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Albert Howes.

Trin. Coll. Camb.

1863.









EDWARD YOUNG D.C.L.

Printed for John Bell near Exeter Exchange, Strand London, Oct: 10<sup>th</sup> 1777.





BELL'S EDITION  
The POETS of GREAT BRITAIN.  
COMPILED FROM  
CHAUCER to CHURCHILL.



YOUNG VOLUME I.

Such is Earth's insensibly map, but far  
More faithful this worth is a true map of Man.

Epitaph.

Printed for John Bell near Easter Exchange Strand London Oct<sup>r</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> 1777.



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 shows 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 halliffs into parliament;  
When dying sinners, to blot out their score,  
Bequeath the Church the leavings of a whore;  
To chase 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. 1.

VOL. I.

EDINBURG:

AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINE.

ANNO 1777.



POETICAL WORKS  
OF THE REVISED  
DR. EDWARD YOUNG.

WITH THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

THESE POETICAL WORKS OF EDWARD YOUNG, ESQ. ARE NOW FIRST PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN, BY J. BELL, IN ST. MARTIN'S LANE, NEAR ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, AND BY J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD. 1765.

VOL. I.

THE END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

AT THE END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



THE  
POETICAL WORKS  
OF THE REVEREND  
DR. EDWARD YOUNG.  
VOL. I.

CONTAINING HIS  
*C O M P L A I N T :*  
OR,  
NIGHT-THOUGHTS  
ON LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY.

---

*Sunt lacrymae rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt. VIRG.*

---

Thro' many a field of moral sad disguise  
The Muse has Gray'd, and much of sorrow sown—  
O'er friends scarce'd full heartily she wept;  
Of love she loon the wonders she display'd;  
Pro'd Man immortal; shew'd the source of Joy;  
The grand tribunal rais'd; assign'd the bounds  
Of human grief. In few, to shade the whole,  
The moral Muse has shadow'd out a sketch,  
Tho' not in form, nor with a Raphael stroke,  
Yet mark our weakness's needs believe or do,  
In this our land of travail and of hope,  
For penur on earth, or prospect of the skies.

NIGHT IX.

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EDINBURG:  
AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.  
*Ann 1777.*

THE  
POETICAL WORKS  
OF THE REV. DR. EDWARD YOUNG  
VOL. I.

CONTAINING HIS  
COMPLAINT  
ON  
NIGHT-THOUGHTS  
TO THE GREAT FIRST CAUSE

Printed by J. B. Smith, at the Press of the University of Cambridge.

THESE POEMS, WHICH WERE FIRST  
PUBLISHED IN 1729, HAVE BEEN  
REPRINTED FROM THE ORIGINAL  
MANUSCRIPTS, AND ARE HERE  
PRESENTED TO THE PUBLIC IN A  
NEW EDITION, WITH A PREFACE  
AND A LIST OF THE VARIOUS  
EDITIONS. THE FIRST EDITION  
WAS PRINTED BY J. B. SMITH,  
AT THE PRESS OF THE UNIVERSITY  
OF CAMBRIDGE, IN 1729.

PRINTED BY J. B. SMITH,  
AT THE PRESS OF THE UNIVERSITY  
OF CAMBRIDGE.



THE LIFE OF  
DR. EDWARD YOUNG.

THERE is no remark more true, and none more trite, than that the lives of poets, of philosophers, of men of study, indeed, in general, seldom furnish materials for the pen of Biography, by any means so striking in themselves, or so interesting to the multitude of readers, as the lives of warriors, of statesmen, and such other characters as have been eminently distinguished in scenes of public activity and national enterprise. Of the literati, few ever mixed less, upon the whole, with what is termed *the world*, than the reverend and truly immortal Author of the *Night-Thoughts*; a circumstance in no ways to be regretted, however, when we reflect to what noble, to what god-like purposes he devoted all the solitary hours of a life lengthened to a period far beyond what man is commonly destined to enjoy.

This illustrious favourite of the Muses, and ornament of the present century, was the son of the Rev. Mr. Edward Young, a learned and pious divine of the Church of England, of whom there are still extant two volumes of sermons, which able judges have not scrupled to pronounce among the most valuable in our language.

The year in which our Poet was born seems not to be positively known, but in all probability it must have been in or about the 1679. Alike animated to excel



in virtue and to shine in literature, from the example and tuition of the best of fathers, he was, at an early age, matriculated into All-Soul's College, in Oxford, where, in the view of following the Civil law, he actually took a degree in that profession.

In 1704, whilst in this situation, he produced his celebrated poem on the Last Day, which, as being the pious, as well as masterly composition of a young obscure layman, became presently a popular and generally-admired performance.

Soon after this he wrote the poem entitled, *The Force of Religion: or, Vanquish'd Love*; which was likewise received with very flattering marks of distinction. To the noble family for whose amusement it was originally intended, this poem proved a most acceptable present; and indeed such was the success of both these juvenile performances, at a period when the noblest effusions of genius were daily issuing from the press—when, in fact, the literature of England seemed to have reached the zenith of its glory, that several of the first characters in the kingdom not only loaded him with applause, but actually courted his confidence and friendship.

Ever strongly inclined to the Church, from the natural bias of a mind formed for contemplation, our Author went into orders, and soon after we find him in possession of the Rectory of Wellwyn in Hertfordshire, worth about 500 *l. per annum*, and in the honourable list of King's Chaplains.





Though still caressed by the great, and apparently in the full blaze of court favour, it was yet the fortune of Dr. Young to obtain no higher clerical distinction. It must be allowed, indeed, that during that reign the arts of poetry, or of real eloquence, were but little promoted or encouraged from the throne: and indeed our Author could expect no great honours or emoluments from a master who hated poetry, and stigmatized all poets with the odious appellation of *buffoons*. Nevertheless, this disappointment he would not probably have experienced, had the Prince of Wales, by whom he was honoured with particular marks of regard, survived a little longer, or at least had he not been at such open variance with his royal father, and so avowed an enemy to all the then favourite measures of the court. With the demise of his Royal Highness, all the Doctor's hopes of advancement in the church vanished, and even the desire of opulence seemed to forsake him: for in his Night-Thoughts, mentioning himself, he observes that there was

.....one in Britain born, with courtiers bred,  
Who thought even wealth might come a day too late.

Notwithstanding, upon the death of Dr. Hales, he was taken into the service of the Princess Dowager of Wales, and succeeded as her Privy Chaplain.

At an advanced period of life he married the Lady Elizabeth Lee, daughter of the late Earl of Litchfield, and the widowed mother of two amiable chil-



dren, a son and a daughter, who both died young, and within a short time of each other. This melancholy interruption to his domestic happiness was almost immediately followed by the death of his wife, an aggravation of his sorrows which, in the poem quoted above, he thus bitterly bewails in an apostrophe to Death, one of the most animated of the kind perhaps in our language.

Infatiate Archer! could not one suffice!  
Thy shaft flew thrice, and thrice my peace was slain;  
And thrice, ere thrice you' must renew'd her joys.

Of all our Author's poetical performances, the Satires, entitled *Love of Fame*, *The Universal Passion*, have been generally considered as the most correct and finished, though written at an early period of life. By certain fastidious critics they have been stigmatized as a mere string of epigrams, which, however diversified, have still the same object in view, and, consequently, cannot fail to tire the reader before he has got through one half of them. We are, however, of opinion, that if simplicity of subject, elegance of style, and brilliancy of wit, be the grand *desiderata* in such compositions, the Satires of Dr. Young ensure applause; and that when even the great Dean Swift sarcastically observed of them, "that the Poet should have been either more angry or more merry," he rather characterised his own disposition than the intrinsic merit of the poems, which, as the Author ob-



serves in the preface, "have been favourably received at home and abroad."

In 1719 our Author made his first appearance in the train of Melpomene; and though *Busiris*, his first effort in the line of tragedy, afforded but little pleasure in the representation, and is indeed frequently tinged with the false sublime, yet, coolly examined in the closet, a reader of taste will discover in it a number of admirable lines, of elevated sentiments.

