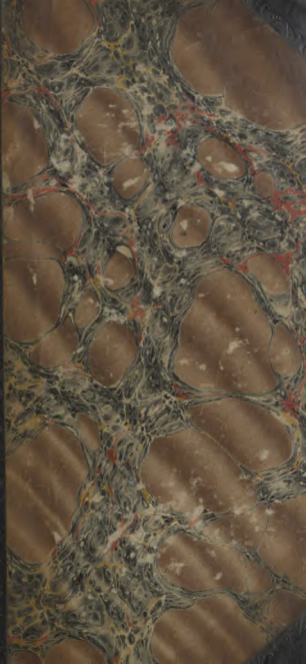


J. D.



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.

London:

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

1808.

Scottish Gaelic

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DEATH:

A POEM.

BY DR. PORTEUS, BISHOP OF LONDON.

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.

1806.

THE

A FORM

BY THE PATENT OFFICE OF GREAT BRITAIN

FOR THE REGISTRATION OF PATENTS
AND A FORM FOR THE DEPOSIT OF SPECIFICATIONS
BY THE PATENT OFFICE OF GREAT BRITAIN

LONDON:
PRINTED BY THE PATENT OFFICE, BEAUCHAMPEL STREET.
1881

A SKETCH
OF THE
LIFE OF DR. BEILBY PORTEUS.

DR. BEILBY PORTEUS, the present Bishop of London, was educated at Cambridge, where, in the year 1752, he took his degree A. B. Soon after this period he obtained the medal given for the best *classical* essay, by the Duke of Newcastle, then Chancellor of the University. In 1755 he proceeded to take his degree of A. M. and in 1759 he procured the *Seatonian* prize by his Poem on Death, which is now generally known and admired. Though it be a juvenile production, it exhibits no marks of juvenility. It is fraught with the spirit of some of the best of our poets. Several of the lines rise beyond the ordinary energies of Poetry. The *Cave of Death*, the *Patriarchal Life*, the *Origin of War*, the *Ravages of Luxury*, the *Horrors of Suicide*, and the *Dire Effects of National Calamities*, may be pronounced a series of pictures drawn by the pencil of a master, and calculated to generate a lasting impression on the heart. Nor can we withhold our admiration from the conclusion of the poem. The prayer is characterised by that manly seriousness and that devotional fervour which best accord with the hour of dissolution. *Let me die the death of the righteous ; let my latter end be like unto his,*

was the wish of a character under the Jewish economy-- with still greater propriety may it be adopted under the *Gospel dispensation*, which, in all its doctrines, precepts, and institutions, breathes love and mercy towards mankind.

About the year 1766 Dr. Porteus was presented with the living of Hunton, in Kent. In 1777 (it is said by the influence of Her Majesty) he was raised to the See of Chester; and, in 1787, he was translated to the See of London on the decease of Dr. Lowth, that ornament of the literary and religious world.

Beside the above poem, his lordship published an account of *Archbishop Secker*, two volumes of *Sermons*, two volumes of *Lectures*, which he delivered in 1798, at St. James's church, during the season of Lent, and several *Charges* to the clergy. The *Life of Secker* is a tribute to the talents and virtues of his patron, to whom he was indebted in early life. The *Sermons*, which have passed through many editions, are written in an elegant style, and on an interesting variety of subjects. The *Lectures*, which were attended, at the time of their delivery, by a great number of the nobility and gentry, embrace various topics of theology, and are happily applied to the great practical purposes of life; and his *Charges*, which are serious and manly, relate either to the progress of infidelity, or to the duties of the clerical character; for no prelate seems to have a juster sense of the importance and usefulness of the sacerdotal profession. Indeed, it is with pleasure we behold a person, so high in the church, attending with such exemplary zeal to the diffusion of practical Christianity.

DEATH.

FRIEND to the wretch whom every friend forsakes,
I woo thee, Death ! In fancy's fairy paths
Let the gay songster rove, and gently trill
The strain of empty joy. Life and its joys
I leave to those that prize them. At this hour,
This solemn hour, when silence rules the world,
And wearied Nature makes a gen'ral pause ;
Wrapt in night's sable robe, through cloysters drear
And charnels pale, tenanted by a throng
Of meagre phantoms, shooting cross my path
With silent glance, I seek the shadowy vale
Of Death. Deep in a murky cave's recess,

Death and his Attendants.

