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COSMO,
THE FLORENTINE;
VISIT TO PERTH;
AND
Other Poems.

BY CHARLES HERVÉ.

LONDON:

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1831.



DEDICATION.

TO MRS. PARTIS.

MADAM,

As the chief contributor to this little work, I take the liberty of inscribing it to you, not only as a medium for conveying my most grateful acknowledgments, but also to express my great admiration of the high benevolence of your disposition, the enthusiasm of which appears to me almost without a parallel. A more striking instance of a disinterested and generous spirit can scarcely exist, than your having given a higher praise to the plan of the NATIONAL BENEVOLENT INSTITUTION (founded by my late Brother, Mr. Peter Hervé) than to that magnificent Establishment, the PARTIS COLLEGE—which, at your instigation, was instituted and endowed on a princely scale of magnitude, according to the directions of the will of your late Husband, thus entailing upon you the whole trouble of founding and establishing; which occasioned you difficulties, such as few other Females could have surmounted: yet, after bestowing immense pains and wealth upon this great work, you have dispensed the greater part of your remaining fortune in acts of charity, rescuing many individuals from ruin and distress, besides

presenting the noble donation of One Thousand Pounds to the National Benevolent Institution, hoping, as you told me, that many of the Nobility and Gentry would follow the example, being far better able to spare such a sum than yourself. Yet, flourishing as this excellent establishment is, through the means of small Annual Subscriptions, the wealthy have not come forward with large donations. The sanguine hopes of the Founder had built upon a tenfold greater extent than has been realized; and I am of opinion, that if the full plan and intentions of this Institution were clearly made known through the medium of the Public Journals, and that a few characters, celebrated for worth and benevolence, would start forward in its behalf, with a similar enthusiasm to its late Founder, it would soon become one of the richest and most serviceable Charitable Establishments in the whole world. Upwards of Two Hundred Pensioners are, I believe, already on the list; and I have little doubt, that were more publicity given to the nature of this Institution, that Subscriptions and Donations would increase in abundance, and enable them to provide for all the applicants. That it is but little known among the great and wealthy, I can give what appears to me a striking and extraordinary proof:—My late Brother, the founder of this great Charity, having been reduced, by a most distressing contingency, to almost pecuniary want, a public subscription for his relief was suggested to him by a committee of friends; but his delicacy recoiling at such an exposure, it was agreed

that only a limited number of circulars should be sent out, which were addressed to all the Members of the two Houses of Parliament, by which the expense of postage was saved. This was conceived to be an excellent expedient, as it was applying at once to the fountain head of wealth and power, not doubting but that the slightest intimation that the founder of such an Institution being in a state of distress, would excite the deepest sympathy, and that an ample subscription would have been raised. The circular stated, in a pathetic appeal, the situation and circumstances of Mr. Peter Hervé, proposing to apply the interest of whatever sum was collected to his benefit for life, and to devolve, at his demise, to the funds of the Charity. Thus a twofold object would have been obtained. This was drawn up and attested by a Committee, composed of Clergymen and Gentlemen well known for their worth and benevolence: SIR JOHN SWINBURNE was their Chairman, one of the first of patrons to the Arts and to Charitable Establishments. Yet, although all the Members of the Two Houses were addressed, but five favourable replies were received! I can account for this extraordinary result in no other way, than in supposing that the majority of these great men cannot be aware of the nature of the National Benevolent Institution, or it is scarcely possible that they would have suffered its Founder to have pined in want, neglected and unnoticed. Nothing could exceed the disappointment of my Brother's friends; and his health being in a precarious

state, the blow went far towards hastening him to the grave. His mind had long been harassed with various persecutions and embarrassments, and his excessive exertions, both mental and physical, in labouring for the Institution, acting upon a very slender constitution, his end may be said to have been premature. He ended his career at an obscure village in France, where he was travelling on foot, in the forlorn hope of recruiting his declining health. Thus died, neglected, a man whose moral rectitude, patience and meekness under affliction, and enthusiastic philanthropy, was scarcely, if ever, surpassed. As coming from his brother, this statement will probably be considered partial; but, MADAM, I cannot help farther remarking, that he, in my opinion, appeared nearer to perfection than any being that ever came within my knowledge. If a character so exalted should have failed to move the Public in his favour, one so utterly insignificant as myself must not murmur at meeting with a similar fate.—This matter will probably be thought out of place in a Dedication; yet, if I mistake not, it will interest you far more than the flights of nonsense that follow; on which, I almost hope, you will not waste your attention. It, perhaps, might be more favourable to me, would all my Readers shut the book at this period.

If, MADAM, I have trespassed too long on your patience, I most humbly beg to be forgiven, and conclude, with the greatest respect, your obedient and devoted servant,

CHARLES HERVÉ.

TO THE PUBLIC.

IN publishing the following Rhyming Attempts, their Author wishes it to be fully understood, that he was not actuated by the slightest expectation of acquiring fame—on the contrary, he is but too conscious that he possesses neither talent nor education that could warrant such a presumption. He, therefore, honestly confesses, that his efforts were only thrust forth as a vehicle for Subscription, to which expedient he has been most reluctantly driven by an afflicting calamity, that compels him to abandon his profession as a Miniature Painter, which for more than twenty years had enabled him to support a numerous Family, till, from excessive application, his sight sustained injury so severe as to threaten a total decay, unless he relinquished his exertions as an

Artist. By the advice of his Friends, he submits to putting forth this appeal—trusting that it will, at least, arrest the severity, if it cannot conciliate the favour and support, of criticism.

For the inaccuracy and poverty of his verses, he begs leave to offer some further apology and observations. The SONNETS were mostly very juvenile essays; and COSMO was a forced production, written expressly for the purpose, composed within the space of Three Weeks, at a time when the Author's mind was charged with the heavy affliction of pecuniary distress, and other embarrassments.

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COSMO,
THE FLORENTINE.

—◆—
CANTO I.
—◆—

WHERE skies are purest, and where Nature glows
Beneath a sunshine of the brightest beam,
Delightful Arno's crystal current flows,
Reflecting groves and vineyards in her stream;
Cloth'd are her slopes in nature's best attire,
Whose fruitage rich and blossoms gay conspire
To charm the eye, and gratify desire.
The orange oft and clust'ring grapes invite
To luxury's feast, the unspoil'd appetite;

And there the olive thrives, and myrtle grows
In gay luxuriance; and as freely blows
The sweet acacia, and the pomegranate,
With grateful mulberry to satiate,
And luscious fig, and every fruitful tree
That blooms beneath the sun of Italy.
Yet nature's riches, by the vain-one, Man,
Are oft pass'd by, that he may closer scan
The works of art—as if his petty deeds
Outvied his great Task-master's—just as weeds
Will flaunt above the unambitious bloom
Of sweeter flowers, and rob them of perfume.
Thus Florence proudly rears her classic fanes
On Arno's verdant banks, and oft'ner gains
The world's best admiration:—few can claim,
Perhaps, a better or a brighter name
Among factitious works; and higher still
The City's praise may sound, and justly fill
The trump of Fame, to speak for ever loud;
For Florence well may triumph and be proud
Of her MEDICI race, who ruled the state
So long and wisely there, and left a great

And glorious name to brighten History's page,
And gild the records of the brilliant age
Their worth enlighten'd. Oh! who could hear
Of good Lorenzo's reign, and not revere
The glory of his name?—who could forget
His noble deeds, and wise decrees, that yet
Avail? His virtues still to Florence give
Example bright, that must for ever live,
And shed a sacred influence to bless
The race who follow such devotedness.
The Palaces and great Medici-Halls
Still shew how taste and talent graced their walls
In those auspicious days—Oh! when again
Shall Arts and Science flourish and retain
Such proud pre-eminence and bright control?
When princely patron with patrician soul
Shall hold and guide again the helm of state!
The stars of genius then shall emulate
Their predecessors' light, and shew the world
That Talent's banner may be yet unfurl'd.—
Thus lived and flourish'd in Lorenzo's days
Painters and poets—learning won the praise

Of all the great and good, which gives a claim
To Florentines, perhaps a better name
For genuine worth, than in tradition's page
Graced the bright era of the golden age.
But tho' men's deeds, when stamp'd with wisdom's seal,
Immortal prove, his works of art cannot reveal,
To time's last day, inheritance on earth!
All that in Florence to which man gave birth
Must yield at last to time—the marble walls,
And stately towers, the temples, domes, and halls,
Will crumble into dust—and yet flow on
Sweet Arno's tide, when all besides are gone,
Still shining as before—the olive groves,
And orange bloom, all nature's rich alcoves
Bloom on; and o'er, perhaps, the City's site
Fresh corn shall rise—and grapes shall grow—and bright
As now, the sun shall shine to ripen all
That's there. But oh! 'tis fit my Muse should call
Her powers forth to tell her purposed theme,
Nor lose her lay in moralizing dream.

 Within the mural pride of Arno's vale,
Young Cosmo dwelt, the hero of my tale:

Lord of a palace, affluence brought ease
And ease content; he well knew how to please
Himself and all about him; he was blest
With all the attributes that give a zest
To high enjoyments—education's charm
Had lent her magic aid, to store and arm
His citadel of thought—his fertile mind,
Which science had unlock'd, was not confined
To bigot themes, or superstitious creeds;
Enrich'd in early youth with all the seeds
Of classic lore, his understanding grew,
Just like some cultured garden, where the show
Of fruit and flowers is most rich and rare,
And nature's sun had ripen'd all that's there.
In learning's widest latitude he loved
To range, and pluck'd the blossoms as he roved,
Whilst yet incipient was the germ of thought
His intellect engender'd; early taught,
By talent urged, and inclination led,
Full soon he found that reason's sunshine shed
Maturing rays that chased the idle train
Of Folly's pageant ever from his brain.

He never loved to launch his bark of life
Upon the tide that bears the brawl and strife
Of Sensuality's mad crew ; for him
The gilded gondola might toss and swim
Untenanted beneath his palace walls.
No gastronome was he, nor masks nor balls
Could tempt him oft to quit the cool alcove,
His frescoed haunt—where he for hours would love
To sit and think, and speculate full oft
Upon the countless spheres that sail aloft,
And mock our comprehension ; he would think,
Perchance this orb was but a tiny link
In nature's mystic chain ; that stars so bright
Perhaps contain'd a class of things, whose light
Of wisdom shone from purer minds than ours,
Nor interposing cloud of darkness lowers
Upon the mirror of their intellect.
On such strange theories he would reflect,
And speculate so deep, that his young mind
Would take a morbid turn, and almost find
Misanthropy's dark cloud come o'er his brow :
But he would rally, and as quickly throw

The monster off, for he was well inclined
To love his fellow-men, and wish'd to bind
In Friendship's bond the world at large—his heart
Was sympathy itself—and would impart
To others all its goodness. He had won
The best results from musing thus alone ;
In thought's deep controversy he had gain'd
Conviction philosophic, that maintain'd
Necessity of virtue; thus he spread
An inspiration round, that seem'd to shed
Its genial influence over all—for e'en
His Serfs had caught their master's ways, and ta'en
A better path than menials oft will tread.
'Tis thus, when bright example takes the lead
Each system finds a source, whence springs a tide
Of purer principles. If kingly pride,
And ostentatious pomp, were check'd or changed
To humbler state, in order so arranged
That majesty were still upheld, and shone
With virtue's ray and wisdom's light alone—
How bright would be the diadem! how great
The sceptre's sway! how dignified the state
Of him whom all would strive to imitate!