His next, and confessedly the best of his tragic compositions, (since it still continues a stock play at the theatres) was *The Revenge*. For the idea of this play, which appears from the *Annals of the Drama* to have been acted in the same year with *Busiris*, our Poet is evidently indebted partly to the *Othello* of Shakespeare, and partly to the *Abdalazar* of *Mrs. Behn*; on both which pieces he has indeed made many skillful improvements. But the writer of *Dr. Young's* life, prefixed to the fifth volume of his works, London edit. 1773, probably goes too great a length when he says, "We may assign this piece, with great justice, "a place in the first rank of our dramatic writings; "and were we to point out to foreigners a tragedy "as a proof of English genius, after two or three "others, perhaps this might be considered as a proper specimen."

His last, and, according to the general voice, his least perfect tragedy, was *The Brothers*, a play writ-



ten upon the plan of a French piece of great merit; and though it brought but little addition to his fame as a Poet, did yet reflect much additional lustre on his character as a Man, the emoluments arising from its exhibition having been generously allotted by the Author to the purposes of public charity.

Having followed Dr. Young through his dramatic career, let us now consider him as the moral and plaintive, the pious but gloomy, Author of *The Night-Thoughts*; a work composed in a style so strictly peculiar to himself, that of the many efforts which have been made to imitate it, none have proved in any degree successful. Than the *Night-Thoughts* never was any poem received with applause more general or unbounded. "The unhappy bard, whose grief  
"in melting numbers flows, and melancholy joys  
"diffuse around," has been sung by the profane as well as the pious. These, as already observed, were written under the recent, the overwhelming pressure of sorrow for the death of his wife, and of his daughter and son in law; the former of whom, though distinguished by no name, he often pathetically alludes to, while the two latter he beautifully characterises under the poetical appellations of *Narcissa* and *Philander*.

This sublime performance is addressed to *Lorenzo*, an infidel man of pleasure and dissipation; in a word, a mere man of the world. By *Lorenzo*, if general report says true, we are to understand his own son,



who, borne away by the passions too often fatal to youth, is well-known to have long laboured under the heavy punishment of a father's just displeasure. Whatever there may be in this, (and indeed it is of little moment to the public) every page of the poem abounds with the noblest flights of fancy—flights which, especially in his description of Death, in the act of noting down, from his secret stand, the exercises of a Bacchanalian society; in his epitaph on the departed World; in the issuing of Satan from his dungeon on the day of judgment, and a few others, might tempt a reader of warm imagination to suppose the poet der the immediate inspiration of the Divinity.

Uniformly a friend to virtue, and an indefatigable assertor of the dignity of human nature against all the cavils, not of the rude multitude only, but of many well-disposed, though mistaken and discontented moralists, in 1754, under the patronage of Queen Caroline, our Author published his *Estimate of Human Life*; a valuable tract, which, while it exhibits a striking picture of the writer's pious benevolence and charity, evinces him to have been alike qualified to shine in prose and verse.—Of this piece, according to his own account of it, the grand scope is to remove a prevalent opinion, highly reflective on Providence, “That  
“ this world is, in its own nature, (in other words, by  
“ God's appointment) a world of misery; and that  
“ to be in it is to be wretched unavoidably.”





• In *The Centaur not Fabulous*, another of his prose pieces, our Author combats, with arguments the most persuasive, clothed in language the most powerful, not only the prevailing vices of his own times, but the vices which, in the nature of things, always will prevail, till Sensuality shall have lost her sway, and Virtue and Reason shall have established their empire in the human breast.

When turned of eighty, our Author published (in the form of a letter addressed to his friend, the celebrated editor of *Sir Charles Grandison*) his *Conjectures on Original Composition*; a performance which (it is more than conjecture to add) will for ever remain a singular monument, that even at that age of general imbecillity and dotage, the intellectual powers of Dr. Young had apparently lost nothing of their wonted vigour.—“When we consider it as the work of a  
“man turned of eighty, (says the writer of *Young’s*  
“*life*, *Biographical Dictionary*, vol. 12th,) we are  
“not to be surprised so much that it has faults, as  
“how it should come to have beauties. It is indeed  
“strange that the load of fourscore years was not  
“able to keep down that vigorous fancy, which here  
“bursts the bounds of judgment, and breaks the slavish shackles of age and experience.”

But, alas! the publication of this piece proved to be little more than as the sudden blaze of a taper ready to expire in its socket; and happy had it been for



the poetical fame of its Author, had his subsequent and final production, entitled *Resignation*, been condemned to the flames. In justice to that fame, however, it is proper to observe that this poem would never have appeared, but for the indiscreet conduct of a few mistaken friends, who, having read it with pleasure in manuscript, thought no injury could accrue to the Author by clandestinely publishing sundry imperfect extracts from it in the papers.

But this failure in old age could no way diminish the fame he had been earning by a life of more than sixty years of excellence. As a Poet, he was still considered as the only Palladium of ancient genius we had left; and, as a Christian, one of the finest examples of primeval piety. Of a turn of mind naturally grave, though untinged with moroseness, our Author, when at home in the country, commonly passed a considerable portion of the day in walking among the tombs in his own churchyard. In his conversation, his writings, and even in his horticultural improvements, there was generally some reference, more or less latent, to the future life of man\*. Of the latter circumstance he

\* The altar-piece in the church of Wellwyn is the most curious in this or any other kingdom, being adorned with an elegant piece of needle work wrought by the Doctor's wife. In the middle is inscribed, in capital letters, the following sentence, *I am the bread of life*. On the north side of the chancel is the following inscription, supposed to be placed there by the order of Dr. Young. *Virginibus*: "Increase in stature and in wisdom." And on the south side, *Patrisque*: "and in favour with God and man."



gave a striking proof, in an alcove with a bench, a little way from his house, so painted, that at a distance it passed, with an unsuspecting gazer, for a real one. On advancing more closely to it the illusion was perceived, and, as a motto, appeared the words, *Invisibilia non decipiunt*; "The things unseen deceive us not." Yet, so far was he from gloominess of temper, he was fond of innocent sports and amusements; and not only instituted an assembly and bowling-green in the parish of which he was Rector, but frequently promoted the gaiety of the company in person.

Endowed with an uncommon wit, never was that wit more successfully pointed than against those who testified any contempt for decency or religion. His extempore epigram on M. de Voltaire, who happened, in our Author's presence, to throw out a few idle sneers at Milton, and the allegorical personages of Sin and Death, is well known. Young thus addressed him;

Thus art so witty, profligate, and thin;  
You seem a Milton, with his Death and Sin.

Of his sensibility we may likewise judge from an anecdote recorded of him in his clerical capacity. One Sunday, when preaching officially at St. James's, finding every effort to command the attention of his polite auditory ineffectual, pity for their infatuation got the better of decorum, and, seating himself back in the pulpit, he burst into a flood of tears.

Towards the close of his life, sensible of his still-in-





erasing infirmities, he suffered himself to be in a kind of pupilage; for he considered that at a certain time of life the second childhood of age demanded its wonted protection. His son, whose juvenile follies were long obnoxious to parental severity, was at last forgiven, and, a few legacies excepted, succeeded, by will, to the whole of his father's fortune. This great and good man, (having previously ordered all his papers to be burned) after having performed all that man could do to fill his post with dignity, regretted by all, full of years, and loaded with honours, breathed his last on the 5th of April 1765.

Those who know how much our Author comprised in a small compass, and who recollect that he never employed his pen but on subjects of importance, with such the irreparable loss of his manuscripts will be ever regretted; more especially when it is considered that he was the particular friend of Addison, whom he occasionally assisted in the *Spectator*, and, excepting the late Dr. Pearce, Bishop of Rochester, was the only surviving genius of that incomparable group of authors who rendered the reign of Queen Anne illustrious in the annals of literature.

