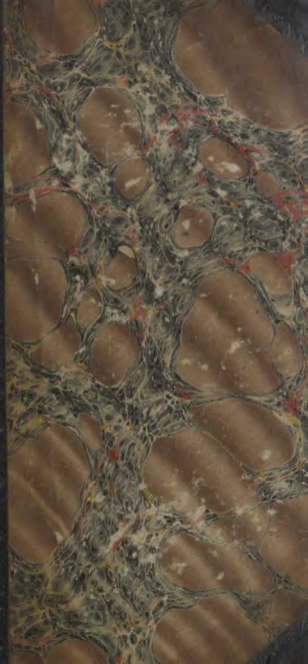


J. D.



ABS. I. 80. 136 (1-5)

THE  
**Poetic Garland:**

SACRED TO VIRTUE AND HUMANITY.

CONSISTING OF

PORTEUS ON DEATH,		CUNNINGHAM'S PILE
BLAIR'S GRAVE,		OF RUINS, and
GRAY'S CHURCH-YARD,		NOYES'S DISTRESS.

---

WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES,  
AND EXPLANATORY HEAD-LINES,  
BY THE REV. J. EVANS, A. M.

---

EMBELLISHED WITH SIX ENGRAVINGS.

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London:

PRINTED FOR R. DUTTON, GRACECHURCH STREET, AND  
LACKINGTON, ALLEN AND CO. TEMPLE OF THE MUSES,  
FINSBURY SQUARE.

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1808.

# Scottish Gaelic

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5

# DISTRESS :

A POEM.

---

BY ROBERT NOYES.

---

WITH EXPLANATORY HEADLINES,  
AND A SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,  
BY THE REV. J. EVANS, A. M.

---

London:

Printed by Dewick and Clarke, Aldersgate-street,  
FOR R. DUTTON, GRACECHURCH-STREET.

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1806.



To MR. WILLIAM TITFORD,

UNION-STREET, SPITALFIELDS,

WHO INTRODUCED THE EDITOR

TO THE AUTHOR OF THE FOLLOWING POEM,

THE

PRESENT ELEGANT EDITION,

BY WHICH IT IS RESCUED FROM OBSCURITY,

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

By J. EVANS.

Islington, March 25, 1806.

TO MR. WILLIAM TITCOMB

CONSTITUTIONAL EXAMINER

WHO HAS OFFERED THE EDITOR

IN THE OUTLINE OF THE FOLLOWING FORM

THE

LIBERTY-BELL EDITION

AT WHICH IT IS BEING NOW PRINTED

IN BOSTON BY J. EVANS

By J. EVANS

NEW YORK: 1848



A SKETCH  
OF THE  
LIFE OF ROBERT NOYES.

---

ROBERT NOYES was educated for the ministry among the Protestant dissenters, and had the care of a congregation at Cranbrook, in Kent. He preached for some years with great acceptance and success. A discourse delivered on the threatened *Invasion* in 1755, and afterwards published, was much admired. It was founded on Nehemiah, iv. 14; the sentiments were manly, the expressions spirited, and the whole was a fine specimen of animated composition. He was the author of some fugitive pieces, in which the sprightliness and versatility of his genius were manifested. But his chief production was the following poem, which was originally published by subscription. The editor received a copy of it from his own hands, and is happy in thus rescuing it from obscurity. The subject *Distress*, was no doubt suggested by his reduced circumstances, occasioned by an irregularity of conduct, over which it is thought proper to throw the veil of oblivion. The production speaks for itself; it is no mean effusion, and is fraught, in many of its parts, with the inspiration of genuine poetry. He died at Cranbrook in November, 1798—Peace be to his memory!



**DISTRESS.**

---

IS there a Muse will her assistance lend  
To him who wants a patron and a friend!  
Is there among the gay and sprightly Nine,  
Who on Distress will condescend to shine  
With ray indulgent? Then I'd soar and sing,  
Though Penury's hard hand hath clipt my wing.  
Humbly I've urg'd my suit to ev'ry Muse;  
All turn disdainful and my suit refuse;  
How shall I tune, forlorn, the mournful reed,  
While my heart sickens, and my sorrows bleed?

Some gentle Spirit whispers in my ear,  
"Produce the song"—"Suppress it," says Despair--

---

---

*Abode of Distress.*

---

---

The gentle Spirit's whisper I obey,  
And to his care commit my feeble lay.

