

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF THE REVEREND
DR. EDWARD YOUNG.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

WITH THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

When flatter'd crimes of a licentious age
Reproach our silence, and demand our rage;
When purchas'd follies, from each distant land,
Like arts, improve in Britain's skilful hand;
When the Law shews her teeth, but dares not bite,
And South-sea treasures are not brought to light;
When Churchmen Scripture for the Classics quit,
Polite apostates from God's grace to wit;
When men grow great from their revenue spent,
And fly from bailiff's into parliament;
When dying sinners, to blot out their score,
Bequeath the Church the leavings of a whore;
To chafe our spleen, when themes like these increase,
Shall panegyric reign, and censure cease!--
Shall authors smile on such illustrious days,
And satirize with nothing---but their praise?

SAT. I.

VOL. II.

EDINBURG:

AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.

Anno 1777.



THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF THE REVEREND
DR. EDWARD YOUNG.
VOL. II.
CONTAINING HIS
COMPLAINT:
OR,
NIGHT-THOUGHTS
ON LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY.

Sunt lacrymae rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt. VIRG.

Thro' many a field of moral and divine
The Muse has stray'd, and much of sorrow seen.....
O'er friends deceas'd full heartily she wept;
Of love divine the wonders she display'd;
Prov'd Man immortal; shew'd the source of joy;
The grand tribunal rais'd; assign'd the bounds
Of human grief. In few, to close the whole,
The moral Muse has shadow'd out a sketch,
Tho' not in form, nor with a Raphael stroke,
Of most our weakness needs believe or do,
In this our land of travail and of hope,
For peace on earth, or prospect of the skies. NIGHT IX.

EDINBURG:
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THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT VII.

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

PART II.

Containing the

Nature, Proof, and Importance, of Immortality.

P R E F A C E.

AS we are at war with the power, it were well if we were at war with the manners, of France. A land of levity is a land of guilt. A serious mind is the native soil of every virtue, and the single character that does true honour to mankind. The soul's immortality has been the favourite theme with the serious of all ages. Nor is it strange; it is a subject by far the most interesting and important that can enter the mind of man. Of highest moment this subject always was, and always will be: yet this its highest moment seems to admit of increase at this day; a sort of occasional importance is superadded to the natural weight of it, if that opinion which is advanced in the Preface to the preceeding Night be just. It is there supposed that all our Infidels, whatever scheme, for argument's sake, and to keep themselves in countenance, they patronize, are betrayed into their deplorable error by some doubt of their immortality at the bottom:

Volume II.

A



and the more I consider this point, the more I am persuaded of the truth of that opinion. Though the distrust of a futurity is a strange error, yet it is an error into which bad men may naturally be distressed; for it is impossible to bid defiance to final ruin, without some refuge in imagination, some presumption of escape. And what presumption is there? there are but two in Nature; but two within the compass of human thought; and these are,—That either God will not or cannot punish. Considering the divine attributes, the first is too gross to be digested by our strongest wishes; and since Omnipotence is as much a divine attribute as holiness, that God cannot punish is as absurd a supposition as the former. God certainly can punish as long as wicked men exist. In non-existence, therefore, is their only refuge; and, consequently, non-existence is their strongest wish: and strong wishes have a strange influence on our opinions; they bias the judgment in a manner almost incredible. And since on this member of their alternative there are some very small appearances in their favour, and none at all on the other, they catch at this reed, they lay hold on this chimaera, to save themselves from the shock and horror of an immediate and absolute despair.

On reviewing my subject, by the light which this argument, and others of like tendency, threw upon it, I was more inclined than ever to pursue it, as it appeared to me to strike directly at the main root of all our infidelity. In the following pages it is, accordingly, pursued at large, and some arguments for immortality, new at least to me,



are ventured on in them. There, also, the writer has made an attempt to set the gross absurdities and horrors of annihilation in a fuller and more affecting view than is (I think) to be met with elsewhere.

The gentlemen for whose sake this attempt was chiefly made, profess great admiration for the wisdom of Heathen antiquity: what pity it is they are not sincere! If they were sincere, how would it mortify them to consider with what contempt and abhorrence their notions would have been received by those whom they so much admire? What degree of contempt and abhorrence would fall to their share, may be conjectured by the following matter of fact (in my opinion) extremely memorable. Of all their Heathen worthies Socrates ('tis well known) was the most guarded, dispassionate, and composed; yet this great master of temper was angry, and angry at his last hour; and angry with his friend; and angry for what deserved acknowledgment; angry for a right and tender instance of true friendship towards him. Is not this surprising? what could be the cause? The cause was for his honour; it was a truly noble, though, perhaps, a too punctilious regard for immortality: for his friend asking him, with such an affectionate concern as became a friend, "Where he should deposit his remains?" it was resented by Socrates, as implying a dishonourable supposition that he could be so mean as to have regard for any thing, even in himself, that was not immortal.

This fact, well considered, would make our Infidels with-

To wake the sense of future scenes! Aij

draw their admiration from Socrates, or make them endeavour, by their imitation of this illustrious example, to share his glory; and, consequently, it would incline them to peruse the following pages with candour and impartiality, which is all I desire, and that for their sakes; for I am persuaded that an unprejudiced Infidel must, necessarily, receive some advantageous impressions from them.

July 7. 1744.

The Contents.

IN the Sixth Night arguments were drawn from Nature in proof of immortality: here others are drawn from Man: from his discontent, p. 5.; from his passions and powers, p. 7.; from the gradual growth of reason, *ibid.*; from his fear of death, p. 8.; from the nature of hope, *ibid.* and of virtue, p. 9.; from knowledge and love, as being the most essential properties of the soul, p. 13.; from the order of creation, p. 14. &c.; from the nature of ambition, p. 16. &c. avarice, p. 20.; pleasure, p. 21. A digression on the grandeur of the passions, p. 23. Immortality alone renders our present state intelligible, p. 24. An objection from the Stoics' disbelief of immortality answered, p. 25. Endless questions unresolvable, but on supposition of our immortality, p. 26. &c. The natural, most melancholy, and pathetic complaint of a worthy man under the persuasion of no futurity, p. 28. &c. The gross absurdities and horrors of annihilation urged home on Lorenzo, p. 34. &c. The soul's vast importance, p. 40. &c.; from whence it arises, p. 43. &c. The difficulty of being an Infidel, p. 45.; the infamy, p. 46.; the cause, p. 47.; and the character, *ibid.* of an infidel state. What true free-thinking is, p. 49.; the necessary punishment of the false, p. 50. Man's ruin is from himself, p. 51. An Infidel accuses himself of guilt and hypocrisy, and that of the worst sort, *ibid.*; his obligation to Christians, p. 52.; what danger he incurs by virtue, *ibid.*; Vice recommended to him, p. 54.; his high pretences to virtue and benevolence exploded, *ibid.* The conclusion, on the nature of faith, p. 56.; reason, *ibid.*; and hope, *ibid.*; with an apology for this attempt, p. 57.

HEAV'N gives the needful, but neglected call.
What day, what hour, but knocks at human hearts,
To wake the soul to sense of future scenes?

Deaths stand, like Mercurys, in ev'ry way,
And kindly point us to our journey's end.
Pope, who couldst make immortals! art thou dead?
I give thee joy; nor will I take my leave,
So soon to follow. Man but dives in death;
Dives from the sun, in fairer day to rise;
The grave his subterranean road to bliss.
Yes, infinite indulgence plann'd it so;
Thro' various parts our glorious story runs;
Time gives the preface, endless age unrolls
The volume (ne'er unroll'd) of human fate.

This earth and skies * already have proclaim'd.
The world's a prophecy of worlds to come,
And who what God fortels (who speaks in things
Still louder then in words) shall dare deny?
If Nature's arguments appear too weak,
Turn a new leaf, and stronger read in man.
If man sleeps on, untaught by what he sees,
Can he prove infidel to what he feels?
He, whose blind thought futurity denies,
Unconscious bears, Bellerophon! like thee,
His own indictment; he condemns himself;
Who reads his bosom, reads immortal life;
Or Nature there, imposing on her sons,
Has written fables: man was made a lie.

Why discontent for ever harbour'd there?
Incurable consumption of our peace!

* Night the Sixth.

A liij

Resolve me why the cottager and king,
He whom sea-sever'd realms obey, and he himself
Who steals his whole dominion from the waste,
Repelling winter blasts with mud and straw,
Disquieted alike, draw sigh for sigh, 35
In fate so distant, in complaint so near?
Is it that things terrestrial can't content?
Deep in rich pasture will thy flocks complain?
Not so; but to their master is deny'd
To share their sweet serene. Man, ill at ease 40
In this, not his own place, this foreign field,
Where Nature foddered him with other food
Than was ordain'd his cravings to suffice,
Poor in abundance, famish'd at a feast,
Sighs on for something more, when most enjoy'd.
Is Heav'n then kinder to thy flocks than thee? 46
Not so; thy pasture richer, but remote;
In part remote; for that remoter part
Man bleats from instinct, tho', perhaps, debauch'd
By sense, his reason sleeps, nor dreams the cause. 50
The cause how obvious, when his reason wakes!
His grief is but his grandeur in disguise,
And discontent is immortality.
Shall sons of Ether, shall the blood of Heav'n,
Set up their hopes on earth, and stable here, 55
With brutal acquiescence in the mire?
Lorenzo! no; they shall be nobly pain'd;
The glorious foreigners, distress'd, shall sigh



On thrones, and thou congratulate the sigh.
Man's misery declares him born for bliss; 60
His anxious heart asserts the truth I sing,
And gives the sceptic in his head the lie.

Our heads, our hearts, our passions, and our powers,
Speak the same language; call us to the skies:
Unripen'd these, in this inclement clime, 65
Scarce rise above conjecture and mistake;
And for this land of trifles those, too strong,
Tumultuous rise, and tempest human life.
What prize on earth can pay us for the storm?
Meet objects for our passions Heav'n ordain'd, 70
Objects that challenge all their fire, and leave
No fault but in defect. Bless'd Heav'n! avert
A bounded ardour for unbounded bliss!
O for a bliss unbounded! far beneath
A soul immortal is a mortal joy. 75
Nor are our pow'rs to perish immature;
But, after feeble effort here, beneath
A brighter sun, and in a nobler soil,
Transplanted from this sublunary bed,
Shall flourish fair, and put forth all their bloom. 80

Reason progressive, instinct is complete;
Swift Instinct leaps; slow Reason feebly climbs.
Brutes soon their zenith reach; their little all
Flows in at once; in ages they no more
Could know, or do, or covet, or enjoy. 85
Were man to live coeval with the sun,



The patriarch-pupil would be learning still,
Yet, dying, leave his lesson half-unlearn'd,
Men perish in advance, as if the sun
Should set ere noon, in eastern oceans drown'd; 90
If fit with dim illustrious to compare,
The sun's meridian with the soul of man.
To man why, stepdame Nature! so severe?
Why thrown aside thy masterpiece half-wrought,
While meaner efforts thy last hand enjoy? 95
Or if, abortively, poor man must die,
Nor reach what reach he might, why die in dread?
Why curs'd with foresight? wise to misery?
Why of his proud prerogative the prey?
Why less pre-eminent in rank than pain? 100
His immortality alone can tell,
Full ample fund to balance all amiss,
And turn the scale in favour of the just!

His immortality alone can solve
That darkest of enigmas, human hope, 105
Of all the darkest, if at death we die.
Hope, eager Hope, th' assassin of our joy,
All present blessings treading under foot,
Is scarce a milder tyrant than Despair.
With no past toils content, still planning new, 110
Hope turns us o'er to Death alone for ease.
Possession why more tasteless than pursuit?
Why is a wish far dearer than a crown?
That wish accomplish'd, why the grave of bliss?



Because in the great future bury'd deep, 115
Beyond our plans of empire and renown,
Lies all that man with ardour should pursue;
And he who made him bent him to the right.

Man's heart th' Almighty to the future sets,
By secret and inviolable springs, 120
And makes his hope his sublunary joy.

Man's heart eats all things, and is hungry still:

"More, more!" the glutton cries: for something new
So rages appetite. If man can't mount

He will descend. He starves on the possess'd; 125

Hence the world's master, from Ambition's spire,
In Caprea plung'd, and div'd beneath the brute.

In that rank sty why wallow'd Empire's son
Supreme? because he could no higher fly:

His riot was Ambition in despair. 130

Old Rome consulted birds: Lorenzo! thou
With more success the flight of Hope survey,

Of restless Hope, for ever on the wing.

High-perch'd o'er ev'ry thought that falcon sits,

To fly at all that rises in her sight; 135

And never stooping, but to mount again

Next moment, she betrays her aim's mistake,

And owns her quarry lodg'd beyond the grave.

There should it fail us, (it must fail us there,

If being fails) more mournful riddles rise, 140

And virtue vies with hope in mystery.

Why virtue? where its praise, its being, fled?



Virtue is true self-interest pursu'd :
What true self-interest of quite-mortal man ?
To close with all that makes him happy here. 145
If vice (as sometimes) is our friend on earth,
Then vice is virtue ; 'tis our sov'reign good.
In self-applause is virtue's golden prize ?
No self-applause attends it on thy scheme.
Whence self-applause ? from conscience of the right ;
And what is right but means of happiness ? 151
No means of happiness when virtue yields ;
That basis failing, falls the building too,
And lays in ruin ev'ry virtuous joy.

The rigid guardian of a blameless heart, 155
So long rever'd, so long reputed wise,
Is weak, with rank knight-errantries o'er-run.
Why beats thy bosom with illustrious dreams
Of self-exposure, laudable, and great ?
Of gallant enterprise, and glorious death ? 160
Die for thy country ?—thou romantic fool !
Seize, seize the plank thyself, and let her sink.
Thy country ! what to thee ?—the Godhead, what ?
(I speak with awe !) tho' He should bid thee bleed,
If, with thy blood, thy final hope is spilt ? 165
Nor can Omnipotence reward the blow :
Be deaf ; preserve thy being ; disobey.

Nor is it disobedience. Know, Lorenzo !
Whate'er th' Almighty's subsequent command,
His first command is this :—"Man, love thyself."



In this alone free agents are not free. 171
Existence is the basis, bliss the prize;
If virtue costs existence, 'tis a crime,
Bold violation of our law supreme,
Black suicide, tho' nations, which consult 175
Their gain at thy expense, resound applause.

Since virtue's recompense is doubtful here,
If man dies wholly, well may we demand
Why is man suffer'd to be good in vain?
Why to be good in vain is man enjoin'd? 180
Why to be good in vain is man betray'd?
Betray'd by traitors lodg'd in his own breast,
By sweet complacencies from virtue felt?
Why whispers Nature lies on Virtue's part?
Or if blind Instinct (which assumes the name 185
Of sacred Conscience) plays the fool in man,
Why Reason made accomplice in the cheat?
Why are the wisest loudest in her praise?
Can man by reason's beam be led astray?
Or, at his peril, imitate his God? 190
Since virtue sometimes ruins us on earth,
Or both are true, or man survives the grave.

Or man survives the grave, or own, Lorenzo,
Thy boast supreme a wild absurdity.
Dauntless thy spirit, cowards are thy scorn. 195
Grant man immortal, and thy scorn is just.
The man immortal, rationally brave,
Dares rush on death—because he cannot die:



But if man loses all when life is lost,
He lives a coward, or a fool expires.
A daring infidel, (and such there are,
From pride, example, lucre, rage, revenge,
Or pure heroical defect of thought)
Of all earth's madmen most deserves a chain.

When to the grave we follow the renown'd
For valour, virtue, science, all we love,
And all we praise; for worth whose noon-tide beam,
Enabling us to think in higher style,
Mends our ideas of ethereal powers,
Dream we that lustre of the moral world
Goes out in stench, and rottenness the close?
Why was he wise to know, and warm to praise,
And strenuous to transcribe, in human life,
The Mind almighty? Could it be that Fate,
Just when the lineaments began to shine,
And dawn the Deity, should snatch the draught,
With night eternal blot it out, and give
The skies alarm, lest angels too might die?

If human souls, why not angelic, too,
Extinguish'd, and a solitary God,
O'er ghastly ruin, frowning from his throne?
Shall we this moment gaze on God in man,
The next lose man for ever in the dust?
From dust we disengage, or man mistakes,
And there where least his judgment fears a flaw.
Wisdom and worth how boldly he commends!



Wisdom and worth are sacred names; rever'd
Where not embrac'd; applauded! deify'd!
Why not compassion'd too? If spirits die,
Both are calamities, inflicted both
To make us but more wretched. Wisdom's eye
Acute, for what? to spy more miseries;
And worth, so recompens'd, new-points their stings.
Or man surmounts the grave, or gain is loss,
And worth exalted humbles us the more.
Thou wilt not patronize a scheme that makes
Weakness and vice the refuge of mankind.

"Has virtue, then, no joys?"—Yes, joys dear-bought.
Talk ne'er so long, in this imperfect state
Virtue and vice are at eternal war.
Virtue's a combat; and who fights for nought,
Or for precarious, or for small reward?
Who virtue's self-reward so loud resound,
Would take degrees angelic here below,
And virtue, while they compliment, betray
By feeble motives and unfaithful guards.
The crown, th' unsading crown, her soul inspires:
'Tis that, and that alone, can countervail
The body's treach'ries and the world's assaults.
On earth's poor pay our famish'd virtue dies:
Truth incontestable! in spite of all
A Bayle has preach'd, or a V——e believ'd.
In man the more we dive, the more we see
Heav'n's signet stamping an immortal make.

Dive to the bottom of his soul, the base 255
Sustaining all, what find we? knowledge, love.
As light and heat, essential to the sun,
These to the soul: and why, if souls expire?
How little lovely here? how little known?
Small knowledge we dig up with endless toil, 260
And love unfeign'd may purchase perfect hate.
Why starv'd, on earth, our angel-appetites,
While brutal are indulg'd their sulsome fill?
Were then capacities divine conferr'd,
As a mock-diadem, in savage sport, 265
Rank insult of our pompous poverty,
Which reaps but pain from seeming claims so fair?
In future age lies no redress? and shuts
Eternity the door on our complaint?
If so, for what strange ends were mortals made! 270
The worst to wallow, and the best to weep;
The man who merits most, must most complain:
Can we conceive a disregard in Heav'n
What the worst perpetrate, or best endure?

This cannot be. To love and know, in man 275
Is boundless appetite, and boundless pow'r,
And these demonstrate boundless objects too.
Objects, pow'rs, appetites, Heav'n suits in all,
Nor, Nature through, e'er violates this sweet
Eternal concord on her tuneful string. 280
Is man the sole exception from her laws?
Eternity struck off from human hope,



(I speak with truth, but veneration too)
Man is a monster, the reproach of Heav'n,
A stain, a dark impenetrable cloud
On Nature's beauteous aspect, and deforms
(Amazing blot!) deforms her with her lord.
If such is man's allotment, what is heav'n?
Or own the soul immortal, or blaspheme.

Or own the soul immortal, or invert
All order. Go, Mock-majesty! go, Man!
And bow to thy superiors of the stall,
Thro' ev'ry scene of sense superior far:
They graze the turf untill'd, they drink the stream
Unbrew'd, and ever full, and unembitter'd
With doubts, fears, fruitless hopes, regrets, despairs,
Mankind's peculiar! Reason's precious dower!
No foreign clime they ransack for their robes,
Nor brothers cite to the litigious bar;
Their good is good entire, unmix'd, unmarr'd;
They find a paradise in ev'ry field,
On boughs forbidden where no curses hang:
Their ill no more than strikes the sense, unstretch'd
By previous dread, or murmur in the rear:
When the worst comes, it comes unfear'd; one stroke
Begins and ends their woe: they die but once;
Bless'd, incommunicable privilege! for which
Proud man, who rules the globe and reads the stars,
Philosopher or hero, sighs in vain.

Account for this prerogative in brutes.

No day, no glimpse of day, to solve the knot,
 But what beams on it from eternity.
 O sole and sweet solution! that unties
 The difficult, and softens the severe;
 The cloud on Nature's beauteous face dispels; 315
 Restores bright order; casts the brute beneath,
 And reenthrones us in supremacy
 Of joy, ev'n here. Admit immortal life,
 And virtue is knight errantry no more;
 Each virtue brings in hand a golden dower, 320
 Far richer in reversion: hope exults,
 And tho' much bitter in our cup is thrown,
 Predominates, and gives the taste of heav'n.
 O wherefore is the Deity so kind?
 Astonishing beyond astonishment! 325
 Heav'n our reward—for heav'n enjoy'd below.

Still unsubdu'd thy stubborn heart?—for there
 The traitor lurks who doubts the truth I sing.
 Reason is guiltless; will alone rebels.
 What, in that stubborn heart, if I should find 330
 New unexpected witnesses against thee?
 Ambition, Pleasure, and the Love of gain!
 Canst thou suspect that these, which make the soul
 The slave of earth, should own her heir of heav'n?
 Canst thou suspect what makes us disbelieve 335
 Our immortality should prove it sure?

First, then, Ambition summon to the bar!
 Ambition's shame, extravagance, disgust,



And inextinguishable nature, speak :
Each much depose; hear them in their turn.

Thy soul, how passionately fond of fame!
How anxious that fond passion to conceal!
We blush, detected in designs on praise,
Tho' for best deeds, and from the best of men;
And why? because immortal. Art divine
Has made the body tutor to the soul;
Heav'n kindly gives our blood a moral flow,
Bids it ascend the glowing cheek, and there
Upbraid that little heart's inglorious aim
Which stoops to court a character from man;
While o'er us, in tremendous judgment, sit

Far more than man, with endless praise and blame.

Ambition's boundless appetite outspeaks
The verdict of its shame. When souls take fire,
At high presumptions of their own desert,
One age is poor applause: the mighty shout,
The thunder by the living few begun,
Late Time must echo, worlds unborn resound.
We wish our names eternally to live;
Wild dream! which ne'er had haunted human thought,
Had not our natures been eternal too.
Instinct points out an int'rest in hereafter,
But our blind reason sees not where it lies,
Or, seeing, gives the substance for the shade.

Fame is the shade of immortality,
And in itself a shadow: soon as caught

Contemn'd, it shrinks to nothing in the grasp;
Consult the ambitious, 'tis ambition's cure.

“ And is this all thy cry'd Cæsar, at his height,
Disgust'd. This third proof Ambition brings
Of immortality. The first in fame,
Observe him near, your envy will abate;
Sham'd at the disproportion vast between
The passion and the purchase, he will sigh
At such success, and blush at his renown.
And why? because far richer prize invites
His heart; far more illustrious glory calls;
It calls in whispers, yet the deafest hear.

And can Ambition a fourth proof supply?
It can, and stronger than the former three;
Yet quite overlook'd by some reputed wise.
Tho' disappointments in ambition pain,
And tho' success disgusts, yet still, Lorenzo!
In vain we strive to pluck it from our hearts,
By Nature planted for the noblest ends.
Absurd the fam'd advice to Pyrrhus giv'n,
More prais'd than ponder'd; specious, but unsound;
Sooner that hero's sword the world had quell'd,
Than reason his ambition. Man must soar;
An obstinate activity within,
An insuppressive spring, will toss him up
In spite of Fortune's load. Not kings alone,
Each villager has his ambition too:
No sultan prouder than his fetter'd slave.



Slaves build their little Babylons of straw, 395
Echo the proud Assyrian in their hearts,
And cry,—“ Behold the wonders of my might!”
And why? because immortal as their lord;
And souls immortal must for ever heave
At something great; the glitter or the gold; 400
The praise of mortals, or the praise of Heav’n.
Nor absolutely vain is human praise,
When human is supported by divine.
I’ll introduce Lorenzo to himself;
Pleasure and Pride (bad masters!) share our hearts.
As love of pleasure is ordain’d to guard 406
And feed our bodies, and extend our race,
The love of praise is planted to protect
And propagate the glories of the mind.
What is it, but the love of praise, inspires, 410
Matures, refines, embellishes, exalts,
Earth’s happiness? from that the delicate,
The grand, the marvellous, of civil life,
Want and convenience, under-workers, lay
The basis on which love of glory builds. 415
Nor is thy life, O Virtue! less in debt
To praise, thy secret-stimulating friend.
Were men not proud, what merit should we miss!
Pride made the virtues of the Pagan world.
Praise is the salt that seasons right to man, 420
And whets his appetite for moral good.
Thirst of applause is Virtue’s second guard,



Reason her first; but reason wants an aid;
Our private reason is a flatterer;
Thirst of applause calls public judgment in. 425
To poise our own, to keep an even scale,
And give endanger'd Virtue fairer play.

Here a fifth proof arises, stronger still.
Why this so nice construction of our hearts?
These delicate moralities of sense, 430
This constitutional reserve of aid
To succour Virtue when our reason fails,
If virtue, kept alive by care and toil,
And oft' the mark of injuries on earth,
When labour'd to maturity (its bill 435
Of disciplines and pains unpaid) must die?
Why freighted rich to dash against a rock?
Were man to perish when most fit to live,
O how mispent were all these stratagems,
By skill divine inwoven in our frame? 440
Where are Heav'n's holiness and mercy fled?
Laughs Heav'n, at once, at virtue and at man?
If not, why that discourag'd, this destroy'd?

Thus far Ambition: what says Avarice? 444
This her chief maxim, which has long been thine:
"The wise and wealthy are the same."—I grant it.
To store up treasure, with incessant toil,
This is man's province, this his highest praise:
To this great end keen Instinct stings him on:
To guide that instinct, Reason! is thy charge; 450

'Tis thine to tell us where true treasure lies;
But Reason, failing to discharge her trust,
Or to the deaf discharging it in vain,
A blunder follows, and blind Industry,
Gall'd by the spur, but stranger to the course, 455
(The course where stakes of more than gold are won)
O'erloading with the cares of distant age
The jaded spirits of the present hour,
Provides for an eternity below.

“Thou shalt not covet,” is a wise command, 460
But bounded to the wealth the sun surveys.
Look farther, the command stands quite revers'd,
And av'rice is a virtue most divine.
Is faith a refuge for our happiness?
Most sure; and is it not for reason too? 465
Nothing this world unriddles but the next.
Whence inextinguishable thirst of gain?
From inextinguishable life in man:
Man, if not meant, by worth, to reach the skies,
Had wanted wing to fly so far in guilt. 470
Sour grapes, I grant, ambition, avarice;
Yet still their root is immortality:
These its wild growths, so bitter and so base,
(Pain and reproach!) religion can reclaim,
Refine, exalt, throw down their pois'nous lee, 475
And make them sparkle in the bowl of bliss.
See, the third witness laughs at bliss remote,
And falsely promises an Eden here:



Truth she shall speak for once, tho' prone to lie,
A common cheat, and Pleasure is her name. 480

To Pleasure never was Lorenzo deaf;
Then hear her now, now first thy real friend.

Since Nature made us not more fond than proud
Of happiness, (whence hypocrites in joy!
Makers of mirth! artificers of smiles!) 485

Why should the joy most poignant sense affords
Burn us with blushes, and rebuke our pride?—
Those heav'n-born blushes tell us man descends,

Ev'n in the zenith of his earthly bliss;
Should Reason take her infidel repose, 490

This honest instinct speaks our lineage high;
This instinct calls on darkness to conceal

Our rapturous relation to the stalls.
Our glory covers us with noble shame,

And he that's unconfounded is unmann'd. 495
The man that blushes is not quite a brute.

Thus far with thee, Lorenzo! will I close,
Pleasure is good, and man for pleasure made;

But pleasure full of glory as of joy;
Pleasure which neither blushes nor expires. 500

The witnesses are heard, the cause is o'er;
Let Conscience file the sentence in her court:

Dearer than deeds that half a realm convey,
Thus seal'd by Truth th' authentic record runs.

“ Know all; know Infidels,—unapt to know! 505

“ 'Tis immortality your nature solves;

“ 'Tis immortality deciphers man,

“ And opens all the myst’ries of his make :
“ Without it half his instincts are a riddle ;
“ Without it all his virtues are a dream : 510
“ His very crimes attest his dignity ;
“ His fateless thirst of pleasure, gold, and fame,
“ Declares him born for blessings infinite.
“ What less than infinite makes unabsurd
“ Passions, which all on earth but more inflames : 515
“ Fierce passions, so mismeasur’d to this scene,
“ Stretch’d out, like eagles’ wings, beyond our nest,
“ Far, far beyond the worth of all below,
“ For earth too large, presage a nobler flight,
“ And evidence our title to the skies.” 520

Ye gentle Theologues of calmer kind !
Whose constitution dictates to your pen,
Who, cold yourselves, think ardour comes from hell !
Think not our passions from corruption sprung,
Tho’ to corruption now they lend their wings : 525
That is their mistress, not their mother. All
(And justly) reason deem divine : I see,
I feel a grandeur in the passions too,
Which speaks their high descent and glorious end ;
Which speaks them rays of an eternal fire : 530
In Paradise itself they burnt as strong
Ere Adam fell, tho’ wiser in their aim.
Like the proud Eastern, struck by Providence,
What tho’ our passions are run mad, and sloop,
With low terrestrial appetite, to graze 535



On trash, on toys, dethron'd from high desire?
Yet still, thro' their disgrace, no feeble ray
Of greatness shines, and tells us whence they fell:
But these (like that fall'n monarch when reclaim'd)
When reason moderates the rein aright, 542
Shall re-ascend, remount their former sphere,
Where once they soar'd illustrious, ere seduc'd,
By wanton Eve's debauch, to stroll on earth,
And set the sublunary world on fire.

But grant their frenzy lasts; their frenzy fails
To disappoint one providential end 546
For which Heav'n blew up ardour in our hearts.
Were Reason silent, boundless Passion speaks
A future scene of boundless objects too,
And brings glad tidings of eternal day. 550
Eternal day! 'tis that enlightens all,
And all, by that enlighten'd, proves it sure.
Consider man as an immortal being,
Intelligible all, and all is great;
A crystalline transparency prevails, 555
And strikes full lustre thro' the human sphere:
Consider man as mortal, all is dark
And wretched; Reason weeps at the survey.