VERSES TO THE AUTHOR.

Now let the Atheist tremble; thou alone  
 Canst bid his conscious heart the Godhead own.  
 Whom shalt thou not reform? O thou, hast seen  
 How God descends to judge the souls of men.  
 Thou heardest the sentence how the guilty mourn, 5  
 Driv'n out from God; and never to return.

Yet more, beheld ten thousand thunders fall,  
 And sudden vengeance wrap the flaming ball.  
 When Nature sunk; when every bolt was hurl'd,  
 Thou saw'st the boundless ruins of the world. 10

When guilty Sodom felt the burning rain,  
 And sulphur fell on the devoted plain;  
 The Patriarch thus, the fiery tempest past,  
 With pious horror view'd the desert waste;  
 The restless smoke still wav'd its curls around, 15  
 For ever rising from the glowing ground.

But tell me, oh! what heav'nly pleasure, tell,  
 To think so greatly, and describe so well!  
 How wast thou pleas'd the wondrous theme to try,  
 And find the thought of man could rise so high? 20  
 Beyond this world the labour to pursue,  
 And open all eternity to view?

But thou art best delighted to rehearse  
 Heav'n's holy dictates in exalted verse.



O thou hast power the harden'd heart to warm, 25  
 To grieve, to raise, to testify, to charm;  
 To fix the soul on God; to teach the mind  
 To know the dignity of human-kind;  
 By stricter rules well-govern'd life to scan,  
 And practise o'er the angel in the man 30

Magd. Col.  
 Oxon.

T. WARTON.

# TO A LADY, WITH THE LAST DAY.

MADAM,

HERE sacred truths, in lofty numbers told,  
 The prospect of a future state unfold;  
 The realms of night to mortal view display,  
 And the glad regions of eternal day.  
 This daring Author scorns, by vulgar ways 5  
 Of guilty wit, to merit worthless praise.  
 Full of her glorious theme, his tow'ring Muse,  
 With gen'rous zeal, a nobler fame pursues:  
 Religion's cause her ravish'd heart inspires,  
 And with a thousand bright ideas fires; 10  
 Transports her quick, impatient, piercing eye,  
 O'er the strait limits of mortality  
 To boundless orbs, and bids her fearless soar,  
 Where only Milton gain'd renown before;  
 Where various scenes alternately excite 15  
 Amazement, pity, terror, and delight.

B 17

Thus did the Muses sing in early times,  
Ere skill'd to flatter vice, and varnish crimes:  
Their lyres were tun'd to virtuous songs alone,  
And the chaste poet and the priest were one: 20  
But now, forgetful of their infant state,  
They sooth the wanton pleasures of the great;  
And from the press, and the licentious stage,  
With luscious poison taint the thoughtless age:  
Deceitful charms attract our wond'ring eyes, 25  
And specious ruin unsuspected lies.  
So the rich soil of India's blooming shores,  
Adorn'd with lavish Nature's choicest stores,  
Where serpents lurk, by flow'rs conceal'd from sight,  
Hides fatal danger under gay delight. 30

These purer thoughts from gross alloys refin'd,  
With heav'nly raptures elevate the mind:  
Not fram'd to raise a giddy, short-liv'd joy,  
Whose false allurements, while they please, destroy;  
But bliss resembling that of saints above, 35  
Sprung from the vision of th' Almighty Love:  
Firm, solid bliss, for ever great and new,  
The more 'tis known, the more admir'd, like you;  
Like you, fair Nymph! in whom united meet 40  
Endearing sweetness, unaffected wit,  
And all the glories of your sparkling race,  
While inward virtues heighten ev'ry grace.  
By these secur'd, you will with pleasure read  
Of future judgment, and the rising dead;

Of time's grand period, heav'n and earth o'erthrown;  
 And gasping Nature's last tremendous groan. 46  
 These, when the stars and sun shall be no more,  
 Shall beauty to your ravag'd form restore:  
 Then shall you shine with an immortal ray,  
 Improv'd by death, and brighten'd by decay. 50

Pemb. Col.  
 Oxon.

T. TRISTRAM.

# TO THE AUTHOR,

*On his Last Day, and Universal Passion.*

And must it be as thou hast sung,  
 Celestial Bard, seraphic Young!  
 Will there no trace, no point be found  
 Of all this spacious glorious round?  
 Yon' lamps of light must they decay? 5  
 On Nature's self Destruction prey?  
 Then fame, the most immortal thing  
 Ev'n thou canst hope, is on the wing.  
 Shall Newton's system be admir'd  
 When time and motion are expir'd? 10  
 Shall souls be curious to explore  
 Who rul'd an orb that is no more?  
 Or shall they quote the pictur'd age,  
 From Pope's and thy corrective page,  
 When vice and virtue lose their name 15  
 In deathless joy or endless shame?

While wears away the grand machine,  
The works of genius shall be seen :  
Beyond, what laurels can there be  
For Homer, Horace, Pope, or thee ? 10  
Thro' life we chase, with fond pursuit,  
What mocks our hope, like Sodom's fruit ;  
And, sure, thy plan was well design'd  
To cure this madness of the mind ;  
First beyond time our thoughts to raise, 15  
Then lash our love of transient praise ;  
In both we own thy doctrine just,  
And fame's a breath, and men are dust. 28

1736.

J. DANCER.





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# THE COMPLAINT.

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## PREFACE.

*AS the occasion of this Poem was real, not fictitious, so the method pursued in it was rather imposed, by what spontaneously arose in the Author's mind on that occasion, than meditated or designed; which will appear very probable from the nature of it; for it differs from the common mode of poetry, which is, from long narrations to draw short morals: here, on the contrary, the narrative is short, and the morality arising from it makes the bulk of the Poem. The reason of it is, that the facts mentioned did naturally pour these moral reflections on the thought of the writer.*

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## NIGHT I.

### ON LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY.

*Humbly inscribed to the*

RIGHT HON. ARTHUR ONLOW, ESQ.

*Speaker of the House of Commons.*

THU'N Nature's sweet restorer, balmy Sleep!  
He, like the world, his ready visit pays  
Where Fortune smiles; the wretched he forsakes:  
Swift on his downy plume flies from woe,  
And lights on lids unsully'd with a tear.

From short (as usual) and disturb'd repose  
I wake : how happy they who wake no more !  
Yet that were vain, if dreams infest the grave.  
I wake, emerging from a sea of dreams  
Tumultuous ; where my wreck'd desponding thought  
From wave to wave of fancy'd misery 11  
At random drove, her helm of reason lost.  
Tho' now restor'd, 'tis only change of pain,  
(A bitter change!) severer for severe :  
The day too short for my distress ; and night, 15  
Ev'n in the zenith of her dark domain,  
Is sunshine to the colour of my fate.

Night, fable goddess ! from her ebon throne,  
In rayless majesty, now stretches forth  
Her leaden sceptre o'er a slumb'ring world. 20  
Silence how dead ! and darkness how profound !  
Nor eye nor list'ning ear an object finds ;  
Creation sleeps. 'Tis as the gen'ral pulse  
Of life stood still, and nature made a pause ;  
An awful pause ! prophetic of her end. 25  
And let her prophecy be soon fulfill'd :  
Fate ! drop the curtain ; I can lose no more.

Silence and Darkness ! solemn sisters ! twins  
From ancient Night, who nurse the tender thought  
To reason, and on reason build resolve, 30  
(That column of true majesty in man)  
Assist me : I will thank you in the grave ;  
The grave your kingdom : there this frame shall fall.



A victim sacred to your dreary shrine.  
But what are ye?— 33

Thou, who didst put to flight  
Primeval Silence, when the morning stars,  
Exulting, shouted o'er the rising ball;  
O Thou! whose word from solid darkness struck  
That spark, the sun, strike wisdom from my soul; 40  
My soul, which flies to thee, her trust, her treasure,  
As misers to their gold, while others rest.