'Twas not for vain display that Cosmo kept
A train of servitors; he lived and slept
Secure among them, happy in his home,
Best pleased when all who dwelt beneath his dome
Were best amused:—there was but one that he
Could think of doubtful guise, and that might be
Conjecture vain—ANTONIO he was call'd,
And in Lord Cosmo's suite had been install'd
But few months since; he was a man that seem'd
Above his fellow-serfs—by them was deem'd
Their chief;—although but newly come, from whence
He came was known to none, 'twould be offence
To ask; he seem'd of haughty mien, with bright
And searching eye, of manly form and height,
With raven ringlets curling round his face,
Mustachio'd lip, that gave peculiar grace
To features of the finest cast, and skin
Of polish'd brown; and yet there seem'd within
To lurk a restlessness, as if some sting
Of conscience goaded him; yet he would sing,
And dance, and take the lead in every sport
With dauntless recklessness; and he would court

Lord Cosmo's favour oft, and charm his soul,
With that which o'er him ever had control—
Music's magic voice. If in thought profound,
Or deepest reverie, at music's sound
His heart would leap, and all abstractions cease,
Or lull each tumult of the mind to peace.
He loved beneath a chesnut's shade to sit,
Beside his glassy lake, when all was lit
With rosy radiance from the parting blaze
Of day, when glory gleam'd with golden rays
On every shrub and tree; the lofty beech,
And sweeping larch, the stately elm, had each,
With poplar tall, and sweet acacia too,
A share of sunny light, and purple hue,
That dies in sweet gradation as it goes,
And leaves behind magnificent repose.
The soul of Cosmo was enwraught the while
In blest abstraction's trance—the placid smile
Of inward joy seem'd fix'd upon his face,
Like sculptured effort to portray the grace
Of calm content. In hours like these a feeling
Will come full oft upon the bosom stealing

That seems congenial with the landscape round;
A silent rapture, a serene profound,
Like sweet oblivion on an aching heart.
To Cosmo's bosom would such scenes impart
Delight like this; he still would sit and muse,
When garish day was gone, and all its hues
In twilight fade away, when evening star
Emits its dewy light, and murmurs far
Upon the distant breeze soon ling'ring die;
Or, loit'ring still in echo's breath, the cry
Of some complaining bird, or vesper chaunt
Of feather'd songster in his leafy haunt.
All sounds at last are hush'd, and nature's host
Seem lull'd in slumber's lap, and almost lost
Appears the form of things; vague shadows fall
In masses o'er the trees, and evening's pall
Seems spread upon creation. Cosmo still
Would banquet on the tranquil dream, until
The distant sound of music would awake
His trance; his good retainers oft would break
His mood with change delicious; well they knew
His every wish, and each with ardour flew

T' anticipate them all. They came with flute,
And flageolet, and some with joyous lute,
With hautboy sweet, and bugle-horn they blew,
That o'er the rippling lake on Zephyr flew,
And fell as lightly upon Cosmo's ear
As charmed sound from fairy minstrels near:
Or just as when, upon her bridal morn,
From sweetest sleep a maiden to her dawn
Of bliss is summon'd. Thus glad Cosmo woke,
And bless'd the voices that his vision broke.
Intent he listen'd to the melting sound
That nearer drew, and as the minstrels wound
Along the margin of the lake, he saw
Them mirror'd—feeling, as they closer draw,
Increasing pleasure. Oh! he loved the group
Of faithfuls, and address'd the bowing troop
When they approach'd:—" Kind followers, my thanks
" Of gratitude accept; upon the banks
" Of this cool lake amuse yourselves with song,
" Or dance, or sport, or as it best among
" Yourselves may please you; well ye all do know,
" If innocent your mirthful pastimes flow,

“ That your enjoyment, then, contributes well
“ To mine.” With gratitude each heart would swell,
And simultaneously the serfs would bend,
Well pleased to stoop to such a valued friend,
And master kind; and as they slowly rose,
With one accord each man his hautboy blows,
His flageolet, and flute, that seem'd to fill
And rend the air with rapture's joyous thrill:
And when the strain had ceased, Antonio led
A maiden forth, with lute all garlanded,
That gracefully across her bosom hung—
And thus, with melting voice and pathos, sung:—

SONG.

I.

In the vale where sweet Arno is flowing,
Is a spot of all others the dearest—
A home that is ever bestowing
The blessings of friendship sincerest;

A home, where the master who reigneth
With beneficence ever is smiling;
And e'en to his servitors deigneth
To render them all that's beguiling.

Then, oh! let us hope, when our instruments ring,
That the chords to the heart of good Cosmo give
joy —
That our dancing, and sporting, for ever may bring
Delight to his bosom, that never shall cloy.

II.

In the palace where Cosmo is dwelling
Our joys and our pastimes are purest,
For our hearts, with true gratitude swelling,
Have a pulse that makes pleasure the surest.
Is there one that amongst us would slight him,
And fly not to grant his desire?
Is there one would not die to delight him,
Or be proud in his cause to expire?

Chorus—Then, oh! &c. &c.

The song had ceased, but Cosmo's bosom still
Responsive beat, as though the joyous thrill
Vibrated yet upon his raptured soul—
As though his senses to the sweet control
Of silver chords submitted, of harmony
Divine! But soon he rallied to a diff'rent joy:
For now the pageant had a posture ta'en
Of new delight, and on the velvet plain
Were briskly dancing to a merry strain.
Lord Cosmo, starting, with a manly grace,
Disdaining not to join, soon took his place,
And snatch'd the hand of her, the songstress sweet,
Who had enchanted him—and now they meet,
And seem on equal terms, as with the rest
They lightly bound, with hands together press'd.
Perhaps, in those glad hours the youthful heart
Beat high of her selected, but the dart
Of love had never yet touch'd Cosmo's core,
Although no stoic—but he could adore
Sweet nature's altar-piece, and worship there
With homage true, and piety sincere;
And think of all the glorious work man's mind
The pinnacle;—and yet he ne'er was blind

To female charms—his maiden serfs well knew,
That he, in turn, to each would ever shew
A kind approving smile, and all had felt
His palm's warm pressure, for he had dealt
Alike his favours—if, sometimes, perchance,
He deign'd to interchange a furtive glance—
Or brush'd from off a maiden's lips a sigh
Of fragrance, as he pass'd her swiftly by—
Howe'er her heart might beat, full well she knew
To her kind Lord respect was ever due ;
So dignified his mien tow'ds all, to love
She could not dare, but wisely strove
To keep a quiet breast, or let it throb
For one whose station gave a claim to rob
Her bosom of tranquillity. Thus flew
The hours in Cosmo's bless'd domain, for true
Content had fledged the wings of time, and lent
Its downy pinions with a free consent,
To warm this halcyon nest of happiness.
The dancing ceased, and closed with a caress
From each to each, of custom more, perhaps,
Than might be thought of chastity the lapse.

Upon his palace steps good Cosmo now
Would see his serfs assembled all, and bow
To them his night's farewell; Antonio wound,
As he was wont, his thrilling bugle-sound,
To summon them to meet in festive hall,
To banquet as they pleased till slumber's call
Should bid them close their revels, and retire
To innocent repose. Who could desire
More earthly bliss? who would not think
His bondage bless'd who daily drops a link
Of such a golden chain?

Cosmo would alone

Remain, and richly feast upon his own
Pure thoughts and meditations, a repast
To him most grateful—he but little taste
Had oft for dainties of the banquet-hall—
Full pleased that he could render unto all
His servitors enjoyment. He would thank
The Power Supreme, who placed him in a rank
That gave him wealth, and thus the means to bend
His inclinations to their dearest end!

CANTO II.



FROM tranquil sleep our hero would arise,
For bless'd was his repose; he loved to meet
Another morn, and look upon the skies
Before the sun was up, the dawn to greet;
Not oft would opal streak the Levant sky
Ere Cosmo left his couch, for he would fly
From sloth supine to meet upon the hills
The night-breeze ere it fled—to hear the rill's
Continuous plaint, like infant's little wail;
Night's slumber break, what time the loit'ring gale
Foretells th' approach of morn, in fresh-drawn sighs
Of fragrance from below, which seem to rise
From nature's shrine as off'rings up to Heaven!
Aye, Cosmo's philosophic soul was given

To scenes and hours like these; he loved to see
The fleecy clouds roll through immensity,
Uncurtaining the morn, revealing bright
The herald star of day, whose glitt'ring light
Shines sweetly forth, like some celestial gem,
Eclipsing all in heaven's diadem—
Or like when Hope's bright eye alone has shed
A ray, when ev'ry beam beside has fled!

Yes, beauteous star! the Shepherd's simple heart
Hath felt thy kindness oft—for he will start
From sluggish watch, from reverie, or dream,
Instinctively at thy prelusive beam—
He knows thou art no treach'rous one, to smile
Delusively—beneath thy light no guile
Is lurking hid—but, like a long-tried friend,
He can with fullest confidence depend
Upon the promise of thy looks, which speak
Of brighter glories near, that soon must break
Effulgent on the world.

With golden rays,
In gorgeous pomp, the all-o'erpow'ring blaze
Uprises soon, and o'er creation throws
A robe of radiance, till all nature glows

With gratitude and joy; the lark's shrill song
At heaven's portals first leads on the throng
Of feather'd melodists; whilst proudly soars
In silence on, the eagle that adores
To gaze upon his God, for he alone
Of every living thing can view the throne
Of light, and brave its beam with look intense,
Unmoved, unawed, by its magnificence!
Dauntless, he dares, with bright undazzled eye,
To scan the throne of his idolatry!—
Shrine of eternal glory! source of light!
Fount of exhaustless fire, for ever bright!
That beamest blessings upon all below
With everlasting smile, and ceaseless glow
Of goodness and of bliss! Centre of space,
And oracle of time, thy golden face
A universal dial proves, and tells
To erring Man, that truth for ever dwells
In thy transcendant looks, eternally
The same; whilst all beneath thy beam we see
In form and substance change, yet nought appears
Of nature to diminish—days and years

Roll on, and all things perish and decay,
Though not one particle has pass'd away
Of earthly matter; not the slightest breath
That e'er exhaled at e'en an insect's death
Escapes our atmosphere; although we deem
The spirit fled that's scorch'd beneath the beam,
The dew-drop gone, the rose's scent, the mote,
And viewless myriads that in ether float,
Annihilated all, yet each to earth
Returns in some new shape, another birth
And form to take, perpetuating thus
Creation's atoms Yet, 'tis said of us,
That we alone escape from thralldom's chain,
Some bless'd eternal goal at last to gain
Of endless bliss;—for such a glorious home
Of halcyon joys, for happiness to come,
Due gratitude we feel—and for our lot,
Whate'er it be, in this enchanting spot,
Oh! let us all be thankful! Who can look
Upon sweet Nature's face, and not be shook
To bend with admiration? Who can stand
Unmoved upon the mountain's brow, when grand

The scene around reveals a rich and vast
Arena—where rivers roll, and plunge at last
Their waters in the main—where forests bend
Beneath the blast, and precipices end
In wild chaotic forms, too deep for man
To dare, with vision so confined, to scan—
Where cataracts foam, and rush, and seem to tear,
As if revenge had bid them nothing spare,
Huge trees, and shapeless stones, and massive rocks,
In fragments rude, whose loud repeated shocks
Eternal echos rouse, one ceaseless jar,
Of stunning sounds, and elemental war!
And far from these, as if to meet the skies,
In lofty peaks, tremendous mountains rise,
That seem an endless chain, as though to bind
The giant form of nature, and remind
Creation of its slavery—one, perhaps,
Is pinnacled with smoke, whilst inward claps
Of bursting thunder threatens all around
With dire destruction! Soon the trembling ground
The mountain's rage foretells—the crater rends—
The ravage is begun, the flame upsends

The burning bowels of exhaustless earth,
Whose dark and mystic womb can thus give birth
To hideous ruin, and at once to crush
E'en millions in its fall—for when the rush
Of red-hot matter finds a course, oh! who
Shall stem its tide? oh! who the mighty throes
Of nature durst repel? If man presumes
Volcanic warnings to defy, their tombs
Themselves have made, and scarcely claim a tear!—
The crowded vale a chaos doth appear,
A combination rich of nature's gifts
And art's productions, when proudly lifts
Some temple's dome, or battlement on high,
Or sacred fane aspiring to the sky—
And theatres, whose colonnades display
Symbolic statues—and in vain array
The pomp of palaces appears—yet all,
Contingent, must submit to change or fall;
How soon, not one can tell, for even now
The storm may roll above to overthrow
With mighty vengeance all that lives below!—

Such mingled thoughts would pass in Cosmo's mind
Which he would deem enjoymen—the could find
Supreme delight from musing thus, and feel
A fond excitement o'er his senses steal,
That urged his speed to taste of joys at home,
And much endear'd him to his palace-dome ;
For though he loved to gaze on nature best,
Such interviews would give a double zest
To home's delights. He loved to contemplate
The works of Art, that richly decorate
His splendid halls ; the sculptor's pow'ful aid
Had render'd rich adornments, and array'd
In beauty every wall : the painter's art
With brilliance shone ; his forms appear'd to start
With magical effect, and seem at once to charm
The senses and the soul, and thus disarm
The mind of its belief ! Each talent there
So dazzlingly display'd, so rich and rare,
By emulation's zeal was urged, for when
Such patron's worth is known and felt, oh ! then
Is genius roused with ardour to compete,
To win munificence and scorn defeat !

As fondly, too, was erudition stored,
For classic lore he ever had adored ;
With learned men he dearly loved to herd
In converse free, and feast on ev'ry word.
And thus he would indulge each happy mood—
His mind had form'd as yet no cares to brood
Upon.