The learn'd Lorenzo cries, " And let her weep;
" Weak modern Reason: ancient times were wise.
" Authority, that venerable guide, 561
" Stands on my part; the fam'd Athenian Porch
" (And who for wisdom so renown'd as they?)



"Deny'd this immortality to man."

I grant it; but affirm they prov'd it too.

A riddle this!—Have patience; I'll explain.

What noble vanities, what moral flights,
Glitt'ring thro' their romantic wisdom's page,
Make us, at once, despise them and admire?
Fable is flat to these high-season'd Sires; 570
They leave th'extravagance of song below.

"Flesh shall not feel, or, feeling, shall enjoy

"The dagger or the rack; to them alike

"A bed of roses or the burning bull."

In men exploding all beyond the grave, 575

Strange doctrine this! as doctrine it was strange,

But not as prophesy; for such it prov'd,

And, to their own amazement, was fulfill'd:

'They feign'd a firmness Christians need not feign.

The Christian truly triumph'd in the flame; 580

The Stoic saw, in double wonder lost,

Wonder at them, and wonder at himself,

To find the bold adventures of his thought

Not bold, and that he strove to lie in vain.

Whence, then, those thoughts? those tow'ring

thoughts, that flew 585

Such monstrous heights?—From instinct and from

The glorious instinct of a deathless soul, [pride.

Confus'dly conscious of her dignity,

Suggested truths they could not understand.

In Lust's dominion, and in Passion's storm, 590

Volume II.

C



Truth's system broken, scatter'd fragments lay,
As light in chaos, glimm'ring thro' the gloom:
Smit with the pomp of lofty sentiments,
Pleas'd Pride proclaim'd what Reason disbeliev'd.
Pride, like the Delphic priestess, with a swell
Rav'd nonsense, destin'd to be future sense,
When life immortal, in full day, should shine,
And Death's dark shadows fly the Gospel-fun.
They spoke what nothing but immortal souls
Could speak; and thus the truth they question'd prov'd.

Can, then, absurdities, as well as crimes,
Speak man immortal? All things speak him so.
Much has been urg'd; and dost thou call for more?
Call, and with endless questions be distress'd,
All unresolvable, if earth is all.

" Why life a moment, infinite desire?
" Our wish eternity, our home the grave?
" Heav'n's promise dormant lies in human hope;
" Who wishes life immortal proves it too.
" Why happiness pursu'd, tho' never found?
" Man's thirst of happiness declares it is,
" (For Nature never gravitates to nought)
" That thirst unquench'd declares it is not here.
" My Lucia, thy Clarissa, call to thought;
" Why cordial friendship riveted so deep,
" As hearts to pierce at first, at parting rend,
" If friend and friendship vanish in an hour?
" Is not this torment in the mask of joy?



“ Why by reflection marr’d the joys of sense? ”

“ Why past and future preying on our hearts, ” 620

“ And putting all our present joys to death? ”

“ Why labours reason? instinct were as well; ”

“ Instinct far better: what can chuse can err! ”

“ O how infallible the thoughtless brute! ”

“ ’Twere well his Holiness were half as sure. ” 625

“ Reason with inclination why at war? ”

“ Why sense of guilt? why conscience up in arms? ”

Conscience of guilt is prophesy of pain,

And bosom counsel to decline the blow.

Reason with inclination ne’er had jar’d, ” 630

If nothing future paid forbearance here.

Thus on—these, and a thousand pleas uncald, ”

All promise, some insure a second scene,

Which, were it doubtful, would be dearer far ”

Than all things else most certain; were it false, ” 635

What truth on earth so precious as the lie?

This world it gives us, let what will ensue; ”

This world it gives in that high cordial; hope; ”

The future of the present is the soul. ”

How this life groans when sever’d from the next? ” 640

Poor mutilated wretch that disbelieves!

By dark distrust his being cut in two, ”

In both parts perishes; life void of joy, ”

Sad prelude of eternity in pain! ”

Couldst thou persuade me the next life could fail ”

Our ardent wishes, how should I pour out ” 646

“ All posse knowledge once ”



My bleeding heart in anguish, new as deep!
 Oh! with what thoughts thy hope, and my despair,
 Abhorr'd Annihilation! blasts the soul,
 And wide extends the bounds of human woe!
 Could I believe Lorenzo's system true,
 In this black channel would my ravings run.
 "Grief from the future borrow'd peace, ere-while.
 "The future vanish'd! and the present pain'd!
 "Strange import of unprecedented ill!
 "Fall how profound! like Lucifer's the fall!
 "Unequal fate! his fall, without his guilt!
 "From where fond Hope built her pavilion high,
 "The gods among, hurl'd headlong, hurl'd at once
 "To night! to nothing! darker still than night.
 "If 'twas a dream, why wake me my worst foe,
 "Lorenzo! boastful of the name of friend!
 "O for delusion! O for error still!
 "Could vengeance strike much stronger than to plant
 "A thinking being in a world like this;
 "Not over-rich before, now beggar'd quite,
 "More curs'd than at the fall!—The sun goes out!
 "The thorns shoot up! what thorns in ev'ry thought!
 "Why sense of better? it imbitters worse.
 "Why sense? why life? if but to sigh, then sink!
 "To what I was! twice nothing! and much woe!
 "Woe from Heav'n's bounties! woe from what was
 "To flatter most, high intellectual powers.
 "Thought, virtue, knowledge! blessings, by thy scheme,
 "All poison'd into pains. First, knowledge, once



“ My soul’s ambition, now her greatest dread. 676
“ To know myself true wisdom?—No; to shun
“ That shocking science, parent of Despair!
“ Avert thy mirror; if I see I die.
“ Know my Creator? climb his blest’d abode 680
“ By painful speculation, pierce the veil,
“ Dive in his nature, read his attributes,
“ And gaze in admiration—on a foe,
“ Obtruding life, with-holding happiness!
“ From the full rivers that surround his throne, 685
“ Not letting fall one drop of joy on man;
“ Man gasping for one drop, that he might cease
“ To curse his birth, nor envy reptiles more!
“ Ye sable Clouds! ye darkest Shades of night!
“ Hide him, for ever hide him, from my thought,
“ Once all my comfort, source and soul of joy! 691
“ Now leagu’d with furies, and with thee*, against me.
“ Know his achievements? study his renown?
“ Contemplate this amazing universe,
“ Dropt from his hand, with miracles replete! 695
“ For what? ’mid miracles of nobler name
“ To find one miracle of misery?
“ To find the being which alone can know
“ And praise his works a blemish on his praise!
“ Thro’ Nature’s ample range, in thought, to stroll,
“ And start at man, the single mourner there, 701
“ Breathing high hope! chain’d down to pangs and
[death?]

* Lorenzo.

“ Knowing is suff’ring : and shall Virtue share
“ The sigh of Knowledge?—Virtue shares the sigh.
“ By straining up the steep of excellent, 705
“ By battles fought, and from temptation won,
“ What gains she but the pang of seeing worth,
“ Angelic worth, soon shuffled in the dark
“ With ev’ry vice, and swept to brutal dust?
“ Merit is madness, virtue is a crime, 710
“ A crime to reason, if it costs us pain
“ Unpaid : what pain, amidst a thousand more,
“ To think the most abandon’d, after days
“ Of triumph o’er their betters, find in death
“ As soft a pillow, nor make fouler clay! 715
“ Duty! religion!—these, our duty done,
“ Imply reward. Religion is mistake.
“ Duty!—there’s none, but to repel the cheat.
“ Ye Cheats! away : ye daughters of my pride,
“ Who feign yourselves the fav’rites of the skies,
“ Ye tow’ring Hopes! abortive energies! 721
“ That tofs and struggle in my lying breast,
“ To scale the skies, and build presumptions there,
“ As I were heir of an eternity.
“ Vain, vain ambitions! trouble me no more. 725
“ Why travel far in quest of sure defeat?
“ As bounded as my being be my wish.
“ All is inverted, wisdom is a fool.
“ Sense! take the rein ; blind Passion! drive us on ;
“ And, Ignorance! befriend us on our way ; 730

“ Ye new, but truest patrons of our peace! ”
“ Yes; give the pulse full empire; live the brute, ”
“ Since as the brute we die: the sum of man, ”
“ Of godlike man! to revel and to rot. ”
“ But not on equal terms with other brutes; 735 ”
“ Their revels a more poignant relish yield, ”
“ And safer too; they never poisons chuse. ”
“ Instinct than Reason makes more wholesome meals, ”
“ And sends all-marring Murmur far away. ”
“ For sensual life they best philosophize, 740 ”
“ Theirs that serene the sages sought in vain: ”
“ ’Tis man alone expostulates with Heav’n; ”
“ His all the pow’r, and all the cause to mourn. ”
“ Shall human eyes alone dissolve in tears? ”
“ And bleed in anguish none but human hearts? ”
“ The wide-stretch’d realm of intellectual woe, 746 ”
“ Surpassing sensual far, is all our own. ”
“ In life so fatally distinguish’d, why ”
“ Cast in one lot, confounded, lump’d in death? ”
“ Ere yet in being was mankind in guilt? 750 ”
“ Why thunder’d this peculiar clause against us, ”
“ All-mortal, and all-wretched!—Have the skies ”
“ Reasons of state their subjects may not scan, ”
“ Nor humbly reason when they forely sigh? ”
“ All-mortal and all-wretched!—’Tis too much, ”
“ Unparalleled in Nature: ’tis too much, 756 ”
“ On being unrequested at thy hands, ”
“ Omnipotent! for I see nought but power. ”



- “ And why see that? why thought! To toil and eat;
“ Then make our bed in darkness, needs no thought.
“ What superfluities are reas’ning souls! 761
“ Oh give eternity, or thought destroy.
“ But without thought our curse were half unfelt;
“ Its blunted edge would spare the throbbing heart,
“ And therefore ’tis bestow’d. I thank thee, Reason!
“ For aiding life’s too small calamities; 766
“ And giving being to the dread of death.
“ Such are thy bounties!—Was it then too much
“ For me to trespass on the brutal rights?
“ Too much for Heav’n to make one immet more?
“ Too much for Chaos to permit my mass 771
“ A longer stay with essences unwrought,
“ Unfashion’d, untormented into man?
“ Wretched preferment to this round of pains!
“ Wretched capacity of frenzy, thought! 775
“ Wretched capacity of dying, life!
“ Life, thought, worth, wisdom, all (O foul revolt!)
“ Once friends to peace, gone over to the foe.
“ Death, then, has chang’d its nature too, O Death!
“ Come to my bosom, thou best gift of Heav’n! 780
“ Best friend of man! since man is man no more.
“ Why in this throny wilderness so long,
“ Since there’s no promis’d land’s ambrosial bower
“ To pay me with its honey for my stings?
“ If needful to the selfish schemes of Heav’n 785



“ To sting us sore, why mock’d our misery? ”
“ Why this so sumptuous insult o’er our heads? ”
“ Why this illustrious canopy display’d? ”
“ Why so magnificently lodg’d Despair? ”
“ At stated periods, sure-returning, roll ” 790
“ These glorious orbs, that mortals may compute ”
“ Their length of labours and of pains, nor lose ”
“ Their misery’s full measure?—Smiles with flowers ”
“ And fruits, promiscuous, ever-teeming earth, ”
“ That man may languish in luxurious scenes; ” 795
“ And in an Eden mourn his wither’d joys? ”
“ Claim earth and skies man’s admiration, due ”
“ For such delights! blest’d Animals! too wise ”
“ To wonder, and too happy to complain! ”
“ Our doom decreed demands a mournful scene: ”
“ Why not a dungeon dark for the condemn’d? ” 800
“ Why not the dragon’s subterranean den ”
“ For man to howl in? why not his abode ”
“ Of the same dismal colour with his fate? ”
“ A Thebes, a Babylon, at vast expense ” 805
“ Of time, toil, treasure, art, for owls and adders ”
“ As congruous, as for man this lofty dome, ”
“ Which prompts proud thought, and kindles high ”
“ If, from her humble chamber in the dust, [desire,
“ While proud thought swells, and high desire inflames,
“ The poor worm calls us for her inmates there, ” 810
“ And round us Death’s inexorable hand ”
“ Draws the dark curtain close, undrawn no more.



" Undrawn no more!—Behind the cloud of death;
 " Once, I beheld a sun, a sun which gild 813
 " That sable cloud, and turn'd it all to gold.
 " How the grave's alter'd! fathomless as hell!
 " A real hell to those who dream'd of heav'n!
 " Annihilation! how it yawns before me!
 " Next moment I may drop from thought, from sense,
 " The privilege of angels and of worms,
 " An outcast from existence! and this spirit,
 " This all-pervading, this all-conscious soul,
 " This particle of energy divine,
 " Which travels Nature, flies from star to star, 823
 " And visits gods, and emulates their powers,
 " For ever is 'extinguish'd, Horror! death!
 " Death of that death I fearless, once, survey'd!—
 " When horror universal shall descend,
 " And heav'n's dark concave urn all human race, 833
 " On that enormous, unrefunding tomb,
 " How just this verse! this monumental sigh!
 " Beneath the lumber of demolish'd worlds,
 " Deep in the rubbish of the gen'ral wreck,
 " Swept ignominious to the common mass
 " Of matter, never dignify'd with life,
 " Here lie proud Rationals; the sons of Heav'n!
 " The lords of earth! the property of worms!
 " Beings of yesterday, and no to-morrow!
 " Who liv'd in terror, and in pangs expir'd! 840
 " All gone to rot in chaos, or to make



' Their happy transit into blocks or brutes,
' Nor longer fully their Creator's name.'

Lorenzo! hear, pause, ponder, and pronounce.
Just is this history? If such is man,
Mankind's historian, tho' divine, might weep.
And dares Lorenzo smile!—I know thee proud;
For once let pride befriend thee; Pride looks pale
At such a scene, and sighs for something more.
Amid thy boasts, presumptions, and displays,
And art thou then a shadow? less than shade?
A nothing? less than nothing? To have been,
And not to be, is lower than unborn.
Art thou ambitious? why then make the worm
Thine equal? Runs thy taste of pleasure high?
Why patronize sure death of ev'ry joy?
Charm riches? why chuse begg'ry in the grave,
Of ev'ry hope a bankrupt! and for ever?
Ambition, Pleasure, Avarice, persuade thee
To make that world of glory, rapture, wealth,
They lately prov'd *, thy soul's supreme desire.

What art thou made of? rather, how unmade?
Great Nature's master-appetite destroy'd,
Is endless life and happiness despis'd:
Or both wish'd here, where neither can be found;
Such man's perverse, eternal war with Heav'n!
Dar'st thou persist? and is there nought on earth
But a long train of transitory forms,

* In the Sixth Night.



Rising and breaking millions in an hour?
Bubbles of a fantastic deity, blown up 870
In sport, and then in cruelty destroy'd?
Oh! for what crime, unmerciful Lorenzo!
Destroys thy scheme the whole of human race?
Kind is fell Lucifer compar'd to thee.
Oh! spare this waste of being half-divine, 875
And vindicate th' economy of Heav'n.
Heav'n is all love, all joy in giving joy;
It never had created but to bless;
And shall it then strike off the list of life
A being bless'd, or worthy so to be? 880
Heav'n starts at an annihilating God.
Is that all Nature starts at thy desire?
Art such a clod to wish thyself all clay?
What is that dreadful wish?— the dying groan
Of Nature, murder'd by the blackest guilt. 885
What deadly poison has thy nature drank?
To Nature, undebauch'd, no shock so great.
Nature's first wish is endless happiness;
Annihilation is an after-thought,
A monstrous wish, unborn till Virtue dies. 890
And, oh! what depth of horror lies inclos'd!
For non-existence no man ever wish'd,
But first he wish'd the Deity destroy'd.
If so, what words are dark enough to draw
Thy picture true? the darkest are too fair. 895
Beneath what baleful planet, in what hour



Of desperation, by what fury's aid,
In what infernal posture of the soul,
All hell invited, and all hell in joy
At such a birth, a birth so near of kin,
Did thy foul fancy whelp so black a scheme
Of hopes abortive, faculties half-blown,
And deities begun, reduc'd to dust?

There's nought (thou say'st) but one eternal flux
Of feeble essences, tumultuous driven
Thro' time's rough billows into night's abyss.
Say, in this rapid tide of human ruin,
Is there no rock on which man's tossing thought
Can rest from terror, dare his fate survey,
And boldly think it something to be born?
Amid such hourly wrecks of being fair,
Is there no central, all-sustaining base,
All-realizing, all-connecting power,
Which, as it call'd forth all things, can recall,
And force Destruction to refund her spoil?
Command the grave restore her taken prey?
Bid death's dark vale its human harvest yield?
And earth and ocean pay their debt of man,
True to the grand deposit trusted there?
Is there no potentate, whose outstretch'd arm,
When rip'ning time calls forth th' appointed hour,
Pluck'd from foul Devastation's famish'd maw,
Binds present, past, and future, to his throne?
His throne how glorious! thus divinely grac'd

By germinating beings clust'ring round! 925
 A garland worthy the Divinity!
 A throne by Heav'n's omnipotence in smiles,
 Built (like a Pharos tow'ring in the waves)
 Amidst immense effusions of his love!
 An ocean of communicated bliss! 930

An all-prolific, all-preserving God!
 This were a God indeed.—And such is man,
 As here presum'd; he rises from his fall.
 'Think'st thou Omnipotence a naked root,
 Each blossom fair of Deity destroy'd? 935
 Nothing is dead; nay, nothing sleeps; each soul,
 That ever animated human clay,
 Now wakes, is on the wing: and where, O where,
 Will the swarm settle?—When the trumpet's call,
 As sounding brass, collects us, round heav'n's throne
 Conglob'd, we bask in everlasting day, 941
 (Paternal splendour!) and adhere for ever.
 Had not the soul this outlet to the skies,
 In this vast vessel of the universe
 How should we gasp, as in an empty void! 945
 How in the pangs of famish'd hope expire!

How bright my prospect shines! how gloomy thine!
 A trembling world! and a devouring God!
 Earth but the shambles of Omnipotence!
 Heav'n's face all stain'd with causeless massacres 950
 Of countless millions, born to feel the pang
 Of being lost. Lorenzo! can it be?



This bids us shudder at the thoughts of life.
Who would be born to such a phantom world,
Where nought substantial but our misery?
Where joy (if joy) but heightens our distress,
So soon to perish, and revive no more?
The greater such a joy, the more it pains.
A world so far from great (and yet how great
It shines to thee!) there's nothing real in it;
Being a shadow; consciousness a dream:
A dream how dreadful! universal blank
Before it and behind! poor man a spark
From non-existence struck by wrath divine,
Glitt'ring a moment, nor that moment sure,
'Midst upper, nether, and surrounding night,
His sad, sure, sudden, and eternal tomb!

Lorenzo! dost thou feel these arguments?
Or is there nought but vengeance can be felt?
How hast thou dar'd the Deity dethrone?
How dar'd indict him of a world like this?
If such the world, creation was a crime;
For what is crime but cause of misery?
Retract, Blasphemer! and unriddle this,
Of endless arguments above, below,
Without us, and within, the short result—
“If man's immortal, there's a God in heav'n.”

But wherefore such redundancy? such waste
Of argument? one sets my soul at rest;
One obvious, and at hand, and, oh!—at heart.

So just the skies, Philander's life so pain'd;
His heart so pure, that or succeeding scenes
Have palms to give; or ne'er had he been born.

"What an old tale is this!" Lorenzo cries.—
I grant this argument is old; but truth
No years impair; and had not this been true,
Thou never hadst despis'd it for its age.
Truth is immortal as thy soul, and fable
As fleeting as thy joys. Be wise, nor make
Heav'n's highest blessing vengeance. O be wise!
Nor make a curse of immortality.

Say, know'st thou what it is, or what thou art?
Know'st thou the importance of a soul immortal?
Behold this midnight glory: worlds on worlds!
Amazing pomp redouble this amaze;
Ten thousand add; add twice ten thousand more;
Then weigh the whole; one soul outweighs them all,
And calls th' astonishing magnificence
Of unintelligent creation poor.

For this believe not me; no man believe;
Trust not in words, but deeds; and deeds no less
Than those of the Supreme, nor his a few!
Consult them all; consulted, all proclaim
Thy soul's importance. Tremble at thyself,
For whom Omnipotence has wak'd so long;
Has wak'd, and work'd, for ages; from the birth
Of Nature to this unbelieving hour.

In this small province of his vast domain



(All Nature bow while I pronounce his name!)
What has God done, and not for this sole end, 1010
To rescue souls from death? The soul's high price
Is writ in all the conduct of the skies:
The soul's high price is the creation's key,
Unlocks its mysteries, and naked lays
The genuine cause of ev'ry deed divine: 1015
That is the chain of ages which maintains
Their obvious correspondence, and unites
Most distant periods in one blest'd design:
That is the mighty hinge on which have turn'd
All revolutions, whether we regard 1020
The nat'ral, civil, or religious world,
The former two but servants to the third:
To that their duty done, they both expire,
Their mass new-cast, forgot their deeds renown'd,
And angels ask, "Where once they shone so fair?"
To lift us from this abject to sublime; 1026
This flux to permanent; this dark to day;
This foul to pure; this turbid to serene;
This mean to mighty!—for this glorious end
Th' Almighty, rising, his long sabbath broke! 1030
The world was made, was ruin'd, was restor'd;
Laws from the skies were publish'd, were repeal'd;
On earth kings, kingdoms, rose; kings, kingdoms, fell;
Fam'd sages lighted up the Pagan world;
Prophets from Sion darted a keen glance 1035
Thro' distant age; saints travell'd, martyrs bled;

By wonders sacred Nature stood controll'd;
The living were translated; dead were rais'd;
Angels, and more than angels, came from heav'n;
And, oh! for this descended lower still; 1040
Gilt was hell's gloom; astonish'd at his guest,
For one short moment Lucifer ador'd.
Lorenzo! and wilt thou do less?—For this
That hallow'd page, fools scoff at, was inspir'd,
Of all these truths thrice-venerable code! 1045
Deists! perform your quarantine, and then
Fall prostrate ere you touch it, lest you die.
Nor less intensely bent infernal powers
To mar, than those of light this end to gain.
O what a scene is here!—Lorenzo! wake! 1050
Rise to the thought; exert, expand thy soul
To take the vast idea; it denies
All else the name of great. Two warring worlds,
Not Europe against Afric; warring worlds!
Of more than mortal! mounted on the wing! 1055
On ardent wings of energy and zeal,
High-hov'ring o'er this little brand of strife!
This sublunary ball.—But strife, for what?
In their own cause conflicting? no; in thine;
In man's. His single int'rest blows the flame; 1060
His the sole stake; his fate the trumpet sounds
Which kindles war immortal. How it burns!
Tumultuous swarms of deities in arms!
Force force opposing, till the waves run high,



And tempest Nature's universal sphere. 1065
Such opposites eternal, stedfast, stern,
Such foes implacable are good and ill;
Yet man, vain man, would mediate peace between them.

Think not this fiction. "There was war in heav'n."
From heav'n's high crystal mountain, where it hung,
Th' Almighty's outstretch'd arm took down his bow,
And shot his indignation at the deep: 1072
Re-thunder'd Hell, and darted all her fires.—
And seems the stake of little moment still?
And slumbers man, who singly caus'd the storm? 1075
He sleeps.—And art thou shock'd at mysteries?
The greatest thou. How dreadful to reflect
What ardour, care, and counsel, mortals cause
In breasts divine! how little in their own!

Where'er I turn, how new proofs pour upon me!
How happily this wondrous view supports 1081
My former argument! how strongly strikes
Immortal life's full demonstration here!
Why this exertion? why this strange regard
From heav'n's Omnipotent indulg'd to man?—1085
Because in man the glorious, dreadful power,
Extremely to be pain'd, or blest'd for ever,
Duration gives importance, swells the price.
An angel, if a creature of a day,
What would he be? a trifle of no weight; 1090
Or stand or fall, no matter which, he's gone.
Because immortal, therefore is indulg'd



This strange regard of deities to dust.
 Hence Heav'n looks down on earth with all her eyes;
 Hence the soul's mighty moment in her sight; 1095
 Hence ev'ry soul has partizans above,
 And ev'ry thought a critic in the skies :
 Hence clay, vile clay! has angels for its guard,
 And ev'ry guard a passion for his charge;
 Hence, from all agè, the cabinet divine 1100
 Has held high counfel o'er the fate of man.

Nor have the clouds those gracious counfels hid;
 Angels undrew the curtain of the throne,
 And Providence came forth to meet mankind :
 In various modes of emphasis and awe 1105
 He spoke his will, and trembling Nature heard;
 He spoke it loud, in thunder, and in storm :
 Witness thou, Sinai! whose cloud-cover'd height,
 And shaken basis, own'd the present God :
 Witness, ye Billows! whose returning tide, 1110
 Breaking the chain that fasten'd it in air,
 Swept Egypt and her menaces to hell :
 Witness, ye Flames! th' Assyrian tyrant blew
 To sev'nfold rage, as impotent as strong :
 And thou, Earth! witness, whose expanding jaws
 Clos'd o'er Presumption's sacrilegious sons *; 1116
 Has not each element, in turn, subscrib'd
 The soul's high price, and sworn it to the wife?
 Has not flame, ocean, ether, earthquake, stroye

* Korah, &c.



To strike this truth thro' adamantin man? II120
If not all adamant, Lorenzo! hear;
All is delusion; Nature is wrapt up
In tenfold night, from Reason's keenest eye:
'There's no consistence, meaning, plan, or end,
In all beneath the sun, in all above, II125
(As far as man can penetrate) or heaven
Is an immense, inestimable prize:
Or all is nothing; or that prize is all,—
And shall each toy be still a match for heaven,
And full equivalent for groans below? II130
Who would not give a trifle to prevent
What he would give a thousand worlds to cure?

Lorenzo! thou hast seen (if thine to see)
All Nature and her God (by Nature's course,
And Nature's course controll'd) declare for me. II135
The skies above proclaim "immortal man!"
And "man immortal!" all below resounds:
The world's a system of theology,
Read by the greatest strangers to the schools;
If honest, learn'd; and sages o'er a plough. II140
Is not, Lorenzo! then, impos'd on thee
This hard alternative, or to renounce
Thy reason and thy sense, or to believe?
What then is unbelief? 'tis an exploit,
A strenuous enterprise; to gain it man II145
Must burst thro' ev'ry bar of common sense,
Of common shame, magnanimously wrong;

And what rewards the sturdy combatant?
His prize repentance; infamy his crown.

But wherefore infamy?—for want of faith 1150
Down the steep precipice of wrong he slides;
There's nothing to support him in the right.
Faith in the future wanting is, at least
In embryo, ev'ry weakness, ev'ry guilt,
And strong temptation ripens it to birth. 1155

If this life's gain invites him to the deed,
Why not his country sold, his father slain?
'Tis virtue to pursue our good supreme,
And his supreme, his only good, is here.
Ambition, av'rice, by the wise disdain'd,
Is perfect wisdom while mankind are fools,
And think a turf or tombstone covers all:
These find employment, and provide for sense
A richer pasture and a larger range;
And sense, by right divine, ascends the throne. 1165
When virtue's prize and prospect are no more,
Virtue no more we think the will of Heaven.
Would Heav'n quite beggar Virtue if belov'd?

“Has Virtue charms?”—I grant her heav'nly fair;
But if unportion'd, all will Int'rest wed;
Tho' that our admiration, this our choice.
The virtues grow on immortality;
That root destroy'd, they wither and expire.
A Deity believ'd will nought avail;
Rewards and punishments make God ador'd, 1175

And hopes and fears give Conscience all her power.
As in the dying parent dies the child,
Virtue with immortality expires.
Who tells me he denies his soul immortal,
Whate'er his boast, has told me he's a knave. 1180
His duty 'tis to love himself alone,
Nor care tho' mankind perish if he smiles.
Who thinks ere long the man shall wholly die,
Is dead already; nought but brute survives.

And are there such?—Such candidates there are
For more than death; for utter loss of being, 1186
Being, the basis of the Deity!
Ask you the cause?—the cause they will not tell;
Nor need they. Oh the forceries of sense!
They work this transformation on the soul, 1190
Dismount her like the serpent at the fall,
Dismount her from her native wing (which soar'd
Ere-while ethereal heights) and throw her down
To lick the dust, and crawl in such a thought.

Is it in words to paint you? O ye Fall'n! 1195
Fall'n from the wings of reason and of hope!
Erect in stature, prone in appetite!
Patrons of pleasure, posting into pain!
Lovers of argument, averse to sense!
Boasters of liberty, fast-bound in chains! 1200
Lords of the wide creation, and the shame!
More senseless than th' irrationals you scorn!
More base than those you rule! than those you pity!