Thro' this opaque of nature and of soul,  
This double night, transmit one pitying ray,  
To lighten and to cheer. O lead my mind, 45  
(A mind that fain would wander from its woe)  
Lead it thro' various scenes of life and death,  
And from each scene the noblest truths inspire.  
Nor less inspire my conduct than my song;  
Teach my best reason reason; my best will 50  
Teach rectitude; and fix my firm resolve  
Wisdom to wed, and pay her long arrears:  
Nor let the phial of thy vengeance, pour'd  
On this devoted head, be pour'd in vain.

The bell strikes one. We take no note of time 55  
But from its loss: to give it then a tongue  
Is wise in man. As if an angel spoke  
I feel the solemn sound. If heard aright,  
It is the knell of my departed hours.  
Where are they? With the years beyond the flood. 60  
It is the signal that demands dispatch:



How much is to be done! My hopes and fears  
Start up alarm'd, and o'er life's narrow verge  
Look down—on what? A fathomless abyſs.  
A dread eternity! how ſurely mine! 65  
And can eternity belong to me,  
Poor penſioner on the bounties of an hour?  
How poor, how rich, how abject, how auguſt,  
How complicate, how wonderful, is man!  
How paſſing wonder He who made him ſuch! 70  
Who cent'rad in our make ſuch ſtrange extremes  
From different natures marvellouſly mix'd,  
Connexion exquisite of diſtant worlds!  
Diſtinguiſh'd link in being's endleſs chain!  
Midway from nothing to the Deity! 75  
A beam ethereal, fully'd and abſorpt!  
Tho' fully'd and diſhonour'd, ſtill divine!  
Dim miniature of greatneſs abſolute!  
An heir of glory! a frail child of duſt!  
Helpleſs immortal! inſect infinite! 80  
A worm! a god!—I tremble at myſelf,  
And in myſelf am loſt. At home a ſtranger,  
Thought wanders up and down, ſurpris'd, aghaſt,  
And wond'ring at her own. How reaſon reels?  
O what a miracle to man is man! 85  
Triumphantly diſtreſs'd! what joy! what dread!  
Alternately tranſported and alarm'd!  
What can preſerve my life! or what deſtroy!  
An angel's arm can't ſnatch me from the grave;

Legions of angels can't confine me there. 90

'Tis past conjecture; all things rise in proof.  
While o'er my limbs Sleep's soft dominion spread,  
What tho' my soul fantastic measures trod  
O'er fairy fields, or mourn'd along the gloom  
Of pathless woods, or down the craggy steep 95  
Hurl'd headlong, swam with pain the mantled pool,  
Or scal'd the cliff, or danc'd on hollow winds:

With antic shapes, wild natives of the brain!  
Her ceaseless flight, tho' devious, speaks her nature  
Of subtler essence than the trodden clod; 100

Active, aerial, tow'ring, unconfin'd,  
Unfetter'd with her gross companion's fall.  
Ev'n silent night proclaims my soul immortal;  
Ev'n silent night proclaims eternal day.

For human weal Heav'n husbands all events: 105  
Dull sleep instructs, nor sport vain dreams in vain.

Why then their loss deplore that are not lost?  
Why wanders wretched Thought their tombs around  
In infidel distress? Are angels there?

Slumbers, rak'd up in dust, ethereal fire? 110

They live! they greatly live a life on earth  
Unkindled, unconceiv'd, and from an eye  
Of tenderness let heav'nly pity fall  
On me, more justly number'd with the dead:  
This is the desert, this the solitude: 115

How populous, how vital is the grave!  
This is Creation's melancholy vault,

*I close I.*

C

The vale funeral, the sad cypress gloom;  
The land of apparitions, empty shades!  
All, all on earth is shadow, all beyond 110  
Is substance; the reverse is Folly's creed.  
How solid all, where change shall be no more?

This is the bud of being, the dim dawn,  
The twilight of our day, the vestibule.  
Life's theatre as yet is shut, and Death, 115  
Strong Death, alone can heave the massy bar,  
This gross impediment of clay remove,  
And make us, embryos of existence, free.  
From real life but little more remote  
Is he, not yet a candidate for light, 120  
The future embryo, slumb'ring in his sire.  
Embryos we must be till we burst the shell,  
Yon' ambient azure shell, and spring to life,  
The life of gods, O transport! and of man.

Yet man, fool man! here buries all his thoughts, 125  
Inters celestial hopes without one sigh.  
Pris'ner of earth, and pent beneath the moon,  
Here pinions all his wishes; wing'd by Heav'n  
To fly at infinite, and reach it there,  
Where seraphs gather immortality, 130  
On Life's fair tree, fast by the throne of God,  
What golden joys ambrosial clust'ring glow  
In his full beam, and ripen for the just,  
Where momentary ages are no more!  
Where Time, and Pain, and Chance, and Death expire!



And is it in the flight of threescore years 146  
To push eternity from human thought,  
And smother souls immortal in the dust?  
A soul immortal, spending all her fires,  
Wasting her strength in strenuous idleness, 150  
Thrown into tumult, raptur'd, or alarm'd,  
At aught this scene can threaten or indulge,  
Resembles ocean into tempest wrought,  
To waft a feather, or to drown a fly.

Where falls this censure? It o'erwhelms myself. 155  
How was my heart incrust'd by the world!  
O how self-fetter'd was my grov'ling soul!  
How, like a worm, was I wrapt round and round  
In silken thought, which reptile Fancy spun,  
Till darken'd Reason lay quite clouded o'er, 160  
With soft conceit of endless comfort here,  
Nor yet put forth her wings to reach the skies!

Night-visions may befriend (as sung above :)  
Our waking dreams are fatal. How I dream'd,  
Of things impossible! (could sleep do more?) 165  
Of joys perpetual in perpetual change!  
Of stable pleasures on the tossing wave!  
Eternal sunshine in the storms of life!  
How richly were my noon-tide trances hung  
With gorgeous tapestries of pictur'd joys! 170  
Joy behind joy, in endless perspective!  
Till at Death's toll, whose restless iron tongue  
Calls daily for his millions at a meal,

Startling I woke, and found myself undone.  
Where now my frenzy's pompous furniture? 173  
The cobwebb'd cottage, with its ragged wall  
Of mould'ring mud, is royalty to me!  
The spider's most-attenuated thread  
Is cord, is cable, to man's tender tie  
On earthly bliss: it breaks at every breeze. 180

O ye blest scenes of permanent delight!  
Full above measure! lasting beyond bound!  
A perpetuity of bliss is bliss.  
Could you, so rich in rapture, fear an end,  
That ghastly thought would drink up all your joy,  
And quite unparadise the realms of light. 186  
Safe are you lodg'd above these rolling spheres,  
The baleful influence of whose giddy dance  
Sheds sad vicissitude on all beneath.  
Here teems with revolutions every hour, 190  
And rarely for the better; or the best  
More mortal than the common births of Fate.  
Each moment has its sickle, emulous  
Of Time's enormous scythe, whose ample sweep  
Strikes empires from the root: each moment plays  
His little weapon in the narrower sphere 196  
Of sweet domestic comfort, and cuts down  
The fairest bloom of sublunary bliss.

Bliss! sublunary bliss!—proud words, and vain!  
Implicit treason to divine decree! 200  
A bold invasion of the rights of Heav'n!