Far from the seats of Affluence and of Ease,  
Where Plenty riots, and soft sonnets please ;  
Where Mirth's associates in the banquet join,  
And quaff the richness of Burgundia's wine,  
Distress, recluse, a batter'd cottage finds,  
That yields no shelter from tempestuous winds ;  
Whose crevic'd walls admit the driven snow,  
And mark the tenant for a child of woe ;  
Their flimsy texture spiders here extend, [blend ;  
And crickets here their notes with screech-owls  
Here hunger ravens ; hence sweet rest retires ;  
Hence comforts vanish, and here hope expires ;  
This dire abode no traveller ventures near ;  
No brisk associates—for no banquet's here !  
Yet her associates pale Distress can name :  
Hunger, and Thirst, Contempt, and honest Shame,

---

---

*Hunger and Thirst.*

---

---

With anxious Care, and gloomy Solitude,  
(All guests unwelcome) on her cot intrude.

Hunger and Thirst on cold Distress await.  
And threaten Famine in her small retreat ;  
These to the rich a transient visit pay ;  
Plenty relieves them, and they haste away ;  
But with the poor their residence is long,  
Their presence painful, and their cravings strong ;  
“ Give bread! Give water!” but in vain they cry ;  
The shelf is empty, and the fountain dry :  
No pleas avail that Poverty suggests,  
To appease the tumult of her irksome guests ;  
She schemes, she wishes, their demands to grant,  
And says, “ To-morrow shall supply their wants :”  
“ To-morrow!” both with angry haste reply,  
“ Give, give us now, or else to-night we die!”

Contempt, foul fiend, the base born child of Pride,  
Begot by Folly, and to Hell ally'd,

---

---

Contempt and Pride.

---

---

Through strange perverseness meek Distress pursues,  
And all her woes with cruel pleasure views.

Quick from her eye Disdain (a poison'd dart)  
Flies off oblique, and wounds her broken heart;  
Hunger, and Thirst, have painful pointed stings,  
But sly Contempt, a tenfold sorrow brings,  
And brings it, laden with a tenfold weight,  
On those who sink to worse from better state.

Whose eye contemptuous keenest flashes sends ?  
*His*, whom we number'd once among our friends.

Whose brow reveals the most disgusting scorn ?  
*His*, but our equal, or inferior born.

Whose venom'd tongue excites our saddest tears ?  
*His*, whom we once sustain'd in happier years.

Can this foul fiend, the base-born child of Pride,  
In any, but the rankest breast, reside ?

The formal Saint, who carries in his face  
The serious picture of internal grace :





Craig del.

Masterson sc.

*If to this saint some wretch presents his suit  
 Out starts the fiend, and strikes the suppliant mute.*

*Published by E. Dutton, Cross Street, Dec: 1803.*



---

---

*Formal Saint.*

---

---

Who pleads the orphan's and the widow's cause,  
With seeming pity, and with self applause;  
Whose lips the law of charity can teach,  
And love and friendship most devoutly preach;  
Who censures pride with hypocritic zeal,  
And paints its downfall in a whining tale;  
Who for the wretched heaves an artful sigh,  
And gives Distress the tribute of his eye;  
Pleads, pities, preaches, censures, weeps, and sighs,  
Yet is no saint; but Satan in disguise:  
A man like this, within his heart provides  
A filthy corner, where the fiend resides;  
If to this Saint some wretch presents his suit,  
Out starts the fiend, and strikes the suppliant mute.

Shame, such as ne'er the splendid villain grac'd,  
Flushes the cheek of competence debas'd;  
The blush that joins in low Distress's train,  
Springs not from guilt but witnesses to pain,

---

---

*Anxious Cares.*

---

---

A conscious pain excited by despair,  
At thought of what we are, and what we were;  
Reflection traces life's smooth seasons gone,  
And mourns the former pleasing scenes withdrawn;  
Forward it looks, and gloomy clouds arise  
That threaten danger, and create surprise;  
Peculiar hardships mark the steps of those  
Who pass from comfort to Distress and woes!

What anxious cares the poor man's bosom vex,  
In dreams torment him, and by day perplex!  
The poor, I mean, whose prosperous noon is past;  
Whose adverse night draws on with winged haste:  
What various schemes his busy thoughts devise  
To ward off Want, and silence Nature's cries!  
How small the pittance yesterday supply'd!  
To-day a smaller pittance is deny'd;  
He hopes to-morrow will more lib'ral be,  
But proves the greatest niggard of the three.

---

---

Devout Prayer.

---

---

Less anxious thoughts his mind would discompose,  
Were none the partners of his daily woes;  
Had he been doom'd to bear the load alone,  
This mournful verse the world had never known;  
The wretch dejected had in secret sigh'd  
Beneath his burden, and in secret died;  
But tender pledges of connubial love  
Partake his wants, and all his pity move:  
Their mother's joy—their mother now no more,  
To see—to feel—their sorrows and deplore!—

Turn from this scene, my soul, awhile, and sigh,  
And lift to heav'n the hand—the heart—the eye!  
Then to this scene, blest shade! I'll turn again,  
And solemnize thy death in plaintive strain.