Far more undone! O ye most infamous
Of beings, from superior dignity
Deepest in woe from means of boundless bliss!
Ye curs'd by blessings infinite! because
Most highly favour'd, most profoundly lost!
Ye motley mass of contradiction strong!
And are you, too, convinc'd your souls fly off
In exhalation soft, and die in air,
From the full flood of evidence against you?
In the coarse drudgeries and sinks of sense,
Your souls have quite worn out the make of Heav'n,
By vice new-cast, and creatures of your own;
But tho' you can deform, you can't destroy:
To curse, not uncreate, is all your power;
Lorenzo! this black brotherhood renounce;
Renounce St. Evremond, and read St. Paul:
Ere rapt by miracle, by reason wing'd,
His mounting mind made long abode in heav'n.
This is free-thinking, unconfin'd to parts,
To send the soul, on curious travel bent,
Thro' all the provinces of human thought;
To dart her flight thro' the whole sphere of man;
Of this vast universe to make the tour;
In each recess of space and time at home,
Familiar with their wonders; diving deep;
And, like a prince of boundless int'rests there,
Still most ambitious of the most remote;
To look on truth unbroken and entire;



Truth in the system, the full orb; where truths
By truths enlighten'd and sustain'd, afford
An arch-like, strong foundation, to support
Th' incumbent weight of absolute, complete
Conviction: here, the more we press, we stand
More firm: who most examine, most believe.
Parts, like half-sentences, confound; the whole
Conveys the sense, and God is understood;
Who not in fragments writes to human race:
Read his whole volume, Sceptic! then reply.
This, this is thinking free, a thought that grasps
Beyond a grain, and looks beyond an hour.
Turn up thine eye, survey this midnight scene;
What are earth's kingdoms to yon' boundless orbs,
Of human souls, one day, the destin'd range?
And what yon' boundless orbs to godlike man?
Those num'rous worlds that throng the firmament,
And ask more space in heav'n, can roll at large
In man's capacious thought, and still leave room
For ampler orbs, for new creations there.
Can such a soul contract itself, to gripe
A point of no dimension, of no weight?
It can; it does: the world is such a point;
And of that point how small a part enslaves!
How small a part—of nothing, shall I say?
Why not?—Friends, our chief treasure! how they drop!
Lucia, Narcissa fair, Philander, gone!
The grave, like fabled Cerberus, has op'd

A triple mouth, and in an awful voice, 1260
 Loud calls my soul, and utters all I sing:
 How the world falls to pieces round about us,
 And leaves us in a ruin of our joy!
 What says this transportation of my friends?
 It bids me love the place where now they dwell, 1265
 And scorn this wretched spot they leave so poor.
 Eternity's vast ocean lies before thee;
 There, there, Lorenzo! thy Clarissa fails.
 Give thy mind sea-room; keep it wide of earth,
 That rock of souls immortal; cut thy cord;
 Weigh anchor; spread thy sails; call ev'ry wind;
 Eye thy Great Pole-star; make the land of Life. 1270
 Two kinds of life, has double-natur'd man,
 And two of death; the last far more severe.
 Life animal is nurtur'd by the sun, 1275
 Thrives on his bounties, triumphs in his beams:
 Life rational subsists on higher food,
 Triumphant in his beams who made the day:
 When we leave that sun, and are left by this,
 (The fate of all who die in stubborn guilt) 1280
 'Tis utter darkness; strictly double death.
 We sink by no judicial stroke of Heav'n,
 But Nature's course, as sure as plumbets fall:
 Since God or man must alter ere they meet,
 (Since light and darkness blend not in one sphere) 1285
 'Tis manifest, Lorenzo! who must change.
 If, then, that double death should prove thy lot,



Blame not the bowels of the Deity;
Man shall be blest'd, as far as man permits.
Not man alone, all rationals Heav'n arms
With an illustrious, but tremendous power,
To counteract its own most gracious ends,
And this of strict necessity, not choice;
That pow'r deny'd, men, angels, were no more
But passive engines, void of praise or blame. 1295
A nature rational implies the power
Of being blest'd or wretched as we please,
Else idle Reason would have nought to do,
And he that would be barr'd capacity
Of pain, courts incapacity of bliss. 1300
Heav'n wills our happiness, allows our doom;
Invites us ardently, but not compels:
Heav'n but persuades, almighty man decrees.
Man is the maker of immortal fates.
Man falls by man, if finally he falls; 1305
And fall he must, who learns from death alone
The dreadful secret,—that he lives for ever.

Why this to thee?—thee yet, perhaps, in doubt
Of second life? but wherefore doubtful still?
Eternal life is Nature's ardent wish: 1310
What ardently we wish we soon believe:
Thy tardy faith declares that wish destroy'd:
What has destroy'd it?—shall I tell thee what?
When fear'd the future, 'tis no longer wish'd;
And when unwish'd, we strive to disbelieve. 1315

— E ij

" Thus infidelity our guilt betrays." Nor that the sole detection! Blush, Lorenzo! Blush for hypocrisy, if not for guilt. The future fear'd.—An infidel, and fear? Fear what? a dream? a fable?—How thy dread, 1320
 Unwilling evidence, and therefore strong, Affords my cause an undesign'd support? How Disbelief affirms what it denies! " It, unawares, asserts immortal life."— Surprising! infidelity turns out 1325
 A creed and a confession of our sins. Apostates, thus, are orthodox divines. Lorenzo! with Lorenzo clash no more, Nor longer a transparent vizor wear. Think'st thou Religion only has her mask? 1330
 Our infidels are Satan's hypocrites, Pretend the worst, and, at the bottom, fail. When visited by thought (thought will intrude) Like him they serve, they tremble, and believe. Is there hypocrisy so foul as this 1335
 So fatal to the welfare of the world? What detestation, what contempt, their due! And, if unpaid, be thank'd for their escape! That Christian candour they strive hard to scorn. If not for that asylum, they might find 1340
 A hell on earth; nor 'scape a worse below. With insolence and impotence of thought, Instead of racking fancy to refute, Reform thy manners, and the truth enjoy,—



But shall I dare confess the dire result? 1345
Can thy proud reason brook so black a brand?
From purer manners to sublimer faith,
Is Nature's unavoidable ascent.
An honest Deist, where the Gospel shines,
Matur'd to nobler, in the Christian ends. 1350
When that bless'd change arrives, e'en cast aside
This song superfluous: life immortal strikes
Conviction in a flood of light divine.
A Christian dwells, like Uriel *, in the sun;
Meridian evidence puts doubt to flight, 1355
And ardent hope anticipates the skies.
Of that bright sun, Lorenzo! scale the sphere:
'Tis easy; it invites thee; it descends
From heav'n to wooe and waft thee whence it came.
Read and revere the sacred page, a page 1360
Where triumphs immortality; a page
Which not the whole creation could produce;
Which not the conflagration shall destroy:
'Tis printed in the mind of gods for ever,
In Nature's ruins not one letter lost. 1365

In proud disdain of what e'en gods adore,
Dost smile?—Poor wretch! thy guardian angel weeps.
Angels and men assent to what I sing;
Wits smile, and thank me for my midnight dream:
How vicious hearts fume frenzy to the brain! 1370
Parts push us on to pride, and pride to shame:

* Milton.

E iij



Pert Infidelity is Wit's cockade,
 To grace the brazen brow that braves the skies,
 By loss of being dreadfully secure.
 Lorenzo! if thy doctrine wins the day;
 And drives my dreams, defeated, from the field;
 If this is all, if earth a final scene,
 Take heed; stand fast; be sure to be a knave;
 A knave in grain! ne'er deviate to the right.
 Shouldst thou be good—how infinite thy loss! 1375
 Guilt only makes annihilation gain.
 Bless'd scheme! which life deprives of comfort, death
 Of hope, and which vice only recommends.
 If so, where, Infidels! your bait thrown out
 To catch weak converts? where your lofty boast
 Of zeal for virtue, and of love to man?
 Annihilation! I confess in these. 1386

What can reclaim you? dare I hope profound
 Philosophers the converts of a song?
 Yet know its title* flatters you, not me;
 Your's be the praise to make my title good;
 Mine to bless Heav'n, and triumph in your praise.
 But since so pestilential your disease,
 Tho' sov'reign is the med'cine I prescribe,
 As yet I'll neither triumph nor despair,
 But hope, ere long, my midnight dream will wake
 Your hearts, and teach your wisdom—to be wise;
 For why should souls immortal, made for bliss,
 E'er wish (and wish in vain!) that souls could die?

* The Infidel Reclaimed.



What ne'er can die, oh! grant to live, and crown
 The wish, and aim, and labour, of the skies; 1401
 Increase, and enter on the joys of heav'n:
 Thus shall my title pass a sacred seal,
 Receive an imprimatur from above;
 While angels shout—An Infidel Reclaim'd! 1405
 To close, Lorenzo! Spite of all my pains,
 Still seems it strange that thou shouldst live for ever?
 Is it less strange that thou shouldst live at all?
 This is a miracle, and that no more.
 Who gave beginning can exclude an end. 1410
 Deny thou art, then doubt if thou shalt be.
 A miracle with miracles inclos'd
 Is man! and starts his faith at what is strange?
 What less than wonders from the wonderful?
 What less than miracles from God can flow? 1415
 Admit a God—that mystery supreme!
 That cause uncus'd! all other wonders cease!
 Nothing is marvellous for him to do:
 Deny him—all is mystery besides;
 Millions of mysteries! each darker far 1420
 Than that thy wisdom would, unwisely, shun.
 If weak thy faith, why chuse the harder side?
 We nothing know but what is marvellous;
 Yet what is marvellous we can't believe.
 So weak our reason, and so great our God, 1425
 What most surprises in the sacred page,
 Or full as strange, or stranger, must be true.
 Faith is not reason's labour, but repose,



To faith and virtue why so backward, man?
From hence;—the present strongly strikes us all, 1430
The future faintly: can we, then, be men?
If men, Lorenzo! the reverse is right.
Reason is man's peculiar; sense the brute's.
The present is the scanty realm of Sense;
The future Reason's empire unconfin'd: 1435
On that expending all her godlike power,
She plans, provides, expatiates, triumphs, there;
There builds her blessings! there expects her praise;
And nothing asks of Fortune or of men.
And what is Reason? be she thus defin'd; 1440
Reason is upright stature in the soul.
Oh! be a man,—and strive to be a god.

“For what? (thou say’st) to damp the joys of life?”
No; to give heart and substance to thy joys.
That tyrant, Hope, mark how she domineers; 1445
She bids us quit realities for dreams,
Safety and peace for hazard and alarm.
That tyrant o’er the tyrants of the soul,
She bids Ambition quit its taken prize,
Spurn the luxuriant branch on which it sits 1450
Tho’ bearing crowns, to spring at distant game,
And plunge in toils and dangers—for repose.
If hope precarious, and of things, when gain’d,
Of little moment, and as little stay,
Can sweeten toils and dangers into joys, 1455
What then that hope which nothing can defeat,



Our leave unask'd? rich hope of boundless bliss!
Bliss past man's pow'r to paint it, time's to close!

—This hope is earth's most estimable prize;
This is man's portion, while no more than man:
Hope, of all passions, most befriends us here; 1461
Passions of prouder name befriend us less.

Joy has her tears, and Transport has her death:
Hope, like a cordial, innocent, tho' strong,
Man's heart, at once, inspirits and serenes, 1465
Nor makes him pay his wisdom for his joys:
'Tis all our present state can safely bear,
Health to the frame! and vigour to the mind!

A joy attemper'd! a chastis'd delight!
Like the fair summer-evening, mild, and sweet! 1470
'Tis man's full cup, his paradise below!

A blest'd hereafter, then, or hop'd or gain'd,
Is all,—our whole of happiness: full proof
I chose no trivial or inglorious theme.
And know, ye Foes to song! (well-meaning men, 1475
Tho' quite forgotten * half your Bible's praise!)
Important truths, in spite of verse, may please:
Grave minds you praise, nor can you praise too much:
If there is weight in an eternity,
Let the grave listen,—and be graver still. 1480

* The poetical parts of it.

End of Night Seventh.



THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT VIII.

VIRTUE'S APOLOGY:

OR, THE MAN OF THE WORLD ANSWERED.

In which are considered,

THE LOVE OF THIS LIFE; THE AMBITION AND PLEASURE,
WITH THE WIT AND WISDOM, OF THE WORLD.

AND has all Nature, then, espous'd my part?
Have I brib'd Heav'n and Earth to plead against thee?
And is thy soul immortal?—What remains?
All, all, Lorenzo!—make immortal blest'd.
Unblest'd immortals!—what can shock us more? 5
And yet Lorenzo still affects the world;
There flows his treasure; thence his title draws,
Man of the World! (for such wouldst thou be call'd)
And art thou proud of that inglorious style?
Proud of reproach? for a reproach it was, 10
In ancient days, and Christian,—in an age
When men were men, and not ashamed of Heav'n,
Fir'd their ambition, as it crown'd their joy.
Sprinkled with dews from the Castalian font,
Fain would I rebaptize thee, and confer 15
A purer spirit, and a nobler name.



Thy fond attachments, fatal and inflam'd,
 Point out my path, and dictate to my song.
 To thee the world how fair! how strongly strikes
 Ambition! and gay Pleasure stronger still!
 Thy triple bane! the triple bolt that lays
 Thy virtue dead! be these my triple theme;
 Nor shall thy wit or wisdom be forgot.

Common the theme, not so the song, if she
 My song invokes, Urania! deigns to smile.
 The charm that chains us to the world, her foe,
 If she dissolves, the man of earth, at once,
 Starts from his trance, and sighs for other scenes;
 Scenes where these sparks of night, these stars, shall shine
 Unnumber'd suns (for all things, as they are,
 The blest'd behold) and, in one glory, pour
 Their blended blaze on man's astonish'd sight;
 A blaze—the least illustrious object there.

Lorenzo! since eternal is at hand,
 To swallow time's ambitions, as the vast
 Leviathan the bubbles vain that ride
 High on the foaming billow, what avail
 High titles, high descent, attainments high,
 If unattain'd our highest? O Lorenzo!
 What lofty thoughts, these elements above,
 What tow'ring hopes, what fallies from the sun,
 What grand surveys of destiny divine,
 And pompous presage of unfathom'd fate,
 Should roll in bosoms where a spirit burns,



Bound for eternity! in bosoms read
 By him who foibles in archangels sees!
 On human hearts he bends a jealous eye,
 And marks, and in heav'n's register enrolls,
 The rise and progress of each option there;
 Sacred to Doomsday! that the page unfolds,
 And spreads us to the gaze of gods and men.

And what an option, O Lorenzo! thine
 This world! and this, unrival'd by the skies!
 A world where lust of pleasure, grandeur, gold,
 Three demons that divide its realms between them,
 With strokes alternate buffet to and fro
 Man's restless heart, their sport, their flying ball,
 Till, with the giddy circle sick and tir'd,
 It pants for peace, and drops into despair.
 Such is the world Lorenzo sets above!
 That glorious promise angels were esteem'd
 Too mean to bring; a promise their Ador'd
 Descended to communicate, and press,
 By counsel, miracle, life, death, on man.
 Such is the world Lorenzo's wisdom woos,
 And on its thorny pillow seeks repose;
 A pillow which, like opiates ill-prepar'd,
 Intoxicates, but not composes; fills
 The visionary mind with gay chimeras,
 All the wild trash of sleep, without the rest:
 What unfeign'd travel, and what dreams of joy!

How frail men, things! how momentary both!



Fantastic chase of shadows hunting shades !
 The gay, the busy, equal, tho' unlike;
 Equal in wisdom, differently wise! 75
 Thro' flow'ry meadows, and thro' dreary wastes,
 One bustling, and one dancing, into death.
 There's not a day but, to the man of thought,
 Betrays some secret that throws new reproach
 On life, and makes him sick of seeing more. 80
 The scenes of bus'ness tell us—"What are men;"
 The scenes of pleasure—"What is all beside!"
 There others we despise; and here ourselves.
 Amid disgust eternal dwells delight?
 'Tis approbation strikes the string of joy. 85

What wondrous prize has kindled this career,
 Stuns with the din, and chokes us with the dust,
 On life's gay stage, one inch above the grave?
 The proud run up and down in quest of eyes;
 The sensual in pursuit of something worse; 90
 The grave of gold; the politic of power;
 And all of other butterflies as vain!
 As eddies draw things frivolous and light,
 How is man's heart by vanity drawn in!
 On the swift circle of returning toys 95
 Whirl'd, straw-like, round and round, and then in-
 Where gay delusion darkens to despair! [gulf'd,

"This is a beaten track."—Is this a track
 Should not be beaten? never beat enough,
 Till enough learn'd the truths it would inspire. 100



Shall Truth be silent, because Folly frowns?
Turn the world's history, what find we there
But Fortune's sports, or Nature's cruel claims,
Or woman's artifice, or man's revenge,
And endless inhumanities on man? 105
Fame's trumpet seldom sounds but, like the knell,
It brings bad tidings: how it hourly blows
Man's misadventures round the list'ning world!
Man is the tale of narrative old Time;
Sad tale, which high as Paradise begins;
As if, the toil of travel to delude,
From stage to stage, in his eternal round,
The Days, his daughters, as they spin our hours
On Fortune's wheel, where accident unthought
Oft', in a moment, snaps life's strongest thread, 115
Each, in her turn, some tragic story tells,
With now-and-then a wretched farce between,
And fills his chronicle with human woes.

Time's daughters, true as those of men, deceive us;
Not one but puts some cheat on all mankind, 120
While in their father's bosom, not yet ours,
They flatter our fond hopes, and promise much
Of amiable, but hold him not o'er-wise
Who dares to trust them, and laugh round the year,
At still-confiding, still-confounded, man, 125
Confiding tho' confounded; hoping on,
Untaught by trial, unconvin'd by proof,
And ever looking for the never-seen.



Life to the last, like harden'd felons, lies,
 Nor owns itself a cheat till it expires: 130
 Its little joys go out by one and one,
 And leave poor man, at length, in perfect night,
 Night: darker than what now involves the pole.

O thou, who dost permit these ills to fall,
 For gracious ends, and wouldst that man should mourn!
 O thou, whose hands this goodly fabric fram'd, 136
 Who know'st it best, and wouldst that man should know!
 What is this sublunary world? a vapour;
 A vapour all it holds; itself a vapour;
 From the damp bed of Chaos, by thy beam 140
 Exhal'd, ordain'd to swim its destin'd hour
 In ambient air, then melt and disappear.
 Earth's days are number'd; nor remote her doom;
 As mortal, tho' less transient, than her sons;
 Yet they dote on her as the world and they 145
 Were both eternal, solid, thou a dream.

They dote on what? immortal views apart,
 A region of outsidcs! a land of shadows!
 A fruitful field of flow'ry promises!
 A wilderness of joys! perplex'd with doubts, 150
 And sharp with thorns! a troubled ocean, spread
 With bold adventurers, their all on board;
 No second hope, if here their fortune frowns;
 Frown soon it must. Of various rates they sail,
 Of ensigns various; all alike in this, 155
 All restless, anxious, toss'd with hopes and fears

F ij



In calmest skies; obnoxious all to storm;
 And stormy the most gen'ral blast of life:
 All bound for happiness; yet few provide
 The chart of Knowledge, pointing where it lies,
 Or Virtue's helm, to shape the course design'd:
 All, more or less, capricious Fate lament,
 Now lifted by the tide, and now reforc'd,
 And farther from their wishes than before:
 All, more or less, against each other dash,
 To mutual hurt, by gusts of passion, driven,
 And suff'ring more from folly than from Fate.
 Ocean! thou dreadful and tumultuous home
 Of dangers, at eternal war with man!
 Death's capital, where most he domineers,
 With all his chosen terrors frowning round,
 (Tho' lately feasted high at Albion's cost *)
 Wide-op'ning, and loud-roaring still for more!
 Too faithful mirror! how dost thou reflect
 The melancholy face of human life!
 The strong resemblance tempts me farther still:
 And, haply, Britain may be deeper struck
 By moral truth, in such a mirror seen,
 Which Nature holds for ever at her eye.
 Self-flatter'd, unexperienc'd, high in hope,
 When young, with sanguine cheer, and streamers gay,
 We cut our cable, launch into the world,
 And fondly dream each wind and star our friend:
 All in some darling enterprise embark'd;

* Admiral Balchen, &c.

But where is he can fathom its event?
 Amid a multitude of artless hands,
 Ruin's sure perquisite! her lawful prize!
 Some steer aright, but the black blast blows hard,
 And puffs them wide of hope: with hearts of proof,
 Full against wind and tide, some win their way,
 And when strong Effort has deserv'd the port,
 And tugg'd it into view, 'tis won! 'tis lost!
 Tho' strong their oar, still stronger is their fate:
 They strike! and, while they triumph, they expire.
 In stress of weather most, some sink outright;
 O'er them, and o'er their names, the billows close;
 To-morrow knows not they were ever born.
 Others a short memorial leave behind,
 Like a flag floating, when the bark's ingulf'd;
 It floats a moment, and is seen no more.
 One Cæsar lives; a thousand are forgot.
 How few, beneath auspicious planets born,
 (Darlings of Providence! fond Fate's elect!)
 With swelling sails make good the promis'd port,
 With all their wishes freighted! yet ev'n these,
 Freight with all their wishes, soon complain;
 Free from misfortune, not from Nature free,
 They still are men; and when is man secure?
 As fatal time as storm! the rush of years
 Beats down their strength; their numberless escapes
 In ruin end. And now their proud success
 But plants new terrors on the victor's brow:



What pain to quit the world, just made their own,
 Their nest so deeply down'd, and built so high!
 Too low they build who build beneath the stars. 215

Woe then apart (if woe apart can be
 From mortal man) and Fortune at our nod,
 The gay! rich! great! triumphant! and august!
 What are they?—The most happy (strange to say)
 Convince me most of human misery. 220
 What are they? smiling wretches of to-morrow!
 More wretched, then, than e'er their slave can be,
 Their treach'rous blessings, at the day of need,
 Like other faithless friends, unmask, and sting:
 Then what provoking indigence in wealth!
 What aggravated impotence in power!
 High titles, then, what insult of their pain!
 If that sole anchor, equal to the waves,
 Immortal Hope! defies not the rude storm,
 Takes comfort from the foaming billow's rage, 230
 And makes a welcome harbour of the tomb.

Is this a sketch of what thy soul admires?

“ But here (thou say'st) the miseries of life
 “ Are huddled in a group: a more distinct
 “ Survey, perhaps, might bring thee better news.” 235
 Look on life's stages; they speak plainer still;
 The plainer they, the deeper wilt thou sigh.
 Look on thy lovely boy; in him behold
 The best that can befall the best on earth;
 The boy has virtue by his mother's side: 240



Yes, on Florello look : a father's heart
Is tender, tho' the man's is made of stone :
The truth, thro' such a medium seen, may make
Impression deep, and fondness prove thy friend.

Florello ! lately cast on this rude coast
A helpless infant, now a heedless child.
To poor Clarissa's throes thy care succeeds ;
Care full of love, and yet severe as hate !
O'er thy soul's joy how oft' thy fondness frowns !
Needful austerities his will restrain,
As thorns fence in the tender plant from harm.
As yet his reason cannot go alone,
But asks a sterner nurse to lead it on.
His little heart is often terrify'd ;
The blush of morning, in his cheek, turns pale ;
Its pearly dew-drop trembles in his eye,
His harmless eye ! and drowns an angel there.
Ah ! what avails his innocence ? the task
Enjoin'd must discipline his early powers ;
He learns to sigh ere he is known to sin ;
Guiltless, and sad ! a wretch before the fall !
How cruel this ! more cruel to forbear.
Our nature such, with necessary pains
We purchase prospects of precarious peace :
Tho' not a father, this might steal a sigh.

Suppose him disciplin'd aright (if not,
'Twill sink our poor account to poorer still)
Ripe from the tutor, proud of liberty,



He leaps inclosure, bounds into the world;
The world is taken, after ten years' toil,
Like ancient Troy, and all its joys his own.
Alas! the world's a tutor more severe,
Its lessons hard, and ill deserve his pains;
Unteaching all his virtuous Nature taught,
Or books (fair Virtue's advocates!) inspir'd.

For who receives him into public life?
Men of the world, the terræ-filial breed,
Welcome the modest stranger to their sphere,
(Which glitter'd long, at distance, in his sight)
And in their hospitable arms inclose;
Men who think nought so strong of the romance,
So rank knight-errant, as a real friend;
Men that act up to Reason's golden rule,
All weakness of affection quite subdu'd;
Men that would blush at being thought sincere,
And feign, for glory, the few faults they want;
That love a lie, where truth would pay as well,
As if, to them, Vice shone her own reward.

Lorenzo! canst thou bear a shocking sight?
Such, for Florello's sake, 'twill now appear.
See the steel'd files of season'd veterans,
Train'd to the world, in burnish'd falsehood bright;
Deep in the fatal stratagems of peace,
All soft sensation, in the throng, rubb'd off;
All their keen purpose in politeness sheath'd;
His friends eternal—during interest;



His foes implacable—when worth their while;
 At war with ev'ry welfare but their own;
 As wise as Lucifer, and half as good;
 And by whom none, but Lucifer, can gain—
 Naked thro' these, (so common Fate ordains)
 Naked of heart, his cruel course he runs,
 Stung out of all most amiable in life,
 Prompt truth, and open thought, and smiles unfeign'd;
 Affection, as his species wide-diffus'd;
 Noble presumptions to mankind's renown;
 Ingenuous trust, and confidence of love.

These claims, to joy (if mortals joy might claim)
 Will cost him many a sigh, till time and pains,
 From the slow mistress of this school, Experience;
 And her assistant, pausing, pale Distrust,
 Purchase a dear-bought clue to lead his youth
 Thro' serpentine obliquities of life,
 And the dark labyrinth of human hearts.
 And happy! if the clue shall come so cheap;
 For while we learn to fence with public guilt,
 Full oft' we feel its foul contagion too,
 If less than heav'nly virtue is our guard.
 Thus a strange kind of curs'd necessity
 Brings down the sterling temper of his soul,
 By base alloy, to bear the current stamp,
 Below call'd Wisdom; sinks him into safety,
 And brands him into credit with the world,
 Where spacious titles dignify disgrace,



And Nature's injuries are arts of life;
Where brighter reason prompts to bolder crimes,
And heav'nly talents make infernal hearts,
That unfurmountable extreme of guilt!

Poor Machiavel! who labour'd hard his plan,
Forgot that Genius need not go to school;
Forgot that man, without a tutor wife,
His plan had practis'd long before 'twas writ.
The world's all title-page, there's no contents.
The world's all face. The man who shews his heart
Is hooted for his nudities, and scorn'd.

A man I knew who liv'd upon a smile,
And well it fed him; he look'd plump and fair,
While rankest venom foam'd thro' every vein.

Lorenzo! what I tell thee take not ill!
Living, he fawn'd on ev'ry fool alive;
And, dying, curs'd the friend on whom he liv'd.
To such proficients thou art half a saint.

In foreign realms (for thou hast travell'd far)
How curious to contemplate two state-rooks,
Studious their nests to feather in a trice,
With all the necromanties of their art,

Playing the game of faces on each other,
Making court sweetmeats of their latent gall,
In foolish hope to steal each other's trust;
Both cheating, both exulting, both deceiv'd,
And, sometimes, both (let earth rejoice) undone!
Their parts we doubt not, but be that their shame.



Shall men of talents, fit to rule mankind,
 Stoop to mean wiles that would disgrace a fool,
 And lose the thanks of those few friends they serve?
 For who can thank the man he cannot see? 356

Why so much cover? it defeats itself.
 Ye that know all things! know ye not men's hearts?
 Are therefore known because they are conceal'd?
 For why conceal'd?—the cause they need not tell. 360
 I give him joy that's awkward at a lie;
 Whose feeble nature Truth keeps still in awe;
 His incapacity is his renown.

'Tis great, 'tis manly, to disdain disguise;
 It shews our spirit, or it proves our strength. 365
 Thou say'st 'tis needful: is it therefore right?
 Howe'er, I grant it some small sign of grace
 To strain at an excuse: and wouldst thou, then,
 Escape that cruel need? thou may'st with ease;
 Think no post needful that demands a knave. 370
 When late our Civil helm was shifting hands,
 So P—— thought: think better if you can.

But this how rare! the public path of life
 Is dirty:—yet allow that dirt its due,
 It makes the noble mind more noble still. 375
 The world's no neuter; it will wound or save;
 Our virtue quench, or indignation fire.
 You say the world, well-known, will make a man.—
 The world, well-known, will give our hearts to Heav'n,
 Or make us demons, long before we die. 380



To shew how fair the world, thy mistress, shines,
Take either part, sure ills attend the choice;
Sure, tho' not equal, detriment ensues;
Not Virtue's self is deify'd on earth;
Virtue has her relapses, conflicts, foes; 385
Foes that ne'er fail to make her feel their hate.
Virtue has her peculiar set of pains.
True friends to virtue last, and least, complain;
But if they sigh, can others hope to smile?
If Wisdom has her miseries to mourn, 390
How can poor Folly lead a happy life?
And if both suffer, what has earth to boast,
Where he most happy who the least laments?
Where much, much patience, the most envy'd state,
And some forgiveness, needs, the best of friends? 395
For friend, or happy life, who looks not higher,
Of neither shall he find the shadow here.
The world's sworn advocate, without a fee,
Lorenzo smartly, with a smile, replies;
" Thus far thy song is right, and all must own 400
" Virtue has her peculiar set of pains:—
" And joys peculiar who to Vice denies?—
" If vice it is with Nature to comply.
" If pride and sense are so predominant,
" To check, not overcome them, makes a saint. 405
" Can Nature in a plainer voice proclaim
" Pleasure and glory the chief good of man?"
Can pride and sensuality rejoice?



From purity of thought all pleasure springs;
 And from an humble spirit all our peace.
 Ambition, Pleasure! let us talk of these;
 Of these the Porch and Academy talk'd;
 Of these each following age had much to say;
 Yet unexhausted, still, the needful theme.
 Who talks of these, to mankind all at once
 He talks; for where the saint from either free?
 Are these thy refuge?—No; these rush upon thee,
 Thy vitals seize, and, vulture-like, devour:
 I'll try if I can pluck thee from thy rock,
 Prometheus! from this barren ball of earth,
 If reason can unchain thee, thou art free.
 And first, thy Caucasus, Ambition, calls;
 Mountain of torments! eminence of woes!
 Of courted woes! and courted thro' mistake!
 'Tis not ambition charms thee; 'tis a cheat
 Will make thee start, as H—— at his Moor.
 Dost grasp at greatness? first know what it is.
 Think'st thou thy greatness in distinction lies?
 Not in the feather, wave it e'er so high,
 By Fortune stuck, to mark us from the throng,
 Is glory lodg'd: 'tis lodg'd in the reverse;
 In that which joins, in that which equals all,
 The monarch and his slave,—“ a deathless soul,
 “ Unbounded prospect, and immortal kin,
 “ A Father God, and brothers in the skies;”
 Elder, indeed, in time, but less remote



In excellence, perhaps, than thought by man;
Why greater what can fall than what can rise?

