like a torrent flies,  
At last an ancient wood they gain'd,  
By pruner's axe yet unprofaned  
High o'er the rest, by Nature reared,  
The oak's majestic boughs appeared ;

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Beneath a copse of various hue  
In barbarous luxuriance grew.  
No knife had curb'd the rambling sprays,  
No hand had wove th' implicit maze.  
The flowering thorn self-taught to wind,  
The hazle's stubborn stem entwined;  
And bramble twigs were wreathed around,  
And rough furze crept along the ground.  
Here sheltering, from the sons of murder  
The hares drag their tired limbs no further.

But lo, the western wind ere long  
Was loud, and roared the woods among:  
From rustling leaves, and crashing boughs,  
The sound of woe and war arose.  
The Hares distracted scour the grove,  
As terror and amazement drove;  
But danger, wheresoe'er they fled,  
Still seem'd impending o'er their head.  
Now crowded in a grotto's gloom,  
All hope extinct, they wait their doom.  
Dire was the silence, till at length,  
Even from despair deriving strength,  
With bloody eye, and furious look,  
A daring youth arose, and spoke.

“ O wretched race, the scorn of Fate,  
“ Whom ills of every sort await!  
“ O, cursed with keenest sense to feel  
“ The sharpest sting of every ill!  
“ Say ye, who fraught with mighty scheme,  
“ Of liberty and vengeance dream

" What now remains? To what recess  
 " Shall we our weary steps address,  
 " Since fate is evermore pursuing  
 " All ways and means to work our ruin?  
 " Are we alone, of all beneath,  
 " Condemned to misery worse than death!  
 " Must we, with fruitless labour strive  
 " In misery worse than death to live!  
 " No. Be the smaller ill our choice:  
 " So dictates Nature's powerful voice.  
 " Death's pang will in a moment cease,  
 " And then, All hail, eternal peace!"  
 Thus while he spoke, his words impart  
 The dire resolve to every heart.

A distant lake in prospect lay,  
 That, glittering in the solar ray,  
 Gleam'd thro' the dusky trees, and shot  
 A trembling light along the grot.  
 Thither, with one consent, they bend  
 Their sorrows with their lives to end,  
 While each, in thought, already hears  
 The water hissing in his ears.

Fast by the margin of the lake,  
 Conceal'd within a thorny brake,  
 A linnet sat, whose careless lay  
 Amused the solitary day.  
 Careless he sung, for on his breast  
 Sorrow no lasting trace impress'd;  
 When suddenly he heard a sound  
 Of swift feet traversing the ground.  
 Quick to the neighbouring tree he flies,  
 Thence trembling casts around his eyes;

No foe appeared, his fears were vain ;  
Pleased he renews the sprightly strain.

The Hares, whose noise had caused his fright,  
Saw with surprise the linnet's flight.  
Is there on earth a wretch, they said,  
Whom our approach can strike with dread ?  
An instantaneous change of thought  
To tumult every bosom wrought.  
So fares the system-building sage,  
Who, plodding on from youth to age,  
At last on some foundation dream  
Has rear'd aloft his goodly scheme,  
And proved his predecessors fools,  
And bound all nature by his rules ;  
So fares he in that dreadful hour,  
When injured Truth exerts her power,  
Some new phenomenon to raise ;  
Which, bursting on his frightened gaze,  
From its proud summit to the ground  
Proves the whole edifice unsound.

“ Children,” thus spoke a Hare sedate,  
Who oft had known the extremes of fate,  
“ In slight events the docile mind  
“ May hints of good instruction find.  
“ That our condition is the worst,  
“ And we with such misfortunes curs'd  
“ As all comparison defy,  
“ Was late the universal cry.  
“ When lo, an accident so slight  
“ As yonder little linnet's flight,  
“ Has made your stubborn heart confess  
“ (So your amazement bids me guess)

“ That all our load of woes and fears  
“ Is but a part of what he bears.  
“ Where can he rest secure from harms,  
“ Whom even a helpless Hare alarms?  
“ Yet he repines not at his lot,  
“ When past the danger is forgot :  
“ On yonder bough he trims his wings,  
“ And with unusual rapture sings ;  
“ While we, less wretched, sink beneath  
“ Our lighter ills, and rush to death.—  
“ No more of this unmeaning rage,  
“ But hear, my friends, the words of age.

“ When by the winds of autumn driven  
“ The scatter'd clouds fly cross the heaven,  
“ Oft have we, from some mountain's head,  
“ Beheld th' alternate light and shade  
“ Sweep the long vale. Here hovering lowers,  
“ The shadowy cloud ; there downward pours,  
“ Streaming direct, a flood of day,  
“ Which from the view flies swift away ;  
“ It flies, while other shades advance,  
“ And other streaks of sunshine glance.  
“ Thus chequer'd is the life below  
“ With gleams of joy, and clouds of woe.  
“ Then hope not, while we journey on,  
“ Still to be basking in the sun ;  
“ Nor fear, though now in shades ye mourn,  
“ That sunshine will no more return.  
“ If, by your terrors overcome,  
“ Ye fly before th' approaching gloom,  
“ The rapid clouds your flight pursue,  
“ And darkness still o'ercasts your view.