And thus another day had pass'd,
When died upon the ev'ning gale the last
Sweet note in echo's voice of bugle blast,
Antonio's latest peal, when Cosmo found
Himself once more upon his fav'rite ground
Alone. The lamp of heaven was full and clear,
Pelucid seem'd, as crystal orbs appear,
And sail'd through space majestically slow,
That he her charms might contemplate below,
And love her silver radiance—which more bright
And purely shines in an Italian night,
Than oft in other climes; her beauteous beam
Upon the bowers fell, her lovely stream
Of lustre lit the marble vases up ;
The rich Borghese, and chaste Etruscan cup ;

Along the line of statues, sweetly gleam'd
The tender light, so mild, and soft, it seem'd
Like silver tissue robing all around.
The graceful fawn and satyr there had found
A pedestal, and infant God of Love;
And close within a fragrant myrtle grove
His beauteous Mother stood; and all the train
Of Medicean marbles graced the plain
Of this elysium. Fountains glitter'd too,
And far and wide their diamond sparkles flew,
And cool'd the mossy ground; and oft the rose
Refresh'd, whose rich profusion throws
Delicious fragrance to the fitful breeze,
To blend its fragrance with clematis trees,
And violet-beds; whilst orange blossoms oft
Their incense offer, as zephyrs lightly waft
The odour through the groves. The scented gale
Did not unheeded sigh, nor oft exhale
To desert air—for Cosmo loved too well
His paradise, to let the luscious swell
Of sweet ambrosia'd breezes pass, nor taste
Their honied sighs—for nature could not waste

Her charms on him, he held them far too rare.—
But, hark! what sound upon the distant air,
Besides the nightingale's, now faintly fell
Upon his ear? 'Twas like the whisper'd spell
Of some enchantress! Now it nearer draws
With accents more distinct; at every pause
He breathless stands in silent wonderment—
It plainer comes—and now a voice is sent
Which seems like superhuman sounds, that melt
Upon the heart, and so to him they felt—
For now he hears, in words no longer faint,
In thrilling notes, this sad bewilder'd plaint:—

“ By sweet echo led, from the valley I fled,
At the sound of my love's bugle horn;
It came on the gale, like the flattering tale,
That was wont on the breeze to be borne.
But there's treachery now in every sound,
I have wander'd from far bewilder'd and faint,
And the briars my garments have torn on the way,
Yet no where on earth is my love to be found,
And the nightingale mocks my complaint:
I have look'd on the moon till my eye-balls are strain'd

In hopes that a mirror so bright
Would shew my lover's sweet face on her disk—
But the cold orb as placid as ever remain'd.
I thought it the ice of despair,
For it froze up a bosom that once was as warm
As a sun-beam at noon, or the rays of delight.
I sent off my favourite dove at a risk,
With a token tied under its wing,
And pray'd that my bird would return with a charm,
As it used, with his signet or ring:
But the dear one has never come back to the vale,
Nor will Una her footsteps retread;
For the nightshade and aconite poison the gale,
And the pansy is wither'd and dead!"

She ceased—and stood transfix'd as Cosmo gazed,
Himself awhile bewilder'd and amazed,
And lost in admiration—her fine form
Appear'd like symmetry itself, for e'en the storm
Of rude insanity could scarcely wreck
Such pure perfection! Ringlets on her neck
And shoulders hung dishevell'd—madness, too,
Had play'd the ruffian with her robes, which flew

Disorder'd from her. Silent now she stood,
As though absorb'd in some abstracted mood.
To Cosmo it appear'd as though had stept
Some statue from its pedestal—and crept
A cold and almost superstitious thrill
Upon him: fearless heart like his, the chill
Soon chased—he rallied all his powers, and took
With tenderest care and grace her hand, that shook
With tremour, yet seem'd to yield a willing
Touch, as though obediently fulfilling
Some duty forced upon her—she, perhaps,
Had late obey'd some keeper kind, whose lapse
Of watchfulness had set her free. He tried
To sooth her mind, but all was vainly plied—
His eloquence was lost, she wildly bent
Her vacant gaze upon him; still intent,
He urged persuasive accents on an ear
That knew no language now, and yet could hear
The slightest sound; he press'd her hand—as snow
'Twas cold, and seem'd as white, nor trembled now.
Instinctively she forward seem'd to move,
Like one subdued, and hurried through the grove

A willing captive. The chequering trees
Their shadows cast—Lord Cosmo scarcely sees
The beauty of his prize, till forth he led
Her from the shade; and onward still they sped
Towards the palace steps, when now the moon
With unobstructed beam, and brightest noon,
Shone full upon her. E'en the Poet's praise
And flatt'ring parasite might fail to raise
A strain of language that could aptly speak
Of loveliness so rare! all words are weak
To tell the mind's impressions when to rapture
Once excited! E'en Cosmo's soul, in capture,
Now was led—he before had never seen
Expression so divine; nor e'er had been
So charm'd with aught of earthly form—her eyes,
Though fix'd, were full of tenderness, like skies
Of purest blue they shone—her brow was bow'd
In perfect arch—her ample forehead shew'd
Like polish'd Parian stone!—of golden hue,
Her hair in sunny ringlets fell, and grew
In rich profusion—every feature seem'd
A cast of perfect mould! If reason beam'd

But there again, oh! what beside on earth
Could fill perfection up, or add more worth
To beauty! 'Twas Cosmo's turn to tremble
Now; his unstrung nerves could not dissemble
Their defeat, and shook with rapture; whilst she
The firmer of the two now seem'd to be,
And grasp'd the hand she scarcely felt before—
As if a moment's impulse could restore
The senses flown. Alas! 'twas but a start—
A sudden flash of instinct from the heart—
That soon relapsed. And Cosmo rallied now
And reach'd the palace-halls, and heard the flow
Of revelry within. He loudly call'd
His vassals forth, who seem at once appall'd
At summons so unusual; crowding close
Around their valued master, as if foes
And danger had assail'd him—re-assured,
They bow'd submission all.—But what allured
The maniac's eye? 'Twas proud Antonio's plume,
That tower'd o'er the rest, as though t' assume
Command! Like serpent's gaze, with look intense,
As if to fix and fascinate, her sense

Of vision fell on him alone—'twas like
An effort of the basilisk to strike
Its victim to the heart! Antonio quail'd,
Like quarried heron, but as soon assail'd
His enemy; for quick his poniard-steel
Was struck at Una's breast—destined not to feel
The murd'rous aim—for Cosmo's arm had caught
The blow: she fell with piercing shriek, so fraught
With madness and despair, 'twas like no wail
Of earthly sound. Nothing could avail
To stop the murderer's flight, astonishment
Had paralyzed them all! O'er Una bent,
In mute distraction Cosmo was intent,
Till, roused by some instinctive pulse, he cried,
"PURSUE"—and bore his burthen in, and tried
His tenderest efforts to restore his sad
And sunken charge. He saw her bosom had
The throb of life, for beating still her heart,
Though faint the pulse; and now he saw apart
Her bloodless lips, from whence a sigh exhaled,
Which Cosmo's anxious soul as soon inhaled.
Still on he watch'd, till animation's flow
Had fill'd her throbbless veins with gentle glow,

And faintly tinged her cheek and lips again.
Her lids unclosed, but could not long refrain
From sinking to repose. Subduing sleep
Had now enchain'd her frame, and seem'd to steep
Her troubled mind, and all th' eventful past,
In bless'd oblivion. Monumental cast,
From purest Grecian mould, could never shew
A type of slumber so divine; the glow
Of vital warmth would scarcely seem
Her look from death's cold aspect to redeem.
Yet Cosmo's heart felt re-assured, and rest
Once more was welcome to his flutter'd breast,
And calmness reign'd again within his halls:
It was the only lapse from peace those walls
Had e'er assail'd in Cosmo's time—the last
He firmly hop'd—yet some misgiving cast
A cloud upon his brow, he scarce new why,
And vainly strove the darkness to defy.
He call'd the females of his household train,
And gave them charge of Una, to maintain
A vigilance and care, her every want
To watch, anticipate, and sooth—and grant

Her all his palace could afford, and nought
Deny but liberty.—And thus he thought
His duty now was done, and he might claim
The blessing of repose. The deadly aim
Antonio's point for Una had intended,
Had wounded Cosmo's arm, as he defended
The fair one's bosom ; careless of the pain,
Although so deeply cut, his serfs in vain
Had urged their aid till now, and now once more
The halls are hush'd, and peaceful as before.

CANTO III.

OH! who, that's gazed upon a bright blue sky,
And loved to look upon its depth serene,
When not a cloud the glorious canopy
Hath veil'd, and felt his life had ever been
As bright and tranquil too!—oh! who, so bless'd,
Could calmly bear to find his hallow'd rest
By fortune's sudden frown at once disturb'd?
Though Cosmo's philosophic mind had curb'd
As yet his inward passion, and could bear
The brunt of storms and war, if courage were
The test required—yet, oh! he ill could brook
The brutal deed that had so rudely shook
The peaceful tenour of his halls; and still
Vibrated in his breast the fearful thrill

That Una had inspired; for her he felt
A new excitement, pangs that seem'd to melt
His heart, which throb'd with more than common care,
As if another spirit blended there
Solicitude with his—as if his soul
Was doubly charged, and he could not control,
As heretofore, the burthen of his breast;—
Yet mingled with the trouble that oppress'd
A strange sensation, unallied to grief,
Or pain, yet struggled vainly for relief;
A feeling that he deem'd usurper there
Yet wish'd it not away, as tyrants are
Sometime endured for acts that may redeem
Their evil deeds, or qualities that seem
At least a counterpoise to cruelty.
Good Cosmo thought his feelings might defy
Comparison! He found them new, and felt
That rapture's throb and passion's pulse could melt
In one, though dash'd with care; he scarce had known
A restless night before; yet he had flown
At early dawn, with anxious hope to hear
How Una had reposed. Compassion's tear

Th' attendant's eyes bedew'd, for they before
Had ne'er so sad a vigil kept. She wore,
They said, a tranquil aspect now, and sleep
Had not denied its lulling aid, to steep
Her sorrows in its balm; yet oft awake
She'd sing a strain that made their bosoms ache;
'Twas like no earthly sound, and well might seem
The dirge of some Eolian harp, or dream
Of 'wilder'd spirit! He in such a thought
Could fully sympathize, for she had wrought
Upon his soul reminiscence so strong.
Like echoes now, her last night's thrilling song
Was chiming in his ear. It gave him ease
That nothing worse had pass'd, and well did please
His grateful heart to see his Maidens moved;
Compassion in the meanest thing he loved.
Ere noon he bent o'er Una's couch, and spoke
A strain of soothing words, that scarcely broke
The spell of her bereavement, yet she bent
Her looks upon him with a glance that sent
Fresh hope into his heart; her eye-balls now
No longer were distended—yet, although.

Their liquid blue with placid brightness beam'd,
They spoke no language of the mind, but stream'd
With unintelligible light, like stars
At dewy eve, with doubtful gleam, that mars
Our expectations. Cosmo hail'd the calm,
As ominous of good—still urged the balm
Of words assuasive, persevering still,
Whilst hope with flattery would his bosom fill
Deluding his belief; and every spark,
That evanescent shone, oh! he would mark
As coming rays of reason. Fix'd her gaze
Became—on what he scarce could tell—amaze
Her features seem'd t' illumine, as if a flash
Of sudden recollection now would dash
Insanity away.—His bandaged arm
She seized, and though she trembled with alarm,
Thus spoke: "The dagger's point! Oh! let me suck
The poison out! It was Vindici struck
The murd'rous blow! Then should I love him still?
Oh yes! 'Twas me he kindly meant to kill,
To end my mis'ry here." With frantic cry,
And floods of tears, she sunk unconsciously

On Cosmo's breast. So piteously she wept,
His very soul seem'd rent, and o'er him crept
A tremour that unmann'd him, and reveal'd
A secret to his heart, which now must yield
A prisoner to passion—he felt the test
Would be sincere, as now he fondly press'd
The lovely burthen. Soon her tears subside—
She senseless sinks again. Oh! thus the tide
Of sorrow ebbs and flows! subject, like seas,
To wrecks and storms, the human bosom's ease
Is torn asunder! To her couch again
Consign'd, he left his women to remain
Attendants, as before. He sought the air
To cool his fever'd mind, for he could bear
But ill the change from happiness to grief:
Among his garden-shades he found relief;
Amidst his myrtle walks and orange groves,
His gay parterres, and in his dear alcoves,
Inhaling freshness from the balmy breeze,
And fountains sparkling 'mid the dark green trees;
Pure luxury to one so overcome
With agony! In such elysian home

He ever could delight. But short his joy—
A new and painful scene must now destroy
His happiness awhile—for now return'd
From weary chase (and with impatience burn'd
To tell their tidings of pursuit) the men
Who sped Antonio to redeem. Through glen
And forests dark, o'er hill and dale they flew,
The monster still eluding—they pursue
With vigilance and speed, till morning's light
Had chased the umbrage of impervious night,
That favour'd his concealment—dawning beams
Had scarce illumed with glitt'ring orient gleams
Creation's pinnacles, when they beheld
A monastery's gloom, that nigh expell'd
The light of morn. Their searching eyes intent
Now fell upon the pile, and as they bent
To penetrate the dusk, there seem'd to glide
A shadow tall beneath the cloister'd side.
They knew their Chieftain's plume, and onward rush'd—
Too soon the heart's-blood of the foremost gush'd!
Antonio was prepared, resolved that none
His vengeance should escape—yet only one

His point received; for, baffled by a blow,
He fell, and felt he ne'er had sunk so low
Before—one moment longer he had gain'd
A sanctuary within, and then maintain'd
Defiance to his foes; but feeling now
Life ebbing fast, that all to him below
Was now for ever lost, 'twas time, at last,
To think of Heaven, and pray for errors past.
He call'd a Monk to shrive, and thus address'd
Him—"Whate'er to thee may be now confess'd,
To Cosmo bear. As brief my time on earth,
So must be my tale! Naples gave me birth,—
No matter what my name—enough, that I
Disgraced it oft, and say so ere I die.
Of proud inheritance too early claim'd,
To loose companions given, and oft inflamed
By passions never curb'd, my wealth soon sunk
In dissipation's vortex; thus I shrunk
From splendour's blaze, to herd with desp'rate men,
Who, reckless of their deeds, disgrace their very den
By feeding on dishonour—hideous crew!
That despised each other, yet durst not shew