If still delirious, now, Lorenzo! go,
And, with thy full-blown brothers of the world, 440
Throw scorn around thee; cast it on thy slaves,
Thy slaves and equals. How scorn cast on them
Rebounds on thee! If man is mean, as man,
Art thou a god? if Fortune makes him so,
Beware the consequence: a maxim that 445
Which draws a monstrous picture of mankind,
Where, in the drapery, the man is lost;
Externals flutt'ring, and the soul forgot.
Thy greatest glory, when dispos'd to boast,
Boast that aloud in which thy servants share. 450

We wisely strip the steed we mean to buy.
Judge we, in their caparisons, of men?
It nought avails thee where, but what, thou art.
All the distinctions of this little life
Are quite cutaneous, foreign to the man. 455
When thro' Death's streights earth's subtle serpents
Which wriggle into wealth, or climb renown, [creep,
As crooked Satan the forbidden tree,
They leave their party-colour'd robe behind,
All that now glitters, while they rear aloft 460
Their brazen crests, and hiss at us below.
Of Fortune's fucus strip them, yet alive,
Strip them of body too; nay, closer still,
Away with all but moral in their minds,



And let what then remains impose their name; 465
 Pronounce them weak or worthy, great or mean.
 How mean that snuff of glory Fortune lights,
 And Death puts out! Dost thou demand a test,
 A test, at once, infallible and short,
 Of real greatness? that man greatly lives; 470
 Whate'er his fate or fame, who greatly dies;
 High-flush'd with hope where heroes shall despair.
 If this a true criterion, many courts,
 Illustrious, might afford but few grandees.

Th' Almighty, from his throne, on earth surveys 475
 Nought greater than an honest, humble heart;
 An humble heart, his residence! pronounce'd
 His second seat, and rival to the skies.
 The private path, the secret acts of men,
 If noble, far the noblest of our lives! 480
 How far above Lorenzo's glory sits
 Th' illustrious master of a name unknown?
 Whose worth unrivall'd, and unwitness'd; loves
 Life's sacred shades, where gods converse with men,
 And peace, beyond the world's conceptions, smiles! 485
 As thou (now dark) before we part shalt see.

But thy great soul this skulking glory scorns:
 Lorenzo's sick, but when Lorenzo's seen;
 And when he shrugs at public bus'ness lies.
 Deny'd the public eye, the public voice, 490
 As if he liv'd on others' breath, he dies.
 Fain would he make the world his pedestal,



Mankind the gazers, the sole figure he.
Knows he that mankind praise against their will,
And mix as much detraction as they can? 495
Knows he that faithless Fame her whisper has,
As well as trumpet? that his vanity
Is so much tickled from not hearing all?
Knows this all-knower that from itch of praise,
Or from an itch more sordid, when he shines, 500
Taking his country by five hundred ears,
Senates at once admire him and despise,
With modest laughter lining loud applause,
Which makes the smile more mortal to his fame?
His fame which, (like the mighty Cæsar) crown'd 505
With laurels, in full senate, greatly falls,
By seeming friends, that honour and destroy.
We rise in glory as we sink in pride.
Where boasting ends, there dignity begins;
And yet, mistaken beyond all mistake, 510
The blind Lorenzo's proud—of being proud,
And dreams himself ascending in his fall.
An eminence, tho' fancy'd, turns the brain;
All vice wants hellebore; but of all vice
Pride loudest calls, and for the largest bowl; 515
Because, unlike all other vice, it flies,
In fact, the point in fancy most pursu'd.
Who court applause oblige the world in this,
They gratify man's passion to refuse.
Superior honour, when assum'd, is lost: 520



Ev'n good men turn banditti, and rejoice;
Like Kouli-Kan, in plunder of the proud.

Tho' somewhat disconcerted, steady still
To the world's cause, with half a face of joy,
Lorenzo cries,—“ Be, then, Ambition cast; 525

“ Ambition's dearer far stands unimpeach'd,

“ Gay Pleasure! proud Ambition is her slave;

“ For her he soars at great, and hazards ill;

“ For her he fights, and bleeds, or overcomes, 529

“ And paves his way, with crowns, to reach her smile.

“ Who can resist her charms?”—Or should? Lorenzo!

What mortal shall resist where angels yield?

Pleasure's the mistress of ethereal powers;

For her contend the rival gods above;

Pleasure's the mistress of the world below, 535

And well it is for man that Pleasure charms;

How would all stagnate but for Pleasure's ray!

How would the frozen stream of action cease!

What is the pulse of this so busy world?

The love of pleasure: that, thro' ev'ry vein, 540

Throws motion, warmth, and shuts out death from life.

Tho' various are the tempers of mankind,

Pleasure's gay family holds all in chains.

Some most affect the black, and some the fair;

Some honest pleasure court, and some obscene. 545

Pleasures obscene are various, as the throng

Of passions that can err in human hearts,

Mistake their objects, or transgress their bounds.



Think you there's but one whoredom? whoredom all,
But when our reason licenses delight. 550
Dost doubt Lorenzo? thou shalt doubt no more.
Thy father chides thy gallantries, yet hugs
An ugly, common, harlot in the dark,
A rank adulterer with others' gold;
And that hag, Vengeance, in a corner charms. 555
Hatred her brothel has, as well as Love,
Where horrid epicures debauch in blood.
Whate'er the motive, Pleasure is the mark:
For her the black assassin draws his sword;
For her dark statesmen trim their midnight lamp, 560
To which no single sacrifice may fall;
For her the saint abstains, the miser starves;
The Stoic proud, for Pleasure, pleasure scorn'd;
For her Affliction's daughters grief indulge,
And find, or hope, a luxury in tears; 565
For her guilt, shame, toil, danger, we defy,
And, with an aim voluptuous, rush on death.
Thus universal her despotic power.

And as her empire wide, her praise is just.
Patron of Pleasure! Doter on delight! 570
I am thy rival; pleasure I profess;
Pleasure the purpose of my gloomy song.
Pleasure is nought but Virtue's gayer name;
I wrong her still, I rate her worth too low:
Virtue the root, and pleasure is the flower; 575
And honest Epicurus' foes were fools.



But this sounds harsh, and gives the wise offence,
 If o'erstrain'd wisdom still retains the name:
 How knits Austerity her cloudy brow,
 And blames, as bold and hazardous, the praise
 Of pleasure, to mankind, unprais'd, too dear!
 Ye modern Stoics! hear my soft reply;
 Their senses men will trust: we can't impose,
 Or, if we could, is imposition right?
 Own honey sweet; but, owning, add this sting,
 "When mix'd with poison it is deadly too."
 Truth never was indebted to a lie.
 Is nought but virtue to be prais'd as good?
 Why then is health preferr'd before disease?
 What Nature loves is good, without our leave;
 And where no future drawback cries, "Beware,"
 Pleasure, tho' not from virtue, should prevail:
 'Tis balm to life, and gratitude to Heav'n.
 How cold our thanks for bounties unenjoy'd!
 The love of Pleasure is man's eldest-born,
 Born in his cradle, living to his tomb;
 Wisdom, her younger sister, tho' more grave,
 Was meant to minister, and not to mar,
 Imperial Pleasure, queen of human hearts.
 Lorenzo! thou, her Majesty's renown'd,
 Tho' uncoif'd counsel, learned in the world!
 Who think'st thyself a Murray, with disdain
 May'st look on me: yet, my Demosthenes!
 Canst thou plead Pleasure's cause as well as I?



Know'st thou her nature, purpose, parentage? 605
Attend my song, and thou shalt know them all;
And know thyself; and know thyself to be
(Strange truth!) the most abstemious man alive.
Tell not Calista, she will laugh thee dead,
Or send thee to her hermitage with L——. 610
Absurd presumption! thou, who never knew'st
A serious thought! shalt thou dare dream of joy?
No man e'er found a happy life by chance,
Or yawn'd it into being with a wish;
Or with the snout of grow'ling Appetite 615
E'er smelt it out, and grubb'd it from the dirt.
An art it is, and must be learn'd; and learn'd
With unremitting effort, or be lost,
And leaves us perfect blockheads in our bliss.
The clouds may drop down titles and estates; 620
Wealth may seek us; but wisdom must be sought;
Sought before all; but (how unlike all else
We seek on earth!) 'tis never sought in vain.

First, Pleasure's birth, rise, strength, and grandeur, see:
Brought forth by Wisdom, nurs'd by Discipline, 625
By Patience taught, by Perseverance crown'd,
She rears her head majestic; round her throne,
Erected in the bosom of the just,
Each virtue, list'd, forms her manly guard.
For what are virtues? (formidable name!) 630
What but the fountain or defence of joy?
Why then commanded? need mankind commands,



At once to merit and to make their bliss?—
 Great Legillator! scarce so great as kind!
 If men are rational, and love delight, 635
 Thy gracious law but flatters human choice:
 In the transgression lies the penalty;
 And they the most indulge who most obey.

Of Pleasure, next, the final cause explore;
 Its mighty purpose, its important end. 640
 Not to turn human brutal, but to build
 Divine on human, Pleasure came from heav'n:
 In aid to reason was the goddess sent,
 To call up all its strength by such a charm.
 Pleasure, first, succours virtue; in return, 645
 Virtue gives Pleasure an eternal reign.
 What but the pleasure of food, friendship, faith,
 Supports life nat'ral, civil, and divine?
 'Tis from the pleasure of repast we live;
 'Tis from the pleasure of applause we please; 650
 'Tis from the pleasure of belief we pray:
 (All pray'r would cease, if unbelov'd the prize)
 It serves ourselves, our species, and our God;
 And to serve more is past the sphere of man.
 Glide, then, for ever, Pleasure's sacred stream! 655
 Thro' Eden, as Euphrates ran, it runs,
 And fosters ev'ry growth of happy life;
 Makes a new Eden where it flows,—but such
 As must be lost, Lorenzo! by thy fall.

“What mean I by thy fall?”—Thou'lt shortly see,



While Pleasure's nature is at large display'd, 661
Already sung her origin and ends. *1*
Those glorious ends by kind, or by degree, *2*
When Pleasure violates, 'tis then a vice, *3*
And vengeance too; it hastens into pain. 665
From due refreshment life, health, reason, joy; *4*
From wild excess pain, grief, distraction, death;
Heav'n's justice this proclaims, and that her love. *5*
What greater evil can I wish my foe, *6*
Than his full draught of pleasure from a cask 670
Unbroach'd by just authority, ungaug'd *7*
By temperance, by reason unrefin'd? *8*
A thousand demons lurk within the lee. *9*
Heav'n, others, and ourselves! uninjur'd these, *10*
Drink deep; the deeper, then, the more divine: 675
Angels are angels from indulgence there. *11*
'Tis unrepenting pleasure makes a god. *12*
Dost think thyself a god from other joys? *13*
A victim rather! shortly sure to bleed. 679
The wrong must mourn. Can Heav'n's appointments
Can man outwit Omnipotence? strike out [fail?
A self-wrought happiness unmeant by him *14*
Who made us, and the world we would enjoy? *15*
Who forms an instrument, ordains from whence
Its dissonance or harmony shall rise. 685
Heav'n bid the soul this mortal frame inspire;
Bid Virtue's ray divine inspire the soul *16*
With unprecipitous flows of vital joy; *17*

And without breathing man as well might hope
For life, as, without piety, for peace. 690

“Is virtue, then, and piety the same?”—
No; piety is more; 'tis virtue's source,
Mother of ev'ry worth, as that of joy.
Men of the world this doctrine ill digest;
They smile at piety, yet boast aloud 695
Good-will to men, nor know they strive to part
What Nature joins, and thus confute themselves.
With piety begins all good on earth;
'Tis the first-born of Rationality.

Conscience, her first law broken, wounded lies; 700
Enfeebled, lifeless, impotent to good,
A feign'd affection bounds her utmost power.
Some we can't love, but for th'Almighty's sake:
A foe to God was ne'er true friend to man.
Some sinister intent taints all he does, 705
And in his kindest actions he's unkind.

On piety humanity is built,
And on humanity much happiness;
And yet still more on piety itself.
A soul in commerce with her God is heav'n, 710
Feels not the tumults and the shocks of life,
The whirls of passions, and the strokes of heart.
A Deity believ'd is joy begun;
A Deity ador'd is joy advanc'd;
A Deity belov'd is joy matur'd. 715
Each branch of piety delight inspires;



Faith builds a bridge from this world to the next,
O'er Death's dark gulf, and all its horror hides :
Praise, the sweet exhalation of our joy,
That joy exalts, and makes it sweeter still :
Pray'r ardent opens heav'n, lets down a stream
Of glory on the consecrated hour
Of man, in audience with the Deity.
Who worships the Great God, that instant joins
The first in heav'n, and sets his foot on hell.

Lorenzo! when wast thou at church before?
Thou think'st the service long: but is it just?
Tho' just, unwelcome. Thou hadst rather tread
Unhallow'd ground: the Muse, to win thine ear,
Must take an air less solemn. She complies
Good Conscience! at the sound the world retires;
Verse disaffects it, and Lorenzo smiles;
Yet has she her seraglio full of charms,
And such as age shall heighten, not impair.
Art thou dejected? is thy mind o'ercast?
Amid her fair ones thou the fairest chuse
To chase thy gloom.—“Go, fix some weighty truth;
“Chain down some passion; do some gen'rous good;
“Teach Ignorance to see, or Grief to smile;
“Correct thy friend; befriend thy greatest foe;
“Or, with warm heart and confidence divine,
“Spring up, and lay strong hold on Him who made
Thy gloom is scatter'd, sprightly spirits flow, [thee.”
Tho' wither'd is thy vine, and harp unstrung.



Dost call the bowl, the viol, and the dance, b 745
 Loud mirth, mad laughter? Wretched comforters!
 Physicians! more than half of thy disease.
 Laughter, tho' never censur'd yet as sin,
 (Pardon a thought that only seems severe)
 Is half-immoral: is it much indulg'd? 750
 By venting spleen, or dissipating thought,
 It shews a scorner, or it makes a fool;
 And sins, as hurting others, or ourselves.
 'Tis pride, or emptiness, applies the straw
 That tickles little minds to mirth effuse; 755
 Of grief approaching the portentous sign!
 The house of laughter makes a house of woe.
 A man triumphant is a monstrous sight;
 A man dejected is a sight as mean.
 What cause for triumph where such ills abound? 760
 What for dejection where presides a power?
 Who call'd us into being to be blest?
 So griev'd, as conscious grief may rise to joy;
 So joy, as conscious joy to grief may fall.
 Most true a wise man never will be sad; 765
 But neither will sonorous, bubbling mirth,
 A shallow stream of happiness betray;
 Too happy to be sportive, he's serene.
 Yet wouldst thou laugh (but at thy own expense).
 This counsel strange should I presume to give— 770
 "Retire, and read thy Bible, to be gay."
 There truths abound of sov'reign aid to peace:



Ah! do not prize them less because inspir'd,
As thou and thine are apt and proud to do.
If not inspir'd, that pregnant page had stood, 775
Time's treasure! and the wonder of the wise!
Thou think'st, perhaps, thy soul alone at stake:
Alas!—should men mistake thee for a fool;—
What man of taste for genius, wisdom, truth,
'Tho' tender of thy fame, could interpose? 780
Believe me sense, here, acts a double part,
And the true critic is a Christian too.

But these, thou think'st, are gloomy paths to joy.
True joy in sunshine ne'er was found at first.
They first themselves offend who greatly please, 785
And travel only gives us sound repose.
Heav'n sells all pleasure; effort is the price.
The joys of conquest are the joys of man;
And Glory the victorious laurel spreads
O'er Pleasure's pure, perpetual, placid stream. 790

There is a time when toil must be preferr'd,
Or joy, by mistim'd fondness, is undone.
A man of pleasure is a man of pains.
'Thou wilt not take the trouble to be bless'd.
False joys, indeed, are born from want of thought;
From thought's full bent and energy the true; 796
And that demands a mind in equal poize,
Remote from gloomy grief and glaring joy.
Much joy not only speaks small happiness,
But happiness that shortly must expire. 800



Can joy, unbottom'd in reflection, stand ?
 And, in a tempest, can reflection live ?
 Can joy, like thine, secure itself an hour ?
 Can joy, like thine, meet accident unshock'd ?
 Or ope the door to honest poverty ?
 Or talk with threat'ning Death, and not turn pale ?
 In such a world, and such a nature, these
 Are needful fundamentals of delight :
 These fundamentals give delight indeed ;
 Delight pure, delicate, and durable ;
 Delight unshaken, masculine, divine ;
 A constant and a sound, but serious joy.

Is Joy the daughter of Severity ?
 It is :—yet far my doctrine from severe.
 “ Rejoice for ever : ” it becomes a man ;
 Exalts, and sets him nearer to the gods.
 “ Rejoice for ever,” Nature cries ; “ Rejoice,”
 And drinks to man in her nectareous cup,
 Mix'd up of delicacies for ev'ry sense ;
 To the great Founder of the bounteous feast
 Drinks glory, gratitude, eternal praise ;
 And he that will not pledge her is a churl.
 Ill firmly to support, good fully taste,
 Is the whole science of felicity :
 Yet sparing pledge ; her bowl is not the best
 Mankind can boast.—“ A rational repast,
 “ Exertion, vigilance, a mind in arms,
 “ A military discipline of thought,



" To foil temptation in the doubtful field;
" And ever-waking ardour for the right." 830
'Tis these first give, then guard, a cheerful heart:
Nought that is right think little, well aware
What Reason bids; God bids; by his command
How aggrandiz'd the smallest thing we do!
Thus nothing is insipid to the wise; 835
To thee insipid all but what is mad;
Joys season'd high, and tasting strong of guilt.
" Mad! (thou reply'st, with indignation fir'd)
" Of ancient sages proud to tread the steps,
" I follow Nature."—Follow Nature still, 840
But look it be thine own: Is Conscience, then,
No part of Nature? is she not supreme?
Thou regicide! O raise her from the dead!
Then follow Nature, and resemble God.
When, spite of conscience, pleasure is pursu'd; 845
Man's nature is unnaturally pleas'd;
And what's unnatural is painful too
At intervals, and must disgust ev'n thee!
The fact thou know'st; but not, perhaps, the cause.
Virtue's foundations with the world's were laid: 850
Heav'n mix'd her with our make, and twisted close
Her sacred int'rests with the strings of life:
Who breaks her awful mandate shocks himself,
His better self: and is it greater pain
Our soul should murmur, or our dust repine? 855
And one, in their eternal war, must bleed.



If one must suffer, which should least be spar'd?
 The pains of mind surpass the pains of sense:
 Ask, then, the Gout, what torment is in guilt.
 The joys of sense to mental joys are mean: 860
 Sense on the present only feeds; the soul
 On past and future forages for joy:
 'Tis her's, by retrospect, thro' time to range,
 And forward time's great sequel to survey.
 Could human courts take vengeance on the mind,
 Axes might rust, and racks and gibbets fall. 866
 Guard then thy mind, and leave the rest to Fate.

Lorenzo! wilt thou never be a man?
 The man is dead who for the body lives,
 Lur'd by the beating of his pulse, to list 870
 With ev'ry lust that wars against his peace,
 And sets him quite at variance with himself.
 Thyself first know, then love: a self there is,
 Of virtue fond, that kindles at her charms:
 A self there is as fond of ev'ry vice, 875
 While ev'ry virtue wounds it to the heart;
 Humility degrades it, Justice robs,
 Bless'd Bounty beggars it, fair Truth betrays,
 And godlike Magnanimity destroys.
 This self, when rival to the former, scorn; 880
 When not in competition, kindly treat,
 Defend it, feed it:—but when Virtue bids,
 Toss it or to the fowls or to the flames.
 And why? 'tis love of pleasure bids thee bleed:



Comply, or own self-love extinct, or blind: 885

For what is vice? Self-love in a mistake:

A poor blind merchant buying joys too dear:

And virtue what? 'Tis Self-love in her wits;

Quite skilful in the market of delight.

Self-love's good sense is love of that dread power

From whom herself, and all she can enjoy. 891

Other self-love is but disguis'd self-hate,

More mortal than the malice of our foes;

A self-hate now scarce felt, then felt full sore,

When being curs'd, extinction loud-implor'd, 895

And ev'ry thing prefer'd to what we are.

Yet this self-love Lorenzo makes his choice,

And, in this choice triumphant, boasts of joy.

How is his want of happiness betray'd

By disaffection to the present hour! 900

Imagination wanders far a-field;

The future pleases: why? the present pains.—

“But that's a secret.”—Yes, which all men know,

And know from thee, discover'd unawares.

Thy ceaseless agitation, restless roll, 905

From cheat to cheat, impatient of a pause,

What is it?—'Tis the cradle of the soul,

From Instinct sent, to rock her in disense,

Which her physician, Reason, will not cure.

A poor expedient! yet thy best; and while 910

It mitigates thy pain, it owns it too.

Such are Lorenzo's wretched remedies!



The weak have remedies; the wise have joys.
Superior wisdom is superior bliss.
And what sure mark distinguishes the wise?
Consistent wisdom ever will the same;
Thy fickle wish is ever on the wing.
Sick of herself is Folly's character,
As Wisdom's is a modest self-applause.
A change of evils is thy good supreme,
Nor but in motion canst thou find thy rest.
Man's greatest strength is shewn in standing still.
The first sure symptom of a mind in health
Is rest of heart, and pleasure felt at home.
False Pleasure from abroad her joys imports;
Rich from within, and self-sustain'd, the true.
The true is fix'd and solid as a rock;
Slipp'ry the false, and tossing, as the wave.
This a wild wanderer on earth, like Cain;
That like the fabled, self-enamour'd boy,
Home-contemplation her supreme delight:
She dreads an interruption from without,
Smit with her own condition, and the more
Intense she gazes, still it charms the more.
No man is happy till he thinks on earth
There breathes not a more happy than himself:
Then envy dies, and love o'erflows on all;
And love o'erflowing makes an angel here.
Such angels all entitled to repose
On him who governs Fate. Tho' tempest frowns,



Tho' Nature shakes, how soft to lean on Heav'n!
To lean on him on whom archangels lean!
With inward eyes, and silent as the grave,
They stand collecting ev'ry beam of thought,
Till their hearts kindle with divine delight; 945
For all their thoughts, like angels, seen of old
In Israel's dream, come from, and go to heav'n;
Hence are they studious of sequester'd scenes,
While noise and dissipation comfort thee.

Were all men happy revellings would cease, 950
That opiate for inquietude within.
Lorenzo! never man was truly blest'd,
But it compos'd and gave him such a cast,
As Folly might mistake for want of joy:
A cast unlike the triumph of the proud; 955
A modest aspect, and a smile at heart.
O for a joy from thy Philander's spring!
A spring perennial, rising in the breast,
And permanent as pure! no turbid stream
Of rapt'rous exultation, swelling high, 960
Which, like land-floods, impetuous pour a while,
Then sink at once, and leave us in the mire.
What does the man who transient joy prefers?
What but prefer the bubbles to the stream?

Vain are all sudden sallies of delight, 965
Convulsions of a weak distemper'd joy.
Joy's a fix'd state; a tenure, not a start.
Bliss there is none but unprecious bliss;



That is the gem: sell all, and purchase that.
Why go a-begging to contingencies, 976
Not gain'd with ease, nor safely lov'd, if gain'd?
At good fortuitous draw back, and pause;
Suspect it; what thou canst ensure, enjoy;
And nought but what thou giv'st thyself is sure.
Reason perpetuates joy that reason gives, 975
And makes it as immortal as herself:
To mortals nought immortal but their worth.

Worth, conscious Worth! should absolutely reign,
And other joys ask leave for their approach,
Nor unexamined ever leave obtain. 980
Thou art all anarchy; a mob of joys
Wage war, and perish in intestine broils;
Not the least promise of internal peace!
No bosom-comfort! or unborrow'd bliss!
Thy thoughts are vagabonds; all outward-bound 985
'Mid sands, and rocks, and storms, to cruise for pleasure;
If gain'd, dear-bought; and better miss'd than gain'd.
Much pain must expiate what much pain procur'd.
Fancy and sense, from an infected shore,
Thy cargo bring, and pestilence the prize. 990
Then such thy thirst, (insatiable thirst
By fond indulgence but inflam'd the more)
Fancy still cruises, when poor Sense is tir'd.

Imagination is the Paphian shop
Where feeble Happiness, like Vulcan, lame, 995
Bids foul ideas, in their dark recess,



And hot as hell (which kindled the black fires)
With wanton art those fatal arrows form,
Which murder all thy time, health, wealth, and fame.
Wouldst thou receive them, other thoughts there are
On angel-wing, descending from above,
Which these, with art divine, would counter-work,
And form celestial armour for thy peace.

In this is seen Imagination's guilt,
But who can count her follies? she betrays thee,
'To think in grandeur there is something great.
For works of curious art, and ancient fame,
'Thy genius hungers, elegantly pain'd,
And foreign climes must cater for thy taste.
Hence what disaster!—Tho' the price was paid,
'That persecuting priest, the Turk of Rome,
Whose foot, (ye Gods!) tho' cloven, must be kiss'd,
Detain'd thy dinner on the Latian shore;
(Such is the fate of honest Protestants!)
And poor Magnificence is starv'd to death.
Hence just resentment, indignation, ire!—
Be pacify'd; if outward things are great,
'Tis magnanimity great things to scorn;
Pompous expenses, and parades august,
And courts, that insalubrious soil to peace.
True happiness ne'er enter'd at an eye;
True happiness resides in things unseen.
No smiles of Fortune ever blest'd the bad,
Nor can her frowns rob Innocence of joys;



That jewel wanting, triple crowns are poor: 1025
So tell his Holiness, and be reveng'd.

Pleasure, we both agree, is man's chief good;
Our only contest what deserves the name.
Give Pleasure's name to nought but what has pass'd
Th' authentic seal of Reason (which, like Yorke, 1030
Demurrs on what it passes) and defies
The tooth of Time; when past, a pleasure still;
Dearer on trial, lovelier for its age,
And doubly to be priz'd, as it promotes
Our future, while it forms our present joy. 1035
Some joys the future overcast, and some
Throw all their beams that way, and gild the tomb.
Some joys endear eternity; some give
Abhor'd Annihilation dreadful charms.
Are rival joys contending for thy choice? 1040
Consult thy whole existence, and be safe;
That oracle will put all doubt to flight.
Short is the lesson, tho' my lecture long;
Be good—and let Heav'n answer for the rest.

Yet, with a sigh o'er all mankind, I grant, 1045
In this our day of proof, our land of hope,
The good man has his clouds that intervene;
Clouds that obscure his sublunary day,
But never conquer: ev'n the best must own,
Patience and resignation are the pillars 1050
Of human peace on earth: the pillars these,
But those of Seth not more remote from thee,



Till this heroic lesson thou hast learn'd,
To frown at pleasure, and to smile in pain.
Fir'd at the prospect of unclouded bliss,
Heav'n in reversion, like the sun, as yet
Beneath th' horizon, cheers us in this world ;
It sheds, on souls susceptible of light,
The glorious dawn of our eternal day.

“ This (says Lorenzo) is a fair harangue ;
“ But can harangues blow back strong Nature's stream,
“ Or stem the tide Heav'n pushes thro' our veins,
“ Which sweeps away man's impotent resolves,
“ And lays his labour level with the world ? ”
Themselves men make their comment on mankind,
And think nought is but what they find at home :
Thus weakness to chimera turns the truth.
Nothing romantic has the Muse prescrib'd :
Above *, Lorenzo saw the man of earth,
The mortal man, and wretched was the sight.
To balance that, to comfort and exalt,
Now see the man immortal ; him, I mean,
Who lives as such ; whose heart, full-bent on heav'n,
Leans all that way, his bias to the stars.
The world's dark shades, in contrast set, shall raise
His lustre more, tho' bright, without a foil :
Observe his awful portrait, and admire ;
Nor stop at wonder ; imitate, and live.

Some angel guide my pencil, while I draw,
What nothing less than angel can exceed,

A man on earth devoted to the skies;
Like ships in seas, while in, above the world.

With aspect mild, and elevated eye,
Behold him seated on a mount serene,
Above the fogs of sense, and passion's storm; 1085
All the black cares and tumults of this life,
Like harmless thunders, breaking at his feet,
Excite his pity, not impair his peace.

Earth's genuine sons, the sceptred and the slave,
A mingled mob! a wand'ring herd! he sees, 1090
Bewilder'd in the vale; in all unlike!

His full reverse in all! what higher praise?
What stronger demonstration of the right?

The present all their care, the future his.
When public welfare calls, or private want, 1095
They give to Fame; his bounty he conceals.
Their virtues varnish Nature, his exalt.

Mankind's esteem they court, and he his own.
Theirs the wild chase of false felicities;
His the compos'd possession of the true. 1100

Alike throughout is his consistent peace,
All of one colour, and an even thread;
While party-colour'd shreds of happiness,
With hideous gaps between, patch up for them
A madman's robe; each puff of Fortune blows 1105
The tatters by, and shews their nakedness.

He sees with other eyes than theirs: where they
Behold a fun, he spies a Deity.

Volume II.