Father of mercies! whose indulgent ear  
Is always open to an humble pray'r!  
Whose pity sees, whene'er thy creatures grieve;  
Whose bounteous hands their indigence relieve!

---

---

*Sad Solitude.*

---

---

O! for *His* sake, whose lips, with grace replete,  
Successful plead before thy mercy-seat ;  
Pour down thy blessings on the sons of need,  
Who at thy throne for blessings intercede !  
Their fears remove, their pressing wants supply,  
And guide their feet through life with watchful eye,  
To their sad hearts restore departed joy,  
So shall thy praise their grateful tongues employ !

To poor Distress sad Solitude repairs,  
And with her, broods in silence o'er her fears ;  
While to the rich base parasites resort,  
And at the shrine of Mammon make their court ;  
Who turn their footsteps to the moss-spread door,  
Where sit and pine the solitary poor !  
Shunn'd by the proud with no less tim'rous care,  
Than flies the unwounded from the stricken deer.

Is there among the opulent and great,  
Who deign to enter poverty's retreat ?

---

---

Benevolus.

---

---

Is there who makes the Christian name his boast,  
But to the virtues of a Christian's lost?—  
Some few there are, how blest and honour'd they!  
Who hear the Saviour's precepts, and obey;  
Who feed the hungry with a heart benign;  
Who give refreshment when the thirsty pine;  
Who grant the stranger shelter from the storm,  
Who clothe the naked and the frost-nip warm;  
The sick who visit with humane intent,  
And seek the cottage, where the poor lament;  
To *these* kind, blest, and honour'd few, I raise  
An humble column of unfeigned praise!  
Above the rest, if one in goodness shines,  
To him my muse inscribes these artless lines,  
Benevolus is he—the friend unsought,  
Whose soul with ev'ry lovely virtue's fraught.

Now, my sad soul, life's former scenes revise;  
Compare the summer with the winter skies!—

---

---

Distress lamented.

---

---

Ye halcyon days! O! why for ever fled?  
Why beats the storm on this devoted head?  
O! that I were as in bright seasons gone,  
When God with favour on my dwelling shone!  
When by his light I walk'd thro' darksome ways,  
And peace and safety crown'd my youthful days!  
When Plenty's hand my homely table spread,  
And Rest her roses scatter'd on my bed!  
When Hunger's plaint ne'er pierc'd a father's ear,  
Nor children's wants drew forth a mother's tear!—  
Now sights of anguish meet my weeping eyes,  
And prospects dreary all around me rise,  
The infant's moan a parent's heart pervades,  
Who, in their looks, their wants with sorrow reads;  
Reads, in such lines as eloquence excel,  
The woes and wishes that their bosoms swell.  
Will Heav'n the shaggy lion's young supply,  
And hear, and feed the ravens when they cry!

---

---

Divine Compassion

---

---

Yet leave the human offspring to complain,  
To sigh—to weep—to supplicate—in vain:  
Sooner shall whirlwinds rock the sea to rest,  
And mothers stab their sucklings at the breast;  
Sooner shall tygers from the desert rove,  
And wander harmless through the festive grove;  
Sooner the leopard change his spotted side;  
A feather sooner stem the rapid tide;  
Sooner the Moor efface his sable hue,  
And sooner earth be delug'd with a dew,  
Than God his timely succours shall withhold  
From babes oppress'd with hunger, thirst, and cold.

Where is the bounty of the sons of wealth,  
Whom heav'n hath blest with opulence and health?  
Where is the eye that "weeps with those who weep?"  
Where the soft voice that lulls Distress to sleep?  
Where the kind hand!—the sympathizing heart  
To feel another's woe, and joy impart?

---

*Invocation of Charity.*

---

Bounty is fled, and seeks her native sky,  
And pitying tears forsake the human eye;  
No strains to lull Distress—the soothing voice  
Is drown'd in giddy mirth's tumultuous noise;  
Flinty those hearts that once with pity flow'd;  
Clos'd now the hands that Christian alms bestow'd:  
Oh! Heav'n! send Bounty back from where she's fled!  
Let eyes relenting tears of pity shed!  
Let the soft voice to sorrow comfort give!  
The heart be melted, and the hand relieve!  
Then will of wretches the most wretched own,  
That Charity on earth hath fix'd her throne:  
'Tis fix'd on earth—I feel her gentle sway,  
And humbly at her shrine my homage pay.

Straight from thine altar, Charity, shall rise  
The smok of incense, and perfume the skies!  
Incense of gratitude, which fragrance yields,  
Surpassing citron-groves or spicy fields;



---

---

Contemplation.