I clasp'd the phantoms, and I fond titem air.  
 O had I weigh'd it ere my fond embrace,  
 What darts of agony had mis'd my heart!  
 Death! great proprietor of all! 'tis thine 105  
 To tread out empire, and to quench the stars.  
 The sun himself by thy permission shines,  
 And, one day, thou shalt pluck him from his sphere:  
 Amid such mighty plunder, why exhaust  
 Thy partial quiver on a mark so mean? 110  
 Why thy peculiar rancour wreak'd on me?  
 Infatiate Archer! could not one suffice?  
 Thy shaft flew thrice, and thrice my peace was slain;  
 And thrice, ere thrice yon' moon had fill'd her horn.  
 O Cynthia! why so pale? dost thou lament 115  
 Thy wretched neighbour? grieve to see thy wheel  
 Of ceaseless change outwhirl'd in human life?  
 How wanes my borrow'd bliss! from Fortune's smile,  
 Precarious courtesy! not virtue's sure,  
 Self-given, solar, ray of sound delight. 120  
 In ev'ry vary'd posture, place, and hour,  
 How widow'd ev'ry thought of ev'ry joy!  
 Thought, busy thought! too busy for my peace!  
 Thro' the dark postern of time long clasp'd,  
 Led softly, by the stillness of the night, 125  
 Led, like a murderer, (and such it proves!)  
 Strays (wretched rover!) o'er the pleasing past;  
 In quest of wretchedness perversely strays,  
 And finds all desert now; and meets the ghosts



Of my departed joys, a num'rous train 230  
I rue the riches of my former fate;  
Sweet comfort's blasted clusters I lament;  
I tremble at the blessings once so dear,  
And ev'ry pleasure pains me to the heart.

Yet why complain? or why complain for one? 235  
Hangs out the sun his lustre but for me,  
The single man? are angels all beside?  
I mourn for millions; 'tis the common lot:  
In this shape or in that has Fate entail'd  
The mother's throes on all of woman born, 240  
Not more the children than sure heirs of pain.

War, famine, pest, volcano, storm, and fire,  
Intestine broils, Oppression, with her heart  
Wrapt up in triple brass, besiege mankind.  
God's image, disinherited of day, 245  
Here plung'd in mines, forgets a sun was made;  
'There beings, deathless as their haughty lord,  
Are hammer'd to the galling oar for life,  
And plow the winter's wave, and reap despair.  
Some for hard masters, broken under arms, 250  
In battle lost away, with half their limbs,  
Beg bitter bread thro' realms their valour sav'd,  
If so the tyrant or his minion doom.  
Want, and incurable disease, (fell pair!)  
On hopeless multitudes remorseless seize 255  
At once, and make a refuge of the grave.  
How groaning hospitals eject their dead!



What numbers groan for sad admission there!  
 What numbers, once in Fortune's lap high-fed,  
 Solicit the cold hand of Charity! 260  
 To shock us more, solicit it in vain!  
 Ye silken sons of Pleasure! since in pains  
 You rue more modish visits, visit here,  
 And breathe from your debauch; give, and reduce  
 Surfeit's dominion o'er you. But so great 265  
 Your impudence, you blush at what is right.

Happy! did sorrow seize on such alone,  
 Not prudence can defend, or virtue save.  
 Disease invades the chasteest temperance,  
 And punishment the guiltless; and alarm, 270  
 Thro' thickest shades, pursues the fond of peace.  
 Man's caution often into danger turns,  
 And, his guard falling, crushes him to death.  
 Not Happiness itself makes good her name;  
 Our very wishes give us not our wish. 275  
 How distant oft' the thing we dote on most  
 From that for which we dote, felicity?  
 The smoothest course of Nature has its pains,  
 And trust friends, thro' error, wound our rest.  
 Without misfortune what calamities! 280  
 And what hostilities without a foe!  
 Nor are foes wanting to the best on earth.  
 But endless is the list of human ills,  
 And sighs might sooner fail than cause to sigh.  
 A part how small of the terraqueous globe! 285



Is tenanted by man? the rest a waste,  
Rocks, deserts, frozen seas, and burning sands!  
Wild haunts of monsters, poisons, stings, and death.  
Such is earth's melancholy map! but, far  
More sad! this earth is a true map of man: 290  
So bounded are its haughty lord's delights  
To woe's wide empire, where deep troubles toss,  
Loud sorrows howl, cavenom'd passions bite,  
Rav'nous calamities our vitals seize,  
And threat'ning Fate wide opens to devour. 295

What then am I, who sorrow for myself?  
In age, in infancy, from others' aid  
Is all our hope; to teach us to be kind:  
'That Nature's first, last, lesson to mankind.  
'The selfish heart deserves the pain it feels. 300  
More gen'rous sorrow, while it sinks exalts,  
And conscious virtue mitigates the pang.  
Nor virtue more than prudence bids me give  
Sworn thought a second channel: who divide,  
'They weaken, too, the torrent of their grief. 305  
Take, then, O World! thy much-indebted tear.  
How sad a sight is human happiness  
To those whose thought can pierce beyond an hour!  
O thou! whate'er thou art, whose heart exults,  
Wouldst thou I should congratulate thy fate! 310  
I know thou wouldst; thy pride demands it from me:  
Let thy pride pardon what thy nature needs,  
The salutary censure of a friend.

Thou happy wretch! by blindness thou art blest;  
By dotage dandled to perpetual smiles. 315  
Know, Smiler! at thy peril art thou pleas'd;  
Thy pleasure is the promise of thy pain.  
Misfortune, like a creditor severe,  
But rises in demand for her delay;  
She makes a scourge of past prosperity, 320  
To sting thee more, and double thy distress.  
Lorenzo! Fortune makes her court to thee:  
Thy fond heart dances while the Syren sings.  
Dear is thy welfare; think me not unkind;  
I would not damp, but to secure thy joys. 325  
Think not that fear is sacred to the storm.  
Stand on thy guard against the smiles of Fate.  
Is Heav'n tremendous in its frowns? most sure;  
And in its favours formidable too:  
Its favours here are trials, not rewards; 330  
A call to duty, not discharge from care,  
And should alarm us full as much as woes,  
Awake us to their cause and consequence,  
And make us tremble, weigh'd with our desert;  
Awe Nature's tumult, and chastise her joys, 335  
Lest while we clasp we kill them; nay, invert  
To worse than simple misery their charms.  
Revolted joys, like foes in Civil war,  
Like bosom friendships to resentment sour'd,  
With rage envenom'd rise against our peace. 340  
Beware what earth calls happiness; beware

All joys but joys that never can expire.  
Who builds on less than an immortal base,  
Fond as he seems, condemns his joys to death.

Mine dy'd with thee, Philander! thy last sigh 345  
Dissolv'd the charm; the disenchanted earth  
Lost all her lustre. Where her glittering towers?  
Her golden mountains where? all darken'd down  
To naked waste; a dreary vale of tears.  
The great magician's dead! Thou poor, pale piece 350  
Of outcast earth, in darkness! what a change  
From yesterday! Thy darling hope so near,  
(Long-labour'd prize!) O how ambition flush'd  
Thy glowing cheek! ambition truly great,  
Of virtuous praise. Death's subtle seed within, 355  
(Sly, treach'rous miner!) working in the dark,  
Smil'd at thy well-concerted scheme, and beckon'd  
The worm to riot on that rose so red,  
Unfaded ere it fell, one moment's prey!

Man's foresight is conditionally wise. 360  
Lorenzo! wisdom into folly turns,  
Oft' the first instant its idea fair  
To labouring thought is born. How dim our eye!  
The present moment terminates our sight;  
Clouds; thick as those on Doomsday, drown the next:  
We penetrate, we prophecy in vain. 366  
Time is dealt out by particles, and each  
Are mingled with the streaming sands of life.  
By Fate's inviolable oath is sworn

Deep silence, "where eternity begins." 370

By Nature's law, what may be may be now;

There's no prerogative in human hours.

In human hearts what bolder thought can rise

Than man's presumption on to-morrow's dawn?

Where is to-morrow? In another world. 375

For numbers this is certain; the reverse

Is sure to none; and yet on this *perhaps*,

This *peradventure*, infamous for lies,

As on a rock of adamant we build

Our mountain-hopes, spin out eternal schemes, 380

As we the Fatal Sisters could outspin,

And, big with life's futurities, expire.

Not ev'n Philander had bespoke his shroud;

Nor had he cause; a warning was deny'd.

How many fall as sudden, not as safe? 385

As sudden, tho' for years admonish'd home?

Of human ills the last extreme beware;

Beware, Lorenzo! a slow-sudden death.