I



What makes them only smile, makes him adore.
Where they see mountains, he but atoms sees. II10
An empire, in his balance, weighs a grain.
They things terrestrial worship as divine;
His hopes, immortal, blow them by as dust
That dims his sight, and shortens his survey,
Which longs, in infinite, to lose all bound. II15
Titles and honours (if they prove his fate)
He lays aside to find his dignity;
No dignity they find in aught besides.
They triumph in externals, (which conceal
Man's real glory) proud of an eclipse: II20
Himself too much he prizes to be proud,
And nothing thinks so great in man as man.
Too dear he holds his int'rest to neglect
Another's welfare, or his right invade;
Their int'rest, like a lion, lives on prey. II25
They kindle at the shadow of a wrong;
Wrong he sustains with temper, looks on Heav'n,
Nor stoops to think his injurer his foe.
Nought but what wounds his virtue wounds his peace.
A cover'd heart their character defends; II30
A cover'd heart denies him half his praise.
With nakedness his innocence agrees,
While their broad foliage testifies their fall.
Their no-joys end where his full feast begins;
His joys create, theirs murder, future bliss. II35
'To triumph in existence his alone;



And his alone triumphantly to think
 His true existence is not yet begun.
 His glorious course was, yesterday, complete;
 Death then was welcome; yet life still is sweet. 1140

But nothing charms Lorenzo like the firm,
 Undaunted breast.—And whose is that high praise?
 They yield to pleasure, tho' they danger brave,
 And shew no fortitude but in the field;
 If there they shew it, 'tis for glory shewn, 1145
 Nor will that cordial always man their hearts.

A cordial his sustains that cannot fail:
 By pleasure unsubdu'd, unbroke by pain,
 He shares in that Omnipotence he trusts;
 All-bearing, all-attempting, till he falls, 1150
 And when he falls writes *Vici* on his shield.
 From magnanimity all fear above;
 From nobler recompense above applause,
 Which owes to man's short outlook all its charms.

Backward to credit what he never felt, 1155
 Lorenzo cries,—“Where shines this miracle?
 “From what root rises this immortal man?”
 A root that grows not in Lorenzo's ground:
 The root dissect, nor wonder at the flower.

He follows Nature (not like thee *) and shews us
 An uninverted system of a man. 1165
 His appetite wears Reason's golden chain,
 And finds, in due restraint, its luxury.

* See Night the Eighth, ver. 838.



His passion, like an eagle well-reclaim'd,
Is taught to fly at nought but infinite. 1165
Patient his hope, unanxious is his care,
His caution fearless, and his grief (if grief
The gods ordain) a stranger to despair.
And why?—because affection, more than meet,
His wisdom leaves not disengag'd from heav'n. 1170
Those secondary goods that smile on earth
He, loving in proportion, loves in peace.
They most the world enjoy who least admire.
His understanding 'scapes the common cloud
Of fumes arising from a boiling breast. 1175
His head is clear, because his heart is cool,
By worldly competitions uninflam'd.
The mod'rate movements of his soul admit
Distinct ideas, and matur'd debate,
An eye impartial, and an even scale; 1180
Whence judgment sound, and unrepenting choice.
Thus, in a double sense, the good are wise;
On its own dunghill wiser than the world.
What, then, the world? it must be doubly weak.
Strange truth! as soon would they believe their creed.
Yet thus it is, nor otherwise can be, 1185
So far from aught romantic what I sing.
Bliss has no being, virtue has no strength,
But from the prospect of immortal life.
Who think earth all, or (what weighs just the same)
Who care no farther, must prize what it yields, 1191



Fond of its fancies, proud of its parades.
Who thinks earth nothing can't its charms admire;
He can't a foe, tho' most malignant, hate,
Because that hate would prove his greater foe. 1195
'Tis hard for them (yet who so loudly boast
Good-will to men?) to love their dearest friend;
For may not he invade their good supreme,
Where the least jealousy turns love to gall?
All shines to them, that for a season shines: 1200
Each act, each thought, he questions; "What its weight,
" Its colour what, a thousand ages hence?"——
And what it there appears he deems it now;
Hence pure are the recesses of his soul.
The godlike man has nothing to conceal; 1205
His virtue, constitutionally deep,
Has Habit's firmness, and Affection's flame:
Angels, ally'd, descend to feed the fire,
And death, which others slays, makes him a god.

And now, Lorenzo! bigot of this world! 1210
Wont to disdain poor bigots caught by Heav'n!
Stand by thy scorn, and be reduc'd to nought!
For what art thou?—Thou Boaster! while thy glare,
Thy gaudy grandeur, and mere worldly worth,
Like a broad mist, at distance, strikes us most, 1215
And, like a mist, is nothing when at hand;
His merit, like a mountain, on approach,
Swells more, and rises nearer to the skies,
By promise now, and by possession, soon



(Too soon, too much, it cannot be) his own. 1220

From this thy just annihilation rise,

Lorenzo! rise to something, by reply.

The world, thy client, listens, and expects,

And longs to crown thee with immortal praise.

Canst thou be silent? no; for wit is thine, 1225

And Wit talks most when least she has to say,

And Reason interrupts not her career.

She'll say—That mists above the mountains rise,

And with a thousand pleasantries amuse;

She'll sparkle, puzzle, flutter, raise a dust, 1230

And fly conviction in the dust she rais'd.

Wit, how delicious to man's dainty taste!

'Tis precious as the vehicle of sense,

But as its substitute a dire disease.

Pernicious talent! flatter'd by the world, 1235

By the blind world, which thinks the talent rare.

Wisdom is rare, Lorenzo! wit abounds;

Passion can give it; sometimes wine inspires

The lucky flash; and madness rarely fails.

Whatever cause the spirit strongly stirs, 1240

Confers the bays, and rivals thy renown.

For thy renown 'twere well was this the worst;

Chance often hits it; and, to pique thee more,

See Dulness, blund'ring on vivacities,

Shakes her sage head at the calamity 1245

Which has expos'd, and let her down to thee.

But wisdom, awful Wisdom! which inspects,



Discerns, compares, weighs, separates, infers,
Seizes the right, and holds it to the last,
How rare! in senates, synods, fought in vain; 1250
Or if there found, 'tis sacred to the few;
While a lewd prostitute to multitudes,
Frequent as fatal, Wit. In civil life
Wit makes an enterpriser, sense a man.
Wit hates authority, commotion loves, 1255
And thinks herself the lightning of the storm.
In states 'tis dang'rous; in religion death.
Shall Wit turn Christian when the dull believe?
Sense is our helmet, wit is but the plume;
The plume exposes, 'tis our helmet saves. 1260
Sense is the di'mond, weighty, solid, sound;
When cut by wit it casts a brighter beam;
Yet wit apart, it is a diamond still.
Wit, widow'd of good sense, is worse than nought;
It hoists more sail to run against a rock. 1265
Thus a half-Chesterfield is quite a fool,
Whom dull fools scorn, and bless their want of wit.

How ruinous the rock I warn thee shun,
Where Sirens sit to sing thee to thy fate!
A joy in which our reason bears no part, 1270
Is but a sorrow, tickling ere it stings.
Let not the cooings of the world allure thee;
Which of her lovers ever found her true?
Happy! of this bad world who little know:—
And yet we much must know her to be safe. 1275



To know the world, not love her, is thy point;
She gives but little, nor that little long.
There is, I grant, a triumph of the pulse,
A dance of spirits, a mere froth of joy,
Our thoughtless agitation's idle child, 1280
That mantles high, that sparkles, and expires,
Leaving the soul more vapid than before;
An animal ovation! such as holds
No commerce with our reason, but subsists
On juices, thro' the well-ton'd tubes well strain'd;
A nice machine! scarce ever tun'd aright; 1286
And when it jars—thy Sirens sing no more;
Thy dance is done; the demi-god is thrown
(Short apotheosis!) beneath the man,
In coward gloom immers'd, or fell despair. 1290
Art thou yet dull enough despair to dread,
And startle at destruction? if thou art,
Accept a buckler, take it to the field;
(A field of battle is this mortal life!)
When danger threatens, lay it on thy heart, 1295
A single sentence proof against the world.
"Soul, body, fortune! every good pertains
"To one of these; but prize not all alike;
"The goods of Fortune to thy body's health,
"Body to soul, and soul submit to God." 1300
Wouldst thou build lasting happiness? do this:
Th' inverted pyramid can never stand.
Is this truth doubtful? it outshines the sun;



Nay, the sun shines not but to shew us this,
 The single lesson of mankind on earth: 1305
 And yet—yet what? No news! mankind is mad;
 Such mighty numbers list against the right,
 (And what can't numbers, when bewitch'd, achieve!)
 They talk themselves to something like belief
 That all earth's joys are theirs: as Athens' fool
 Grinn'd from the port on ev'ry sail his own. 1311

They grin, but wherefore? and how long the laugh?
 Half ignorance their mirth, and half a lie.
 To cheat the world, and cheat themselves, they smile:
 Hard either task! the most abandon'd own 1315
 That others, if abandon'd, are undone:
 Then for themselves, the moment Reason wakes,
 (And Providence denies it long repose)
 O how laborious is their gaiety!
 They scarce can swallow their ebullient spleen, 1320
 Scarce muster patience to support the farce,
 And pump sad laughter till the curtain falls.
 Scarce, did I say? some cannot sit it out;
 Oft' their own daring hands the curtain draw,
 And shew us what their joy by their despair. 1325

The clotted hair! gor'd breast! blaspheming eye!
 Its impious fury still alive in death!
 Shut, shut the shocking scene.—But Heav'n denies
 A cover to such guilt, and so should man.
 Look round, Lorenzo! see the reeking blade, 1330
 Th' envenom'd phial, and the fatal ball;
 The strangling cord, and suffocating stream;



The loathsome rottenness, and foul decays,
From raging riot (slower suicides!)
And pride in these, more execrable still! 1335
How horrid all to thought!—but horrors, these,
That vouch the truth, and aid my feeble song.

From vice, sense, fancy, no man can be blest'd:
Bliss is too great to lodge within an hour:
When an immortal being aims at bliss, 1340
Duration is essential to the name.
O for a joy from reason! joy from that
Which makes man man, and, exercis'd aright,
Will make him more: a bounteous joy! that gives
And promises; that weaves, with art divine, 1345
The richest prospect into present peace:
A joy ambitious! joy in common held
With thrones ethereal, and their greater far:
A joy high-privileg'd from chance, time, death!
A joy which death shall double, judgment crown!
Crown'd higher, and still higher, at each stage, 1351
Thro' blest'd eternity's long day, yet still
Not more remote from sorrow than from him
Whose lavish hand, whose love stupendous, pours
So much of Deity on guilty dust. 1355
There, O my Lucia! may I meet thee there,
Where not thy presence can improve my bliss!

Affects not this the sages of the world?
Can nought affect them, but what fools them too?
Eternity depending on an hour, 1360
Makes serious thought man's wisdom, joy, and praise.



Nor need you blush (tho' sometimes your designs
May shun the light) at your designs on heaven;
Sole point! where overbashful is your blame. 1364
Are you not wise?—you know you are: yet hear
One truth, amid your num'rous schemes mislaid,
Or overlook'd, or thrown aside, if seen;
“ Our schemes to plan by this world or the next,
“ Is the sole difference between wise and fool.”
All worthy men will weigh you in this scale; 1370
What wonder, then, if they pronounce you light?
Is their esteem alone not worth your care?
Accept my simple scheme of common sense,
Thus, save your fame, and make two worlds your own.

The world replies not;—but the world persists,
And puts the cause off to the longest day, 1376
Planning evasions for the day of doom:
So far, at that rehearing, from redress,
They then turn witnesses against themselves.
Hear that, Lorenzo! nor be wise to-morrow. 1380
Haste, haste! a man, by nature, is in haste;
For who shall answer for another hour?
'Tis highly prudent to make one sure friend,
And that thou canst not do this side the skies.

Ye sons of Earth! (nor willing to be more!) 1385
Since verse you think from priestcraft somewhat free,
Thus, in an age so gay, the Muse plain truths
(Truths which, at church, you might have heard in prose)
Has ventur'd into light, well-pleas'd the verse
Should be forgot, if you the truths retain, 1390



And crown her with your welfare, not your praise.
But praise she need not fear : I see my fate,
And headlong leap, like Curtius, down the gulf.
Since many an ample volume, mighty tome,
Must die, and die unwept ; O thou minute, 1395
Devoted page ! go forth among thy foes ;
Go, nobly proud of martyrdom for truth,
And die a double death : mankind, incens'd,
Denies thee long to live ; nor shalt thou rest
When thou art dead, in Stygian shades arraign'd
By Lucifer, as traitor to his throne, 1401
And bold blasphemer of his friend,—the World ;
The world, whose legions cost him slender pay,
And volunteers around his banner swarm,
Prudent as Prussia in her zeal for Gaul. 1405
“ Are all, then, fools ? ” Lorenzo cries.—Yes, all
But such as hold this doctrine, (new to thee)
“ The mother of true wisdom is the will,”
The noblest intellect a fool without it.
World-wisdom much has done, and more may do,
In arts and sciences, in wars and peace ; 1411
But art and science, like thy wealth, will leave thee,
And make thee twice a beggar at thy death.
This is the most indulgence can afford,—
“ Thy wisdom all can do but—make thee wise.”
Nor think this censure is severe on thee ;
Satan, thy master, I dare call a dunce. 1417

End of Night Eighth.

THE CONSOLATION.

NIGHT IX. AND LAST.

Containing, among other things,

I. A MORAL SURVEY OF THE NOCTURNAL HEAVENS.

II. A NIGHT-ADDRESS TO THE DEITY.

Humbly inscribed to

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE,

One of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State.

-----Fatis contraria fata rependens.

Virg.

As when a traveller, a long day past
In painful search of what he cannot find,
At night's approach, content with the next cot,
There ruminates a while his labour lost,
Then cheers his heart with what his fate affords, 5
And chants his sonnet to deceive the time,
Till the due season calls him to repose;
Thus I, long-travell'd in the ways of men,
And dancing, with the rest, the giddy maze,
Where Disappointment smiles at Hope's career, 10
Warn'd by the languor of life's evening ray,
At length have hous'd me in an humble shed,
Where, future wand'ring banish'd from my thought,
And waiting, patient, the sweet hour of rest,

Volume II.

K



I chase the moments with a serious song. 15
Song fooths our pains, and age has pains to footh.

When age, care, crime, and friends, embrac'd at
heart,

Torn from my bleeding breast, and death's dark shade,
Which hovers o'er me, quench th' ethereal fire,
Canst thou, O Night! indulge one labour more? 20
One labour more indulge! then sleep, my Strain!
Till, haply, wak'd by Raphael's golden lyre,
Where night, death, age, care, crime, and sorrow,
To bear a part in everlasting lays; [cease,
Tho' far, far higher set, in aim, I trust, 25
Symphonious to this humble prelude here.

Has not the Muse asserted pleasures pure,
Like those above, exploding other joys?
Weigh what was urg'd, Lorenzo! fairly weigh,
And tell me, hast thou cause to triumph still? 30
I think thou wilt forbear a boast so bold:
But if, beneath the favour of mistake,
Thy smiles sincere, not more sincere can be
Lorenzo's smile, than my compassion for him.
The sick in body call for aid; the sick 35
In mind are covetous of more disease,
And when at worst, they dream themselves quite well.
To know ourselves diseas'd is half our cure.
When Nature's blush by custom is wip'd off,
And conscience, deaden'd by repeated strokes, 40
Has into manners naturaliz'd our crimes,



The curse of curses is our curse to love,
To triumph in the blackness of our guilt,
(As Indians glory in the deepest jet)
And throw aside our senses with our peace. 45

But grant no guilt, no shame, no least alloy;
Grant joy and glory quite unfully'd shone;
Yet, still, it ill deserves Lorenzo's heart.
No joy, no glory, glitters in thy sight,
But, thro' the thin partition of an hour, 50
I see its fables wove by Destiny,
And that in sorrow bury'd, this in shame,
While howling furies ring the doleful knell,
And Conscience, now so soft thou scarce canst hear
Her whisper, echoes her eternal peal. 55

Where the prime actors of the last year's scene,
Their port so proud, their buskin, and their plume?
How many sleep, who kept the world awake
With lustre and with noise! Has Death proclaim'd
A truce, and hung his fated lance on high? 60
'Tis brandish'd still, nor shall the present year
Be more tenacious of her human leaf,
Or spread, of feeble life, a thinner fall.

But needless monuments to wake the thought;
Life's gayest scenes speak man's mortality, 65
Tho' in a style more florid, full as plain
As mausoleums, pyramids, and tombs.
What are our noblest ornaments, but Deaths
Turn'd flatterers of Life in paint or marble.



The well-stain'd canvass, or the featur'd stone? 70
Our fathers grace, or rather haunt, the scene.
Joy peoples her pavilion from the dead.

“Profess’d diversions! cannot these escape?”—
Far from it: these present us with a shroud,
And talk of death, like garlands o’er a grave. 75
As some bold plunderers for bury’d wealth,
We ransack tombs for pastime; from the dust
Call up the sleeping hero; bid him tread
The scene for our amusement. How like gods
We sit, and, wrapt in immortality, 80
Shed gen’rous tears on wretches born to die,
Their fate deploring, to forget our own!

What all the pomps and triumphs of our lives
But legacies in blossom? Our lean soil,
Luxuriant grown, and rank in vanities, 85
From friends interr’d beneath, a rich manure!
Like other worms, we banquet on the dead;
Like other worms, shall we crawl on, nor know
Our present frailties or approaching fate?

Lorenzo! such the glories of the world! 90
What is the world itself? Thy world—a grave.
Where is the dust that has not been alive?
The spade, the plough, disturb our ancestors.
From human mould we reap our daily bread.
The globe around earth’s hollow surface shakes, 95
And is the cieling of her sleeping sons.
O’er devastation we blind revels keep;



Whole bury'd towns support the dancer's heel.
The moist of human frame the sun exhales;
Winds scatter thro' the mighty void the dry :
Earth repossesses part of what she gave,
And the freed spirit mounts on wings of fire :
Each element partakes our scatter'd spoils.
As Nature wide our ruins spread. Man's death
Inhabits all things but the thought of man.

Nor man alone; his breathing bust expires;
His tomb is mortal : empires die : where, now,
The Roman ? Greek ? they stalk, an empty name !
Yet few regard them in this useful light,
'Tho' half our learning is their epitaph.
When down thy vale, unlock'd by midnight thought,
That loves to wander in thy sunless realms,
O Death ! I stretch my view, what visions rise !
What triumphs ! toils imperial ! arts divine !
In wither'd laurels glide before my sight !
What lengths of far-fam'd ages, billow'd high
With human agitation, roll along
In unsubstantial images of air !
The melancholy ghosts of dead Renown,
Whisp'ring faint echoes of the world's applause,
With penitential aspect, as they pass,
All point at earth, and hiss at human pride,
The wisdom of the wise, and prancings of the great.

But, O Lorenzo ! far the rest above,
Of ghastly nature, and enormous size,

One form assaults my sight, and chills my blood,
And shakes my frame. Of one departed World
I see the mighty shadow: oozy wreath
And dismal sea-weed crown her: o'er her urn
Reclin'd, she weeps her desolated realms, 130
And bloated sons, and, weeping, prophecies
Another's dissolution, soon, in flames:
But, like Cassandra, prophecies in vain;
In vain to many; not, I trust, to thee.

For, know'st thou not, or art thou loath to know,
The great decree, the counsel of the Skies? 136
Deluge and Conflagration, dreadful powers!
Prime ministers of vengeance! chain'd in caves
Distinct, apart, the giant furies roar;
Apart, or such their horrid rage for ruin, 140
In mutual conflict would they rise, and wage
Eternal war, till one was quite devour'd.
But not for this ordain'd their boundless rage.
When Heav'n's inferior instruments of wrath,
War, famine, pestilence, are found too weak 145
To scourge a world for her enormous crimes,
These are let loose alternate: down they rush,
Swift and tempestuous, from th' eternal throne,
With irresistible commission arm'd,
The world, in vain corrected, to destroy, 150
And ease creation of the shocking scene.

Seest thou, Lorenzo! what depends on man?
The fate of Nature, as for man her birth.



Earth's actors change earth's transitory scenes,
And make creation groan with human guilt. 155
How must it groan, in a new deluge whelm'd,
But not of waters! At the destin'd hour,
By the loud trumpet summon'd to the charge,
See all the formidable sons of fire,
Eruptions, earthquakes, comets, lightnings, play 160
Their various engines; all at once disgorge
Their blazing magazines, and take, by storm,
This poor terrestrial-citadel of man.

Amazing period! when each mountain-height
Outburns Vesuvius; rocks eternal pour 165
Their melted mass, as rivers once they pour'd;
Stars rush, and final Ruin fiercely drives
Her ploughshare o'er creation!—while aloft,
More than astonishment! if more can be!
Far other firmament than e'er was seen, 170
Than e'er was thought by man! far other stars!
Stars animate, that govern these of fire;
Far other sun!—a sun, O how unlike
The Babe at Bethle'm! how unlike the Man
That groan'd on Calvary!—yet he it is; 175
That Man of sorrows! O how chang'd! what pomp!
In grandeur terrible all heav'n descends!
And gods, ambitious, triumph in his train.
A swift archangel, with his golden wing,
As blots and clouds that darken and disgrace 180
The scene divine, sweeps stars and suns aside,



And now, all dross remov'd, heav'n's own pure day,
Fall on the confines of our ether flames,
While (dreadful contrast!) far, how far beneath!
Hell, bursting, belches forth her blazing seas, 185
And storms sulphureous, her voracious jaws
Expanding wide, and roaring for her prey.
Lorenzo! welcome to this scene, the last
In Nature's course, the first in Wisdom's thought.
This strikes, if aught can strike thee; this awakes 190
The most supine; this snatches man from death.
Rouse, rouse, Lorenzo! then, and follow me,
Where truth, the most momentous man can hear,
Loud calls my soul, and ardour wings her flight.
I find my inspiration in my theme: 195
The grandeur of my subject is my Muse.

At midnight, when mankind is wrapp'd in peace,
And worldly Fancy feeds on golden dreams,
To give more dread to man's most dreadful hour;
At midnight, 'tis presum'd, this pomp will burst 200
From tenfold darkness, sudden as the spark
From smitten steel; from nitrous grain the blaze,
Man, starting from his couch, shall sleep no more!
The day is broke, which never more shall close!
Above, around, beneath, amazement all! 205
Terror and glory join'd in their extremes!
Our God in grandeur, and our world on fire!
All Nature struggling in the pangs of death!
Dost thou not hear her? dost thou not deplore



Her strong convulsions, and her final groan? 210
Where are we now? Ah me! the ground is gone
On which we stood: Lorenzo! while thou may'st
Provide more firm support, or sink for ever!
Where? how? from whence? Vain hope! it is too late!
Where, where, for shelter, shall the guilty fly, 215
When consternation turns the good man pale?
Great day! for which all other days were made;
For which earth rose from chaos, man from earth,
And an eternity, the date of gods,
Descended on poor earth-created man! 220
Great day of dread, decision, and despair!
At thought of thee each sublunary wish
Lets go its eager grasp, and drops the world,
And catches at each reed of hope in heaven.
At thought of thee!—and art thou absent then? 225
Lorenzo! no; 'tis here; it is begun:—
Already is begun the grand assize,
In thee, in all: deputed Conscience scales
The dread tribunal, and forestalls our doom;
Forestalls, and, by forestalling, proves it sure. 230
Why on himself should man void judgment pass?
Is idle Nature laughing at her sons?
Who Conscience sent her sentence will support,
And God above assert that god in man.
Thrice happy they! that enter now the court 235
Heav'n opens in their bosoms: but how rare;
Ah me! that magnanimity, how rare!

What hero like the man who stands himself,
Who dares to meet his naked heart alone,
Who hears, intrepid, the full charge it brings, 240
Resolv'd to silence future murmurs there?

The coward flies, and, flying, is undone.
(Art thou a coward? no:) the coward flies;
Thinks, but thinks slightly; asks, but fears to know:
Asks "What is truth?" with Pilate, and retires; 245
Dissolves the court, and mingles with the throng:
Asylum sad! from reason, hope, and heav'n!

Shall all but man look out with ardent eye
For that great day which was ordain'd for man?
O day of consummation! mark supreme 250
(If men are wise) of human thought! nor least
Or in the sight of angels or their King!
Angels, whose radiant circles, height o'er height,
Order o'er order, rising, blaze o'er blaze,
As in a theatre, surround this scene, 255
Intent on man, and anxious for his fate.
Angels look out for thee; for thee their Lord,
To vindicate his glory; and for thee
Creation universal calls aloud
To disinvolve the moral world, and give 260
To Nature's renovation brighter charms.

Shall man alone, whose fate, whose final fate,
Hangs on that hour, exclude it from his thought?
I think of nothing else; I see! I feel it!
All Nature, like an earthquake, trembling round! 265



All Deities, like summer's swarms, on wing!
All basking in the full meridian blaze!
I see the Judge enthron'd! the flaming guard!
The volume open'd! open'd ev'ry heart!
A sun-beam pointing out each secret thought! 270
No patron! intercessor none! now past
The sweet, the clement, mediatorial hour!
For guilt no plea! to pain no pause! no bound!
Inexorable all! and all extreme!

Nor man alone; the foe of God and man, 275
From his dark den, blaspheming, drags his chain,
And rears his brazen front, with thunder scarr'd,
Receives his sentence, and begins his hell.
All vengeance past, now, seems abundant grace.
Like meteors in a stormy sky, how roll 280
His baleful eyes! he curses whom he dreads,
And deems it the first moment of his fall.

'Tis present to my thought!—and yet where is it?
Angels can't tell me; angels cannot guess
The period, from created beings lock'd 285
In darkness; but the process and the place
Are less obscure; for these may man inquire.
Say, thou great close of human hopes and fears!
Great key of hearts! great finisher of fates!
Great end! and great beginning! say, where art thou?
Art thou in time, or in eternity? 291
Nor in eternity nor time I find thee:
These, as two monarchs, on their borders meet,



(Monarchs of all claps'd or unarriv'd!)
As in debate, how best their pow'rs ally'd 295
May swell the grandeur, or discharge the wrath
Of him, whom both their monarchies obey.
Time, this fast fabric for him built (and doom'd
With him to fall) now bursting o'er his head,
His lamp, the sun, extinguish'd, from beneath 300
The frown of hideous darkness calls his sons
From their long slumber, from earth's heaving womb
To second birth! contemporary throng!
Rous'd at one call, upstart'd from one bed,
Press'd in one crowd, appall'd with one amaze, 305
He turns them o'er, Eternity! to thee:
Then (as a king depos'd disdains to live)
He falls on his own scythe, nor falls alone;
His greatest foe falls with him; Time, and he
Who murder'd all Time's offspring, Death, expire. 310
Time was! Eternity now reigns alone!
Awful Eternity! offended queen!
And her resentment to mankind how just!
With kind intent, soliciting access,
How often has she knock'd at human hearts! 315
Rich to repay their hospitality,
How often call'd! and with the voice of God!
Yet bore repulse, excluded as a cheat!
A dream! while foulest foes found welcome there!
A dream, a cheat, now all things but her smile. 320
For, lo! her twice ten thousand gates thrown wide,



As thrice from Indus to the frozen pole,
With banners streaming as the comet's blaze,
And clarions louder than the deep in storms,
Sonorous as immortal breath can blow, 325
Pour forth their myriads, potentates, and powers,
Of light, of darkness, in a middle field,
Wide as creation! populous as wide!
A neutral region! there to mark th' event
Of that great drama, whose preceding scenes 330
Detain'd them close spectators, thro' a length
Of ages, rip'ning to this grand result;
Ages as yet unnumber'd but by God,
Who now, pronouncing sentence, vindicates
The rights of virtue, and his own renown. 335

Eternity, the various sentence past,
Assigns the sever'd throng distinct abodes,
Sulphureous or ambrosial. What ensues?
The deed predominant! the deed of deeds!
Which makes a hell of hell, a heav'n of heav'n. 340
The goddess, with determin'd aspect, turns
Her adamantine key's enormous size
Thro' Destiny's inextricable wards,
Deep driving ev'ry bolt on both their fates;
Then from the crystal battlements of heav'n 345
Down, down she hurls it thro' the dark profound,
Ten thousand thousand fathom, there to rust,
And ne'er unlock her resolution more.
'The deep resounds, and Hell, thro' all her glooms,



Returns, in groans, the melancholy roar. 350

O how unlike the chorus of the skies!

O how unlike those shouts of joy that shake

The whole ethereal! how the concave rings!

Nor strange! when deities their voice exalt;

And louder far than when Creation rose, 355

To see Creation's godlike aim and end

So well accomplish'd! so divinely clos'd!

To see the mighty Dramatist's last act

(As meet) in glory rising o'er the rest.

No fancy'd God; a God, indeed, descends, 360

To solve all knots; to strike the moral home;

To throw full day on darkest scenes of time;

To clear, commend, exalt, and crown the whole.

Hence, in one peal of loud, eternal praise,

The charm'd spectators thunder their applause, 365

And the vast void beyond applause resounds.

What then am I?—

Amidst applauding worlds,

And worlds celestial, is there found on earth

A peevish, dissonant, rebellious string, 370

Which jars in the grand chorus, and complains?

Censure on thee, Lorenzo! I suspend,

And turn it on myself; how greatly due!

All, all is right, by God ordain'd or done;

And who, but God, resum'd the friends he gave? 375

And have I been complaining, then, so long?

Complaining of his favours, pain, and death?



Who without Pain's advice would e'er be good?
Who without Death but would be good in vain?
Pain is to save from pain; all punishment 380
To make for peace; and death to save from death;
And second death, to guard immortal life;
To rouse the careless, the presumptuous awe,
And turn the tide of souls another way;
By the same tenderness divine ordain'd 385
That planted Eden, and high-bloom'd for man
A fairer Eden, endless, in the skies.