Their cowardly contempt! Disgusted soon,
When all was lost, and misery's darkest noon
Was come, oh! driven by desperation's curse,
I join'd another gang, which, scarcely worse
I deem'd, for honour's point at least was held
As sacred there, though else beside expell'd
Of moral worth. It now was far from home
I urged my fortunes on—Upon the foam
Of Adriatic oft I won my share
Of wealth, deserving it, if those who dare
The most, can claim reward; a better cause
My courage might have served, had I the laws
Revered, for perseverance at the helm,
And patience at the prow, will oft o'erwhelm
A host of foes, and deprecate the storm.
My proud and dauntless brow, athletic form,
My tow'ring height, and arrogance of speech,
Soon gain'd me a command; my fellows each,
With one accord, declared me chosen chief;
Vindici I was call'd, and soon relief
From pirates' life I sought, and on the land
In dark Dalmation forests led my band,

And ravaged all around, with desperate
Success. At twilight once it was our fate
To mark a splendid equipage that dared
Resistance to our force, and all had shared
The doom of death, had I not interfered
To save the Lady Una, who appear'd
Like Angel supplicating demons vile!
I would have spared her father, but the while
Confusion reign'd, he fell beneath their steels,
Deaf to my commands and to her appeals.
As senseless on her father's corpse she lay,
I bore her from the horrid scene away,
Far from our hateful haunt, to fertile vale
Remote, where fragrance floats on every gale,
And echo only answers to the voice
Of innocence—that such sweet spot her choice
Might be, I deem'd, upon Italia's shore;
But e'en such tranquil joys could not restore
The lovely fair-one soon—she little thought
That I was of the Robber Band, that brought
Her such bereavement; she could believe
That I came there to rescue and relieve;

And soon I won upon her gentle heart
With smooth and flatt'ring tongue, and specious art,
Inducing her to love—although I felt
But little of the passion that could melt
My savage nature, yet I thought the prize
Worth winning; soon an ardent lover's guise
Was well dissembled; the sweet seclusion
Of the scene well favour'd the delusion.
Yet oft upon her noble father's name
She dwelt, and wept, and often would she claim
My promise to convey her to her home
In Tuscany, where once beneath the dome
Of affluence she dwelt. O'erpow'ring love
Acknowledged weak evasions, yet above
The blind infatuation that detracts
From dignity, she had a soul whose acts
Can never swerve from virtue's course, or throw
The sophist's mask upon them; and although
Subdued into devotedness for me,
Her homage was so high, that I could see
No hope of conqu'ring in th' illicit way
I wish'd, yet felt contented with the sway

I'd gain'd, and loved her floral wreathes to take;
And hear her song upon the breezes break
At eve, when at a distance I would wind
My bugle in reply. Oh! I could find
Such dalliance would delight me; I would love,
When in my forest-cave, t'allure her dove,
And bless a messenger so mute. She thought
That I was of some castle Lord, and taught
Her bird t'invade my window. Soon the spell
Was broken! One ill-fated day befell
Destruction to my band, when I had led
Them on—some bravely fell, and others fled,
And some were ta'en—myself escaped, and flew
To Florence, where I could conceal, I knew,
In safety. By Una softened, I felt
Accusing conscience sting, and almost melt
My flinty heart—but oh! the awful dread
Of justice in pursuit upon my head
Impell'd me to abandon her. I chose
To join Lord Cosmo's suite—too well he knows
The rest, and thanks to Heaven and him that he
My murd'rous aim frustrated! Bear from me

My dying thanks. From whence she came that night,
Or for what, I knew not; a spect'ral light
Seem'd glaring from her eyes, I scarcely thought
Her mortal—her looks appear'd with charges fraught—
I could not brook reproach—my madd'ning brain
The impulse urged, my hand could not restrain
The irresistible decree!—Oh may Heaven
My soul assoil, and all be here forgiven!"

Thus closed the tale of guilt, and soon from earth,
And agony, his spirit fled to birth
And life eternal!

Faithfully the Priest
Deliver'd this narration, which increased
Solicitude awhile in Cosmo's breast.
He thanks the Holy Man, and all the rest
For their kind services; lamenting much
His good retainer's death, he knew that such
Were all his serfs, in courage staunch as well
As in fidelity, for each would sell
His life's blood for his master. Once again
Was Cosmo left to ruminat—a train

Of new bewildering thoughts now charged his mind;
Una was the burthen!—chance had consign'd
To his peculiar and devoted care
The loveliest of beings; well aware
His heart had felt a shock, to him as new
As it was strange, that now more ardent grew,
He dared to ask the cause—perhaps he might
Anticipate the answer well, some light
Had dawn'd already on his mind, for Fear
Before had whisper'd "Love!" Hope, more dear,
Confirm'd the sentence now.

Antonio's tale

Had heighten'd every pulse—could aught avail
Her senses to restore, it should be done;
E'en now he thought the work was well begun,
If not completed. Once had he been told,
That sudden shocks would loosen oft the hold
Of temporary madness—such he deem'd
Was her's. Antonio's rash attempt had seem'd
To rouse her recollection; floods o' tears
Had gush'd to her relief, and calm'd her fears;

Oh! should she be herself again, he thought
What raptures might be his!—and thus he wrought
His mind to ecstasy.

In calmness she

Had long reposed, just like some tranquil sea
Unbroken by a breeze, for scarce a sigh
Her bosom heaved, nor now was beating high
Her heart, her pulses gently throbb'd, and seem'd
To promise restoration; pleasure beam'd
On all. Days pass'd, and every change new joy
To Cosmo gave. Oh! what could now destroy
His hope! she now would talk of home, and ask
What friend had brought her here.—The hideous mask
Of madness now had fallen from her mind,
And shew'd a heart submissively resign'd
To bear the ills of fate. Soon Cosmo broke
By slow degrees the burthen'd tale, and spoke
In language such as Una ne'er before
Had heard, and seem'd to her that more
Than mortal voice address'd and soothed her now;
Such eloquence he used, that she would glow

With pure delight, as if she felt her soul
Had left the thralldom of this earth's control
And dwelt in realms of bliss—as if she heard
The silver voice of angels speak the word
Of comfort to her ear—For oh! to those
Who wake at once to rapture and repose
From dark Insanity's delirious dream,
'Twere like a heavenly birth, beneath the beam
Of bless'd beatitude. The tones that fell
From Cosmo's tongue, though sweet, did nothing tell
Of love—too delicately wrought he felt,
That though his heart with passion's throb should melt,
He could not touch on chords so lately snapp'd,
And now so freshly strung—however wrapt,
His soul should yield to Time's unfolding wing,
And watch till opportunity should bring
The golden moments round. Ere long they came—
To Una soon his heart's consuming flame
Communicates; in those dear walks and bowers,
Those philosophic haunts, where once his hours
To study were devote, where once he thought
His mind too firm to be subdued and caught

In Passion's snare, yet here he humbly bow'd
A willing slave; here his ardent bosom glow'd
With undissembled love; unlike the lure
That tempted Una once—she felt how pure
And polish'd was the strain that now her heart
Invaded—that intellect could now impart
A higher tone, a music to the mind,
That, blending with the bosom's thrill, entwined
The senses and the soul in harmony
Divine; for he would weave so tenderly
The texture of his lay—so fondly dwell
On future joys, that purest bosoms swell,
Reciprocally join'd; how doubly dear
Would every scene and favourite haunt appear,
When hand in hand with her he dearly loved
Each fond delight was shared. Whene'er they roved
By Arno's side, or through the vista's shade,
On lake's cool bank, or in the cultured glade,
Or on the hillocks cloth'd with clustering vines,
When each their homage paid at nature's shrines
With Adoration's zeal—when music's voice
Should melt their ardent bosoms to rejoice

In sweet accordance, and together thrill
With rapture's chord—or oft when, higher still,
Their hearts are beating with the purest bliss,
That can be shared in world so frail as this,
To walk in Charity's sweet path, and strew
The blossoms of benevolence, and dew
The thorns of life with honied balm—how bless'd
Was he, that wealth and power he possess'd
To scatter good!—And now he bent his eyes
On Una, and with rapture saw the prize
Was won; and oh! he felt how doubly bless'd
Were all anticipations now; at rest
His heart, though beating high,—the point was gain'd,
He saw the goal, the pinnacle attain'd—
And now could revel in the gorgeous flame
Of sweet expectancy, and every vein
Vibrated joy.

The day, the happy day
Was fix'd! The blissful nuptial morn, when they
In holy love should link, and bless the rite,
The sacred bond, that seal'd such pure delight!

The day was come—the joyous hour—the dawn
Auspicious shone—a brighter sun than this,

Had never rose to bless a brilliant morn,

With golden seal to sanctify such bliss!

And rung the marriage bells with merry peal,

From every tower, with emulative zeal;

And banners proudly wave, and streamers fly,

From steeples, pinnacles, and windows high;

And lovely Arno's silver tide was gay

With gondolas, and guests, to grace the day

With pageantry, to shew their pride of joy:

All hearts and hands were striving to employ

Their utmost zeal. The streets of Florence rung

With shouts of mirth—and gratulation sung

Its loudest peal, for every joyous chord

By gratitude was strung, to bless the Lord

That oft had shewn beneficence to them.

Each decoration rare, and costly gem,

Was put in requisition now. The Nobles all,

From far and near, to celebrate the ball,

In gilded equipages came; from Rome,

Naples, Venice, Pisa, and from the home

Of Una—for Cosmo had prepared her friends
To meet their long-lost Fair, and greeting sends
An invitation for her bridal morn,
Her joy to witness, and the feast t' adorn.
They come, and all the splendid crowd are seen
In Cosmo's gardens—each flower-bed and evergreen
Are now eclipsed—for e'en the rose's bloom,
The tulips gay, and dalia's dyes, are gloom,
Compared with glittering oriental gems,
That now in crosses shone, and diadems,
And dazzling diamond stars, and sapphire's blaze,
And ruby bright, and topaz' golden rays,
With amethysts and emeralds, whose play
Is glittering to the gorgeous star of day
Like some enchanted fountain.—Winding now
Between the trees, they glide, a brilliant show
Of lovely forms, in rare and rich array,
That intersects the boughs and blossoms gay—
Like moving labyrinth they twine, and seem
The passing pageant of some fairy dream.
The still-cold statues, and the colonnades,
In long perspective, and the balustrades,

With graceful urns and vases deck'd; the domes,
The pediments, and porticoes, in Rome's
Best style, with rich ensculptured architraves,
And all the architecture that enslaves
Our admiration—all conspired to form
A grand and solemn contrast to the warm
And sunny sparkle of the joyous throng
Of buoyant life, that swiftly moved among
The marble monuments. Palladio's days
Of triumph scarce could win a group to gaze
Upon his grandest works, of purer taste
Than those assembled now, to praise the chaste
Enchantment of this bright and magic scene.
Palmyra's proudest zenith might have been
More gorgeous in its pomp, and high display,
More ostentatious on a festal day,
Than Cosmo's palace now could boast—for though
His high-born guests their choicest gaudes would show
In compliment to him, he loved the least
Such vain display, nor had he for the feast
Commanded decoration. All his good
Domestics knew, and loved his every mood

T' indulge—yet thought, for once, that they might
swerve,

Nor aught offend. Each had tried his best to serve

Th' occasion—each his humble emblems brought—

The maidens, wreaths of whitest ribbon wrought,

And flowers the men profusely had entwined

About the columns and the busts, and lined

The avenues with garlands, and the floor

And steps had strewn with roses. Every door

And portal hung festoon'd, yet nought offence

Could give, for nature's own magnificence

He loved, and praised the galaxy of bloom

That graced the halls, and render'd such perfume.

He thought the brightest gem that he could shew

Was Una, and led her forth with manly glow

Of honest pride. She was in simplest white

Array'd, undeck'd with gold or jewels bright—

A damask rose alone, with modest grace,

Her breast adorn'd—and though upon her face

There glow'd a sweet and unaffected flush,

The deeper crimson of the rose the blush

Subdued—perhaps it was design, that e'en
The purer Cosmo could not deem a stain.

The halls now rung with greeting—all gave place
To Una's friends, who foremost to embrace
With rapture rush'd—and oh! 'twere hard to say,
Whose heart were happiest then! Such a day
Can ne'er in Florence be forgot.—Once more
The halls were hush'd, and Cosmo stood before
His guests, with Una hand in hand, and thus
Address'd them all:—

“ My dearest friends, from us,
From Una and myself, accept our best,
Our grateful thanks—and though if not express'd
In language that can speak the heart's o'erflowing,
We know they will be felt by bosoms glowing
With pleasure, like our own—on every face
We see the smile that speaks acknowledged grace
For all that we would say, and bless the beam
That thus anticipates what we should deem
As justly due from us.”

The signal came,
The organ peal'd, the palpitating frame

Of Una now was led, and felt the glow
In Cosmo's palm, that press'd so fondly now
To shew his inward ecstasy. He drew
His treasure forward up the steps, and through
The chapel's portal-arch, where stood the Priest
To lead them onward to the sacred feast,
That consummates their joy.

The fane was fill'd—

The rite perform'd, again the organ thrill'd
A holy swell in every heart, as though
They felt a heavenly voice was sent to shew
Full approbation of the deed below.
The guests within the ample hall once more
Are ranged—The maidens strew the steps and floor
With flower-gifts, as Cosmo and his Bride
Descend, and now come forth in conscious pride,
The ready Bards, to sing and to rehearse
Their nuptial song, and improvisatore verse:—

FLOWER-MAIDEN'S SONG.