Lav'd by oblivion's listless stream, and fenc'd
By shelving rocks, and intermingled horrors
Of yew and cypress shade, from all intrusion
Of busy noontide beam, the Monarch sits
In unsubstantial majesty enthron'd.
At his right hand, nearest himself in place
And frightfulness of form, his parent Sin,
With fatal industry and cruel care,
Busies herself in pointing all his stings,
And tipping every shaft with venom, drawn
From her infernal store: around him rang'd
In terrible array, and mixture strange
Of uncouth shapes, stand his dread ministers.
Foremost Old Age, his natural ally
And firmest friend: next him diseases thick,
A motley train; Fever, with cheek of fire;
Consumption wan; Palsy, half warm with life,
And half a clay-clod lump; joint-tort'ring Gout,

Pathetic Expostulation.

And ever-gnawing Rheum : Convulsion wild ;
Swoln Dropsy ; panting Asthma ; Apoplex
Full-gorg'd. There too the Pestilence that walks
In darkness, and the Sickness that destroys
At broad noon-day. These and a thousand more,
Horrid to tell, attentive wait ; and, when
By Heav'n's command Death waves his ebon wand,
Sudden rush forth to execute his purpose,
And scatter desolation o'er the earth.

Ill-fated man, for whom such various forms
Of mis'ry wait, and mark their future prey !
Ah ! why all-righteous Father, didst thou make
This creature man ? Why wake th' unconscious dust
To life and wretchedness ? O better far
Still had he slept in uncreated night,
If this the lot of Being ! Was it for this
Thy breath divine kindled within his breast
The vital flame ? For this was thy fair image

Entrance of Evil.

Stamp'd on his soul in godlike lineaments ?
For this dominion giv'n him absolute
O'er all thy works, only that he might reign
Supreme in woe? From the blest source of Good
Could Pain and Death proceed? Could such foul ills
Fall from fair Mercy's hands? Far be the thought,
The impious thought! God never made a creature
But what was good. He made a living soul;
The wretched mortal was the work of man.
Forth from his Maker's hands he sprung to life,
Fresh with immortal bloom; no pain he knew,
No fear of change, no check to his desires,
Save one command. That one command which stood
'Twixt him and Death, the test of his obedience,
Urg'd on by wanton curiosity,
He broke. There in one moment was undone
The fairest of God's works! The same rash hand,
That pluck'd in evil hour the fatal fruit,

Sad Effects of Evil.

Unbarr'd the gates of Hell, and let loose Sin
And Death, and all the family of Pain,
To prey upon mankind. Young Nature saw
The monstrous crew, and shook thro' all her frame.
Then fled her new-born lustre, then began
Heaven's cheerful face to low'r, then vapours choak'd
The troubled air, and form'd a veil of clouds
To hide the willing sun. The earth convuls'd
With painful throes threw forth a bristly crop
Of thorns and briars; and insect, bird, and beast,
That wont before with admiration fond
To gaze at man, and fearless crowd around him,
Now fled before his face, shunning in haste
The infection of his misery. He alone
Who justly might, th' offended Lord of man,
Turn'd not away his face; he, full of pity,
Forsook not in this uttermost distress
His best lov'd work. That comfort still remain'd,

Judgment and Mercy.

(That best, that greatest comfort in affliction)
The countenance of God, and through the gloom
Shot forth some kindly gleams, to cheer and warm
Th' offender's sinking soul. Hope sent from Heav'n
Uprais'd his drooping head, and shew'd afar
A happier scene of things; the promis'd Seed
Trampling upon the Serpent's humbled crest;
Death of his sting disarm'd; and the dark grave,
Made pervious to the realms of endless day,
No more the limit but the gate of life!

Cheer'd with the view, man went to till the ground,
From whence he rose; sentenc'd indeed to toil
As to a punishment, yet (ev'n in wrath,
So merciful is Heav'n) this toil became
The solace of his woes, the sweet employ
Of many a live-long hour, and surest guard
Against Disease and Death. Death, tho' denounc'd,
Was yet a distant ill, by feeble arm

Of Age, his sole support, led slowly on,
Not then, as since, the short-liv'd sons of men
Flock'd to his realms in countless multitudes;
Scarce in the course of twice five hundred years,
One solitary ghost went shiv'ring down
To his unpeopled shore. In sober state,
Through the sequester'd vale of rural life,
The venerable Patriarch guileless held
The tenor of his way; Labour prepar'd
His simple fare, and Temp'rance rul'd his board.
Tir'd with his daily toil, at early eve
He sunk to sudden rest; gentle and pure
As breath of evening zephyr, and as sweet,
Were all his slumbers; with the sun he rose,
Alert and vigorous as He, to run
His destin'd course. Thus nerv'd with giant strength
He stemm'd the tide of time, and stood the shock
Of ages rolling harmless o'er his head.

Evils multiplied by Man.