Heav'n gives us friends to bless the present scene,
Resumes them to prepare us for the next.
All evils natural are moral goods; 390
All discipline indulgence, on the whole.
None are unhappy: all have cause to smile,
But such as to themselves that cause deny.
Our faults are at the bottom of our pains:
Error in acts, or judgment, is the source 395
Of endless sighs. We sin, or we mistake,
And Nature tax, when false opinion slings.
Let impious grief be banish'd, joy indulg'd,
But chiefly then when Grief puts in her claim.
Joy from the joyous frequently betrays, 400
Oft' lives in vanity, and dies in woe.
Joy amidst ills corroborates, exalts;
'Tis joy and conquest; joy and virtue too.
A noble fortitude in ills delights
Heav'n, earth, ourselves; 'tis duty, glory, peace. 405



Affliction is the good man's shining scene,
Prosperity conceals his brightest ray.
As night to stars, we lustre gives to man.
Heroes in battle, pilots in the storm,
And virtue in calamities, admire. 410
The crown of manhood is a winter-joy;
An evergreen that stands the northern blast,
And blossoms in the rigour of our fate.

'Tis a prime part of happiness to know
How much unhappiness must prove our lot; 415
A part which few possess! I'll pay life's tax,
Without one rebel murmur, from this hour,
Nor think it misery to be a man;
Who thinks it is shall never be a god.
Some ills we wish for, when we wish to live. 420

What spoke proud Passion?—"Wish my being lost"?
Presumptuous! blasphemous! absurd! and false!
The triumph of my soul is,—that I am;
And therefore that I may be—what? Lorenzo!
Look inward, and look deep; and deeper still; 425
Unfathomably deep our treasure runs,
In golden veins, thro' all eternity!
Ages, and ages, and succeeding still
New ages, where the phantom of an hour,
Which courts, each night, dull slumber for repair,
Shall wake, and wonder, and exult, and praise, 431
And fly thro' infinite, and all unlock,

* Referring to the First Night.

And (if deserv'd) by Heav'n's redundant love,
 Made half-adorable, itself adore,
 And find, in adoration, endless joy! 435
 Where thou, not master of a moment here,
 Frail as the flow'r, and fleeting as the gale,
 May'st boast a whole eternity, enrich'd
 With all a kind Omnipotence can pour.
 Since Adam fell, no mortal, uninspir'd, 440
 Has ever yet conceiv'd, or ever shall,
 How kind is God, how great (if good) is man.
 No man too largely from Heav'n's love can hope,
 If what is hop'd he labours to secure. 444

Ills!—there are none: All-gracious! none from
 From man full many! Num'rous is the race [thee;
 Of blackest ill, and those immortal too,
 Begot by Madness on fair Liberty,
 Heav'n's daughter, hell-debauch'd! her hand alone
 Unlocks destruction to the sons of men, 450
 Fast barr'd by thine: high-wall'd with adamant,
 Guarded with terrors reaching to this world,
 And cover'd with the thunders of thy law,
 Whose threats are mercies, whose injunctions guides,
 Assisting, not restraining, Reason's choice; 455
 Whose sanctions, unavoidable results
 From Nature's course, indulgently reveal'd,
 If unreveal'd more dang'rous, nor less sure.
 Thus an indulgent father warns his sons,
 "Do this, fly that;"—nor always tells the cause; 460



Pleas'd to reward, as duty to his will,
A conduct needful to their own repose.
Great God of wonders! (if, thy love survey'd,
Aught else the name of wonderful retains)
What rocks are these on which to build our trust? 465
Thy ways admit no blemish; none I find;
Or this alone,—“That none is to be found:”
Not one to soften Censure's hardy crime;
Not one to palliate peevish Grief's complaint,
Who, like a demon, murmur'ing from the dust, 470
Dares into judgment call her judge.—Supreme!
For all I bless thee; most for the severe;
Her death *—my own at hand—the fiery gulf,
That flaming bound of wrath omnipotent!
It thunders;—but it thunders to preserve; 475
It strengthens what it strikes; its wholesome dread
Averts the dreaded pain: its hideous groans
Join heav'n's sweet hallelujahs in thy praise,
Great Source of good alone! how kind in all!
In vengeance kind! Pain, death, gehenna, save. 480
Thus, in thy world material, mighty Mind!
Not that alone which solaces and shines,
The rough and gloomy, challenges our praise.
The winter is as needful as the spring;
The thunder as the sun. A stagnate mass 485
Of vapours breeds a pestilential air:
Nor more propitious the Favonian breeze
To Nature's health, than purifying storms.

* Lucia.



The dread volcano ministers to good;
Its smother'd flames might undermine the world. 490
Loud Ætnas fulminate in love to man:
Comets good omens are, when duly scann'd;
And, in their use, eclipses learn to shine.

Man is responsible for ills receiv'd;
Those we call wretched are a chosen band, 495
Compell'd to refuge in the right, for peace.

Amid my list of blessings infinite
Stand this the foremost, "That my heart has bled."
'Tis Heav'n's last effort of good-will to man.

When pain can't bless, Heav'n quits us in despair. 500
Who fails to grieve, when just occasion calls,
Or grieves too much, deserves not to be blest'd,
Inhuman or effeminate, his heart.

Reason absolves the grief which reason ends.
May Heav'n ne'er trust my friend with happiness, 505
Till it has taught him how to bear it well
By previous pain, and made it safe to smile!

Such smiles are mine, and such may they remain,
Nor hazard their extinction from excess.

My change of heart a change of style demands; 510
The Consolation cancels the Complaint,
And makes a convert of my guilty song.

As when o'er-labour'd, and inclin'd to breathe,
A panting traveller some rising ground,
Some small ascent, has gain'd, he turns him round, 515
And measures with his eye the various vale,

The fields, woods, meads, and rivers, he has past,
And, satiate of his journey, thinks of home,
Endear'd by distance, nor affects more toil;
Thus I, though small, indeed, is that ascent 520
The Muse has gain'd, review the paths she trod,
Various, extensive, beaten but by few;
And, conscious of her prudence in repose,
Pause, and with pleasure meditate an end,
Tho' still remote; so fruitful is my theme. 525
Thro' many a field of moral and divine
The Muse has stray'd, and much of sorrow seen
In human ways, and much of false and vain,
Which none who travel this bad road can miss.
O'er friends decas'd full heartily she wept; 530
Of love divine the wonders she display'd;
Prov'd man immortal; shew'd the source of joy;
The grand tribunal rais'd; assign'd the bounds
Of human grief. In few, to close the whole,
The moral Muse has shadow'd out a sketch, 535
Tho' not in form, nor with a Raphael stroke,
Of most our weakness needs believe or do,
In this our land of travail and of hope,
For peace on earth, or prospect of the skies. 539

What then remains? much! much! a mighty debt
To be discharg'd. These Thoughts, O Night! are thine;
From thee they came, like lovers' secret sighs,
While others slept. So Cynthia, (poets feign)
In shadows veil'd, soft-sliding from her sphere,



Her shepherd cheer'd, of her enamour'd less 545
Than I of thee.—And art thou still unsung,
Beneath whose brow, and by whose aid, I sing?
Immortal Silence! where shall I begin?
Where end? or how steal music from the spheres
To sooth their goddesses? 550

O majestic Night!
Nature's great ancestor! Day's elder-born!
And fated to survive the transient sun!
By mortals and immortals seen with awe!
A starry crown thy raven brow adorns, 555
An azure zone thy waist; clouds, in heav'n's loom
Wrought thro' varieties of shape and shade,
In ample folds of drapery divine,
Thy flowing mantle form, and, heav'n throughout,
Voluminously pour thy pompous train: 560
Thy gloomy grandeurs (Nature's most august,
Inspiring aspect!) claim a grateful verse,
And, like a sable curtain starr'd with gold,
Drawn o'er my labours past, shall close the scene.

And what, O Man! so worthy to be sung? 565
What more prepares us for the songs of heaven?
Creation of archangels is the theme!
What to be sung so needful, what so well
Celestial joys prepare us to sustain?
The soul of man, His fate design'd to see 570
Who gave these wonders to be seen by man,
Has here a previous scene of objects great



On which to dwell, to stretch to that expanse
Of thought, to rise to that exalted height
Of admiration, to contract that awe, 575
And give her whole capacities that strength
Which best may qualify for final joy.
The more our spirits are enlarg'd on earth,
The deeper draught shall they receive of heaven. 579

Heav'n's King! whose face unveil'd consummates
Redundant bliss! which fills that mighty void [bliss,
The whole creation leaves in human hearts!
Thou! who didst touch the lip of Jesse's son,
Rapt in sweet contemplation of these fires,
And set his harp in concert with the spheres, 585
While of thy works material the Supreme
I dare attempt; assist my daring song:
Loose me from earth's inclosure; from the sun's
Contracted circle set my heart at large;
Eliminate my spirit, give it range 590
Thro' provinces of thought yet unexplor'd;
Teach me, by this stupendous scaffolding,
Creation's golden steps, to climb to thee:
Teach me with art great Nature to control,
And spread a lustre o'er the shades of night. 595
Feel I thy kind assent? and shall the sun
Be seen at midnight, rising in my song?

Lorenzo! come, and warm thee; thou whose heart,
Whose little heart, is moor'd within a nook
Of this obscure terrestrial, anchor weigh; 600
Another ocean calls, a nobler port;



I am thy pilot, I thy prosp'rous gale :
Gainful thy voyage thro' yon' azure main,
Main without tempest, pirate, rock, or shore,
And whence thou may'st import eternal wealth, 605
And leave to beggar'd minds the pearl and gold.
Thy travels dost thou boast o'er foreign realms?
Thou stranger to the world! thy tour begin;
Thy tour thro' Nature's universal orb.
Nature delineates her whole chart at large 610
On soaring souls, that sail among the spheres;
And man how purblind, if unknown the whole!
Who circles spacious earth, then travels here,
Shall own he never was from home before!
Come, my Prometheus *! from thy pointed rock 615
Of false ambition, if unchain'd, we'll mount;
We'll, innocently, steal celestial fire,
And kindle our devotion at the stars,
A theft that shall not chain, but set thee free.

Above our atmosphere's intestine wars, 620
Rain's fountain-head, the magazine of hail;
Above the northern nests of feather'd snows,
The brew of thunders, and the flaming forge
That forms the crooked lightning; 'bove the caves
Where infant tempests wait their growing wings, 625
And tune their tender voices to that roar
Which soon, perhaps, shall shake a guilty world;
Above misconstru'd omens of the sky,

* Night the Eighth.



Far-travell'd comets' calculated blaze,
Elance thy thought, and think of more than man: 630
Thy soul, till now contracted, wither'd, shrunk,
Blighted by blasts of earth's unwholesome air,
Will blossom here; spread all her faculties
To these bright ardours; ev'ry pow'r unfold,
And rise into sublimities of thought. 635
Stars teach, as well as shine. At Nature's birth
Thus their commission ran,—“Be kind to man.”
Where art thou, poor benighted Traveller!
The stars will light thee, tho' the moon should fail.
Where art thou, more benighted! more astray! 640
In ways immoral? the stars call thee back,
And, if obey'd their counsel, set thee right.

This prospect vast, what is it?—Weigh'd aright
'Tis Nature's system of divinity,
And ev'ry student of the night inspires. 645
'Tis elder Scripture, writ by God's own hand;
Scripture authentic! uncorrupt by man.
Lorenzo! with my radius (the rich gift
Of thought nocturnal!) I'll point out to thee
Its various lessons; some that may surprise 650
An unadept in mysteries of Night;
Little, perhaps, expected in her school,
Nor thought to grow on planet or on star.
Bulls, lions, scorpions, monsters here we feign,
Ourselves more monstrous, not to see what here 655
Exists indeed,—a lecture to mankind.



What read we here?—th' existence of a God?
Yes; and of other beings man above;
Natives of ether! sons of higher climes!
And, what may move Lorenzo's wonder more, 660
Eternity is written in the skies.
And whose eternity?—Lorenzo! thine;
Mankind's eternity. Nor faith alone,
Virtue grows here; here springs the sov'reign cure
Of almost ev'ry vice, but chiefly thine, 665
Wrath, pride, ambition, and impure desire.

Lorenzo! thou canst wake at midnight too,
Tho' not on morals bent. Ambition, Pleasure!
Those tyrants I for thee so lately fought*,
Afford their harass'd slaves but slender rest. 670
Thou, to whom midnight is immoral noon,
And the sun's noon-tide blaze prime dawn of day,
Not by thy climate, but capricious crime,
Commencing one of our antipodes!
In thy nocturnal rove one moment halt, 675
'Twixt stage and stage of riot and cabal,
And lift thine eye, (if bold an eye to lift,
If bold to meet the face of injur'd Heav'n)
To yonder stars: for other ends they shine
Than to light revellers from shame to shame, 680
And thus be made accomplices in guilt.

Why from yon' arch, that infinite of space,
With infinite of lucid orbs replete,

* Night the Eighth.

Volume II.

M



Which set the living firmament on fire; 685
 At the first glance, in such an overwhelming
 Of wonderful on man's astonish'd sight
 Rushes Omnipotence?—To curb our pride,
 Our reason rouse, and lead it to that Power
 Whose love lets down these silver chains of light;
 To draw up man's ambition to himself, 690
 And bind our chaste affections to his throne.
 Thus the three virtues, least alive on earth,
 And welcom'd on heav'n's coast with most applause,
 An humble, pure, and heav'nly-minded heart,
 Are here inspir'd;—and canst thou gaze too long?

Nor stands thy wrath depriv'd of its reproof, 696
 Or unupbraided by this radiant choir.
 The planets of each system represent
 Kind neighbours; mutual amity prevails;
 Sweet interchange of rays, receiv'd, return'd, 700
 Enlight'ning and enlighten'd! all, at once,
 Attracting and attracted! patriot-like,
 None sins against the welfare of the whole;
 But their reciprocal, unselfish aid,
 Affords an emblem of millennial love. 705
 Nothing in nature, much less conscious being,
 Was e'er created solely for itself.
 Thus man his sov'reign duty learns in this
 Material picture of benevolence.

And know, of all our supercilious race, 710
 Thou most inflammable! thou wasp of men!



Man's angry heart, inspected, would be found
 As rightly set as are the starry spheres :
 'Tis Nature's structure, broke by stubborn will,
 Breeds all that uncelestial discord there.
 Wilt thou not feel the bias Nature gave ?
 Canst thou descend from converse with the skies,
 And seize thy brother's throat ?—For what ?—a clod ?
 An inch of earth ? The planets cry, "Forbear."
 They chase our double darkness, Nature's gloom,
 And (kinder still !) our intellectual night.
 And see, Day's amiable sister sends
 Her invitation in the softest rays
 Of mitigated lustre ; courts thy sight,
 Which suffers from her tyrant-brother's blaze.
 Night grants thee the full freedom of the skies,
 Nor rudely reprimands thy lifted eye ;
 With gain and joy she bribes thee to be wise.
 Night opens the noblest scenes, and sheds an awe
 Which gives those venerable scenes full weight,
 And deep reception in th'entender'd heart,
 While light peeps thro' the darkness like a spy,
 And darkness shews its grandeur by the light.
 Nor is the profit greater than the joy,
 If human hearts at glorious objects glow,
 And admiration can inspire delight.
 What speak I more than I this moment feel ?
 With pleasing stupor first the soul is struck
 (Stupor ordain'd to make her truly wise !)

M ij



Then into transport starting from her trance, 740
 With love and admiration how she glows !
 This gorgeous apparatus ! this display !
 'This ostentation of creative power !
 'This theatre !—what eye can take it in ?
 By what divine enchantment was it rais'd ; 745
 For minds of the first magnitude to launch
 In endless speculation, and adore ?
 One sun by day, by night ten thousand shine ;
 And light us deep into the Deity ;
 How boundless in magnificence and might ! 750
 O what a confluence of ethereal fires,
 From urns unnumber'd, down the steep of heav'n
 Streams to a point, and centres in my sight !
 Nor tarries there ; I feel it at my heart :
 My heart, at once, it humbles and exalts ; 755
 Lays it in dust, and calls it to the skies
 Who sees it unexalted, or unaw'd ?
 Who sees it, and can stop at what is seen ?
 Material offspring of Omnipotence !
 Inanimate, all-animating birth ! 760
 Work worthy him who made it ! worthy praise !
 All praise ! praise more than human ! nor deny'd
 'Thy praise divine !—But tho' man, drown'd in sleep,
 Withholds his homage, not alone I wake ;
 Bright legions swarm unseen, and sing unheard 765
 By mortal ear, the glorious Architect,
 In this his universal temple hung



With lustres, with innumerable lights,
That shed religion on the soul; at once
The temple and the preacher! O how loud
It calls devotion! genuine growth of Night!
Devotion! daughter of Astronomy!
An undevout astronomer is mad.
True; all things speak a God; but in the small
Men trace out him; in great he seizes man;
Seizes, and elevates, and raps, and fills
With new inquiries, 'mid associates new.
Tell me, ye Stars! ye Planets! tell me, all
Ye starr'd and planeted Inhabitants! what is it?
What are these sons of wonder? Say, proud Arch,
(Within whose azure palaces they dwell)
Built with divine ambition! in disdain
Of limit built! built in the taste of heav'n!
Vast concave! ample dome! wast thou design'd
A meet apartment for the Deity?—
Not so; that thought alone thy state impairs,
Thy lofty sinks, and shallows thy profound,
And strengthens thy diffusive; dwarfs the whole,
And makes an universe an Orrery.

But when I drop mine eye, and look on man,
Thy right regain'd, thy grandeur is restor'd,
O Nature! wide flies off th' expanding round:
As when whole magazines, at once, are fir'd,
The smitten air is hollow'd by the blow,
The vast dislosion dissipates the clouds,



Shock'd ether's billows dash the distant skies;
Thus (but far more) th' expanding round flies off,
And leaves a mighty void, a spacious womb,
Might teem with new creation; reinfam'd,
Thy luminaries triumph, and assume
Divinity themselves. Nor was it strange
Matter high-wrought to such surprising pomp,
Such godlike glory, stole the style of gods,
From ages dark, obtuse, and sleep'd in sense:
For sure to sense they truly are divine,
And half-absolv'd idolatry from guilt,
Nay, turn'd it into virtue. Such it was
In those who put forth all they had of man
Unlost, to lift their thought, nor mounted higher,
But, weak of wing, on planets perch'd, and thought
What was their highest must be their ador'd. 811

But they how weak, who could no higher mount?
And are there, then, Lorenzo! those to whom
Unseen, and unexistent, are the same?
And if incomprehensible is join'd,
Who dare pronounce it madness to believe?
Why has the mighty Builder thrown aside
All measure in his work? stretch'd out his line
So far, and spread amazement o'er the whole?
Then (as he took delight in wide extremes)
Deep in the bosom of his universe
Dropp'd down that reas'ning mite, that insect, man,
To crawl, and gaze, and wonder at the scene?—



That man might ne'er presume to plead amazement
For disbelief of wonders in himself. 825
Shall God be less miraculous than what
His hand has form'd? shall mysteries descend
From unmysterious? things more elevate
Be more familiar? uncreated lie
More obvious than created to the grasp 830
Of human thought? The more of wonderful
Is heard in him, the more we should assent.
Could we conceive him, God he could not be;
Or he not God, or we could not be men.
A God alone can comprehend a God: 835
Man's distance how immense! On such a theme,
Know this, Lorenzo! (seem it ne'er so strange)
Nothing can satisfy but what confounds;
Nothing but what astonishes is true.
The scene thou seest attests the truth I sing, 840
And ev'ry star sheds light upon thy creed.
These stars, this furniture, this coast of Heav'n,
If but reported, thou had'st ne'er believ'd;
But thine eye tells thee the romance is true.
The grand of Nature is th' Almighty's oath 845
In Reason's court, to silence Unbelief.

How my mind, op'ning at this scene, imbibes
The moral emanations of the skies,
While nought, perhaps, Lorenzo less admires!
Has the Great Sov'reign sent ten thousand worlds 850
To tell us he resides above them all,



In glory's unapproachable recess?
And dare earth's bold inhabitants deny
The sumptuous, the magnific, embassy
A moment's audience? Turn we, nor will hear 855
From whom they come, or what they would impart
For man's emolument, sole cause that stoops
Their grandeur to man's eye? Lorenzo! rouse;
Let thought, awaken'd, take the lightning's wing,
And glance from east to west, from pole to pole. 860
Who sees but is confounded, or convinc'd?
Renounces reason, or a God adores?
Mankind was sent into the world to see:
Sight gives the science needful to their peace;
That obvious science asks small learning's aid. 865
Wouldst thou on metaphysic pinions soar?
Or wound thy patience amid logic thorns?
Or travel history's enormous round?
Nature no such hard task enjoins: she gave
A make to man directive of his thought; 870
A make set upright, pointing to the stars,
As who shall say, "Read thy chief lesson there."
'Too late to read this manuscript of heaven,
When, like a parchment-scroll, shrunk up by flames,
It folds Lorenzo's lesson from his sight. 875
Lesson how various! not the God alone,
I see his ministers; I see, diffus'd
In radiant orders, essences sublime,
Of various offices, of various plume,



In heav'nly liveries distinctly clad,
 Azure, green, purple, pearl, or downy gold,
 Or all commix'd; they stand, with wings outspread,
 List'ning to catch the Master's least command,
 And fly thro' nature ere the moment ends;
 Numbers innumerable!—Well conceiv'd
 By Pagan and by Christian! O'er each sphere
 Presides an angel to direct its course,
 And feed, or fan, its flames, or to discharge
 Other high trusts unknown: for who can see
 Such pomp of matter, and imagine mind,
 For which alone inanimate was made,
 More sparingly dispens'd? that nobler son,
 Far liker the great Sire!—'Tis thus the skies
 Inform us of superiors numberless,
 As much, in excellence, above mankind,
 As above earth, in magnitude, the spheres:
 These, as a cloud of witnesses, hang o'er us:
 In a throng'd theatre are all our deeds.
 Perhaps a thousand demigods descend
 On ev'ry beam we see to walk with men.
 Awful reflection! strong restraint from ill!
 Yet here our virtue finds still stronger aid
 From these ethereal glories sense surveys.
 Something, like magic, strikes from this blue vault:
 With just attention is it view'd? we feel
 A sudden succour, unimplor'd, unthought.
 Nature herself does half the work of man.



Seas, rivers, mountains, forests, deserts, rocks,
The promontory's height, the depth profound
Of subterranean excavated grotts,
Black-brow'd, and vaulted high, and yawning wide,
From Nature's structure, or the scoop of time;
If ample of dimension, vast of size,
Ev'n these an aggrandizing impulse give;
Of solemn thought enthusiastic heights
Ev'n these infuse.—But what of vast in these?
Nothing—or we must own the skies forgot.
Much less in art.—Vain Art! thou pigmy power!
How dost thou swell, and strut, with human pride,
To shew thy littleness! What childish toys,
Thy watry columns squirted to the clouds!
Thy bason'd rivers and imprison'd seas!
Thy mountains moulded into forms of men!
Thy hundred gated Capitals! or those
Where three days' travel left us much to ride;
Gazing on miracles by mortals wrought,
Arches triumphal, theatres immense,
Or nodding gardens pendent in mid air!
Or temples proud to meet their gods half-way!
Yet these affect us in no common kind:
What then the force of such superior scenes?
Enter a temple, it will strike an awe:
What awe from this the Deity has built?
A good man seen, tho' silent, counsel gives:
The touch'd spectator wishes to be wise.



In a bright mirror his own hands have made,
Here we see something like the face of God,
Seems it not then enough to say, Lorenzo,
_o man abandon'd, "Hast thou seen the skies?"
And yet so thwarted Nature's kind design
By daring man, he makes her sacred awe
(That guard from ill) his shelter, his temptation
To more than common guilt, and quite inverts
Celestial Art's intent. The trembling stars
See crimes gigantic, stalking thro' the gloom
With front erect, that hide their head by day,
And making night still darker by their deeds,
Slumb'ring in covert, till the shades descend,
Rapine and Murder, link'd, now prowl for prey.
The miser earths his treasure, and the thief,
Watching the mole, half-beggars him ere morn
Now plots and foul Conspiracies awake,
And, muffling up their horrors from the moon,
Havoc and devastation they prepare,
And kingdoms tott'ring in the field of blood.
Now sons of riot in mid-revel rage.
What shall I do?—suppress it? or proclaim?—
Why sleeps the thunder? Now, Lorenzo! now
His best friend's couch the rank adulterer
Ascends secure, and laughs at gods and men.
Prepost'rous madmen, void of fear or shame,
Lay their crimes bare to these chaste eyes of Heav'n,
Yet shrink and shudder at a mortal's sight.



Were moon and stars for villains only made
To guide, yet screen them, with tenebrious light? 965
No; they were made to fashion the sublime
Of human hearts, and wiser make the wise.
Those ends were answer'd once, when mortals liv'd
Of stronger wing, of aquiline ascent,
In theory sublime. O how unlike 970
Those vermine of the night, this moment sung,
Who crawl on earth, and on her venom feed!
Those ancient sages, human stars! they met
Their brothers of the skies at midnight hour,
Their counsel ask'd, and what they ask'd obey'd. 975
The Stagirite, and Plato, he who drank
The poison'd bowl, and he of Tusculum,
With him of Corduba (immortal names!)
In these unbounded and Elysian walks,
An area fit for gods and godlike men, 980
They took their nightly round, thro' radiant paths,
By seraphs trod; instructed, chiefly, thus,
To tread in their bright footsteps here below,
To walk in worth still brighter than the skies.
There they contracted their contempt of earth; 985
Of hopes eternal kindled there the fire;
There, as in near approach, they glow'd, and grew
(Great visitants!) more intimate with God,
More worth to men, more joyous to themselves.
Thro' various virtues they, with ardour, ran 990
The zodiac of their learn'd illustrious lives.



In Christian hearts O for a Pagan zeal!
 A needful, but opprobrious pray'r! as much
 Our ardour less, as greater is our light.
 How monstrous this in morals! Scarce more strange
 Would this phenomenon in nature strike,
 A sun that froze her, or a star that warm'd.

What taught these heroes of the moral world?
 To these thou giv'st thy praise, give credit too.
 These doctors ne'er were pension'd to deceive thee,
 And Pagan tutors are thy taste.—They taught
 That narrow views betray to misery;
 That wise it is to comprehend the whole;
 That virtue rose from Nature, ponder'd well,
 The single base of virtue built to heav'n;
 That God and Nature our attention claim;
 That Nature is the glass reflecting God,
 As by the sea reflected is the sun,
 Too glorious to be gaz'd on in his sphere;
 That mind immortal loves immortal aims;
 That boundless mind affects a boundless space;
 That vast surveys, and the sublime of things,
 The soul assimilate, and make her great;
 That, therefore, Heav'n her glories, as a fund
 Of inspiration, thus spreads out to man.
 Such are their doctrines; such the Night inspir'd.

And what more true? what truth of greater weight?
 The soul of man was made to walk the skies,
 Delightful outlet of her prison here!

Volume II.

N



There, disincumber'd from her chains, the ties 1020
Of toys terrestrial, she can rove at large;
There freely can respire, dilate, extend,
In full proportion let loose all her powers,
And, undelpd, grasp at something great.
Nor as a stranger does she wander there, 1025
But, wonderful herself, thro' wonder strays;
Contemplating their grandeur, finds her own;
Dives deep in their economy divine,
Sits high in judgment on their various laws,
And, like a master, judges not amiss. 1030
Hence greatly pleas'd, and justly proud, the soul
Grows conscious of her birth celestial; breathes
More life, more vigour, in her native air,
And feels herself at home among the stars,
And, feeling, emulates her country's praise. 1035

What call we, then, the firmament, Lorenzo?—
As earth the body, since the skies sustain
The soul with food that gives immortal life,
Call it the noble pasture of the mind,
Which there expatiates, strengthens, and exults, 1040
And riots thro' the luxuries of thought.
Call it the garden of the Deity,
Blossom'd with stars, redundant in the growth
Of fruit ambrosial, moral fruit to man.
Call it the breastplate of the true High-priest, 1045
Ardent with gems oracular, that give,



In points of highest moment, right response;
And ill neglected, if we prize our peace.

Thus have we found a true astrology;
Thus have we found a new and noble sense,
In which alone stars govern human fates,
O that the stars (as some have feign'd) let fall
Bloodshed, and havoc, on embattled realms,
And rescu'd monarchs from so black a guilt!
Bourbon! this wish how gen'rous in a foe!
Wouldst thou be great, wouldst thou become a god,
And stick thy deathless name among the stars,
For mighty conquests on a needle's point?
Instead of forging chains for foreigners,
Bastile thy tutor; grandeur all thy aim?
As yet thou know'st not what it is. How great,
How glorious, then, appears the mind of man,
When in it all the stars and planets roll!
And what it seems it is. Great objects make
Great minds, enlarging as their views enlarge;
Those still more godlike as these more divine.

And more divine than these thou canst not see.
Dazzled, o'erpow'r'd, with the delicious draught
Of miscellaneous splendours, how I reel
From thought to thought, inebriate, without end!
An Eden this! a Paradise unlost!
I meet the Deity in ev'ry view,
And tremble at my nakedness before him!
O that I could but reach the tree of life!

N ii



For here it grows unguarded from our taste; 1075
No flaming sword denies our entrance here;
Would man but gather, he might live for ever;
O Lorenzo! much of moral hast thou seen;
Of curious arts art thou more fond? then mark
The mathematic glories of the skies, 1080
In number, weight, and measure, all ordain'd.
Lorenzo's boasted builders, Chance and Fate,
Are left to finish his aerial towers;
Wisdom and Choice their well-known characters
Here deep impress, and claim it for their own. 1085
Tho' splendid all, no splendour void of use.
Use rivals beauty, art contends with power;
No wanton waste amid effuse expense,
The great Economist adjusting all
To prudent pomp, magnificently wise. 1090
How rich the prospect! and for ever new;
And newest to the man that views it most;
For newer still in infinite succeeds.
Then these aerial racers, O how swift!
How the shaft loiters from the strongest string! 1095
Spirit alone can distance the carter.
Orb above orb ascending without end!
Circle in circle, without end, inclos'd!
Wheel within wheel, Ezekiel! like to thine!
Like thine, it seems a vision or a dream; 1100
Tho' seen, we labour to believe it true!
What involution! what extent! what farms
Of worlds, that laugh at earth! immensely great!