We have roses white, for the bride's delight,
 And pancies for her breast ;
Her path we'll strew, with violets blue,
 And scatter all the rest.

We have roses too, for the bridegroom true,—
 He loves their sweet perfume !
Oh! may they shed, upon his head,
 The blessings of their bloom !

With every flower that is sweet and gay,
 Our nuptial chaplets are entwined ;
Propitious to our aid, enchanting May,
 Abundant blossoms has combined.

With every hue that can the fancy charm,
And ev'ry fragrance to delight,
With not a thorn and briar that can harm,
Nor e'en the fawning parasite.

May they emblems be of the perfect bliss
That Heaven's goodness has in store—
For a purer pair, in a world like this,
Ne'er link'd in happiness before!

IMPROVISATORE'S EPITHALAMIUM.

WE knew by the star, at the break of day,
That the dawn would auspiciously rise—
We knew by the light of the next coming ray
That a promise of gold would illumine the skies.

We knew by the cresset of morn when it came,
That a smile of approval had rose in the east—
That the splendour which follow'd, would hallow the
 same,
To bless, and to brighten the feast.

We judge by the radiance that beams on us now,
That the rite is attested by Heaven—
That the sun is a signet, to seal every vow,
That the pair to each other have given.

We trust that the glory and brightness will last
Through the day, to confirm our delight—
That in pleasure the noon of the nuptials be pass'd,
And we sport in the revels at night.

We hope by the blushes that sunset may bring,
That the eve will propitiously end—
That the bliss which has beam'd on our day's banquet-
 ing,
Will our latest enjoyments attend.

When our revelry's o'er, and the breezes of night
 Invite to luxurious repose,
May the moon on our lids shed her sweet silver light,
 And our sleep in tranquillity close!

Then, oh! may the hours so deliciously pass'd
 Be the symbol of that happiness,
Which Heaven for **UNA** and **COSMO** has cast
 As a dower their virtue to bless!

DESULTORY STANZAS,

SUGGESTED

IN A STEAM-BOAT ON THE TAY,

DURING A VOYAGE

FROM DUNDEE TO PERTH.

VISIT TO PERTH,

&c. &c.

I.

WHEN borne upon thy bosom, beauteous Tay!
From Dundee's fertile shore, I little thought
To brighter scenes our boat would bear away;
Yet prospects onward sweeter gleam'd, and brought,
Upon approach, a landscape gaily fraught
With foliage and with flowers; the lovely vale
Seem'd clad, as though creation's hand had wrought
Its richest robes to decorate the dale,
And flung its rarest fragrance to the fitful gale.

II.

Lavish of her charms, Nature on thy banks
Hath sweet profusion spread, meandering Tay!
Selecting thee, in her romantic pranks,
A mirror for her mountain beauties—they,
On either hand arranged, in rich array
Rise, proudly peering, like some eastern bride;
Whilst others shrink attired in sober grey:
And some are bending o'er thy crystal tide,
As though with gaze untired, and yet unsated pride.

III.

The day was cloudless, and the sun assumed
That silvery tone upon the atmosphere,
As though its dazzling rays the world illumed
Through some soft medium to subdue them here;
Beaming so mildly, tranquilly, and clear,
Diffusing softness over every scene,
That all creation seem'd at once to wear
Serenity congenial;—Resentment keen
On such a day might smile, forgetful of its spleen.

IV.

The lark was high in heaven, and yet his song
Was heard by us below—rejoicing, too,
Were all the feather'd tribe the woods among,
And rich their peal of harmony, for true
To nature's score, their tiny shells they blew ;
And echo would awake as from a dream,
In fitful starts, whenever more loudly grew
The choral sounds, whilst, in the glittering stream,
The silver trout would sport, and sparkle in the beam.

V.

Light as the bark that briskly bore me on
My spirits rose, as in the noon-day beam
I bask'd, for worldly cares awhile were gone,
And visions bright, like some bewildering dream,
Upon my fancy stole, and all did seem
More gay and glittering than reality
Upon my spell-bound mind : a meteor's gleam
Could scarce reveal, upon a Polar sky,
More spectral shapes than flash'd upon my phantasy.

VI.

Many an airy castle then I built—
That baseless architecture of the brain,
Whose images of fairy hands are gilt
To cheat fond Fancy's child, who, light and vain,
Erects his villa on Utopia's plain,
To dwell awhile in visionary bliss—
Illusion's paradise perhaps to gain—
Soothing to those who, in a world like this,
Can realise no joy, no solid happiness.

VII.

The boat was crowded, and on every face
Contentment calmly seem'd to smile, save one—
In her a pensive languor I could trace ;
She fain would sit apart and muse alone—
From her fair cheek the rose was nearly gone—
Her brow was sunk, as though by grief's control,
Save when an evanescent brightness shone
In her dark eye, as though there sometimes stole
A momentary joy o'er her abstracted soul.

VIII.

Her air was dignified, and not a glance
That searching fell from my intrusive eye
Was met by hers with mutual advance ;
I felt abash'd that I so ardently
Had gazed—I felt a struggling sigh
Escape—and bent my looks upon the stream—
Or scann'd the throng around, but they
Alike with thoughts were busy, and did seem
To well enjoy anticipation's golden dream.

IX.

Perhaps they felt a happy home was near,
And, in imagination, warmly press'd
The fervent hearts and hands of friends sincere,
Or clasp'd an ideal lover to the breast ;
Whilst some their expectations newly dress'd
In robes of fancy, others were perchance
Engaged in sporting themes—their looks confess'd
Those savage joys that in such bosoms dance ;—
The moralist alone enjoy'd abstraction's trance.

X.

This pensive Fair One's looks my joy had damp'd ;
I felt, I scarce knew why, a fluttering pain
Not all unlike the heart-ache—sadness stamp'd
Its seal upon my brow ; alas ! 'tis plain
That happiness is but a phantom vain ;
For pleasure lives not long unchequer'd here ;
Our discontented hearts, in prayers profane,
Too oft will beg for bliss that others share,
And envy brutes their freedom—birds their airy sphere.

XI.

But soon the reveries of all were o'er ;
For, roused by shouts of exultation loud,
We found a prize was haul'd upon the shore.
Quick to the vessel's side the eager crowd
All rush'd, when, struggling in their fatal shroud,
A draught of salmon lay—sad victims dire
To man's insatiate appetite, who, proud
Of his dominion, vents his petty ire
On many a harmless thing, to gratify desire.

XII.

I could not look with pleasure on the sight—
I felt compassion's impulse rise to see
Their silver sides, so beautiful and bright,
Writhing in death's convulsive agony ;
Their broad tails lashing nervous ere they die,
Ending their throes with one delirious bound,
Their last vain effort for vitality ;
Oh ! as they gasp'd and glitter'd on the ground
I felt a pang—perhaps 'twas weakness gave the wound.

XIII.

I deem'd the human soul too great to feel
Delight in any mortal agonies ;
To me a ray of reason did reveal
That Man's bright spirit was ordain'd to rise
Above the brutal joy that sat in eyes
Of those around me ; if, at such a time,
'Twere wrong barbarian feelings to despise,
I own my guilt, and tell it in my rhyme—
So harden'd too in sin, I glory in my crime.

XIV.

Nor was I all alone—for one, more weak,
Betray'd a softer heart—I plainly saw,
That pearls of pity gemm'd her pallid cheek :
But she again from view would fain withdraw,
As if ashamed of tears—'twas nature's law
She had obey'd ; oh ! 'tis a stony heart
That deems such drops of tenderness a flaw ;
They were the gift of Heaven, soft dewes that start
In virtue's sacred cause, compassion to impart.

XV.

All, all again was still, the din was pass'd,
And tranquil as before we seem'd to glide ;
'Twas but as when a pebble might be cast
Upon the surface of the glassy tide—
The ruffled waters soon again subside,
And leave no trace of trouble there, but calm
As sweet contentment's brow once more abide ;
Or just as when oblivion's soothing balm
Smooths o'er the furrows of misfortune with its charm.

XVI.

We sail'd in silence on, and every scene
As we advanced more beautiful appear'd—
Corn on the hills and cattle on the green,
O'erhanging rocks and cliffs majestic rear'd
Their tree-crown'd heads on high ; and thus we steer'd
Past islets small, that look like fairy lands ;
Many a villa, too, as Perth we near'd,
Beneath the hills in groves embosom'd stands—
As though erected there by some Enchanter's hands.

XVII.

And some were spacious piles, for Princes fit ;
And, oh ! if happiness should reign therein
Were palaces indeed ! but 'tis not wit,
Nor wealth, however boundless, that can win
The halcyon bird to wing its way within,
If pride and ostentation plume the nest ;
For peace with them could never claim a kin ;
The home that smiles and wears contentment's crest,
Is, when pure virtue dwells in every inmate's breast.

XVIII.

But where's the heart that does not harbour guilt?
Oh! 'tis a haven too ready to import
Freightage unexamined—'Tis full of wile,
And winks at guilt like some corrupted court;
'Tis like a citadel without a fort,
Or mounting batteries too weak to ward
An enemy's approach—Oh! 'tis the sport
Of passion's waywardness, too proud to guard
Its portal from the foe, and leaves them oft unbarr'd.

XIX.

Vain moralist! thought I, thyself didst sin
But now, and leave an unprotected gate,
And let the reptile Envy creep therein;
For whilst intently thou didst contemplate
Those rich domains and mansions of the great,
A selfish sigh escaped—the viper's sting
Had goaded thee to think thine own estate
An insufficient lot—ungrateful thing!
Thou art, perhaps, in bliss far richer than a king!

XX.

What strange succession is our train of thought
A viewless pageant passing in the mind—
Too oft, indeed, unpolish'd and untaught,
A heedless crowd, to order not confined—
An unembodied mass, that seems enshrined
Within the brain, yet occupies no space—
An endless scroll which daily we unwind,
Fresh characters to add, or to retrace
Records long written, lest oblivion should efface.

XXI.

Our thoughts resemble waves :—when one is gone
Another comes, and yet another still,
But not as time's eternal tide flows on,
Without an ebb; imagination's rill
Must cease to run; there is a day that will
Return the current to its source again,
Perchance another channel's course to fill;
Or, as a tiny drop of drifted rain,
Cling to the fount above, for ever to remain.

XXII.

How like a sea tumultuous ideas
Roll on, when'er by mental tempests torn—
Oh! 'tis the blast of dire revenge that tears
The tide of thought, by hatred too, and scorn ;
And when by jealous storms 'tis overborne,
'Tis rent and robb'd of every ray of gladness,
Until by dark despair delirious worn
The once gay buoyant mind is sunk to sadness,—
Till, overcharged at last, 'tis driven to death or madness.

XXIII.

But oh! what moody thoughts are these? 'Tis strange,
That, in a day so bright, the mind should take
A morbid turn, and thus at once derange
The harmony such loveliness should make ;
'Twas but to start and look around to break
The mental cloud, for all was sunshine there,
So bright, a stoic's sullen soul might shake
Its apathy away—so sweet and fair
A scene, might even thaw the ice-bolt of despair.

XXIV.

Our goal appear'd, and every heart seem'd light
With joy to see their destination near ;
To those it smiled more lovelily and bright
Who saw, in Perth, a home where all was dear :
To me the scene enchanting did appear,
Although a stranger—when upon my view
The City burst, I thought it seem'd to wear
An aspect gay, 'midst hills of verdant hue,
As if in sweet accordance art and nature grew.

XXV.

The quay was crowded, every eye was bent
To scan the vessel's deck, and many a sign
Of recognition came, and back was sent—
Each face with anxious pleasure seem'd to shine—
A hand was stretch'd for every one's but mine,
For I was strange to all ; and yet to see
The joyous greeting, and the hands entwine,
Of those I knew not, gave delight to me :—
I wish that all the world in friendship were as free !

XXVI.

'Tis sweet to hear the cordial strain that breaks
From pure affection's voice—for friendship's tongue,
However rude, still eloquently speaks
The language of the heart, which never sung
A tuneless lay—such chords are ever strung,
Like heavenly harps, unceasingly to fill
With music every soul; and though among
The human race too often discords thrill,
Each has a key that turns to harmony at will.

XXVII.

The throng dispersed—some sped away in groups,
And some in pairs were gaining fast the Town;
The pensive Fair One, too, no longer droops,
She found a greeting, and had swiftly flown
Linked in an arm as youthful as her own—
Perhaps a lover's;—happy, happy they,
Who live for love's delightful dream alone,
To bask beneath affection's sunny ray
In earth's elysium, in fondest dalliance all the day!

XXVIII.

My thoughts I rallied, for I stood alone,
Like one just cast upon a desert shore;
Friendless, forlorn, unnoticed and unknown,
I gazed around, the bustle all was o'er;
The landscape smiling sweetly as before,
Inviting my approach, I onward moved
Instinctively, with firm resolve no more
To feel an isolated man, and roved
To Perth through fields and groves—companions that I
loved !

XXIX.