How dreadful that deliberate surprise!

Be wise to-day; 'tis madness to defer: 390

Next day the fatal precedent will plead;

Thus on, till wisdom is push'd out of life.

Procrastination is the thief of time;

Year after year it steals, till all are fled,

And to the mercies of a moment leaves 395

The vast concerns of an eternal scene.

If not so frequent, would not this be strange?



That 'tis so frequent, this is stranger still.

Of man's miraculous mistakes this bears  
The palm, "That all men are about to live," 400

For ever on the brink of being born.

All pay themselves the compliment to think

They one day shall not drivel, and their pride

On this reverſion takes up ready praise;

At least their own; their future selves applauds. 405

How excellent that life they ne'er will lead!

Time lodg'd in their own hands is Folly's vails;

That lodg'd in Fate's to wisdom they consign;

The thing they can't but purpose, they postpone.

'Tis not in folly not to scorn a fool, 410

And scarce in human wisdom to do more.

All promise is poor dilatory man,

And that thro' ev'ry stage. When young, indeed,

In full content we sometimes nobly rest,

Unanxious for ourselves, and only wish, 415

As dutious sons, our fathers were more wise.

At thirty man suspects himself a fool;

Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan;

At fifty chides his infamous delay,

Pushes his prudent purpose to resolve; 420

In all the magnanimity of thought

Resolves, and re-resolves; then dies the same.

And why? because he thinks himself immortal.

All men think all men mortal but themselves;

Themselves, when some alarming shock of Fate 425



Strikes thro' their wounded hearts the sudden dread:  
But their hearts wounded, like the wounded air,  
Soon close; where past the shaft no trace is found.  
As from the wing no scar the sky retains,  
'The parted wave no furrow from the keel, 430  
So dies in human hearts the thought of death:  
Ev'n with the tender tear which Nature sheds  
O'er those we love, we drop it in their grave.  
Can I forget Philander? that were strange!  
O my full heart!—But should I give it vent, 435  
The longest night, tho' longer far, would fail,  
And the lark listen to my midnight song.  
The sprightly lark's shrill matin wakes the morn.  
Grief's sharpest thorn hard pressing on my breast,  
I strive, with wakeful melody, to cheer 440  
The sullen gloom, sweet Philomel! like thee,  
And call the stars to listen: every star  
Is deaf to mine, enamour'd of thy lay.  
Yet be not vain; there are who thine excel,  
And charm thro' distant ages. Wrapt in shade, 445  
Pris'ner of darkness! to the silent hours  
How often I repeat their rage divine,  
To lull my griefs, and steal my heart from woe!  
I roll their raptures, but not catch their fire.  
Dark, tho' not blind, like thee, Mæonides! 450  
Or, Milton! thee; ah, could I reach your strain!  
Or his who made Mæonides our own.  
Man, too, he sung: immortal man I sing:

*Volante L.*

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Oft' bursts my song beyond the bounds of life :  
What, now, but immortality can please ! 455  
O had he press'd his theme, pursu'd the track  
Which opens out of darkness into day !  
O had he mounted on his wing of fire,  
Soar'd where I sink, and sung immortal man,  
How had it blest mankind, and rescu'd me ! 460

*End of Night First.*



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## THE COMPLAINT.

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### NIGHT II.

ON TIME, DEATH, FRIENDSHIP.

*Humbly inscribed to the*

RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF WILMINGTON.

"WHEN the cock crew he wept,"—smote by that  
Which looks on me, on all; that pow'r who bids [eye  
This midnight centinel, with clarion shrill,  
Emblem of that which shall awake the dead,  
Rouse souls from slumber into thoughts of Heav'n's.  
Shall I too weep? where then is fortitude?  
And fortitude abandon'd, where is man?  
I know the terms on which he sees the light:  
He that is born is list'd: life is war;  
Eternal war with woe: who bears it best,  
Deserves it least.—On other themes I'll dwell.  
Lorenzo! let me turn my thoughts on thee!  
And thine; on themes may profit; profit there  
Where most thy need. Themes, too, the genuine growth  
Of dear Philander's dust. He thus, tho' dead,  
May still befriend.—What themes? Time's wondrous  
Death, friendship, and Philander's final scene. [sings.

*Dijous*

So could I touch these themes as might obtain  
 'Thine ear, nor leave thy heart quite disengag'd,  
 'The good deed would delight me; half-impress'd 20  
 On my dark cloud an iris, and from grief  
 Call glory.—Dost thou mourn Philander's fate?  
 I know thou say'st it; says thy life the same?  
 He mourns the dead who lives as they desire.  
 Where is that thirst, that avarice of time, 25  
 (O glorious avarice!) thought of death inspires,  
 As rumour'd robberies endear our gold?  
 O Time! than gold more sacred; more a load  
 Than lead to fools, and fools reputed wise.  
 What moment granted man without account? 30  
 What years are squander'd, wisdom's debt unpaid?  
 Our wealth in days all due to that discharge.  
 Haste, haste, he lies in wait, he's at the door;  
 Insidious Death! should his strong hand arrest,  
 No composition sets the pris'ner free. 35  
 Eternity's inexorable chain  
 Fast binds, and vengeance claims the full arrears.  
 How late I shudder'd on the brink! how late  
 Life call'd for her last refuge in despair!  
 That time is mine, O Mead! to thee I owe; 40  
 Vain would I pay thee with eternity,  
 But ill my genius answers my desire:  
 My sickly song is mortal, past thy cure.  
 Accept the will;—that dies not with my strain.  
 For what calls thy disease, Lorenzo? not 45

For Esculapian; but for moral aid.  
 Thou think'st it folly to be wise too soon.  
 Youth is not rich in time; it may be, poor;  
 Part with it as with money, sparing; pay  
 No moment, but in purchase of its worth;  
 And what its worth ask deathbells; they can tell.  
 Part with it as with life, reluctantly;  
 With holy hope of nobler time to come;  
 Time higher aim'd, still nearer the great mark  
 Of men and angels; virtue more divine.

Is this our duty, wisdom, glory, gain?  
 (These Heav'n's benign in vital motions bind)  
 And sport we like the natives of the bough,  
 When vernal suns inspire? Amusement reigns  
 Man's great demand: to trifle is to live;  
 And is it, then, a trifle, too, to die?  
 Thou say'st I preach, Lorenzo! 'tis confess'd.  
 What if, for once, I preach thee quite awake?  
 Who wants amusement in the flame of battle?  
 Is it not treason to the soul immortal,  
 Her foes in arms, eternity the price?  
 Will toys amuse when med'cines cannot cure?  
 When spirits ebb, when life's enchanting scenes  
 Their lustre lose, and lessen in our sight,  
 As lands, and cities with their glitt'ring spires,  
 To the poor shatter'd bark, by sudden storm  
 Thrown off to sea, and soon to perish there;  
 Will toys amuse? No; thrones will then be toys,

D 11]

And earth and skies seem dust upon the scale.

Redeem we time—its loss we dearly buy.

What pleads Lorenzo for his high-priz'd sports?

He pleads time's num'rous blanks; he loudly pleads

'The straw-like trifles on life's common stream.

From whom those blanks and trifles but from thee?

No blank, no trifle, Nature made, or meant.

Virtue, or purpos'd virtue, still be thine;

This cancels thy complaint at once; this leaves

In act no trifle, and no blank in time.

This greatens, fills, immortalizes all;

This the blest art of turning all to gold;

This the good heart's prerogative to raise

A royal tribute from the poorest hours;

Immense revenue! ev'ry moment pays.

If nothing more than purpose in thy pow'r,

Thy purpose firm is equal to the deed.

Who does the best his circumstance allows

Does well, acts nobly; angels could no more.

Our outward act, indeed, admits restraint:

'Tis not in things o'er thought to domineer.

Guard well thy thought: our thoughts are heard in

On all-important time, thro' ev'ry age,

Tho' much, and warm, the wise have urg'd, the man

Is yet unborn who duly weighs an hour.