Immensely distant from each other's spheres!
 What, then, the wondrous space thro' which they roll?
 At once it quite ingulfs all human thought;
 'Tis Comprehension's absolute defeat.

Nor think thou seest a wild disorder here:
 Thro' this illustrious chaos to the sight,
 Arrangement neat, and chastest order, reign
 The path prescrib'd, inviolably kept,
 Upbraids the lawless fallies of mankind.
 Worlds ever thwarting never interfere:
 What knots are ty'd! how soon are they dissolv'd,
 And set the seeming marry'd planets free!
 They rove for ever, without error rove;
 Confusion unconfus'd! nor less admire
 This tumult untumultuous; all on wing!
 In motion all! yet what profound repose!
 What fervid action, yet no noise! as aw'd
 To silence by the presence of their Lord;
 Or hush'd, by his command, in love to man,
 And bid let fall soft beams on human rest,
 Restless themselves. On yon' cerulean plain,
 In exultation to their God and thine,
 They dance, they sing eternal jubilee,
 Eternal celebration of his praise.
 But since their song arrives not at our ear,
 Their dance perplex'd exhibits to the sight
 Fair hieroglyphic of his peerless power.
 Mark how the labyrinthian turns they take,



The circles intricate, and mystic maze,
Weave the grand cipher of Omnipotence;
To gods how great! how legible to man!

Leaves so much wonder greater wonder still? 1135
Where are the pillars that support the skies?
What more than Atlantean shoulder props
Th' incumbent load? what magic, what strange art,
In fluid air these pond'rous orbs sustains?
Who would not think them hung in golden chains?—
And so they are; in the high will of Heav'n, 1141
Which fixes all; makes adamant of air,
Or air of adamant; makes all of nought,
Or nought of all, if such the dread decree.

Imagine from their deep foundations torn 1145
The most gigantic sons of earth, the broad
And tow'ring Alps, all toss'd into the sea;
And, light as down, or volatile as air,
Their bulks enormous dancing on the waves,
In time and measure exquisite; while all 1150
The winds, in emulation of the spheres,
Tune their sonorous instruments aloft,
The concert swell, and animate the ball.
Would this appear amazing? what then worlds
In a far thinner element sustain'd, 1155
And acting the same part with greater skill,
More rapid movement, and for noblest ends?

More obvious ends to pass, are not these stars
The seats majestic, proud imperial thrones,
On which angelic delegates of heav'n, 1160



At certain periods, as the Sov'reign nods,
Discharge high trusts of vengeance or of love,
To clothe in outward grandeur grand design,
And acts most solemn still more solemnize?
Ye Citizens of air! what ardent thanks, 1165
What full effusion of the grateful heart,
Is due from man, indulg'd in such a sight!
A sight so noble! and a sight so kind!
It drops new truths at every new survey!
Feels not Lorenzo something stir within, 1170
That sweeps away all period? As these spheres
Measure duration, they no less inspire
The godlike hope of ages without end.
The boundless space, thro' which these rovers take
Their restless roam, suggests the sister-thought 1175
Of boundless time. Thus by kind Nature's skill,
To man unlabour'd, that important guest,
Eternity, finds entrance at the sight;
And an eternity for man ordain'd,
Or these his destin'd midnight counsellors, 1180
The stars, had never whisper'd it to man.
Nature informs, but ne'er insults, her sons:
Could she, then, kindle the most ardent wish
To disappoint it?—That is blasphemy.
Thus of thy creed a second article, 1185
Momentous as th' existence of a God,
Is found (as I conceive) where rarely sought,
And thou may'st read thy soul immortal here.



Here, then, Lorenzo! on these glories dwell,
 Nor want the gilt, illuminated roof,
 That calls the wretched gay to dark delights.
 Assemblies?—this is one divinely bright;
 Here, unendanger'd in health, wealth, or fame,
 Range thro' the fairest, and the Sultan scorn.
 He, wise as thou, no Crescent holds so fair
 As that which on his turbant awes a world,
 And thinks the moon is proud to copy him.
 Look on her, and gain more than worlds can give,
 A mind superior to the charms of power,
 Thou muffled in delusions of this life!
 Can yonder moon turn Ocean in his bed
 From side to side in constant ebb and flow,
 And purify from stench his watry realms,
 And fails her moral influence? wants she power
 To turn Lorenzo's stubborn tide of thought
 From stagnating on earth's infected shore,
 And purge from nuisance his corrupted heart?
 Fails her attraction when it draws to heav'n?
 Nay, and to what thou valu'st more, earth's joy?
 Minds elevate, and panting for unseen,
 And defecate from sense, alone obtain
 Full relish of existence undeflow'r'd;
 The life of life, the zest of worldly bliss;
 All else on earth amounts—to what? to this,
 "Bad to be suffer'd, blessings to be left!"
 Earth's richest inventory boasts no more.

Of higher scenes be then the call obey'd
 O let me gaze!—of gazing there's no end.
 O let me think!—thought, too, is wilder'd here;
 In mid-way flight Imagination tires;
 Yet soon reprints her wing to fear anew,
 Her point unable to forbear or gain;
 So great the pleasure, so profound the plan!
 A banquet this where men and angels meet,
 Eat the same manna, mingle earth and heaven. 1225
 How distant some of these nocturnal suns!
 So distant (says the sage) 'twere not absurd
 To doubt if beams, set out at Nature's birth,
 Are yet arriv'd at this so foreign world,
 Tho' nothing half so rapid as their flight. 1230
 An eye of awe and wonder let me roll,
 And roll for ever. Who can satiate sight
 In such a scene? in such an ocean wide
 Of deep astonishment? where depth, height, breadth
 Are lost in their extremes; and where to count 1235
 The thick-sown glories in this field of fire,
 Perhaps a seraph's computation fails.
 Now go, Ambition! boast thy boundless might
 In conquest o'er the tenth part of a grain.
 And yet Lorenzo calls for miracles, 1240
 To give his tott'ring faith a solid base.
 Why call for less than is already thine?
 Thou art no novice in theology;
 What is a miracle?—'tis a reproach,

'Tis an implicit satire on mankind, 1245
 And while it satisfies it censures too.
 To common-sense great Nature's course proclaims
 A Deity. When mankind falls asleep,
 A miracle is sent as an alarm,
 To wake the world, and prove him o'er again, 1250
 By recent argument, but not more strong.
 Say which imports more plenitude of power,
 Or Nature's laws to fix, or to repeal?
 To make a sun, or stop his mid career?
 To countermand his orders, and send back 1255
 The flaming courier to the frighted East,
 Warm'd and astonish'd at his ev'ning ray;
 Or bid the moon, as with her journey tir'd,
 In Ajalon's soft flow'ry vale repose?
 Great things are these; still greater to create. 1260
 From Adam's bow'r look down thro' the whole train
 Of miracles;—resistless is their power?
 They do not, cannot, more amaze the mind,
 Than this, call'd unmiraculous survey,
 If duly weigh'd, if rationally seen, 1265
 If seen with human eyes. The brute, indeed,
 Sees nought but spangles here; the fool no more.
 Say'st thou, "The course of Nature governs all?"
 The course of Nature is the art of God.
 The miracles thou call'st for this attest; 1270
 For say, could Nature Nature's course control?



But, miracles apart, who sees him not
 Nature's Controller, Author, Guide, and End?
 Who turns his eye on Nature's midnight face,
 But must inquire—"What hand behind the scene,
 "What arm Almighty, put these wheeling globes
 "In motion, and wound up the vast machine?
 "Who rounded in his palm these spacious orbs?
 "Who bowl'd them flaming thro' the dark profound,
 "Num'rous as glitt'ring gems of morning-dew,
 "Or sparks from populous cities in a blaze,
 "And set the bosom of Old Night on fire,
 "Peopled her desert, and made Horror smile?"
 Or if the military style delights thee,
 (For stars have fought their battles, leagu'd with man)
 "Who marshals this bright host? enrolls their names,
 "Appoints their post, their marches, and returns,
 "Punctual, at stated periods? who disbands
 "These vet'ran troops, their final duty done,
 "If e'er disbanded?"—He whose potent word,
 Like the loud trumpet, levy'd first their powers
 In Night's inglorious empire, where they slept
 In beds of darkness; arm'd them with fierce flames;
 Arrang'd, and disciplin'd, and cloth'd in gold,
 And call'd them out of Chaos to the field,
 Where now they war with Vice and Unbelief.
 Q let us join this army! joining these
 Will give us hearts intrepid at that hour
 When brighter flames shall cut a darker night;



When these strong demonstrations of a God, 1300
Shall hide their heads, or tumble from their spheres,
And one eternal curtain cover all!

Struck at that thought, as new-awak'd, I lift
A more enlighten'd eye, and read the stars:
To man still more propitious, and their aid 1305
(Tho' guiltless of idolatry) implore,
Nor longer rob them of their noblest name.

O ye Dividers of my time! ye bright
Accomptants of my days, and months, and years,
In your fair kalendar distinctly mark'd! 1310

Since that authentic, radiant register,
Tho' man inspects it not, stands good against him;
Since you and years roll on, tho' man stands still,
Teach me my days to number, and apply

My trembling heart to wisdom, now beyond 1315
All shadow of excuse for fooling on.

Age smooths our path to prudence; sweeps aside
The snares keen appetite and passion spread
To catch stray souls; and woe to that gray head

Whose folly would undo what age has done! 1320
Aid, then, aid, all ye Stars!—Much rather thou,

Great Artist! thou whose finger set aright
This exquisite machine, with all its wheels,

Tho' intervolv'd, exact, and pointing out
Life's rapid and irrevocable flight 1325

With such an index fair as none can miss
Who lifts an eye, nor sleeps till it is clos'd;

Open mine eye, dread Deity! to read
The tacit doctrine of thy works; to see
Things as they are, unalter'd thro' the glass 1330
Of worldly wishes. Time, eternity!
('Tis these mismeasur'd ruin all mankind)
Set them before me; let me lay them both
In equal scale, and learn their various weight.
Let time appear a moment, as it is, 1335
And let eternity's full orb, at once,
Turn on my soul, and strike it into heav'n.
When shall I see far more than charms me now,
Gaze on creation's model in thy breast
Unveil'd, nor wonder at the transcript more? 1340
When this vile, foreign dust, which smothers all
That travel earth's deep vale, shall I shake off?
When shall my soul her incarnation quit,
And, readopted to thy blest'd embrace,
Obtain her apotheosis in thee? 1345

Dost think, Lorenzo, this is wand'ring wide?
No; 'tis directly striking at the mark.
To wake thy dead devotion* was my point;
And how I blest Night's consecrating shades,
Which to a temple turn an universe, 1350
Fill us with great ideas, full of heaven,
And antidote the pestilential earth!
In ev'ry storm that either frowns or falls,
What an asylum has the soul in pray'r!

* Ver. 610.

Volume II.

O



And what a fane is this in which to pray! 1355
 And what a God must dwell in such a fane!
 O what a genius must inform the skies!
 And is Lorenzo's salamander-heart
 Cold, and untouch'd, amid these sacred fires?
 O ye nocturnal Sparks! ye glowing Embers, 1360
 On heav'n's broad hearth! who burn, or burn no more,
 Who blaze, or die, as great Jehovah's breath
 Or blows you or forbears, assist my song;
 Pour your whole influence; exorcise his heart,
 So long possess'd, and bring him back to man. 1365
 And is Lorenzo a demurrer still?
 Pride in thy parts provokes thee to contest
 Truths which, contested, put thy parts to shame:
 Nor shame they more Lorenzo's head than heart,
 A faithless heart, how despicably small! 1370
 Too strait aught great or gen'rous to receive!
 Fill'd with an atom! fill'd and foul'd with self!
 And self-mistaken! self, that lasts an hour!
 Instincts and passions of the nobler kind
 Lie suffocated there, or they alone, 1375
 Reason apart, would wake high hope, and open
 To ravish'd thought, that intellectual sphere
 Where Order, Wisdom, Goodness, Providence,
 Their endless miracles of love display,
 And promise all the truly great desire. 1380
 The mind that would be happy must be great;
 Great in its wishes, great in its surveys.



Extended views a narrow mind extend,
 Push out its corrugate, expansive make,
 Which, ere long, more than planets shall embrace. O
 A man of compass makes a man of worth. 1386
 Divine contemplate, and become divine. 1387

As man was made for glory and for bliss,
 All littleness is in approach to woe. 1388
 Open thy bosom, set thy wishes wide,
 And let in manhood; let in happiness; 1390
 Admit the boundless theatre of thought
 From nothing, up to God, which makes a man. 1391
 Take God from Nature, nothing great is left;
 Man's mind is in a pit, and nothing sees; 1395
 Man's heart is in a jakes, and loves the mire.
 Emerge from thy profound; erect thine eye;
 See thy distress! how close art thou besieg'd!
 Besieg'd by Nature, the proud sceptic's foe!
 Inclos'd by these innumerable worlds, 1400
 Sparkling conviction on the darkeft mind,
 As in a golden net of Providence,
 How art thou caught, sure captive of belief!
 From this thy blest'd captivity what art,
 What blasphemy to reason, sets thee free! 1405
 This scene is Heav'n's indulgent violence;
 Canst thou bear up against this tide of glory?
 What is earth bosom'd in these ambient orbs,
 But faith in God impos'd, and press'd on man?
 Dar'st thou still litigate thy desp'rate cause, 1410



Spite of these num'rous, awful witnesses,
And doubt the deposition of the skies?
O how laborious is thy way to ruin!
Laborious? 'tis impracticable quite:
'To sink beyond a doubt in this debate, 1415
With all its weight of wisdom and of will,
And crime flagitious, I defy a fool.
Some with they did, but no man disbelieves.
God is a spirit; spirit cannot strike
'These gross material organs; God by man 1420
As much is seen, as man a God can see,
In these astonishing exploits of power.
What order, beauty, motion, distance, size!
Concertion of design, how exquisite!
How complicate in their divine police! 1425
Apt means! great ends! consent to general good!—
Each attribute of these material gods,
So long (and that with specious pleas) ador'd,
A sep'rate conquest gains o'er rebel thought,
And leads in triumph the whole mind of man. 1430

Lorenzo! this may seem harangue to thee;
Such all is apt to seem that thwarts our will.
And dost thou, then, demand a simple proof
Of this great master moral of the skies,
Unskill'd, or disinclin'd, to read it there? 1435
Since 'tis the basis, and all drops without it,
Take it in one compact, unbroken chain.
Such proof insists on an attentive ear,



'Twill not make one amid a mob of thoughts,
 And for thy notice struggle with the world. 1440
 Retire ;—the world shut out ;—thy thoughts call
 Imagination's airy wing repress ;— [home ;—
 Lock up thy senses ;—let no passion stir ;—
 Wake all to Reason ;—let her reign alone ;—
 Then in thy soul's deep silence, and the depth 1445
 Of Nature's silence, midnight, thus inquire,
 As I have done, and shall inquire no more.
 In Nature's channel thus the questions run.

“ What am I? and from whence?—I nothing know
 “ But that I am ; and since I am, conclude 1450
 “ Something eternal : had there e'er been nought,
 “ Nought still had been : eternal there must be.—
 “ But what eternal? Why not human race?
 “ And Adam's ancestors without an end?—
 “ That's hard to be conceiv'd, since ev'ry link 1455
 “ Of that long-chain'd succession is so frail.
 “ Can ev'ry part depend, and not the whole?
 “ Yet grant it true, new difficulties rise;
 “ I'm still quite out at sea, nor see the shore. 1459
 “ Whence earth, and these bright orbs?—Eternal
 “ Grant matter was eternal, still these orbs [too?—
 “ Would want some other father ;—much design
 “ Is seen in all their motions, all their makes.
 “ Design implies intelligence and art ; 1464
 “ That can't be from themselves—or man : that art
 “ Man scarce can comprehend, could men bestow?

O iij



- “ And nothing greater yet allow’d than man.—
“ Who motion, foreign to the smallest grain,
“ Shot thro’ vast masses of enormous weight?
“ Who bid brute matter’s restive lump assume I470
“ Such various forms, and gave it wings to fly?
“ Has matter innate motion? then each atom,
“ Asserting its indisputable right
“ To dance, would form an universe of dust : I474
“ Has matter none? then whence these glorious forms
“ And boundless flights from shapeless and repos’d?
“ Has matter more than motion? has it thought,
“ Judgment, and genius? is it deeply learn’d
“ In mathematics? has it fram’d such laws, I479
“ Which but to guess a Newton made immortal?—
“ If so, how each sage atom laughs at me,
“ Who think a clod inferior to a man!
“ If art to form, and counsel to conduct,
“ And that with greater far than human skill,
“ Resides not in each block,—a Godhead reigns.—
“ Grant, then, invisible, eternal Mind; I486
“ That granted, all is solv’d :—but granting that,
“ Draw I not o’er me a still darker cloud?
“ Grant I not that which I can ne’er conceive?
“ A being without origin or end!— I490
“ Hail, human Liberty! there is no God—
“ Yet why? on either scheme that knot subsists;
“ Subsist it must in God or human race;
“ If in the last, how many knots beside,



" Indissoluble all?—why chuse it there 1495
" Where, chosen, still subsist ten thousand more?
" Reject it where, that chosen, all the rest,
" Dispers'd, leave Reason's whole horizon clear?
" This is not Reason's dictate; Reason says,
" Close with the side where one grain turns the scale.
" What vast preponderance is here! can Reason 1501
" With louder voice exclaim—Believe a God?
" And reason heard, is the sole mark of man.
" What things impossible must man think true
" On any other system? and how strange 1505
" To disbelieve thro' mere credulity!"

If in this chain Lorenzo finds no flaw,
Let it for ever bind him to belief.
And where the link in which a flaw he finds?
And if a God there is, that God how great! 1510
How great that pow'r whose providential care
Thro' these bright orbs' dark centres darts a ray!
Of Nature universal threads the whole!
And hangs creation, like a precious gem,
Tho' little, on the footstool of his throne! 1515

That little gem how large! A weight let fall
From a fix'd star, in ages can it reach
This distant earth? Say, then, Lorenzo? where,
Where ends this mighty building? where begin
The suburbs of creation? where the wall 1520
Whose battlements look o'er into the vale
Of non-existence, Nothing's strange abode!



Say at what point of space Jehovah dropp'd
His slacken'd line, and laid his balance by;
Weigh'd worlds, and measur'd infinite no more? 1525
Where rears his terminating pillar high
Its extramundane head? and says to gods,
In characters illustrious as the sun,
" I stand, the plan's proud period; I pronounce
" The work accomplish'd; the creation clos'd: 1530
" Shout, all ye Gods! nor shout, ye Gods, alone;
" Of all that lives, or, if devoid of life,
" That rests, or rolls; ye Heights and Depths, resound!
" Resound! resound! ye Depths and Heights, resound!"
Hard are those questions!—answer harder still. 1535
Is this the sole exploit, the single birth,
The solitary son of Pow'r Divine?
Or has th' Almighty Father, with a breath,
Impregnated the womb of distant Space?
Has he not bid, in various provinces, 1540
Brother-creations the dark bowels burst
Of Night primeval, barren now no more?
And he the central sun, transpiercing all
Those giant-generations which disport,
And dance as motes, in his meridian ray, 1545
That ray withdrawn, benighted, or absorb'd
In that abyfs of horror whence they sprung;
While Chaos triumphs, repossess'd of all
Rival Creation ravish'd from his throne?
Chaos! of Nature both the womb and grave! 1550



Think'st thou my scheme, Lorenzo, spreads too
Is this extravagant?—No; this is just; [wide?
Just in conjecture, tho' 'twere false in fact.
If 'tis an error, 'tis an error sprung
From noble root, high thought of the most High. 1555
But wherefore error? who can prove it such?—
He that can set Omnipotence a bound.
Can man conceive beyond what God can do?
Nothing but quite impossible is hard.
He summons into being, with like ease, 1560
A whole creation, and a single grain.
Speaks he the word? a thousand worlds are born!
A thousand worlds? there's space for millions more;
And in what space can his great fiat fail?
Condemn me not, cold Critic! but indulge 1565
The warm imagination: why condemn?
Why not indulge such thoughts as swell our hearts
With fuller admiration of that Power
Who gives our hearts with such high thoughts to swell?
Why not indulge in his augmented praise? 1570
Darts not his glory a still brighter ray,
The less is left to Chaos and the realms
Of hideous Night, where Fancy strays aghast,
And, tho' most talkative, makes no report?
Still seems my thought enormous? think again;—
Experience self shall aid thy lame belief. 1576
Glasses, (that revelation to the sight!)
Have they not led us in the deep discloſe



Of fine-spun Nature, exquisitely small,
 And, tho' demonstrated, still ill-conceiv'd?
 If, then, on the reverse the mind would mount
 In magnitude, what mind can mount too far,
 To keep the balance, and creation poise?
 Defect alone can err on such a theme:
 What is too great, if we the cause survey?
 Stupendous Architect! thou, thou art all!
 My soul flies up and down in thoughts of thee,
 And finds herself but at the centre still!
 I Am thy name! existence all thine own!
 Creation's nothing, flatter'd much if styl'd
 "The thin, the fleeting atmosphere of God."

O for the voice—of what? of whom?—what voice
 Can answer to my wants, in such ascent
 As dares to deem one universe too small?
 Tell me, Lorenzo! (for now Fancy glows,
 Fir'd in the vortex of almighty power)
 Is not this home creation, in the map
 Of universal Nature, as a speck,
 Like fair Britannia, in our little ball;
 Exceeding fair, and glorious, for its size,
 But, elsewhere, far outmeasur'd, far outshone?
 In fancy (for the fact beyond us lies)
 Canst thou not figure it, an isle, almost
 Too small for notice in the vast of being;
 Sever'd by mighty seas of unbuilt space
 From other realms; from ample continents



Of higher life, where nobler natives dwell;
 Less northern, less remote from Deity,
 Glowing beneath the line of the Supreme,
 Where souls in excellence make haste, put forth
 Luxuriant growths, nor the late autumn wait 1611
 Of human worth, but ripen soon to gods?

Yet why drown Fancy in such depths as these?
 Return, presumptuous Rover! and confess
 The bounds of man, nor blame them, as too small.
 Enjoy we not full scope in what is seen? 1616
 Full ample the dominions of the sun!
 Full glorious to behold! how far, how wide,
 The matchless monarch from his flaming throne,
 Lavish of lustre, throws his beams about him, 1620
 Farther and faster than a thought can fly,
 And feeds his planets with eternal fires!
 This Heliopolis, by greater far
 Than the proud tyrant of the Nile was built,
 And he alone who built it can destroy. 1625
 Beyond this city why strays human thought?
 One wonderful enough for man to know!
 One infinite enough for man to range!
 One firmament enough for man to read!
 O what voluminous instruction here! 1630
 What page of wisdom is deny'd him? none,
 If learning his chief lesson makes him wise.
 Nor is instruction here our only gain;
 There dwells a noble pathos in the skies,



Which warms our passions, profelytes our hearts.
How eloquently shines the glowing pole! 1636
With what authority it gives its charge,
Remonstrating great truths in style sublime,
Tho' silent, loud! heard earth around; above
The planets heard; and not unheard in hell; 1640
Hell has her wonder, tho' too proud to praise.
Is earth, then, more infernal? has she those
Who neither praise (Lorenzo!) nor admire?
Lorenzo's admiration, pre-engag'd,
Ne'er ask'd the moon one question; never held
Least correspondence with a single star; 1646
Ne'er rear'd an altar to the Queen of heaven
Walking in brightness, or her train ador'd.
Their sublunary rivals have long since
Engross'd his whole devotion; stars malign, 1650
Which made the fond astronomer run mad,
Darken his intellect, corrupt his heart;
Cause him to sacrifice his fame and peace
To momentary madness, call'd Delight:
Idolater more gross than ever kiss'd 1655
The lifted hand to Luna, or pour'd out
The blood to Jove!—O thou, to whom belongs
All sacrifice! O thou great Jove unfeign'd!
Divine Instructor! thy first volume this
For man's perusal; all in capitals! 1660
In moon and stars (heav'n's golden alphabet!)
Emblaz'd to seize the sight, who runs may read;



Who reads can understand. 'Tis unconfin'd
To Christian land or Jewry; fairly writ,
In language universal, to mankind; 1665
A language lofty to the learn'd, yet plain
To those that feed the flock, or guide the plough,
Or from his husk strike out the bounding grain:
A language worthy the great Mind that speaks!
Preface and comment to the sacred page! 1670
Which oft' refers its reader to the skies,
As presupposing his first lesson there,
And Scripture 'self a fragment, that unread.
Stupendous book of wisdom to the wise!
Stupendous book! and open'd, Night! by thee. 1675
By thee much open'd, I confess, O Night!
Yet more I wish; but how shall I prevail?
Say, gentle Night! whose modest, maiden beams,
Give us a new creation, and present
The world's great picture soften'd to the sight; 1680
Nay, kinder far, far more indulgent still,
Say thou, whose mild dominion's silver key
Unlocks our hemisphere, and sets to view
Worlds beyond number, worlds conceal'd by day
Behind the proud and envious star of noon! 1685
Canst thou not draw a deeper scene,—and shew
The Mighty Potentate to whom belong
These rich regalia, pompously display'd
To kindle that high hope? Like him of Uz,
I gaze around, I search on ev'ry side— 1690

Volume II.

P



O for a glimpse of him my soul adores!
As the chas'd hart, amid the desert waste,
Pants for the living stream, for him who made her
So pants the thirsty soul amid the blank
Of sublunary joys. Say, Goddess! where? 1695
Where blazes his bright court? where burns his throne?
Thou know'st, for thou art near him; by thee, round
His grand pavilion, sacred Fame reports
The fable curtain drawn. If not, can none
Of thy fair daughter-train, so swift of wing, 1700
Who travel far, discover where he dwells?
A star his dwelling pointed out below.
Ye Pleiades! Arcturus! Mazaroth!
And thou, Orion! of still keener eye!
Say ye, who guide the wilder'd in the waves, 1705
And bring them out of tempest into port!
On which land must I bend my course to find him?
These courtiers keep the secret of their King;
I wake whole nights, in vain, to steal it from them.

I wake, and, waking, climb Night's radiant scale
From sphere to sphere, the steps by Nature set 1711
For man's ascent, at once to tempt and aid;
To tempt his eye, and aid his tow'ring thought,
Till it arrives at the great goal of all.

In ardent Contemplation's rapid car, 1715
From earth, as from my barrier, I set out.
How swift I mount! diminish'd earth recedes:
I pass the moon; and, from her farther side,



Pierce heav'n's blue curtain; strike into remote;
 Where, with his lifted tube, the subtle sage 1720
 His artificial airy journey takes,
 And to celestial lengthens human sight.
 I pause at ev'ry planet on my road,
 And ask for him who gives their orbs to roll,
 Their foreheads fair to shine. From Saturn's ring, 1725
 In which of earths an army might be lost,
 With the bold comet take my bolder sight,
 Amid those sov'reign glories of the skies,
 Of independent, native lustre proud;
 The souls of systems! and the lords of life, 1730
 Thro' their wide empires!—What behold I now?
 A wilderness of wonder burning round,
 Where larger suns inhabit higher spheres;
 Perhaps the villas of descending gods;
 Nor halt I here; my toil is but begun; 1735
 'Tis but the threshold of the Deity;
 Or, far beneath it, I am grov'ling still.
 Nor is it strange; I built on a mistake:
 The grandeur of his works, whence Folly sought
 For aid, to Reason sets his glory higher; 1740
 Who built thus high for worms (mere worm to him)
 O where, Lorenzo! must the builder dwell?
 Pause, then, and, for a moment, here respire—
 If human thought can keep its station here.
 Where am I?—where is earth?—nay, where art thou,
 O Sun?—Is the sun turn'd recluse?—and are 1746



His boasted expeditions short to mine?—
 To mine how short! On Nature's Alps I stand,
 And see a thousand firmaments beneath!
 A thousand systems! as a thousand grains! 1750
 So much a stranger, and so late arriv'd,
 How can man's curious spirit not inquire
 What are the natives of this world sublime,
 Of this so foreign, unterrestrial sphere,
 Where mortal, untranslated, never stray'd? 1755

“ O ye, as distant from my little home
 “ As swiftest sunbeams in an age can fly!
 “ Far from my native element I roam,
 “ In quest of new and wonderful to man.
 “ What province this, of his immense domain, 1760
 “ Whom all obeys? or mortals here, or gods?
 “ Ye Bord'ers on the coasts of Bliss! what are you?
 “ A colony from heav'n? or only rais'd,
 “ By frequent visit from heav'n's neighb'ring realms,
 “ To secondary gods, and half divine?— 1765
 “ Whate'er your nature, this is past dispute,
 “ Far other life you live, far other tongue
 “ You talk, far other thought, perhaps, you think,
 “ Than man. How various are the works of God!
 “ But say, what thought? Is Reason here enthron'd,
 “ And absolute? or Sense in arms against her? 1771
 “ Have you two lights? or need you no reveal'd?
 “ Enjoy your happy realms their golden age?
 “ And had your Eden an abstemious Eve?—

- “ Our Eve’s fair daughters prove their pedigree, 1775
“ And ask their Adams—“ Who would not be wife?”
“ Or, if your mother fell, are you redeem’d?
“ And if redeem’d—is your Redeemer scorn’d?
“ Is this your final residence? if not,
“ Change you your scene translated, or by death?
“ And if by death, what death?—Know you dis-
“ ease? 1781
“ Or horrid war?—With war, this fatal hour,
“ Europa groans (so call we a small field
“ Where kings run mad.) In our world, Death deposes
“ Intemperance to do the work of Age, 1785
“ And, hanging up the quiver Nature gave him,
“ As slow of execution, for dispatch
“ Sends forth imperial butchers; bids them slay
“ Their sheep, (the silly sheep they fleec’d before)
“ And toss him twice ten thousand at a meal. 1790
“ Sit all your executioners on thrones?
“ With you can rage for plunder make a god?
“ And bloodshed wash out ev’ry other stain?—
“ But you, perhaps, can’t bleed: from matter gross
“ Your spirits clean are delicately clad 1795
“ In fine-spun ether, privileg’d to soar,
“ Unloaded, uninfected. How unlike
“ The lot of man! how few of human race
“ By their own mud unmurder’d! how we wage
“ Self-war eternal!—Is your painful day 1800
“ Of hardy conflict o’er? or are you still



“ Raw candidates at school? and have you those
“ Who disaffect reversions, as with us?—
“ But what are we? you never heard of man,
“ Or earth, the bedlam of the universe! 1805
“ Where Reason (undiseas’d with you) runs mad,
“ And nurses Folly’s children as her own,
“ Fond of the foulest. In the sacred mount
“ Of Holiness, where Reason is pronounc’d
“ Infallible, and thunders like a god, 1810
“ Ev’n there, by saints the demons are outdone;
“ What these think wrong our saints refine to right,
“ And kindly teach dull Hell her own black arts;
“ Satan, instructed, o’er their morals smiles.—
“ But this how strange to you who know not man?
“ Has the least rumour of our race arriv’d? 1816
“ Call’d here Elijah in his flaming car?
“ Past by you the good Enoch, on his road
“ To those fair fields whence Lucifer was hurl’d;
“ Who brush’d, perhaps, your sphere in his descent,
“ Stain’d your pure crystal ether, or let fall 1821
“ A short eclipse from his portentous shade?
“ O that the fiend had lodg’d on some broad orb
“ Athwart his way, nor reach’d his present home,
“ Then blacken’d earth, with footsteps foul’d in hell,
“ Nor wash’d in ocean, as from Rome he past 1826
“ To Britain’s isle, too, too conspicuous there.”