---

---

Accept the offering which I bring to thee,  
Thou fairest sister of the lovely three !  
My needy hands no costly tribute hold ;  
No bright oblation of Peruvian gold ;  
Yet I present what thou wilt ne'er despise,  
—A grateful heart in willing sacrifice—  
A grateful heart is all I have to give ;  
O! Charity benign! that all receive!

Now on that scene reflect, my faithful muse,  
Nor to the dead a sigh—a tear refuse—  
To that sad scene Death's blacken'd pencil wrought,  
My soul returns in melancholy thought. [shades,  
Come, Contemplation, from thy much-lov'd  
Which scarce a ray of Summer's noon pervades!  
Quit for a while thy consecrated cave,  
And pay with me a visit to the grave!  
Come, solemn Night, in deepest sable clad ;  
Come, join the train, with silence ever sad !

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---

Retrospection.

---

---

Come, sit with me beneath yon baleful yew,  
And see my sorrows pass in slow review!  
On "joys departed, never to return,"  
My soul depress'd shall meditate and mourn;  
First mourn "departed joys," and then review  
My scenes of woe from yonder baneful yew.

Once my fond heart with secret rapture glow'd;  
Once, like a stream, my bosom bliss o'erflow'd:  
Nor thought my rapture like a fleeting dream,  
Or my bliss transient as the flowing stream:  
Delusive world! who on thy smiles presume,  
Rear, unexpected, for their hopes a tomb—  
Once prosp'rous suns around me lustre shed,  
Now set these suns, and all their rays are fled;  
What friends and friendship meant, of old, I knew;  
How cold that friendship now! those friends how few!  
As fickle flowers, beneath a vernal sky,  
Bloom and are fragrant, but in winter die;

---

---

Grave of his Wife.

---

---

So, when in life, wealth's store our wishes meets,  
Friendship shall flourish, and diffuse its sweets ;  
Let the scene shift, and poverty ensue,  
Friendship withdraws, and scarcely bids, Adieu !

Once sacred friendship, kindled into love,  
Made all my hours with soft endearments move ;  
Heav'n gave a wife—to me—to Heav'n endear'd,  
Who all my comforts and my sorrows shar'd ;  
But heav'n resum'd her to the world of bliss,  
And left me lonely to lament in this !

Now to yon yew I turn my weary feet,  
Where Silence, Night, and Contemplation meet ;  
With these companions, suited to my taste,  
The grave I visit where her ashes rest ;  
Rest in firm hope to rise to life divine,  
When earth and seas shall all their dead resign.  
There I repose, and in calm sadness there  
Pour on her dust a tributary tear :

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---

Grave of his Children.

---

---

Nor shall my soul, while there for her I weep,  
Forget the children fall'n in death asleep:  
Tho' first my tears a mother's grave bedew,  
Yet I retain some tender drops for you!  
These branches, blasted by the tainting breath  
Of languid sickness, and relentless death,  
How droop'd my heart! my fainting spirit said, [fade;]"  
"Youths spring like flow'rs, and soon like flow'rs they  
But when the stock which those fair branches bore,  
Wither'd and died, my hopes were then no more:  
Yet calm reflection bids my hopes revive,  
For truth asserts "The tree cut down shall live,"  
And all its branches, now decay'd and dead,  
Again shall shoot, and with new verdure spread.  
Haste, glorious morn! when from the fertile tomb,  
These all shall rise, and bear eternal bloom:  
And when yon yew shall lose its green and die,  
Ye shall reffourish, evergreens on high!

---

---

His own Grave.

---

---

When at your graves I shed the friendly tear,  
How empty all terrestrial things appear!  
Then would my soul with transport soar above,  
To realms of life, light, liberty, and love!  
Ye gay who flutter in the brilliant ball,  
Nor hear when Reason, and when Conscience, call!  
Return'd from thence, some cemetery tread,  
And wisdom learn among the silent dead!

Close by the graves where your lov'd relics rest,  
Let my cold limbs by some kind hand be plac'd!  
If, when my eyes are by Death's signet seal'd,  
Some hand of friendship will that kindness yield;  
Peace to that friend who with my wish complies,  
And peace attend his manes, whene'er he dies!

See! Morn, awak'd, unfolds her purple eye,  
And bids old Night these dreary regions fly!  
'The noisy world from Morpheus' chains set loose,  
Warns sober Silence to her still recluse;

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---

*Origin of Distress.*

---

---

The din confus'd of ever busy men,  
Sends Contemplation to her cave again ;  
With them I leave the baneful yew and tomb,  
And now the subject of Distress resume.