"I've lost a day,"—the prince who nobly cry'd,

Had been an emperor without his crown.

Of Rome? say, rather, lord of human race:

He spoke as if deputed by mankind.  
So should all speak: so reason speaks in all:  
From the soft whispers of that God in man,  
Why fly to folly, why to frenzy fly, 105  
For rescue from the blessings we possess?  
Time, the supreme!—Time is eternity;  
Pregnant with all eternity can give;  
Pregnant with all that makes archangels smile.  
Who murders Time, he crushes in the birth 110  
A pow'r ethereal, only not ador'd.

Ah! how unjust to Nature and himself  
Is thoughtless, thankless, inconsistent man!  
Like children babbling nonsense in their sports,  
We censure Nature for a span too short; 115  
That span too short we tax as tedious too;  
Torture invention, all expedients tire,  
To lash the ling'ring moments into speed,  
And whirl us (happy riddance!) from ourselves.  
Art, brainless Art! our furious charioteer, 120  
(For Nature's voice unlist'ed would recall)  
Drives headlong tow'ards the precipice of death;  
Death most our dread; death thus more dreadful made.  
O what a riddle of absurdity!  
Leisure is pain; takes off our chariot-wheels: 125  
How heavily we drag the load of life!  
Blest leisure is our curse; like that of Cain,  
It makes us wander, wander earth around,  
To fly that tyrant Thought. As Atlas groan'd



The world beneath, we groan beneath an hour: 130  
We cry for mercy to the next amusement;  
The next amusement mortgages our fields;  
Slight inconvenience! prisons hardly frown,  
From hateful time if prisons set us free.  
Yet when Death kindly tenders us relief, 135  
We call him cruel; years to moments shrink,  
Ages to years. The telescope is turn'd:  
To man's false optics (from his folly false)  
Time, in advance, behind him hides his wings,  
And seems to creep, decrepit with his age. 140  
Behold him when past by; what then is seen  
But his broad pinions swifter than the winds?  
And all mankind, in contradiction strong,  
Rueful, aghast, cry out on his career.

Leave to thy foes these errors and these ills; 145  
To Nature just, their cause and cure explore.  
Not short Heaven's bounty, boundless our expense;  
No niggard Nature, men are prodigals.  
We waste, not use our time; we breathe, not live.  
Time wasted is existence, us'd is life: 150  
And bare existence man, to live ordain'd,  
Wrings and oppresses with enormous weight.  
And why? since time was giv'n for use, not waste,  
Enjoin'd to fly, with tempest, tide, and stars,  
To keep his speed, nor ever wait for man. 155  
Time's use was doom'd a pleasure, waste a pain,  
That man might feel his error if unseen;





And, feeling, fly to labour for his cure;  
 Not, blond'ring, split on idleness for ease. 159  
 Life's cares are comforts; such by Heav'n design'd;  
 He that has none must make them, or be wretched.  
 Cares are employments, and without employ  
 The soul is on a rack, the rack of rest,  
 To souls most adverse, action all their joy.

Here then the riddle, mark'd above, unfolds; 165  
 Then time turns torment, when man turns a fool.  
 We rave, we wrestle with great Nature's plan;  
 We thwart the Deity; and 'tis decreed,  
 Who thwart his will shall contradict their own.  
 Hence our unnatural quarrel with ourselves; 170  
 Our thoughts at enmity; our bosom-broil;  
 We push Time from us, and we with him back;  
 Lavish of lustrums, and yet fond of life:  
 Life we think long and short; death seek and shun:  
 Body and soul, like peevish man and wife, 175  
 United jar, and yet are loath to part.  
 Oh the dark days of vanity! while here  
 How tasteless! and how terrible when gone!  
 Gone? they ne'er go; when past they haunt us still:  
 The spirit walks of ev'ry day decens'd, 180  
 And smiles an angel, or a fury frowns.  
 Nor death nor life delight us. If time pass  
 And time possess both pain us, what can please?  
 That which the Deity to please ordain'd,  
 Time us'd. The man who consecrates his hours 185

By vigorous effort and an honest aim,  
At once he draws the sling of life and death ;  
He walks with Nature, and her paths are peace.

Our error's cause and cure are seen : see next  
Time's nature, origin, importance, speed, 190  
And thy great gain from urging his career.—  
All-sensual man, because untouch'd, unseen,  
He looks on time as nothing. Nothing else  
Is truly man's ; 'tis Fortune's.—Time's a god.  
Hast thou ne'er heard of Time's omnipotence ? 195  
For, or against, what wonders can he do !  
And will : to stand blank neuter he disdains.  
Not on those terms was Time (Heav'n's stranger !) sent  
On his important embassy to man.  
Lorenzo ! hark ! on the long-destin'd hour, 200  
From everlasting ages growing ripe,  
That memorable hour of wondrous birth,  
When the Dread Sire, on emanation bent,  
And big with Nature, rising in his might,  
Call'd forth creation (for then Time was born) 205  
By Godhead streaming thro' a thousand worlds ;  
Not on those terms, from the great days of heav'n,  
From old Eternity's mysterious orb  
Was Time cut off, and cast beneath the skies ;  
The skies, which watch him in his new abode, 210  
Measuring his motions by revolving spheres,  
That horologe machinery divine.  
Hours, days, and months, and years, his children, play

Like num'rous wings, around him, as he flies;  
 Or rather, as unequal plumes, they shape 215  
 His ample pinions, swift as darted flame,  
 To gain his goal, to reach his ancient rest,  
 And join anew Eternity his fire,  
 In his immutability to nest,  
 When worlds, that count his circles now, unking'd, 220  
 (Fate the loud signal sounding) headlong rush  
 To timeless night and chaos, whence they rose.

Why spur the speedy? why with levities  
 New-wing thy short short day's too rapid flight?  
 Know'st thou or what thou dost, or what is done? 225  
 Man flies from time, and time from man: too soon,  
 In sad divorce, this double flight must end;  
 And then where are we? where, Lorenzo! then,  
 Thy sports, thy pomps? I grant thee in a state  
 Not unambitious; in the ruffled shroud, 230  
 Thy Parian tomb's triumphant arch beneath.  
 Has Death his fopperies? then well may Life  
 Put on her plume, and in her rainbow shine.

Ye well-array'd! ye Lilies of our land!  
 Ye Lilies Male! who neither toil nor spin, 235  
 (As sister lilies might) if not so wise  
 As Solomon, more sumptuous to the sight!  
 Ye Delicate! who nothing can support,  
 Yourselves most insupportable! for whom  
 The winter rose must blow, the sun put on 240  
 A brighter beam in Leo; silky-soft

Favonius! breathe still softer, or be chid;  
And other worlds send odours, sance, and song,  
And robes, and notions, fram'd in foreign looms!  
O ye Lorenzos of our age! who deem 245  
One moment unamus'd a misery  
Not made for feeble man! who call aloud  
For ev'ry bawble drivell'd o'er by sense;  
For rattles and conceits of ev'ry cast;  
For change of follies and relays of joy, 250  
To drag your patient thro' the tedious length  
Of a short winter's day——say, Sages! say,  
Wit's Oracles! say, Dreamers of gay dreams!  
How will you weather an eternal night,  
Where such expedients fail? 255

O treach'rous Conscience! while she seems to sleep  
On rose and myrtle, lull'd with Syren song;  
While she seems, nodding o'er her charge, to drop  
On headlong Appetite the slacken'd rein,  
And give us up to license, unrecall'd, 260  
Unmark'd;—see, from behind her secret stand,  
The sly informer minutes ev'ry fault,  
And her dread diary with horror fills.  
Not the gross act alone employs her pen;  
She reconnoitres Fancy's airy band. 265  
A watchful foe! the formidable spy  
Lis'ning, o'erhears the whispers of our camp,  
Our dawning purposes of heart explores,  
And steals our embryos of iniquity.