At life's meridian point arriv'd, he stood,
And looking round, saw all the valleys fill'd
With nations from his loins; full well content
To leave his race thus scatter'd o'er the earth,
Along the gentle slope of life's decline
He bent his gradual way, till, full of years,
He dropp'd like mellow fruit into his grave.

Such in the infancy of time was man; -
So calm was life, so impotent was Death!
O had he but preserv'd these few remains,
The shatter'd fragments, of lost happiness,
Snatch'd by the hand of Heav'n from the sad wreck
Of innocence primeval; still had he liv'd
In ruin great; though fall'n, yet not forlorn;
Though mortal, yet not every where beset
With Death in ev'ry shape! But he, impatient
To be completely wretched, hastes to fill up
The measure of his woes—'Twas man himself

Envy and Ambition.

Brought Death into the world ; and man himself
Gave keenness to his darts, quicken'd his pace,
And multiply'd destruction on mankind.

First Envy, eldest born of Hell, embrued
Her hands in blood, and taught the sons of men
To make a Death which Nature never made,
And God abhor'd : with violence rude to break
The thread of life ere half its length was run,
And rob a wretched brother of his being.

With joy Ambition saw, and soon improv'd
The execrable deed. 'Twas not enough

By subtle fraud to snatch a single life ;

Puny impiety ! Whole kingdoms fell

To sate the lust of power : more horrid still,

The foulest stain and scandal of our nature,

Became its boast. One murder made a villain ;

Millions a hero. Princes were Privileg'd

To kill, and numbers sanctified the crime.

War execrated and deplored.

Ah! why will kings forget that they are men?
And men that they are brethren? Why delight
In human sacrifice? Why burst the ties
Of Nature, that should knit their souls together
In one soft bond of amity and love?
Yet still they breathe destruction, still go on
Inhumanly ingenious to find out
New pains for life, new terrors for the grave.
Artificers of Death! Still monarchs dream
Of universal empire growing up
From universal ruin. Blast the design,
Great God of Hosts, nor let thy creatures fall
Unpitied victims at Ambition's shrine!

Yet say, should tyrants learn at last to feel,
And the loud din of battle cease to bray;
Should dove-eyed Peace o'er all the earth extend
Her olive branch, and give the world repose,
Would Death be foil'd? Would health, and strength,
and youth,

Destructive Effects of Luxury.

Defy his pow'r? Has he no arts in store,
No other shafts save those of war? Alas!
Ev'n in the smile of peace, that smile which sheds
A heav'nly sunshine o'er the soul, there basks
That serpent Luxury. War its thousands slays;
Peace its ten thousands. In th' embattled plain,
Tho' Death exults, and claps his raven wings,
Yet reigns he not ev'n there so absolute,
So merciless, as in yon frantic scenes
Of midnight revel and tumultuous mirth,
Where in th' intoxicating draught conceal'd,
Or couch'd beneath the glance of lawless love,
He snares the simple youth, who nought suspecting
Means to be blest—but finds himself undone!

Down the smooth stream of life the stripling darts,
Gay as the morn; bright glows the vernal sky,
Hope swells his sails, and passion steers his course.
Safe glides his little bark along the shore

Progress of Youth.

Where Virtue takes her stand; but if too far
He launches forth beyond Discretion's mark,
Sudden the tempest scowls, the surges roar,
Blot his fair day, and plunge him in the deep.
O sad but sure mischance! O happier far
To lie like gallant Howe 'midst Indian wilds
A breathless corse, cut off by savage hands
In earliest prime, a generous sacrifice
To freedom's holy cause; than so to fall,
Torn immature from life's meridian joys,
A prey to Vice, Intemp'rance, and Disease!

Yet die ev'n thus, thus rather perish still,
Ye sons of Pleasure, by the Almighty strick'n,
Than ever dare (though oft, alas! ye dare)
To lift against yourselves the murd'rous steel,
To wrest from God's own hand the sword of justice,
And be your own avengers! Hold, rash man,
Though with anticipating speed thou'st rang'd

The Suicide addressed.

Through every region of delight, nor left
One joy to gild the evening of thy days ;
Though life seem one uncomfortable void,
Guilt at thy heels, before thy face despair ;
Yet gay this scene, and light this load of woe,
Compar'd with thy hereafter. Think, O think,
And, ere thou plunge into the vast abyss,
Pause on the verge a while: look down and see
Thy future mansion. Why that start of horror ?
From thy slack hand why drops th' uplifted steel ?
Didst thou not think such vengeance must await
The wretch, that with his crimes all fresh about him
Rushes irreverent, unprepar'd, uncall'd,
Into his Maker's presence, throwing back
With insolent disdain his choicest gift ?

Live then, while Heav'n in pity lends thee life,
And think it all too short to wash away,
By penitential tears and deep contrition,

National Judgments.