Say, from what curs'd, from what polluted spring,  
Flow the sharp sorrows which I mournful sing !  
Than follow these in all their devious course,  
Sooner my feet might trace Nile's hidden source :  
The secret motions of a restless soul,  
What eye can search, what finite pow'r controul ?  
From the foul heart, where pride and malice dwell  
With every vice that bears the stamp of hell,  
Corrupted actions, as by instinct, flow,  
And make the world a seat of sin and woe :  
But who suspects a treach'rous deed from those  
Whom the fair robes of sanctity inclose ?  
Prudence against an open foe may shield,  
And caution guides us in the dangerous field :

---

*Poignancy of Distress.*

---

With those who friendship's specious vizard wear,  
Unarm'd we walk, because we nothing fear:  
The dart that deepest to my bosom went,  
Flew from the bow pretended friendship bent.

As some poor wretch, whose little crazy boat  
By cruel hands is set in storms afloat,  
And soon by boist'rous winds and waves is tost  
Far from the covert of a shelt'ring coast,  
Sees the shore lessen, and the billows rise,  
And wat'ry ruin spread before his eyes,  
While the base authors of his sudden woe  
Stand on the beach, nor signs of pity show:  
So in a painful, unexpected hour,  
By holy cunning and religious pow'r,  
My feeble bark to sea was push'd, to meet  
The waves that life's wide shore with fury beat:  
And the same craft, the same opposing hand  
That push'd it off, prevents it reaching land.

---

*Affecting Expostulation.*

---

Strangers to want! of every good possest,  
That makes mankind, or seems to make them, blest;  
Whose golded stores the poor man's mites exceed,  
Whose health abounds beyond a creature's need;  
Whose purse commands the dainties of the West,  
And silken vestments of the splendid East;  
Whose table smoke with ev'ry varied dish,  
From high-sauc'd venison to the luscious fish;  
Amidst the countless treasures of your hoard;  
Amidst the plenty that regales your board:  
Strangers to want! while with such affluence fraught,  
Spare ye the poor a pittance, or a thought?  
Strangers to want! can ye, presumptuous, say,  
No clouds shall rise to overcast your day?  
Time past hath prov'd how fleeting riches are,  
Time future to this truth may witness bear;  
By means no human wisdom can foresee,  
Or pow'r prevent, a sudden change may be:



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---

*Ravages of Death.*

---

---

War, in its route, may plunder all your store,  
And leave you friendless, desolate, and poor ;  
Your spacious lands, possess by tenure fair,  
Earthquakes may swallow, and thus bar the heir:  
Your wealth, entrusted to the treach'rous sea,  
May sink, or fall to pirates' hands a prey ;  
Your all the flames may waste, or lawless men:  
Strangers to want! shall ye be strangers then?  
Since so precarious all you now enjoy,  
A treasure seek which nothing can destroy! [spare,  
Should earthquakes, flames, war, seas and pirates  
Still there is one will strip the wealthy bare:  
Death, King of Terrors! whose despotic sway  
The mortal race reluctantly obey,  
Distinction levels, when his bow he bends,  
And all the noble with the ignoble blends;  
With hand impartial strikes the fatal blow,  
And lays mankind in common ruin low:

---

---

*Variety of Life.*

---

---

Inspect the dust, o'er which the marble weeps;  
Inspect the ashes, where the peasant sleeps;  
And say, what difference in the putrid earth  
That form'd the vulgar and the man of birth:  
Hence let false pride instructive lessons learn,  
And hence the folly of contempt discern.

One is our parent, and that parent good,  
Whose numerous children claim an equal blood,  
From India's savage and the Scythian wild,  
To Europeans and the fondled child;  
Though all from one original descend,  
And all promiscuous to one exit tend;  
Yet in their passage thro' life's chequer'd state,  
What various scenes their various roads await!  
With restless steps some honour's heights attain,  
While others, humble, tread the lowly plain,  
Some seek the vale, and dangerous summits shun,  
In devious paths some stray, and are undone.

---

---

Acquiescence in Providence.

---

---

Nor is their lot less diff'rent than their ways,  
Some walk in gloomy, some in gilded days;  
Their lot unequal, tho' their parent good;  
Perplexing truth! how little understood!  
Unequal lot, as judges reason blind;  
But just and equal in the eternal mind:  
Tho' Vice high honours and rewards may reap,  
And Virtue sit disconsolate and weep;  
Yet let not man, at random, hence conclude,  
The heavenly Parent is not just or good;  
But rest, with patience rest, in whate'er sphere  
The will of Providence hath plac'd him here,  
And patient wait, till God shall in the end  
Unfold what now man cannot comprehend!

Tho' Heaven, all-wise, hath mark'd me for *Distress*,  
May Heav'n, all-good, my fellow mortals bless!  
May none thro' Earth's wide peopled regions know  
What ills from friendless poverty will flow;

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---

Parental Prayer.