From bank to bank a graceful bridge is bent,
A simple structure of gray granite stone,
Where strength and beauty are so nicely blent.
Perth may be proud so fair a pile to own;
Perth, too, may boast, in still a higher tone,
Of architectural fame—beside the Tay
A noble Court-house stands, and stands alone
In grace and majesty—a pure display
Of Grecian taste, whose glory ne'er can fade away.

XXX.

And Churches, too, with goodly spires are seen,
Whilst other monuments of art combine
The city to adorn; and meadows green,
Extending far and wide, at last recline
To where meandering Tay's bright waters shine—
Where pensile willows weep into the wave
The purest crystal drops unstain'd with brine—
Tears such as Nature's self might shed to lave
The Suicide's despised and unremember'd grave!

XXXI.

But why again let melancholy mar
Ideas that should be gay? such scenes might well
Inspire gladness—resplendent shone the star
Of day, whose bright beams surely never fell
On sweeter plains, or ever deign'd to dwell
On richer groves, for trees of every hue
In gay assemblage met; sometimes the swell
Of breezes broke the woody ranks—and through
The transient vista burst some villa on the view.

XXXII.

And oh! what splendid boundaries are there
 To terminate this gay luxuriant plain—
 What mighty forms uprising in the air!
 It is the giant Grampian's glorious train,
 Together link'd, in one colossal chain,
 Like some bold Patriot Band, all sternly bent
 With firm resolve their freedom to maintain;—
 Fancy might deem each sunlit peak a tent
 For monarchs pitch'd, so grand and so magnificent!

XXXIII.

I could not gaze unawed on such a scene
 Sublime—I felt the soul-inspiring thrill
 Of reverence run through each excited vein—
 My bosom felt as if it fain would fill
 With Superstition's strange mysterious chill;—
 But oh! I chased the dark delusive dream;
 Volition roused maintain'd its mastery still,
 And flew to fan the fast-expiring gleam
 Of reason's torch, and kindled fast the fading beam!

XXXIV.

'Tis thus the mind can combat with its foes
When reason firmly guards the citadel—
That good strong hold Omnipotence bestows
On all—that deep recess—that centre cell,
Wherein the spirit of the soul must dwell:
The germ that springs from pure perfection's root,
Though unmaturing on earth, time yet may tell
Its mode of culture—buds are seen to shoot,
And blossoms have appear'd—we yet may taste the fruit.

XXXV.

Oh! none should dare to say perfection's tree
Will never flourish here; the ills we bear,
The sufferings, crimes, the evil that we see
Upon time's page, are all recorded there
In characters so durable and clear
'Tis but to look and learn—and, learning, find,
That though experience seems to us so dear,
'Tis cheaply bought, should it but prove the rind
That hides the seeds of happiness from human kind.

XXXVI.

Oh! let us think that destiny's great ends,
Though far remote, perfection be their goal ;
That sin upon the sea of life attends,
By wisdom placed, a dark and ruthless shoal
To wreck our barks upon, by such control
That those may learn, who look upon the past,
Another course is safer for the soul
To steer—where all shall navigate at last
In virtue's placid tide, unwreck'd by rock or blast.

XXXVII.

Age after age a change will scarcely bring—
Yet every cycle, as it rolls away,
Shall gain a feather from the golden wing
Of happiness ; but none can see the day
When that sweet bird of bliss its flight shall stay,
Till sin's dark cloud shall cease to overcast
The world ; until perfection's sunny ray
Shines forth—when folly, vice, and war be past,
Then peace, eternal peace, shall bless the land at last!

XXXVIII.

Oh! it would seem, in this devoted sphere,
That all were not complete—as if the best
And brightest gem were yet unpolish'd here—
As if the last munificent bequest
Of Heaven to earth had yet not fully bless'd
The holders of the boon—pure reason's ray,
To human ken, is yet not half confess'd ;
And we, like children who with jewels play,
But look upon its light as carelessly as they.

XXXIX.

If from th' exhaustless Spirit that presides,
Our hearts have each derived a drop divine,
Than such pure essence, oh! what more besides
Can mortals wish? for though a hidden mine
Contains the precious gem, if we incline
To search, we shall not find beyond our reach
The treasure of the soul, for at the shrine
Of intellect, bright reason's tablets teach,
That Heaven bestows an equal share of grace on each.

XL.

Oh! surely reason is a holy spark
From heaven's highest halo—sent to light
And bless imagination's boundless ark,
Whose chambers else were dark to mental sight;
Without such emanations beaming bright,
How dull a void would intellect appear—
Oh! where would fancy find its airy site
To raise pavilions on—alas! too, where
Would wit and wisdom hold their seats, or sparkle here

XLI.

Yet few display the jewel they possess,
Or feel its value yet—'tis left to rest
Within its cell in utter heedlessness;
Lock'd up too oft in dark oblivion's chest
To sparkle never on its native breast;
Retaining still, like diamonds in the mine,
Its purity unstain'd, on virtue's crest
At last to light, there palpably to shine,
A pledge to us redeem'd, by agency divine.

XLII.

We gaze on nature with surprise and awe,
To see that all things flourish here, but man
Surmises vague, and vain conclusions draw ;
For none on earth, as yet, are fit to scan
The works of Heaven, and tell the mighty plan
Omnipotence design'd ; we do but guess
Unsatisfied, conjecture all we can ;
To one perspective point we all address
Our hopes and prayers, to gain a home of happiness !

XLIII.

But oh ! what different paths we each pursue—
Yet all perchance are right, the Viewless One
Who tracks our steps, must surely guide them too :—
And dare we doubt that deeds are wisely done
At Heaven's instigation ? The work begun
By an almighty hand, can never err
In progress to its goal ; and those who shun
The part that nature bids them play, incur
The penalties that laws immutable prefer.

XLIV.

Pure instinct's reign is now but little known
To human hearts—Corruption has crept in,
And hurl'd the native monarch from his throne,
To sway supreme a tyrant sovereign;
And would pollute the soul, yet ne'er can win
Its stainless spirit to the wily snare;
But Time triumphant o'er the despot Sin
At last shall prove, and crush him in his lair,
To reinstate, by reason's aid, the rightful heir.

XLV.

E'en now the cloud o'er intellect is less—
Convicting rays of philosophic light
Point out the path that leads to happiness,
And shew that truth alone directs us right;
And though as yet no perfect proselyte
Perhaps be made, the vain and mad control
Of vice more palpable appears—our sight
Has caught a glimpse of some far distant goal
Some bless'd eternal home, to sanctify the soul!

XLVI.

That paradise to come, where vice no more
Shall wave its baneful branches overhead—
Nor flourish green and gay, as heretofore,
Nor blossoms bear, nor treacherous fruitage spread—
Nor on mankind inebrious juices shed—
But in eternal shade its blighted boughs
Shall droop and blacken, to all seeming dead,
Yet live to tell, that though the Upas grows,
Its breath no more around malignant poison throws.

XLVII.

Oh! yes, 'tis plain perfection, yet shall find
A site on earth that's fitter for its fane;
That we are instruments by Heaven design'd
To build the temple, and at last to gain
Admittance there, redeeming all the pain
Our agency shall cost. Oh! time's long scroll
Will surely tell we labour not in vain,
That we are workmen by divine control
Ordain'd to raise a superstructure for the soul!

XLVIII.

And though severe may seem the doom that fate
Has fix'd on some, 'twere impious to complain !
Each mind is proof against the sternest state
That destiny decrees it should sustain !
What infidel shall say it is not plain,
That nature's glorious code contains no flaws ?
Oh ! willingly then let us wear the chain
Of life's sad slavery, and bless the laws,
That bid us proudly suffer in creation's cause.

XLIX.

It were not martyrdom to live content
With all contingencies, if we but feel
The selfish hope, of some fair promise sent—
That bright reward religion would reveal—
If such a wish but stimulate our zeal,
We earn no light from purity's clear flame :
Unless from love of universal weal
We bear life's burthen well, we must not claim
Relationship with Him who bears perfection's name.

L.

Perhaps my theory is weak, and wild,
Vain heresy to reason, and may excite
The world's contempt; but who is not a child
At arguments like this? who shall say he's right?
Surmise is darkness, for scarce a ray of light
Has shone upon our controversy yet—
The sun of knowledge still keeps out of sight;
Its herald stars have but in twilight met,
So slowly comes the blaze that never is to set!

LI.

'Tis time these wayward wanderings should cease!
My cause I fear will scarcely find a friend,
Yet I could wish these thoughts at least should please
The philosophic few, who fain would mend
The human race. I have no other end
In these imaginings, than to advise
The superstitious world, no more to bend
Their impious knees to idols, but to prize
The ray that reason sends, and virtue realise.

LII.

But who can turn the bigot from his theme,
Enlarge his soul, or teach his narrow mind
The latitude of thought? The idle dream
His petty faith inspires, is but confined
To one contracted point, that leaves mankind
No hope of happiness on earth, as though
The greatest work creation had design'd
Were but a thing of sport, condemn'd to know
Sad misery in life, all unredeem'd below!

LIII.

My argument must stop, for oh! 'twere vain
To war with Superstition's licensed creed!
Our minds are doom'd to wear the cold, cold chain
Of slavery yet, and thousands yet may bleed
In reason's cause—as once it was decreed
That fools should fall, and deem it victory won
In holy fight—as though the cross and bead
Were better symbols than the stars and sun
Of nature's glorious God—the all-presiding One!

LIV.

My strain is done! 'Twas nature's works that gave
This channel to my thoughts, which, like a rill,
Whose tiny current to a wider wave
Runs murmuring onwards from its parent hill—
And frets and fumes awhile, at last to spill
Its little flood, in some broad lake or bay
Remote—its baby voice for ever still
Amidst the watery waste—just so my lay
Runs out its course, and whines its maudlin hours away.

SONNETS.

I.

TO KIRKSTALL, ABBEY.

THERE is in Kirkstall's dale a mouldering pile
With arches ranged upon the level plain,
Whose columns still their capitals retain
Untouch'd by time, of pure old Saxon style—
With fonts, with altars too, and cloister'd aisle,
Which tell 'twas once a superstition's fane,
Perhaps a shelter to the proud and vain!
But now the victor Time appears to smile,
As if in mockery at the temple's wane,
For all around is young, and gay, in bloom,
Fresh verdure springs and blossoms o'er again—
High trees in triumph o'er the ruin's gloom
Wave their green boughs, and sport upon its mane;
Whilst flowers flaunt, and flourish on its tomb.

II.

TO KIRKSTALL ABBEY.

'Tis beautiful when morning rays pervade,
And brightest glories glitter on the vale,
To view the vista of that lovely dale
Where Kirkstall casts its interposing shade ;
Whose stately turrets tower in the glade,
With ivy streamers fluttering in the gale ;
Whose arches tell with simple grace the tale,
That Saxon sculptors lent their chisels' aid :
Whose crumbling columns, which young tendrils
climb—
As infants clasp the tottering knees of age—
Disclose more truly than tradition's page,
The ruthless deeds of desolating Time—
That universal heir, who destines all,
Like thee, to ruin—and triumphs in their fall !

III.

TO KIRKSTALL ABBEY.

KIRKSTALL! 'tis sweet, sublimely sweet to see
Thy grand and graceful pile in age repose
Thy broken beauties, where gay verdure grows—
Where low-creeping moss, and high-towering tree,
Alike assist, to clothe and shelter thee:
Beneath thy cloisters' shade the violet blows,
And o'er thy walls, fond, faithful ivy throws
Its warm protecting mantle—fresh and free
The wild weeds wander to thy turrets' height;
The cowslip crouches at thy columns' base—
And, humbler still, the lily, out of sight,
Retiring blooms, with unambitious grace.
Thus Nature's blossoms bow before the shrine
That man forsakes, and renders thee divine.

IV.

TO KIRKSTALL ABBEY.

WE hold thee, Kirkstall! sweeter far to view,
More graceful now, though mouldering in decay,
Perhaps, than in thy zenith's proudest day,
When altars, arches, pillars, all were new.
If Time has help'd thy grandeur to undo,
And changed thy form as centuries roll'd away,
Thou look'st so lovely in thy fresh array,
Oh! who could wish thy splendour to renew?
And though thy walls with age are dark, and gray,
Thy robe is still magnificently gay;
Thou art with garlands hung of verdant hue,
Which blossom-buds emboss, and sparkling dew
Bespangles oft thy vest, and every day
Thou wear'st the mantle of enchanting May!

V.

TO KIRKSTALL ABBEY.

'Tis grand to see the orb of parting day
Fling its broad beams aslant upon the plain
Where Kirkstall's Abbey stands! The ruin'd fane
Looks gorgeous then, for each resplendant ray
Of glory gilds, before it fades away,
The graceful turrets o'er; a varied train
Of bright hues seem the ivied walls to stain,
More evanescent than the colours gay
That tint the Iris of a summer shower:
A little moment more, and twilight throws
The pall of evening o'er the topmost tower—
Whilst o'er my mind reciprocal repose
As calmly steals, when night fulfils its doom,
And wraps the ruin in congenial gloom.

VI.

TO KIRKSTALL ABBEY.