The scarlet of thy crime. So shalt thou find
Rest to thy soul; so unappall'd shalt meet
Death when he comes, not wantonly invite
His ling'ring stroke. Be it thy sole concern
With innocence to live: with patience wait
Th' appointed hour: too soon that hour will come,
Tho' Nature run her course. But Nature's God,
If need require, by thousand various ways,
Without thy aid, can shorten that short span,
And quench the lamp of life. O when he comes,
Rous'd by the cry of wickedness extreme,
To Heav'n ascending from some guilty land,
Now ripe for vengeance; when he comes array'd
In all the terrors of Almighty wrath,
Forth from his bosom plucks his ling'ring arm,
And on the miscreants pours destruction down;
Who can abide his coming? Who can bear
His whole displeasure? In no common form

National Judgments.

Death then appears, but starting into size
Enormous, measures with gigantic stride
Th' astonish'd earth, and from his looks throws round
Unutterable horror and dismay.
All nature lends her aid. Each element
Arms in his cause. Ope fly the doors of Heav'n;
The fountains of the deep their barriers break;
Above, below, the rival torrents pour,
And drown Creation; or in floods of fire
Descends a livid cataract, and consumes
An impious race. Sometimes, when all seems peace,
Wakes the grim whirlwind, and with rude embrace
Sweeps nations to their grave, or in the deep
Whelms the proud wooden world; full many a youth
Floats on his wat'ry bier, or lies unwept
On some sad desert shore! At dead of night,
In sullen silence stalks forth Pestilence:
Contagion close behind taints all her steps

The Earthquake.

With poisonous dew; no smiting hand is seen,
No sound is heard, but soon her secret path
Is mark'd with desolation; heaps on heaps
Promiscuous drop. No friend, no refuge near;
All, all is false and treacherous around;
All that they touch, or taste, or breathe, is Death!

But ah! what means that ruinous roar? Why fail
These tott'ring feet? Earth to its centre feels
The Godhead's power, and trembling at his touch
Through all its pillars, and in ev'ry pore,
Hurls to the ground, with one convulsive heave,
Precipitating domes, and towns, and tow'rs,
The work of ages. Crush'd beneath the weight
Of gen'ral devastation, millions find
One common grave; not ev'n a widow left
To wail her sons: the house, that should protect,
Entombs his master; and the faithless plain,
If there he flies for help, with sudden yawn





Expressed del. et sc.

*Through all its pillars, and at every pore
 Hurls to the ground, with one convulsive heave,
 Precipitating domes and towers and towers,
 The work of ages.*

Devout Prayer.

Starts from beneath him. Shield me gracious Heav'n,
O snatch me from destruction ! If this globe,
This solid globe, which thine own hand hath made
So firm and sure, if this my steps betray ;
If my own mother Earth, from whence I sprung,
Rise up with rage unnatural to devour
Her wretched offspring, whither shall I fly ?
Where look for succour ? Where, but up to thee,
Almighty Father ? Save, O save, thy suppliant .
From horrors such as these ! At thy good time
Let Death approach ; I reckon not—let him but come
In genuine form, not with thy vengeance arm'd,
Too much for man to bear. O rather lend
Thy kindly aid to mitigate his stroke ;
And at that hour when all aghast I stand
(A trembling candidate for thy compassion)
On this world's brink, and look into the next :
When my soul, starting from the dark unknown,

Preparation for Death.

Casts back a wishful look, and fondly clings
To her frail prop, unwilling to be wrench'd
From this fair scene, from all her custom'd joys
And all the lovely relatives of life ;
Then shed thy comforts o'er me, then put on
The gentlest of thy looks. Let no dark crimes,
In all their hideous forms then starting up,
Plant themselves round my couch in grim array,
And stab my bleeding heart with two-edg'd torture,
Sense of past guilt, and dread of future woe,
Far be the ghastly crew! And in their stead
Let cheerful Memory from her purest cells
Lead forth a goodly train of virtues fair,
Cherish'd in earliest youth, now paying back
With tenfold usury the pious care,
And pouring o'er my wounds the heav'nly balm
Of conscious innocence. But chiefly, *Thou*,
Whom soft-eyed Pity once led down from Heav'n,

Entrance into Heaven.

To bleed for man, to teach him how to live,
And, oh! still harder lesson! how to die;
Disdain not *Thou* to smooth the restless bed
Of Sickness and of Pain. Forgive the tear
That feeble Nature drops, calm all her fears,
Wake all her hopes, and animate her faith,
Till my rapt soul, anticipating Heav'n,
Bursts from the thraldom of incumb'ring clay,
And on the wing of Ecstasy upborne,
Springs into Liberty, and Light, and Life!

THE END.

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