" Who longs to reach the radiant plain  
 " Must onward urge his course amain ;  
 " For doubly swift the shadow flies,  
 " When 'gainst the gale the pilgrim plies.  
 " At least be firm, and undismayed  
 " Maintain your ground ? the fleeting shade  
 " Erelong spontaneous glides away,  
 " And gives you back th' enlivening ray.  
 " Lo, while I speak, our danger past !  
 " No more the shrill horn's angry blast  
 " Howls in our ear : the savage roar  
 " Of war and murder is no more.  
 " Then snatch the moment fate allows,  
 " Nor think of past or future woes."  
 He spoke ; and hope revives ; the lake  
 That instant one and all forsake,  
 In sweet amusement to employ  
 The present sprightly hour of joy.

Now from the western mountain's brow,  
 Compassed with clouds of various glow,  
 The sun a broader orb displays,  
 And shoots aslope his ruddy rays.  
 The lawn assumes a fresher green,  
 And dew-drops spangle all the scene.  
 The balmy zephyr breathes along,  
 The shepherd sings his tender song,  
 With all their lays the groves resound,  
 And falling waters murmur round ;  
 Discord and care were put to flight,  
 And all was peace, and calm delight.



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 EPITAPH :

BEING PART OF AN INSCRIPTION FOR A MONUMENT TO BE  
ERECTED BY A GENTLEMAN TO THE  
MEMORY OF HIS LADY.

FAREWELL, my best beloved; whose heavenly mind  
Genius with virtue, strength with softness joined;  
Devotion, undebased by pride or art,  
With meek simplicity, and joy of heart;  
Tho' sprightly, gentle; tho' polite, sincere;  
And only of thyself a judge severe;  
Unblamed, unequal'd, in each sphere of life,  
The tenderest Daughter, Sister, Parent, Wife.  
In thee their Patroness th' afflicted lost;  
Thy friends, their pattern, ornament, and boast,  
And I——but ah, can words my loss declare,  
Or paint th' extremes of transport and despair!  
O Thou, beyond what verse or speech can tell,  
My guide, my friend, my best-beloved, farewell!

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 TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE

LADY CHARLOTTE GORDON,

DRESSED IN A TARTAN SCOTCH BONNET, WITH  
PLUMES, &c.

Why, Lady, wilt thou bind thy lovely brow  
With the dread semblance of that warlike helm,  
That nodding plume, and wreath of various glow,  
That graced the chiefs of SCOTIA's antient realm?

Thou knowest that virtue is of power the source,  
 And all her magic to thy eyes is given ;  
 We own their empire, while we feel their force,  
 Beaming with the benignity of heaven.

The plummy helmet, and the martial mien,  
 Might dignify MINERVA's awful charms;  
 But more resistless far th' IDALIAN queen—  
 Smiles, graces, gentleness, her only arras.

## THE HERMIT.

AT the close of the day, when the hamlet is still,  
 And mortals the sweets of forgetfulness prove,  
 When nought but the torrent is heard on the hill,  
 And nought but the nightingale's song in the grove:  
 'Twas thus, by the eave of the mountain afar,  
 While his harp rung symphonious, a Hermit began;  
 No more with himself or with nature at war,  
 He thought as a Sage, tho' he felt as a Man.

- “ Ah why, all abandoned to darkness and wo,  
 “ Why, lone PHILOMELA, that languishing fall?  
 “ For spring shall return, and a lover bestow,  
 “ And sorrow no longer thy bosom enthrall.  
 “ But, if pity inspire thee, renew the sad lay,  
 “ Mourn, sweetest complainer, man calls thee to  
     “ mourn ;  
 “ O soothe him, whose pleasures like thine pass  
     “ away :  
 “ Full quickly they pass—but they never return.

" Now gliding remote, on the verge of the sky,  
 " The moon half extinguished her crescent displays :  
 " But lately I marked, when majestic on high  
 " She shone, and the planets were lost in her blaze,  
 " Roll on, thou fair orb, and with gladness pursue  
 " The path that conducts thee to splendor again,  
 " But Man's faded glory what change shall renew !  
 ; Ah fool ! to exult in a glory so vain !

" 'Tis night, and the landscape is lovely no more ;  
 " I mourn, but, ye woodlands, I mourn not for you ;  
 " For morn is approaching, your charms to restore,  
 " Perfumed with fresh fragrance, and glittering with  
 " dew.

" Nor yet for the ravage of winter I mourn ;  
 " Kind Nature the embryo blossom will save.  
 " But when shall Spring visit the mould'ring urn !  
 " O when shall it dawn on the night of the grave !"

" 'Twas thus, by the glare of false Science betrayed,  
 " That leads, to bewilder ; and dazzles, to blind :  
 " My thoughts wont to roam, from shade onward to  
 " shade,

" Destruction before me, and sorrow behind.  
 " O pity, great Father of light," then I cry'd,  
 " Thy creature, who fain would not wander from  
 " Thee ;

" Lo, humbled in dust, I relinquish my pride :  
 " From doubt and from darkness thou only canst  
 " free."

" And darkness and doubt are now flying away.  
 " No longer I roam in conjecture forlorn.

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‘ So breaks on the traveller, faint, and astray,  
‘ The bright and the balmy effulgence of morn.  
‘ See Truth, Love, and Mercy, in triumph descending,  
‘ And Nature all glowing in EDEN’S first bloom !  
‘ On the cold cheek of Death smiles and roses are  
‘ blending,  
‘ And Beauty immortal awakes from the tomb.’

31

FINIS.