'Twas night, and heaven's high lamp illumed the vale
Where ruin'd Kirkstall rests—I ne'er had seen
A sight more lovely, tranquil and serene;
All, all was hush'd, but when a passing gale
Would sigh along the glade with mournful wail,
Wafting wild whispers through the dusky green,
As though some spirit hover'd o'er the scene:
Gigantic shadows, dark across the dale,
Fell from high walls, and stately towers, that rise
Like monuments, magnificent in gloom:
So grand the pile, it seem'd to realize
The mighty dream of some colossal tomb!—
Oh! 'twas a time to banquet on repose,
In bless'd abstraction from all worldly woes!

VII.

TO OMNIPOTENCE.

WISDOM supreme to wrap th' eternal soul
In mystery! to hide the page of fate
From human ken, and shut the golden gate
Of knowledge from us all! 'tis fit the scroll
Of destiny be hid; could man unroll,
At will, the awful tablets that relate
Mortality's career, and future state,
Would happiness be his? Could he control
The dire decrees Omnipotence ordains?
Oh no! the sun of hope could shed no beam
On those condemn'd to penalties and pains—
And such there be, Predestinarians deem:
But oh! so dark a creed 'twere well to shun,
And look for mercy from the wisest One!

VIII.

WHY do I love the silent midnight hour,
And why the pale moon's soft and silver beam
Why love to wander with the winding stream,
Or seek at sultry noon the trellised bower,
To pluck, with truant hand, the jasmine flower?
'Tis not that love of loneliness I deem
Such dear delight, the calm congenial gleam
Of Cynthia's ray, in plenitude of power—
The stream, th' alcove, all nature's blossoming,
Gives each its charm to contemplation's gaze;
But doubly sweet, when they to memory bring
Recallings bright of those devoted days,
In early life, when love's bright holiday
Was shared with Her, who now dwells far away!

IX.

TO A BUTTERFLY.

WHERE is thy home, gay insect of an hour?

Thou seem'st to rove, on desultory wing,

Regardless of a resting-place, yet cling

Sometimes the careless tenant of a flower,

Bask on the rose, or flutter in the bower!

In sooth, thou art a thoughtless, flaunting thing,

A giddy wanton in thy airy swing,

Nor heed the gale, the sun-beam, nor the shower!—

Thou sparkling symbol of a life serene!

Thy tiny spirit frisks in joyance free,

Unconscious of its own exility—

Short as the revels of a May-day queen!

Aye, Man, to see such buoyant holiday,

Might envy time so lightly pass'd away.



X.

THE BLUSH.

PURE as the crimson hues that sweetly streak
At summer's eve the bright and glowing west,
An evanescent, though a graceful guest
Blent the deep dye on Rosa's guiltless cheek;
A soft suffusion, innocent and meek,
The tacit tell-tale of an artless breast,
A joyous signal, from the heart address'd,
Put forth with voiceless eloquence to speak—
As some gay banner, with triumphant wave,
Proclaims a festal day, or victory won.
To me the sign a world of glory gave,
I felt my bliss, my happiness begun,
And hail'd the blush as bidden to depart,
To herald love's confession from her heart.

XI.

THE SIGH.

SHE sigh'd—and fragrance from her bosom fled,

Exhaling perfume, like the scent divine

Of incense burning on a holy shrine,

Or odour winnow'd from a violet bed!

It seem'd as if her sinless soul had shed

Its purest spirit to rekindle mine,

And like the essence of some spicy wine,

New life and freshness o'er my senses spread.

'Twas not of sorrow the devoted sigh,

For grief's sad plaint was never half so warm!

She knew my wounded heart pined hopelessly,

Till she should send reciprocating balm!

Then, oh! 'twas love that wafted a reply,

To send my soul a cicatrizing charm!

XII.

TO THE STARRY SKY.

BRIGHT canopy of heaven! thou starry sky!
What voice presumptuous aspires to sing
Thy glories infinite? What earthly thing
Attempts, with rude and vagrant minstrelsy,
To swell his tuneless sounds so loud and high?
Far, far aside, oh! let the vain-one fling
His truant lyre, for mortal music's string
Is powerless to praise thy galaxy!—
The shining myriads that so proudly gem
The mighty dome of thy supernal sphere,
Like jewels on a godly diadem,
Irradiate worlds; which no pageant here
Can parallel!—Abandon, then, a theme
Too vast, too lofty, for a Poet's dream.

XIII.

TO THE MOON.

SWEET moon! upon the spangled robe of night,
Thou seem'st a beauteous badge, a radiant star
Of sov'reignty—flinging thy silver beams afar,
A matchless halo, mild and exquisite!
Sometimes thou look'st pelucid, clear, and bright,
Like some illuminated crystal car,
Careering homewards from triumphant war,
With myriads in thy train—a glorious sight!
Too vast for vain conjecturing man to count.
Though midnight monarch of a glittering sphere,
Thy splendour streams from still a higher fount,
Which lends thee glories to reflect them here,
That we may deem thy emanations given
To shine as rays of blessedness from heaven.

XIV.

IMITATED FROM THE ITALIAN.

'TWERE vain to seek for aught that can compare,
On earth, with Her who reigns the ruling star
Of loveliness, for she eclipses far
The brightest gems that proudest monarchs wear ;
She seems a seraph exquisitely fair
Who walks this world awhile, perhaps to mar
The pride of those who won in beauty's war
The victory of the day ; all, all declare
Her charms with matchless brilliancy to beam—
Her looks transcendent, dazzling, and divine,
As though an angel's attributes could shine
Through mortal frame ; oh ! surely it would seem
As if, through Heaven's munificence, this land
Might boast a daughter from perfection's hand !

XV.

TO ———,

WITH CAMPBELL'S "PLEASURES OF HOPE."

LADY! the song of Hope's delightful dream
Is here so sweetly sung, that I would fain
Thou shouldst possess the all-inspiring strain—
That thou shouldst fondly linger on the theme—
As though 'twere language from a Power Supreme
Divinely sent—for surely 'tis not vain
To say that hope, of all the various train
Of Heaven's blessings, puts forth the brightest beam.
Oh! 'tis a holy light—whose genial rays
Can chase away the darkness of despair,
And smile a second sunshine on our days.—
And if thou wouldst, that I should have my share
Of happiness in hope, oh! thou wilt take
My offer'd gift to keep for friendship's sake.

XVI.

TO ———.

I own my crime, 'twere guilty to dispel
The tranquil tenour of that halcyon nest
Where happiness reposed—thy artless breast
Had never known its inmates to rebel,
Till I disturb'd the quiet of the cell:
I talk'd of love, and broke the sweetest rest
That Heaven e'er gave as dower to the bless'd!
I would again thy heart shouldst strive to dwell
The happy tenant of a peaceful home—
Nor beat again for one whose hapless fate
Dooms him in utter hopelessness to roam
With joyless soul, all dark and desolate—
Claiming no other solace to beguile
Than Petrarch won, the cold Platonic smile!

XVII.

TO ———.

FAIR ONE! although refinement's magic art
Has polish'd not thy mind, yet I can trace
An intellectual spirit in thy face
As if thy soul were struggling to impart
Its native greatness, and as if thy heart,
Although plebeian born, could not efface
An ardent wish, an emulative grace,
To soar above its station—sighing to start
From slavery's bonds, to cull the choicest flowers
In learning's gay alcoves, to steal the bloom,
And seeds, and roots, and rob its richest bowers
Of Rhetoric buds, purloining their perfume
To store thy mind with sweets, and realise
The promise bright that sparkles in thine eyes!

XVIII.

TO ———.

If education has not lent its charm
To draw forth beauties from thy artless mind,
To thee, at least, kind Nature has consign'd
A heart that beats affectionately warm—
A bosom open to the tender balm
Of love's soft pleading, fitted and design'd
To wear the nuptial knot—oh! mayst thou find
Thy bondage bless'd, and may the cloudless calm
Of sweet contentment smile upon thy hours!
A richer dower, than all the costly gems
That decorate the proud! Let simplest flowers
Be thine, with petals pure, and thornless stems,
Sweet symbols of thyself! till thy last sigh
Shall give its perfume to eternity.

XIX.

ON THE DEATH OF LORD BYRON.

BRING robes of black, oh! bring the sable plume,
With cypress boughs of darkest green to wave—
Bring all the emblems sorrow ever gave,
To mourn for greatness gone—for BYRON'S doom
In sadness wraps the world! a deeper gloom
Than fallen kings and conqu'rors e'er shall have.—
No pageantry of woe shall mark the grave
That holds our Poet's dust—his sacred tomb,
By pomp and trappings unprofaned, shall tell
Where Talent sleeps! His NAME alone,
Recorded simply on a tablet stone,
Volumes will relate! Every heart must swell
With grief, to see the monument of one
Who shone of verse the centre, and the sun!

XX.

ON THE DEATH OF LORD BYRON.

WHOLE nations mourn, whole nations weep,
And pity's pulse beats high in every heart,
Th' enthusiast's warm tears in sorrow start,
And sighs the Patriot's breast with anguish deep,
For Byron sunk in everlasting sleep!
Had ruthless Death delay'd awhile the dart,
Thus prematurely thrown, a cureless smart
To millions had been spared—Oh! let us keep
The direful day, year after year, in gloom,
And call for Heaven's darkest clouds to spread
A universal pall—and o'er his tomb
Abundant sighs to breathe, and tears to shed,
Congenial with our own, which falling find
A cenotaph to him in every mind.

XXI.

TO ———.

LADY! so well I know thy gentle mind
Would nobly spurn, with sensitive recoil,
The slightest drop of flattery's fulsome oil,
That I would scorn to offer draughts unkind,
Where virtue lies so delicately shrined—
I would not spread the meretricious toil
To catch thy fluttering heart, nor rudely soil
Thy bosom's snow, although to lure inclined;—
Oh no! I never said the sapphire's blaze
Would shrink eclipsed beside thy dazzling eyes;
Nor have I said thy rosy lip displays
A richer lustre than the ruby's dyes;
I but, in truth, declare thy soul a gem,
A pearl reserved for Heaven's diadem!

XXII.

TO ———.

To what sweet flower, in this devoted sphere,
Can I compare thee, dear and lovely one?
What blossoms spread such beauties to the sun,
Or brighter beam when sparkling with a tear?
And when thy guiltless cheek doth sometimes bear
An evanescent blush, 'tis not outdone
By any earthly bloom—ah! surely none!
Carnation dyes are not so vivid here—
Unlike the rose, thou hast no hidden thorns—
Nor like the tulip, for thy sigh is sweet—
No vain display hast thou, for modesty adorns
Thy stainless soul! Oh! nothing can compete
With thee on earth! Some lily, haply, vies
To match thy charms in heaven's paradise!

XXIII.

TO ———.

SCARCE as the choicest gems from eastern mines,
Pure as the splendour of their brightest ray,
Yet free from ostentation's proud display,
Is friendship's charm! a charm that doubly shines
When woman's breast the attribute enshrines—
As jewels, sparkling side by side, convey
An added lustre, on each other's play:
Such treasure lives in thee, thy mind combines
With heart and soul to lavish upon those
Who win thy warm regard the brightest beam
From friendship's glow—thy bosom aye bestows
A dower of wealth on all thou dost esteem;—
Could I possess my share, I'd hold thy love
A casket, stored with riches from above!

XXIV.

TO ———.

IN playful dalliance bending o'er thy brow,
 With pensile softness and patrician grace,
 Thy chesnut locks o'ershadowing thy face
A pensive languor lends, and lovelier glow—
As o'er some beauteous bust a cypress bough
 Luxuriant waves, and oft will chase
 The garish sun-beam from its prying place.
I fain would rob thy ringlets of their flow,
 And steal one little tendril from thy hair,
Near to my heart with such devotedness
 The stolen prize for evermore to wear;—
Yet I were guilty of one crime the less,
 Wouldst thou prevent the theft, and freely spare
For friendship's sake the tribute of a tress.

XXV.

TO ———.

OH! 'tis a task, a dire decree, to part,
To say farewell, perhaps a long adieu,
To one whose friendship is so sweet and true—
To one whose soul, unsoil'd by guile or art,
Can sigh sincerely, and by tears impart
Affection's sympathy—haply, such dew
May fall to sooth our last sad interview,
The fatal hour that isolates my heart—
When, if thine eye emits hope's flattering beam,
Though evanescent as a falling star,
Its light shall live, oh! when I'm wandering far,
In recollection's sphere, with joyous gleam,
To soften separation's ceaseless pain,
And seem to say, "We yet may meet again!"

XXVI.

TO ———.

FAREWELL, and yet again I'll say farewell,
Although protracting pangs, that only wring
A heart already torn—yet on the sting,
A last adieu inflicts, I fain would dwell—
Aye, fondly linger on our parting knell,
Tenaciously as those who vainly cling
To life, though Death has o'er them flapp'd his wing.
Oh! should thy bosom, with responsive swell,
Acknowledge all my sighs, thy sweet regard
Shall bless my absent hours; and should thy palm
Return my pressure, with the rich reward
Of friendship's fervent thrill, the silent charm
Shall say, "Although our hearts are doom'd to sever,
We hope and trust it may not be for ever!"

XXVII.

TO THE OCEAN.

OCEAN! I love to see thy blue expanse,
Thy vast and undivisible domain,
Unbroken by a breeze! Thy liquid plain
Resembles then, to man's imperfect glance,
A parallel of heaven—and should, perchance,
The sun in clear and cloudless splendour deign
To cast his mighty image on the main,
Such pure reflected radiance might entrance
Th' enthusiast's sanguine soul—oh! who could gaze
Unawed, unmoved upon the bright display
Of mirror'd glories and meridian blaze?
Through ocean's medium thus the God of Day
We dare to look upon! for nature has denied
The eagle's privilege to man—to curb his pride.