---

---

What storms await prosperity's decline,  
And what dread anguish dwells with woes like mine.  
And may the children of my warmest pray'r,  
Heav'n's daily favour and protection share!  
Almighty Father! shield them with thine arm;  
Their feet preserve from vanity and harm!  
Their steps direct with ever-watchful eye,  
And let thy bounty all their wants supply!  
From sins, and snares, and sorrows keep them free,  
And may their souls for succour fly to thee!  
For them my heart in fond affection sighs,  
And tears for them in secret cloud my eyes;  
Their smiles of innocence with joy I view,  
And hear their prattle with a pleasure new;  
But when my fears anticipate their woes,  
My heart no longer joy and pleasure knows;  
O! may his hand, whose Providence is good,  
Give for their bodies, raiment, rest, and food!

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---

Address to the Grave.

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---

And to their souls impart his needful grace,  
To do his will, and early seek his face !  
In hopes of this my fainting spirits rise,  
And bid farewell to all beneath the skies !  
Will the cold grave afford a quiet rest  
To all who droop, by want and woe opprest ?—  
Hail ! peaceful chamber, where the weary sleep !  
Where sland'rous tongues perpetual silence keep !  
Where harass'd slaves shake off the galling chain,  
And where *Distress* forgets her ev'ry pain ;  
Where tears no more descend from sorrow's eye ;  
Where the sad heart no longer vents a sigh.  
Thou hallow'd refuge ! still abode of peace,  
Where dangers reach not, and where troubles cease,  
Thy portals open, and admission give  
The wretch, to whom 'tis misery to live !  
Who deem thee cruel are to reason blind ;  
O ! grant me shelter—and I'll call thee kind !

---

---

American War.

---

---

From themes distressful, seen and heard by few,  
I pass to scenes that meet a Kingdom's view ;  
Scenes, where *Distress*, an awful shade, appears,  
And asks the tribute of a flood of tears.

Could my muse, pinion'd, spread her wings, and fly  
From Albion's borders to the Western sky,  
Beneath whose ample arch of structure strong,  
The vast Atlantic rolls his waves along ;  
There would she seek *Distress*, with her deplore,  
In cities, deserts, and the hostile shore ;  
Paint her sad cheeks, bedew'd with crystal tears ;  
Unveil her breast, distent with sick'ning fears ;  
Present to view that sister of Despair,  
Tortur'd with anguish, and of frantic air,  
With hands close claspt, and loose her sanguine  
hair!

My muse, advent'rous, takes her arduous flight,  
And reaches safe fam'd Bunker's tow'ring height ;

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---

Battle of Bunker's Hill.

---

---

Thence views with weeping eye, and heart-felt pain,  
The ransack'd village, and the purpled plain;  
From thence, dejected, sees the mangled dead,  
Who for their country nobly fought and bled;  
Thence hears the wounded hero's parting groan,  
The mother's wailings, and the widow's moan;  
From thence beholds *Distress*, in solemn mood,  
Stalk o'er the slain, and tinge her feet with blood;  
Around, the ghosts of slaughter'd patriots rise,  
And call for vengeance to the dreary skies!  
Far as the eye can reach, my mournful muse  
The wand'ring footsteps of *Distress* pursues,  
And sees her rush into the thicket wild,  
(The dreadful haunt of Nature's fiercest child)  
Where the rough savage, train'd to blood and toil,  
(Murder his trade, and all his treasure spoil)  
In ambush lies, and whets the pointed steel,  
Whose scalping edge, youth, age, and beauty feel:

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American Tale.

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So Fame reports—nor doubt her language now,  
As pure from falsehood as a vestal's vow.

Near Penn's domain once dwelt a sober sage,  
Grown venerably grey with grief and age;  
The bridal partner of his younger years,  
Shar'd in his joys and kindly sooth'd his cares;  
One was their wish, their daily pray'r was one,  
That Heav'n, to seal their bliss, would give a son,  
Whose growing strength might prove his parents' stay,  
When their's thro' time, was sinking to decay:  
At length to recompense their mutual love,  
Heav'n gave the hope she should a mother prove;  
The expected hour to crown their joy arrives;  
When, lo! the mother dies—the child survives:  
Thus in one moment (such the will of Heav'n)  
The wife is snatch'd away—a daughter giv'n.  
The father eyes his infant with delight;  
Shields her by day, and wakes to shield by night:



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American Tale.

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She lives the object of his fondest care;  
Her health and safety his attention share;  
His lips instruction to her mind impart,  
And fix sage lessons on her ductile heart:  
With pious joy her rev'rend sire she hears,  
Imbibes his wisdom, and his truths reveres;  
Treads in his steps with circumspective care:  
His precepts learns with love and filial fear.