But this is all digression: where is he
That o’er heav’n’s battlements the felon hurl’d



To groans, and chains, and darkness? where is he
Who sees creation's summit in a vale? 1831
He whom, while man is man, he can't but seek,
And if he finds, commences more than man?
O for a telescope his throne to reach!
Tell me, ye Learn'd on earth! or Bless'd above! 1835
Ye searching, ye Newtonian angels! tell
Where your Great Master's orb? his planets where?
Those conscious satellites, those morning-stars,
First-born of Deity! from central love,
By veneration most profound, thrown off; 1840
By sweet attraction no less strongly drawn;
Aw'd, and yet raptur'd; raptur'd, yet serene;
Past thought illustrious, but with borrow'd beams;
In still approaching circles still remote,
Revolving round the sun's eternal Sire? 1845
Or sent, in lines direct, on embassies
To nations—in what latitude?—beyond
Terrestrial thought's horizon!—and on what
High errands sent?—Here human effort ends,
And leaves me still a stranger to his throne. 1850
Full well it might! I quite mistook my road;
Born in an age more curious than devout,
More fond to fix the place of heav'n or hell,
Than studious this to shun, or that secure.
'Tis not the curious but the pious path 1855
That leads me to my point. Lorenzo! know,
Without or star or angel for their guide,



Who worship God shall find him. Humble Love,
And not proud Reason, keeps the door of heav'n;
Love finds admission where proud Science fails. 1860
Man's science is the culture of his heart,
And not to lose his plumbet in the depths
Of Nature, or the more profound of God :
Either to know is an attempt that sets
The wisest on a level with the fool. 1865
To fathom Nature (ill-attempted here!)
Past doubt is deep philosophy above;
Higher degrees in bliss archangels take,
As deeper learn'd, the deepest learning still.
For what a thunder of omnipotence 1870
(So might I dare to speak) is seen in all !
In man ! in earth ! in more amazing skies !
Teaching this lesson Pride is loath to learn—
“ Not deeply to discern, nor much to know,
“ Mankind was born to wonder and adore.” 1875
And is there cause for higher wonder still
Than that which struck us from our past surveys ?
Yes; and for deeper adoration too.
From my late airy travel unconfin'd,
Have I learn'd nothing?—Yes, Lorenzo ! this; 1880
Each of these stars is a religious house;
I saw their altars smoke, their incense rise,
And heard hosannas ring thro' ev'ry sphere,
A seminary fraught with future gods.
Nature all o'er is consecrated ground, 1885

Teeming with growths immortal and divine.
 The great Proprietor's all-bounteous hand
 Leaves nothing waste, but sows these fiery fields
 With seeds of Reason, which to virtues rise
 Beneath his genial ray; and, if escap'd 1890
 The pestilential blasts of stubborn will,
 When grown mature are gather'd for the skies.
 And is devotion thought too much on earth,
 When beings, so superior, homage boast,
 And triumph in prostrations to the throne? 1895

But wherefore more of planets or of stars?
 Ethereal journeys, and, discover'd there,
 Ten thousand worlds, ten thousand ways devout,
 All Nature sending incense to the throne,
 Except the bold Lorenzos of our sphere? 1900
 Op'ning the solemn sources of my soul,
 Since I have pour'd, like feign'd Eridanus,
 My flowing numbers o'er the flaming skies,
 Nor see of fancy or of fact what more
 Invites the Muse—here turn we and review 1905
 Our past nocturnal landscape wide;—then say,
 Say, then, Lorenzo! with what burst of heart
 The whole, at once, revolving in his thought,
 Must man exclaim, adoring, and aghast?
 “O what root! O what branch, is here! 1910
 “O what a Father! what a family?
 “Worlds! systems! and creations!—and creations,
 “In one agglomerated cluster, hung,



“ Great Vine*! on thee, on thee the cluster hangs,
“ The filial cluster! infinitely spread 1915
“ In glowing globes, with various being fraught,
“ And drinks (nectarcous draught!) immortal life.
“ Or, shall I say: (for who can say enough?)
“ A constellaton of ten thousand gems,
“ (And, O! of what dimension! of what weight!) 1920
“ Set in one signet, flames on the right hand
“ Of Majesty Divine! The blazing seal,
“ That deeply stamps, on all created mind,
“ Indelible, his sovereign attributes,
“ Omnipotence and Love! that passing bound, 1925
“ And this surpassing that. Nor stop we here
“ For want of pow’r in God, but thought in man.
“ Ev’n this acknowledg’d leaves us still in debt;
“ If greater aught, that greater all is thine,
“ Dread Sire!—Accept this miniature of thee, 1930
“ And pardon an attempt from mortal thought,
“ In which archangels might have fail’d unblam’d.”
How such ideas of th’ Almighty’s pow’r,
And such ideas of th’ Almighty’s plan,
(Ideas not absurd) distend the thought 1935
Of feeble mortals! nor of them alone!
The fulness of the Deity breaks forth
In inconceivables to men and gods.
Think, then, O think, nor ever drop the thought,
How low must man descend when gods adore! 1940

* John xv. 1.

Have I not, then, accomplish'd my proud boast?
 Did I not tell thee "We would mount *, Lorenzo!
 "And kindle our devotion at the stars?"

And have I fail'd? and did I flatter thee?

And art all adamant? and dost confute, 1945

All urg'd, with one irrefragable smile?

Lorenzo! mirth how miserable here!

Swear by the stars, by Him who made them, swear,

Thy heart, henceforth, shall be as pure as they;

Then thou, like them, shalt shine; like them, shalt rise

From low to lofty, from obscure to bright, 1951

By due gradation, Nature's sacred law.

The stars from whence?—ask Chaos—he can tell.

These bright temptations to idolatry

From darkness and confusion took their birth; 1955

Sons of Deformity! from fluid dregs

Tartarean first they rose to masses rude,

And then to spheres opaque; then dimly shone,

Then brighten'd; then blaz'd out in perfect day.

Nature delights in progress, in advance. 1960

From worse to better; but when minds ascend,

Progress, in part, depends upon themselves.

Heav'n aids exertion. Greater makes the great.

The voluntary little lessens more.

O be a man! and thou shalt be a god! 1965

And half self-made!—ambition how divine!

O thou, ambitious of disgrace alone!

Still undevout? unkindled?—tho' high taught,

* Ver. 616.



School'd by the skies, and pupil of the stars,
Rank coward to the fashionable world! 1970
Art thou ashamed to bend thy knee to Heav'n?
Curs'd fume of pride, exhal'd from deepest hell!
Pride in religion is man's highest praise.
Bent on destruction! and in love with death!
Not all these luminaries, quench'd at once, 1975
Were half so sad as one benighted mind,
Which gropes for happiness, and meets despair!
How, like a widow in her weeds, the Night,
Amid her glimm'ring tapers, silent sits!
How sorrowful, how desolate, she weeps 1980
Perpetual dews, and saddens Nature's scene!
A scene more sad sin makes the darken'd soul,
All comfort kills, nor leaves one spark alive.

Tho' blind of heart, still open is thine eye.
Why such magnificence in all thou seest? 1985
Of matter's grandeur, know one end is this,
To tell the rational, who gazes on it,—
"Tho' that immensely great, still greater he
" Whose breast, capacious, can embrace and lodge,
" Unburden'd, Nature's universal scheme; 1990
" Can grasp creation with a single thought;
" Creation grasp, and not exclude its Sire."—
To tell him farther—"It behoves him much
" To guard th' important yet depending fate
" Of being, brighter than a thousand suns; 1995
" One single ray of thought outshines them all."



And if man hears obedient, soon he'll soar
Superior heights, and on his purple wing,
His purple wing bedropp'd with eyes of gold,
Rising, where thought is now deny'd to rise, 2000
Look down triumphant on these dazzling spheres.
Why then persist?---no mortal ever liv'd
But, dying, he pronounc'd (when words are true)
The whole that charms thee absolutely vain;
Vain, and far worse!---Think thou with dying men;
O condescend to think as angels think! 2006
O tolerate a chance for happiness!
Our nature such, ill choice insures ill fate;
And hell had been, tho' there had been no God.
Dost thou not know, my new Astronomer! 2010
Earth, turning from the sun, brings night to man?
Man, turning from his God, brings endless night;
Where thou canst read no morals, find no friend,
Amend no manners, and expect no peace.
How deep the darkness! and the groan how loud! 2015
And far, how far, from lambent are the flames!--
Such is Lorenzo's purchase! such his praise!
The proud, the politic, Lorenzo's praise!
Tho' in his ear, and levell'd at his heart,
I've half read o'er the volume of the skies. 2020
For think not thou hast heard all this from me;
My song but echoes what great Nature speaks.
What has she spoken? Thus the goddess spoke,
Thus speaks for ever;—"Place, at Nature's head,

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“ A Sov’reign which o’er all things rolls his eye, 2023
“ Extends his wing, promulgates his commands,
“ But, above all, diffuses endless good,
“ To whom, for sure redress, the wrong’d may fly,
“ The vile for mercy, and the pain’d for peace;
“ By whom the various tenants of these spheres, 2030
“ Diversify’d in fortunes, place, and powers,
“ Rais’d in enjoyment, as in worth they rise,
“ Arrive at length (if worthy such approach)
“ At that bless’d fountain-head from which they
“ Where conflict past redoubles present joy, [stream,
“ And present joy looks forward on increase, 2036
“ And that on more; no period! ev’ry step
“ A double boon! a promise and a bliss.”
How easy sits this scheme on human hearts!
It suits their make, it sooths their vast desires; 2040
Passion is pleas’d, and Reason asks no more:
’Tis rational! ’tis great!—but what is thine?
It darkens! shocks! excruciates! and confounds!
Leaves us quite naked, both of help and hope,
Sinking from bad to worse; few years the sport 2045
Of Fortune, then the morsel of Despair.
Say, then, Lorenzo! (for thou know’st it well)
What’s vice?—mere want of compass in our thought.
Religion what?—the proof of common-sense.
How art thou hooted where the least prevails! 2050
Is it my fault if these truths call thee Fool?
And thou shalt never be miscall’d by me.



Can neither Shame nor Terror stand thy friend?
 And art thou still an insect in the mire?
 How like thy guardian angel have I flown, 2055
 Snatch'd thee from earth, escorted thee thro' all
 Th' ethereal armies, walk'd thee, like a god,
 Thro' splendours of first magnitude, arrang'd
 On either hand; clouds thrown beneath thy feet;
 Close-cruis'd on the bright paradise of God, 2060
 And almost introduc'd thee to the throne!
 And art thou still carousing, for delight,
 Rank poison? first fermenting to mere froth,
 And then subsiding into final gall?
 To beings of sublime, immortal make, 2065
 How shocking is all joy whose end is sure!
 Such joy more shocking still, the more it charms!
 And dost thou chuse what ends ere well begun,
 And infamous as short? and dost thou chuse
 (Thou, to whose palate glory is so sweet) 2070
 To wade into perdition thro' contempt,
 Not of poor bigots only, but thy own?
 For I have peep'd into thy cover'd heart,
 And seen it blush beneath a boastful brow;
 For by strong Guilt's most violent assault, 2075
 Conscience is but disabled, not destroy'd.
 O thou most awful being! and most vain!
 Thy will how frail! how glorious is thy power!
 Tho' dread Eternity has sown her seeds
 Of bliss and woe in thy despotic breast; 2080



Tho' heav'n and hell depend upon thy choice,
A butterfly comes cross, and both are fled.
Is this the picture of a rational?
This horrid image, shall it be most just
Lorenzo! no; it cannot,—shall not be,
If there is force in reason, or in sounds
Chanted beneath the glimpses of the moon
A magio, at this planetary hour,
When Slumber locks the gen'ral lip, and dreams,
Thro' senseless mazes, hunt souls uninspir'd.
Attend—the sacred mysteries begin—
My solemn nightborn adjuration hear;
Hear, and I'll raise thy spirit from the dust,
While the stars gaze on this enchantment new;
Enchantment not infernal, but divine!

“ By Silence, Death's peculiar attribute;
“ By Darkness, Guilt's inevitable doom;
“ By Darkness and by Silence, sisters dread!
“ That draw the curtain round Night's ebon throne,
“ And raise ideas solemn as the scene!
“ By Night, and all of awful Night presents
“ To thought or sense (of awful much, to both,
“ The goddess brings!) By these her trembling fires,
“ Like Vesta's, ever-burning, and, like her's,
“ Sacred to thoughts immaculate and pure!
“ By these bright orators that prove and praise,
“ And press thee to revere the Deity,
“ Perhaps, too, aid thee, when rever'd, a while,



“ To reach his throne, as stages of the soul 2109
“ Thro’ which, at different periods, she shall pass,
“ Refining gradual, for her final height,
“ And purging off some dross at ev’ry sphere!
“ By this dark pall thrown o’er the silent world!
“ By the world’s kings and kingdoms most renown’d,
“ From short Ambition’s zenith set for ever, 2115
“ Sad presage to vain boasters, now in bloom!
“ By the long list of swift mortality,
“ From Adam downward to this ev’ning knell,
“ Which Midnight waves in Fancy’s startled eye, 2119
“ And shocks her with an hundred centuries,[thought!
“ Round Death’s black banner throng’d in human
“ By thousands, now, resigning their last breath,
“ And calling thee—wert thou so wise to hear!
“ By tombs o’er tombs arising, human earth
“ Ejected, to make room for—human earth, 2125
“ The monarch’s terror! and the sexton’s trade!
“ By pompous obsequies that shun the day,
“ The torch funereal, and the nodding plume,
“ Which makes poor man’s humiliation proud,
“ Boast of our ruin! triumph of our dust! 2130
“ By the damp vault that weeps o’er royal bones,
“ And the pale lamp that shews the ghastly dead,
“ More ghastly thro’ the thick incumbent gloom!
“ By visits (if there are) from darker scenes,
“ The gliding spectre! and the groaning grove! 2135
“ By groans, and graves, and miseries that groan



“ For the grave’s shelter! By desponding men,
“ Senseless to pains of death from pangs of guilt!
“ By Guilt’s last audit! By yon’ moon in blood,
“ The rocking firmament, the falling stars, 2140
“ And thunder’s last discharge, great Nature’s knell!
“ By second Chaos, and eternal Night,”—
Be wise—nor let Philander blame my charm;
But own not ill discharg’d my double debt,
Love to the living, duty to the dead. 2145
For know I’m but executor; he left
This moral legacy; I make it o’er
By his command: Philander hear in me,
And Heav’n in both.—If deaf to these, oh! hear
Florello’s tender voice; his weal depends 2150
On thy resolve; it trembles at thy choice:
For his sake—love thyself: example strikes
All human hearts; a bad example more,
More still a father’s; that insures his ruin.
As parent of his being, wouldst thou prove 2155
Th’ unnatural parent of his miseries,
And make him curse the being which thou gav’st?
Is this the blessing of so fond a father?
If careless of Lorenzo, spare, oh! spare
Florello’s father, and Philander’s friend! 2160
Florello’s father ruin’d, ruins him;
And from Philander’s friend the world expects
A conduct no dishonour to the dead.
Let passion do what nobler motive should;

Let love and emulation rise in aid. 2165
To reason, and persuade thee to be—blest'd.

This seems not a request to be deny'd;
Yet (such th' infatuation of mankind!)
'Tis the most hopeless man can make to man.

Shall I then rise in argument and warmth? 2170
And urge Philander's posthumous advice,
From topics yet unbroach'd?—

But, oh! I faint! my spirits fail!—nor strange!
So long on wing, and in no middle clime!
To which my great Creator's glory call'd; 2175

And calls—but, now, in vain. Sleep's dewy wand
Has strok'd my drooping lips, and promises
My long arrear of rest: the downy god
(Wont to return with our returning peace)

Will pay, ere long and bless me with repose. 2180
Haste, haste, sweet Stranger! from the peasant's cot,
The shipboy's hammoc, or the soldier's straw,

Whence Sorrow never chas'd thee; with thee bring
Not hideous visions, as of late, but draughts
Delicious of well-tasted cordial rest, 2185

Man's rich restorative; his balmy bath,
That supples, lubricates, and keeps in play
The various movements of this nice machine,
Which asks such frequent periods of repair.

When tir'd with vain rotations of the day 2190
Sleep winds us up for the succeeding dawn,
Fresh we spin on, till sickness clogs our wheels,

Or death quite breaks the spring, and motion ends:
When will it end with me?

———"Thou only know'st, 2195
"Thou, whose broad eye the future and the past
"Joins to the present, making one of three
"To moral thought! thou know'st, and thou alone,
"All-knowing!—all unknown!—and yet well known!
"Near, tho' remote! and, tho' unfathom'd, felt!
"And, tho' invisible, for ever seen! 2201
"And seen in all! the great and the minute:
"Each globe above, with its gigantic race,
"Each flow'r, each leaf, with its small people swarm'd,
"(Those puny vouchers of Omnipotence!) 2205
"To the first thought that asks 'From whence?' declare
"Their common source: thou fountain, running o'er
"In rivers of communicated joy!
"Who gav'st us speech for far, far humbler themes!
"Say by what name shall I presume to call 2210
"Him I see burning in these countless suns,
"As Moses in the bush? Illustrious Mind!
"The whole creation less, far less, to thee,
"Than that to the creation's ample round, 2214
"How shall I name thee?—How my lab'ring soul
"Heaves underneath the thought, too big for birth!
"Great System of perfections! mighty Cause
"Of causes mighty! Cause uncaus'd! sole root
"Of Nature, that luxuriant growth of God!
"First Father of effects! that progeny 2220



" Of endless series, where the golden chain's
 " Last link admits a period who can tell?
 " Father of all that is or heard or hears!
 " Father of all that is or seen or sees!
 " Father of all that is or shall arise! 2225
 " Father of this immeasurable mass
 " Of matter multiform, or dense or rare,
 " Opaque or lucid, rapid or at rest,
 " Minute, or passing bound! in each extreme
 " Of like amaze and mystery to man. 2230
 " Father of these bright millions of the night!
 " Of which the least full Godhead had proclaim'd,
 " And thrown the gazer on his knee—Or, say,
 " Is appellation higher still thy choice?
 " Father of matter's temporary lords! 2235
 " Father of spirits! nobler offspring! sparks
 " Of high paternal glory, rich endow'd
 " With various measures, and with various modes
 " Of instinct, reason, intuition; beams
 " More pale or bright from day divine, to break
 " The dark of matter organiz'd (the ware 2241
 " Of all created spirit) beams that rise
 " Each over other in superior light,
 " Till the last ripens into lustre strong,
 " Of next approach to Godhead. Father fond 2245
 " (Far fonder than e'er bore that name on earth)
 " Of intellectual beings! beings blest'd
 " With pow'rs to please thee, not of passive ply



“ To laws they know not; beings lodg’d in seats ”
“ Of well-adapted joys, in different domes 2250
“ Of this imperial palace for thy sons;
“ Of this proud, populous, well-policy’d,
“ Tho’ boundless habitation, plann’d by thee;
“ Whose several clans their several climates suit,
“ And transposition, doubtless, would destroy. 2255
“ Or, oh! indulge, immortal King! indulge
“ A title less august, indeed, but more
“ Endearing; ah! how sweet in human ears!
“ Sweet in our ears, and triumph in our hearts!
“ Father of immortality to man! 2260
“ A theme that lately * fet my soul on fire—
“ And thou the next! yet equal! thou by whom
“ That blessing was convey’d, far more! was bought;
“ Ineffable the price! by whom all worlds 2264
“ Were made, and one redeem’d! illustrious Light
“ From light illustrious! thou, whose regal power,
“ Finite in time, but infinite in space,
“ On more than adamantine basis fix’d,
“ O’er more, far more, than diadems and thrones
“ Inviolably reigns, the dread of gods! 2270
“ And, oh! the friend of man! beneath whose foot,
“ And by the mandate of whose awful nod,
“ All regions, revolutions, fortunes, fates,
“ Of high, of low, of mind, and matter, roll
“ Thro’ the short channels of expiring time, 2275

* Nights the Sixth and Seventh.



" Or shoreless ocean of eternity,
 " Calm or tempestuous (as thy Spirit breathes)
 " In absolute subjection!—And, O thou!
 " The glorious Third! distinct, not separate!
 " Beaming from both! with both incorporate, 2280
 " And (strange to tell!) incorporate with dust!
 " By condescension, as thy glory, great,
 " Inshrin'd in man! of human hearts, if pure,
 " Divine Inhabitant! the tie divine
 " Of heav'n with distant earth! by whom, I trust,
 " (If not inspir'd) uncensur'd this address 2286
 " To thee, to them—to whom?—mysterious power!
 " Reveal'd—yet unreveal'd! darkness in light!
 " Number in unity! our joy! our dread!
 " The triple bolt that lays all wrong in ruin! 2290
 " That animates all right, the triple sun!
 " Sun of the soul! her never-setting sun!
 " Triune, unutterable, unconceiv'd,
 " Absconding, yet demonstrable, Great God!
 " Greater than greatest! better than the best! 2295
 " Kinder than kindest! with soft Pity's eye,
 " Or (stronger still to speak it) with thine own,
 " From thy bright home, from that high firmament
 " Where thou, from all eternity, hast dwelt;
 " Beyond archangels' unassisted ken, 2300
 " From far above what mortals highest call,
 " From Elevation's pinnacle, look down,
 " Thro'—what? confounding interval! thro' all,



“ And more, than lab’ring Fancy can conceive;
“ Thro’ radiant ranks of essences unknown; 2305
“ Thro’ hierachies from hierarchies detach’d
“ Round various banners of Omnipotence,
“ With endless change of rapturous duties fir’d;
“ Thro’ wondrous beings’ interposing swarms,
“ All clustering at the call, to dwell in thee; 2310
“ Thro’ this wide waste of worlds! this vista vast,
“ All fanded o’er with suns, suns turn’d to night
“ Before thy feeblest beam—look down—down—
“ On a poor breathing particle in dust, [down,
“ Or, lower, an immortal in his crimes: 2315
“ His crimes forgive! forgive his virtues too!
“ Those smaller faults, half-converts to the right:
“ Nor let me close these eyes, which never more
“ May see the sun (tho’ Night’s descending scale
“ Now weighs up Morn) unpity’d and unblest’d!
“ In thy displeasure dwells eternal pain; 2321
“ Pain, our aversion; pain, which strikes me now;
“ And, since all pain is terrible to man,
“ Tho’ transient, terrible, at thy good hour,
“ Gently, ah, gently, lay me in my bed, 2325
“ My clay-cold bed! by nature, now, so near;
“ By nature near, still nearer by disease!
“ Till then be this an emblem of my grave;
“ Let it outpreach the preacher; ev’ry night
“ Let it outcry the boy at Philip’s ear, 2330
“ That tongue of death! that herald of the tomb!



" And when (the shelter of thy wing implor'd)
 " My senses, sooth'd, shall sink in soft repose,
 " O sink this truth still deeper in my soul,
 " Suggested by my pillow, sign'd by Fate,
 " First in Fate's volume, at the page of Man—
 " "Man's sickly soul, tho' turn'd and toss'd for ever
 " From side to side, can rest on nought but thee;
 " Here in full trust, hereafter in full joy!"
 " On thee, the promis'd, sure, eternal down
 " Of spirits, toil'd in travel thro' this vale;
 " Nor of that pillow shall my soul despond;
 " For—Love almighty! Love almighty! (sing,
 " Exult, Creation!) Love almighty reigns!
 " That death of death! that cordial of despair!
 " And loud Eternity's triumphant song!
 " Of whom no more:—for, O thou Patron-God!
 " Thou God and mortal! thence more God to man!
 " Man's theme eternal! man's eternal theme!
 " Thou canst not 'scape uninjur'd from our praise:
 " Uninjur'd from our praise can he escape
 " Who, disembosom'd from the Father, bows
 " The heav'n of heav'n's to kiss the distant earth!
 " Breathes out in agonies a sinless soul!
 " Against the cross Death's iron sceptre breaks!
 " From famish'd Ruin plucks her human prey!
 " Throws wide the gates celestial to his foes!
 " Their gratitude, for such a boundless debt,
 " Deputes their suff'ring brothers to receive!

“ And if deep human guilt in payment fails, 2360
“ As deeper guilt prohibits our despair!
“ Enjoins it, as our duty, to rejoice!
“ And (to close all) omnipotently kind,
“ Takes his delights among the sons of men *.”

What words are these—and did they come from
heav’n? 2365

And were they spoke to man? to guilty man?

What are all mysteries to love like this?

The songs of angels, all the melodies

Of choral gods, are wafted in the sound;

Heal and exhilarate the broken heart, 2370

Tho’ plung’d, before, in horrors dark as night:

Rich prelibation of consummate joy!

Nor wait we dissolution to be blest’d.

This final effort of the moral Muse,

How justly *titled*†! nor for me alone; 2375

For all that read. What spirit of support,

What heights of Consolation, crown my song!

Then farewell Night! of darkness, now, no more;

Joy breaks, shines, triumphs; ’tis eternal day.

Shall that which rises out of nought complain 2380

Of a few evils, paid with endless joys?

My Soul! henceforth, in sweetest union join

The two supports of human happiness,

Which some, erroneous, think can never meet,

True taste of life, and constant thought of death!

* Prov. chap. viii.

† The Consolation.

The thought of death, sole victor of its dread! 2386
Hope be thy joy, and probity thy skill;
Thy patron he whose diadem has dropp'd
Yon' gems of heav'n, eternity thy prize;
And leave the racers of the world their own, 2390
Their feather and their froth, for endless toils:
They part with all for that which is not bread;
They mortify, they starve, on wealth, fame, power,
And laugh to scorn the fools that aim at more.
How must a spirit, late escap'd from earth, 2395
Suppose Philander's, Lucia's, or Narcissa's,
The truth of things new-blazing in its eye,
Look back, astonish'd on the ways of men,
Whose lives' whole drift is to forget their graves!
And when our present privilege is past, 2400
To scourge us with due sense of its abuse,
The same astonishment will seize us all.
What then must pain us would preserve us now.
Lorenzo! 'tis not yet too late. Lorenzo!
Seize wisdom, ere 'tis torment to be wise; 2405
That is, seize Wisdom ere she seizes thee.
For what, my small Philosopher! is hell?
'Tis nothing but full knowledge of the truth,
When Truth, resisted long, is sworn our foe,
And calls Eternity to do her right. 2410

Thus darkness aiding intellectual light,
And sacred Silence whisp'ring truths divine,
And truths divine converting pain to peace,

R ij



My Song the midnight raven has outwing'd,
 And shot, ambitious of unbounded scenes, 2415
 Beyond the flaming limits of the world
 Her gloomy flight. But what avails the flight
 Of Fancy, when our hearts remain below?
 Virtue abounds in flatterers and foes;
 'Tis pride to praise her, penance to perform: 2420
 To more than words, to more than worth of tongue,
 Lorenzo! rise, at this auspicious hour,
 An hour when Heav'n's most intimate with man;
 When, like a falling star, the ray divine
 Glides swift into the bosom of the just; 2425
 And just are all determin'd to reclaim,
 Which sets that title high within thy reach.
 Awake, then; thy Philander calls: awake!
 Thou, who shalt wake when the Creation sleeps;
 When, like a taper, all these suns expire; 2430
 When Time, like him of Gaza in his wrath,
 Plucking the pillars that support the world,
 In Nature's ample ruins lies entomb'd,
 And midnight, universal midnight! reigns. 2434

End of Night-Thoughts.



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