XXVIII.

TO A RESTLESS BIRD.

REST, rest, little flutterer, rest in thy cell,
Nor vainly believe that freedom could bring
More peace to thy bosom, more joy to thy wing;
For the tale is too true, that travellers tell,
That birds once encaged must never more dwell
In their wild woods again, nor venture to sing
In free joyance more, on the sweet blossoming—
Nor dip in the fountain—nor fly o'er the dell—
'Tis cruel, in sooth! but each little bird,
That once was their friend, would spurn at them then,
And drive them away from society's herd.
Then bear with thy prison, and think thee, that when
Thy heart is high beating, and longing to roam,
Though hard is thy lot, oh! still 'tis a home!

XXIX.

THE SAILOR'S RETURN.

'Tis sweet to climb the hill, and gain the brow,
That brings to view a dear and long-lost home,
Whose humble thatch may seem a temple's dome,
And white-wash'd walls just like a palace grow,
In eyes of him from carnage freed but now ;
For he had braved, upon the billow's foam,
The battle's rage—oh! he had dared to roam
From rustic bliss, and left the ceaseless flow
Of honest mirth—aye, left the peaceful vale
Where echo ever slept unwaked by war.
But now, repentant, to his native dale
Returns, with firm resolve no more afar
To stray—no more to leave the lowly cot,
Convinced the Peasant's is the happier lot!

XXX.

ON SLEEP.

How willingly the arch-enchanter, Sleep,
Waves his leaden wand o'er rosy health, and throws
His viewless mantle gently over those
Whose minds untroubled know not how to weep!
'Tis sweet to sink beneath the influence deep
That calmly wraps our senses to repose,
For, hull'd in Slumber's lap, its charm bestows
An opiate balsam that will sometimes steep
All sensual feelings in forgetfulness—
Whilst yet awake an intellectual ray,
Whose bright refractions, in their wantonness,
Flash upon the mind in endless play,
Like Polar lights upon an evening sky,
And seem the foretaste of immortality!

XXXI.

SKATING.

IN coldest days, when Winter's winding sheet
Enwraps the world, when icy shackles chain
The current's heedless course, a motley train
Of idle skaters skim, with truant feet,
The surface thus detain'd—so madly fleet
They seem to glide along the glossy plain,
As though to mock, exultingly and vain,
Th' imprison'd flow—in revelry they meet,
A thoughtless throng, who cut and wound the breast
That kindly bears them up—a heartless crew,
To trample thus upon the poor oppress'd!
Just like the world's ingratitude! for true
It is, that neither love nor friendship's zeal
Escapes the ingrate's lacerating steel!

XXXII.

TO A BED OF FLOWERS.

WHY weep, ye flowers, thus at early morn ?
The sun has kindly chased the chill away
Of ruthless night, and yet do ye betray
Abundant tears, as though by sorrow worn,
And drooping heads with languor overborne,
Unfit to meet the glories of the day !
Rise up, rise up, for ye are sweet and gay,
A goodly pageant, destined to adorn,
Perchance, the coronal of her, who reigns
The queen of revels at a May-day feast—
Perhaps to lie in paths for kingly trains
To sweep—or have thy honours still increased,
And live the lover's gifts on bosoms fair,
To mix thy perfume with the fragrance there!

XXXIII.

THE SILENT MENDICANT.

As on a bridge, one Sabbath-eve, the gay
And light-of-heart were idly fluttering by,
In joyous groups, all, all pass'd merrily
Save one, to whom it was no holiday,
For she had shrunk aloof, in sad array,
Which seem'd to tell of better days gone by —
Her lips were moveless, but her sunken eye
Related grief—upon her bosom lay
A blooming babe, just as on a withering stem
One fresh and lovely blossom sometimes lingers—
The heart were stone that could not pity them!
I thrust some coin between the infant's fingers—
The cherub smiled its thanks—the mother stood
In silence still—and wept her gratitude!

XXXIV.

TO THE AUTHOR OF "THE SILENT RIVER."

THERE is, thou know'st, a far, far distant fane,
Which, like a gay and gorgeous palace, shines,
The goal to which each Poet's heart inclines,
Proud of his pilgrimage, should he attain
The temple's threshold, prouder still to gain
Admittance free, to bow before its shrines,
And win, like thee, the wreath that Fame entwines.
A votary there am I—but ah, how vain!
Compared with thee, how mean a thing I feel!
For in Fame's temple could I seek a place,
Low, like a reptile, should I humbly steal,
To crouch contented at a column's base—
Whilst thou, an eagle on triumphant plume,
Shouldst proudly soar to pinnacle its dome.

XXXV.

TO COLOMBIA.

OH! could I dwell in that enchanting clime,
Beyond th' Atlantic wave, where despots reign
No more, where Liberty her flag again
Triumphant waves! Oh! glorious time,
When patriot bands redeem'd the crime
Their fathers wrought, the tyrants of Old Spain!
Oh! yes—brave BOLIVAR from slavery's chain
Colombia's land has freed, whose scenes sublime
To Freedom now are given, a son of whom
I fain would be to range her kingdom o'er,
To search her valleys' depths, her forests' gloom,
Her gay savannahs, and to hear the roar
Of cataracts—and even dare to scan
Her snow-capp'd pinnacles, beyond the reach of man!

XXXVI.

TO C. H—, ON ATTAINING HER 16TH YEAR.

SWEET child of promise, on this thy natal day,
We give thee joy! for, like a bright May morn,
That smiles auspicious on the world, thy dawn
Foretells a cloudless noon—in every ray
That emanates from thee, a high display
Of talent shines, as if, when thou wert born,
Some star had lent its radiance to adorn
Thy future deeds;—and though have pass'd away
But sixteen summers of thy life, oh! still
Such glowing sparks of genius have appear'd,
With virtue's highest attributes so blent,
That every heart to thee must be endear'd,
And fill'd to expectation's highest bent,
With hopes that thou each promise shouldst fulfil.

XXXVII.

TO THE AUTHOR OF "RODOLFO."

WITHIN that rich recess, that fertile mine,
That depth profound, thy intellectual cave,
Like gems beneath the Oriental wave,
Abundant treasures secretly recline!
Then call those beauties forth, and bid them shine
Resplendant on the world! I fain would crave
To search thy mind—aye, proud to be the slave
To draw thy glories from their hidden shrine:
The few bright pearls thou hast already sent
We look upon as jewels chaste and rare—
Yet hold the boon but as an earnest meant
For larger grants, which thou wilt one day spare;
And Fame, the goddess arch, but waits for all,
To claim and seize them for her coronal!

XXXVIII.

TO THE AUTHOR OF "RODOLFO," &c.

OH! thou canst raise, with pure poetic skill,
Thyself a temple and a dwelling-place
In Fame's proud paradise—for thou canst trace
Pavilions gay in fancy's field at will;
And all thy Attic architecture fill
With rich adornments, and patrician grace,
Like some ensculptured marble, on a base
Of polish'd adamant, enduring still,
Although by Grecians wrought in ages past!
Immortal too, like those, thy verse shall live—
For thou each classic style thy work can give;
In simple beauty, like the Doric cast—
Chaste as Ionic's unambitious scroll—
Or with Corinthian grandeur crown the whole!

XXXIX.

THE CAPTIVE'S CONSOLATION.

THE fetter'd captive, in his dungeon cell,
Hath found a solace, in his darkest day,
To lighten grief, and chase despair away,
When some sweet bird hath left its native dell,
And perch'd upon his window-grate, to swell,
In frolic mood, some joyous roundelay—
And, kinder still, hath been beguiled to stay,
And feed on crumbs, and deign awhile to dwell
In misery's abode—Oh! he hath press'd
The gentle warbler to his beating heart,
As though his fond and fluttering little guest
Were one of humankind—for oh! to part
With such a friend, to him that draws his breath
In solitude, is even worse than death!

XL.

TO ———.

THAT heart, which once seem'd idolized by thee,
With all the ardour of devoted love—
With vows, appealing to the powers above,
Of ceaseless homage and fidelity,
With saint-like zeal, as though in me
Thy soul was centred——like some fond dove
That woos her only idol in the grove,
I thought thee then—and felt that we
Were link'd for ever in the hallow'd chain
Of happiness:—delusive dream! thy spell
Too soon, alas! was broken—light and vain
Thy worship proved—the altar best can tell
Thy treachery now—like some exhausted mine,
That heart is left a desecrated shrine!

XLI.

TO PETER HERVÉ,

FOUNDER OF "THE NATIONAL BENEVOLENT INSTITUTION."

WHAT monument, my Brother, could we raise
That could do justice to thy virtue here ?
What marble tablets tell, in eloquence sincere,
The glory of thy deeds ? How poor the praise
The temple's dome or storied urn displays,
When Time, ere long, can bid them disappear !
'Tis true, the trump of Fame, which all can hear,
Will never cease to speak of those bless'd days,
When thy devotedness and zeal were given
To Charity's best work—when thou didst strive
Against the stream of envy, and wast driven
By Poverty's rude blast, and yet outlive
The storm, disdaining all reward on earth,
To wait a higher meed for thy exalted worth !

XLII.

ON THE DEATH OF PETER HERVÉ.

How weak is language that essays to paint
The pang of grief that rankles at the heart
When bursting sighs are struggling to depart
From bosoms choked with agony! how faint
Are words to tell the fever of restraint
That checks the flow of tears that fain would start
In floods, to weep for one from whom we part
For ever:—for ever? ah no! the saint
That suffer'd here on earth, and meekly bore
The barb of Envy, and, with placid smile,
Received too oft within his bosom's core
Rude Slander's shafts, nor malice felt the while—
The bliss to such a one is surely given,
To meet, at last, his dearest friends in heaven!

XLIII.

ON HEARING OF THE DEATH OF P. HERVÉ,

AT AN OBSCURE VILLAGE IN FRANCE.

OH! wert thou driven from thy native land,
By dire consumption, and in hope forlorn,
To seek a warmer clime, and wert thou torn
From every tie by such a stern command,
To die, at last, without one friendly hand
To close thine eyes? By languor overborne,
'Tis said thou droop'd, fatigued and worn,
Yet utter'd no complaint!—and thou had scann'd,
Upon the very morn, the village scenes around,
And seem'd in joyous mood, cheerful to the last,
Pleasing and winning, as thou ever hast,
The hearts of even strangers! Foreign ground
May hold thy mortal part, but we retain
Thy spirit still, for ever to remain!

XLIV.

TO THE WIDOW OF PETER HERVÉ.

LADY! I would, oh! could I pen a strain
Of language, that would lighten and console
Thy bitterness of grief, but sorrow's stern control
Hath paralyzed my mind, and render'd vain
The little power I possess'd—the pain
My heart endureth now can well condole
With thy bereavement—I know thy soul
Is large beyond thy sex, and will regain,
Ere long, its wonted greatness—although thy heart
Be gentleness itself, thy polish'd mind
And high attainments finish'd and refined
By education's all-accomplish'd art,
Although resources for the lonely hour,
But ill can brook the pittance of thy dower!

XLV.

TO MRS. PARTIS,

ON HER DONATION OF £1000 TO THE "NATIONAL
BENEVOLENT INSTITUTION."

OF all the donors on the long, long list
This glorious Charity displays, thou art
By far the greatest! Princes would not part
With wealth so nobly, or else could they resist
Th' example thou hast set? Can there exist
A greater proof of excellence of heart
Than such munificence from thee? Impart
But to the world thy deeds, let none be miss'd,
And thy bright records will at once relate
With what peculiar grace thou dost bestow
Thy gifts, for thou most richly didst endow
A College of thy own—and yet thy great
And philanthropic mind gives higher praise
To others, and shrinks from admiration's gaze!

XLVI.

ON READING THE EXQUISITE DRAMATIC
POEMS OF JOANNA BAILLIE.

LADY! little did I think to find thy lays
So full of grandeur, loftiness, and thought—
Like some broad cloth of gold, most richly wrought,
The texture of thy verse appears—no praise
From such as me could be befitting lays
For brow like thine! Oh! thou hast surely caught
Shakspearian inspiration, and thus brought
Back the glorious style of bards in olden days!
There is a solemn splendour in thy strains,
Sublimely beautiful, that shews a mind
Magnificently great, and still retains
Thy sex's softness—yet one fault we find,
Which thou canst cure—not in thy works, for those
But shew, for lack of more, how much we lose!

XLVII.

TO THE REV. JUST HENRY ALT.

THOUGH last, not least, among the many friends
My Muse has urged her little skill to praise,
She felt, kind Sir! incompetent her lays
To sing of sterling worth—and now she sends
Her tribute forth with diffidence, and bends
In low submission, and modestly displays
Her meekest mantle, and thus greeting says:—
“Your humblest slave upon her knees attends,
With cap in hand, to ask a little grace,
And eke forgiveness for such long delay,
And begs your Reverence will allow her case
More time—for oft she 's heard her master say,
Our theme to you, by rights, should beat the rest—
Of all his friends, you were his first and best!”

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