Revolving years her lovely charms disclose,  
Pure as the snow, and blushing as the rose;  
Her growing beauties spread a lustre far;  
Mild as the radiance of the ev'ning star:  
Palemon saw the lustre of her eye,  
And modest cheek of roseate damask dye;  
He saw—and sudden felt love's pleasing smart  
Thrill thro' his breast, and centre in his heart;  
A kindred flame her tender bosom warms,  
And adds new beauty to her maiden charms;

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American Tale.

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The youth profess'd a passion for this fair,  
Pure as the thoughts of Heaven's archangels are,  
And she for him a mutual love profest :  
They wed—and by her father both are blest.  
Their nuptial state with joys supreme are crown'd,  
Such as the innocent in Eden found ;  
The Sun unclouded gilds each happy day,  
And Life's clear stream unruffled glides away ;  
No storms disturb the silence of their nights,  
And morn awakes them to renew'd delights ;  
Heav'n on their labours with indulgence smiles,  
And sweet discourse their evening hours beguiles ;  
T' enlarge the measure of their worldly joy,  
Heav'n crown'd their wish by giving them a boy.  
In this calm scene of pleasure and repose.  
This favour'd pair nor guilt, nor danger knows ;  
Secure, in hope, their moments softly past,  
And each new day was brighter than the last.

As gathering clouds obscure the clearest skies,  
And sudden waves in calmest seas arise;  
So in one fatal hour, a blast destroys  
The fragrant bloom of her domestic joys.

Dark was the night, and scarce a trembling breeze  
Was heard to whisper thro' the neighbouring trees,  
When to Sleep's arms the household was withdrawn,  
To rest in safety till the morrow's dawn;  
The morrow dawns, and blushes at the sight,  
Of bloody scenes that shun detecting light:  
Urg'd by a nameless thirst for human prey,  
A *savage* band approach'd where Beauty lay;  
Where Innocence, and Youth, and Age reclin'd  
In sleep, refreshing as the southern wind.

Palemon first a harmless victim fell  
To Rage, relentless as the Prince of Hell,  
The sire, though bending with a load of years,  
To save his daughter ev'ry danger dares:

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American Tale.

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With wrath paternal to the assassins flew,  
And at one blow a swarthy murd'rer slew;  
By some rough hand this ancient hero dies—  
The trembling mother for her husband sighs;  
Sighs, and intreats to spare her infant's life,  
Her sighs they hear, and spare him—with the knife.  
The tender parent, frantic with despair,  
To meet Death's arrow lays her bosom bare;  
Death—how unkind! refus'd to bend his bow,  
And life prolong'd for scenes of future woe. [tears,  
Pleas'd with the charms of beauty, drench'd in  
The *savage* tribe to gloomy deserts bears  
The weeping mother, void of all defence,  
Save what she hop'd from Heav'n and innocence:  
Now thoughts distressful agitate her breast,  
And from her eye-lids steal their wonted rest:  
The lovely captive held in bondage dire,  
Weeps for herself—her infant—husband—sire;

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American Tale.

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Weeps—and no eye to shed a social tear;  
No friend to sooth her sorrows, or to share,  
Amidst this scene of misery and awe  
(Too sad and complex for my muse to draw)  
She boldly braves, by solitary flight,  
Danger in deserts, and the gloom of night,  
Thro' woods and swamps, unpress'd by human feet,  
She seeks from *savages* a wild retreat;  
With heedless steps she traverses the glade,  
And finds, at length, the covert of a shade!  
There droops, and sleeps, forgetful of her pain;  
The sun revives her—and she sighs again  
Fatigu'd with wanderings, and depress'd with care,  
Deaths all around her, and no succour near;  
With hunger faint; to slake her thirst no stream;  
And Hope, once shining, left her now no gleam;  
She sinks beneath the burden of her grief,  
And prays for death to 'minister relief—

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Description of Great Britain.

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At once she faints, and lifts to Heav'n her eyes,  
Leans on the bosom of *Distress*—and dies! [spring  
From those bleak hills, where bloody fountains  
My roving muse returns with wearied wing  
To visit happier climes—climes happier made  
By sweet vicissitudes of heat and shade:  
By wholesome laws, and by a clement throne  
That hears with pity every prisoner's moan;  
By watery walls, which Heav'n decreed should flow  
To give protection from each foreign foe:  
Yet these blest climes, tho' safe from Gallia's host,  
From sudden dangers no exemption boast.  
As in some green, plain, smooth, and fair to sight,  
Rubs check the bowl at hand directed right,  
Divert its bias, or impede its force,  
And leave it distant from its destin'd course;  
So on life's green unnumber'd rubs arise,  
And least expected always most surprize:

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*Royal George.*

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Thus safe at anchor lay old Ocean's\* pride,  
And rode triumphant on the lordly tide;  
No danger seen; no wave to wake a fear;  
No danger seen, and yet was ruin near;  
Mirth, such as ne'er a home-bred landman charm'd,  
Glow'd in each heart, and ev'ry bosom warm'd;  
The boatswain's whistle thro' the ship was heard;  
The caulkers labour'd, and the sailors cheer'd;  
No danger seen; no fear to raise a sigh;  
No danger fear'd, and yet was ruin nigh;  
Heel'd on her side the stately fabric lay,  
And wide her broad flag wav'd in proud display;  
When (weep my Muse! at her disaster weep!)  
A sudden gust consigns her to the deep;  
Then with her sunk the hardy tars and brave,  
From life and service, to a fluid grave;

The Royal George, first rate ship of 100 guns, overset and sunk at anchor at Spithead, on August 29, 1782, having then on board 780 persons, of whom 495 were lost.

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*Reign of Distress.*

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With them descended Valour's fav'rite son,  
Who fought her battles, and her laurels won.  
Distressful scene! what piteous moans arise!  
Spread through the decks, and echo to the skies,  
The childless mother heard the tale with woe;  
Tears from the father, childless, secret flow!  
The widow wails her husband sunk in death,  
Kisses her children, and resigns her breath.

*Distress!* associate of all human kind!  
In calms we meet thee; meet thee in the wind;  
From thy assaults no garrison can shield;  
To thy domain must ev'ry mortal yield;  
Thou visit'st where the splendid monarch reigns,  
And haunt'st the cottager on lonely plains;  
No breast so sacred but thy power invades,  
And each frail creature thro' thy river wades.  
Where from thy arm for refuge shall we fly!  
—To Earth's cold bosom, and yon friendly sky—



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The Farewell.

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There no *Distress* the body can annoy,  
And there the soul exults in endless joy!

If thus *Distress* pursues the human race,  
And Me pursues with unremitting pace;  
Then——

Farewell, sublunary scenes and gay!  
Where the old trifle, and where children play;  
Where youths fantastic weave the magic dance;  
And to the grave with heedless steps advance;  
Where busy crowds, like insects, swarm and die;  
And Pleasure's sons pursue a painted fly!

Farewell, ye sublunary scenes and sage!  
Where the grave sophist turns the midnight page;  
With close attention into Nature pries,  
Reads till he's lost, and thinks he grows more  
wise;  
Where the deep Magi of our learned day  
In fancy tread the cometary way;

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The Farewell.

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Where Locke's disciples spin the logic thread;  
Where Galen's pupils from the Grecian dead,  
Like bees industrious, gather healing skill,  
And thence prescribe the salutary pill;  
Where studious minds from Coke instruction draw,  
And learn to trace the labyrinths of law;  
Where priests sedate, to heap polemic lore,  
Turn dusty volumes of the fathers o'er.

Farewell, ye sublunary scenes and dull!

Made more insipid by the prating fool;  
Where flutt'ring fops at Wisdom's lectures hiss;  
Where at Wit's target coxcombs aim and miss;  
Where self-conceit o'er modesty prevails,  
And cloy's society with senseless tales:  
Where misers waste their years in heaping store,  
Toil to be rich, and yet are always poor;  
Where sordid Epicures, of boasted taste,  
Pamper themselves to give the worms a feast.

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The Farewell.

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Farewell, ye sublunary scenes and sad !  
Hung round with 'sutchions, and in mourning clad ;  
Where cruel War and ghastly Famine rage,  
And sudden sweep Life's temporary stage ;  
Where pale Disease destructive pow'r assumes,  
And fills the world with hospitals and tombs ;  
Where Pains the body rack, the limbs distort,  
And fix their arrows in the sicken'd heart ;  
Where poignant Grief o'erwhelms the human mind,  
Robs it of reason, and distracts mankind ;  
Where Hope by Disappointment's dagger bleeds,  
And Woe to Woe with speedy step succeeds :  
Where Poverty stalks forth in all her gloom,  
And leads her children pensive to the tomb ;  
Where *Death*, the monarch of this tragic scene,  
With rage insatiate, and with poniard keen,  
Spreads ruin wide—and when the tyrant calls,  
The drama closes, and the curtain falls.

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The Farewell.

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Once more, ye sublunary scenes farewell!  
I'm warn'd to quit you by each solemn knell:  
Dull world, and sage! of thee I take my leave;  
Form'd to distress, disquiet, and bereave;  
Let others fawn, and pay their court to thee;  
Thou hast no friendship, thou no charms for Me!  
Gay world to some—to *me* sad world, adieu!  
Till the *last day* shall break with glories new.

THE END.

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