As all-rapacious usurers conceal 270  
 Their Doomsday-book from all-consuming heirs,  
 Thus, with indulgence most severe, she treats  
 Us spendthrifts of inestimable time,  
 Unnoted notes each moment misapply'd;  
 In leaves more durable than leaves of brass 275  
 Writes our whole history, which Death shall read  
 In ev'ry pale delinquent's private ear,  
 And judgment publish; publish to more worlds  
 Than this, and endless age in groans resound.  
 Lorenzo! such that sleeper in thy breast; 280  
 Such is her slumber; and her vengeance such  
 For slighted counsel; such thy future peace;  
 And think'st thou still thou canst be wise too soon?  
 But why on time so lavish is my song?  
 On this great theme kind Nature keeps a school 285  
 To teach her sons herself. Each night we die;  
 Each morn are born anew: each day a life!  
 And shall we kill each day? If trifling kills,  
 Sure vice must butcher. O what heaps of slain  
 Cry out for vengeance on us! Time destroy'd 290  
 Is suicide, where more than blood is spilt.  
 Time flies, death urges, knells call, Heav'n invites,  
 Hell threatens: all exerts; in effort all,  
 More than creation, labours! Labours more?  
 And is there in creation what, amidst 295  
 This tumult universal, wing'd dispatch,  
 And ardent energy, supinely yawns?—

Volume I. E



Man sleeps, and man alone; and man, whose fate,  
Fate irreversible, entire, extreme,  
Endless, hair-hung, breeze-shaken, o'er the gulf 300  
A moment trembles; drops! and man, for whom  
All else is an alarm; man, the sole cause  
Of this surrounding storm! and yet he sleeps,  
As the storm rock'd to rest.—Throw years away?  
Throw empires, and be blameless. Moments seize, 305  
Heav'n's on their wing: a moment we may wish,  
When worlds want wealth to buy. Bid Day stand still,  
Bid him drive back his car, and reimport  
The period past, regive the given hour.  
Lorenzo! more than miracles we want. 310  
Lorenzo—O for yesterdays to come!

Such is the language of the man awake,  
His ardour such for what oppresses thee.  
And is his ardour vain, Lorenzo? No;  
That more than miracle the gods indulge. 315  
To-day is yesterday return'd: return'd  
Full-pow'r'd to cancel, expiate, raise, adorn,  
And reinflate us on the rock of peace.  
Let it not share its predecessor's fate,  
Nor, like its elder sisters, die a fool. 320  
Shall it evaporate in fume, fly off  
Fuliginous, and stain us deeper still?  
Shall we be poorer for the plenty pour'd?  
More wretched for the elementies of Heav'n?

Where shall I find him? Angels! tell me where: 325  
You know him: he is near you; point him out.

Shall I see glories beaming from his brow,  
 Or trace his footsteps by the rising flowers?  
 Your golden wings, now hov'ring o'er him, shed  
 Protection; now are waving in applause 330  
 To that blest son of foresight! lord of fate!  
 That awful independent on to-morrow!  
 Whose work is done; who triumphs in the past;  
 Whose yesterdays look backwards with a smile,  
 Nor, like the Parthian, wound him as they fly; 335  
 That common but opprobrious lot! Past hours,  
 If not by guilt, yet wound us by their flight,  
 If folly bounds our prospect by the grave,  
 All feeling of futurity benumb'd;  
 All godlike passion for eternal quench'd; 340  
 All relish of realities expir'd;  
 Renounc'd all correspondence with the skies;  
 Our freedom chain'd; quite winglefs our desire;  
 In sense dark-prison'd all that ought to soar;  
 Prone to the centre; crawling in the dust; 345  
 Dismounted ev'ry great and glorious aim;  
 Imbruted ev'ry faculty divine;  
 Heart-bury'd in the rubbish of the world,  
 The world, that gulf of souls, immortal souls,  
 Souls elevatè, angelic, wing'd with fire 350  
 To reach the distant skies, and triumph there  
 On thrones, which shall not mourn their masters  
 Tho' we from earth, ethereal they that fell. (chang'd;  
 Such veneration due, O man, to man!



Who venerate themselves the world despise. 355  
For what, gay Friend! is this escutcheon'd world,  
Which hangs out death in one eternal night?  
A night that glooms us in the noon-tide ray,  
And wraps our thought at banquet in the shroud.  
Life's little stage is a small eminence, 360  
Inch high the grave above, that home of man,  
Where dwells the multitude: we gaze around;  
We read their monuments; we sigh; and while  
We sigh we sink; and are what we deplor'd:  
Lamenting or lamented all our lot! 365

Is Death at distance? No; he has been on thee,  
And giv'n sure earnest of his final blow.  
Those hours which lately smil'd, where are they now?  
Pallid to thought, and ghastly! drown'd, all drown'd  
In that great deep which nothing disembogues! 370  
And, dying, they bequeath'd thee small renown.  
The rest are on the wing: how fleet their flight!  
Already has the fatal train took fire;  
A moment, and the world's blown up to thee;  
The sun is darkness, and the stars are dust. 375

'Tis greatly wise to talk with our past Hours,  
And ask them what report they bore to Heav'n,  
And how they might have borne more welcome news.  
Their answers form what men Experience call;  
If Wisdom's friend her best, if not, worst foe. 380  
O reconcile them! kind Experience cries,  
"There's nothing here but what as nothing weighs;

"The more our joy, the more we know it vain,  
"And by success are tutor'd to despair."

Nor is it only thus, but must be so. 385

Who knows not this, tho' gray, is still a child.

Loose then from earth the grasp of fond desire,

Weigh anchor, and some happier clime explore.

Art thou so moor'd thou can'st not disengage,

Nor give thy thoughts a ply to future scenes? 390

Since by life's passing breath, blown up from earth,

Light as the summer's dust, we take in air

A moment's giddy flight, and fall again,

Join the dull mass, increase the trodden soil,

And sleep, till Earth herself shall be no more; 395

Since then (as emmets, their small world o'erthrown)

We, fore-amaz'd, from out earth's ruins crawl,

And rise to fate extreme of foul or fair,

As man's own choice (controller of the skies!)

As man's despotic will, perhaps one hour, 400

(O how omnipotent is time!) decrees,

Should not each warning give a strong alarm?

Warning, far less than that of bosom torn

From bosom, bleeding o'er the sacred dead!

Should not each dial strike us as we pass, 405

Portentous, as the written wall which struck,

O'er midnight howls, the proud Assyrian pale,

Ere-while high-flush'd with insolence and wine?

Like that, the dial speaks, and points to thee,

Lorenzo! loath to break thy banquet up: 410

E ij

" O Man ! thy kingdom is departing from thee,  
" And while it lasts is emptier than my shade."  
Its silent language such ; nor need'st thou call  
Thy Magi to decipher what it means.  
Know, like the Median, Fate is in thy walls : 415  
Dost ask how ? whence ? Belshazzar-like, amaz'd,  
Man's make incloses the sure seeds of death ;  
Life feeds the murderer : ingrate ! he thrives  
On her own meal, and then his nurse devours.

But here, Lorenzo, the delusion lies ; 420  
That solar shadow, as it measures life,  
It life resembles too. Life speeds away  
From point to point, tho' seeming to stand still.  
The cunning fugitive is swift by stealth ;  
Too subtle is the movement to be seen ; 425  
Yet soon man's hour is up, and we are gone.  
Warnings point out our danger, gnomatic time :  
As these are useless when the sun is set,  
So those, but when more glorious Reason shines.  
Reason should judge in all ; in Reason's eye 430  
That sedentary shadow travels hard :  
But such our gravitation to the wrong,  
So prone our hearts to whisper what we wish,  
'Tis later with the wise than he's aware.  
A Wilmington goes slower than the sun ; 435  
And all mankind mistake their time of day ;  
Ev'n age itself. Fresh hopes are hourly sown  
In furrow'd brows. So gentle life's descent,



We shut our eyes, and think it is a plain.  
We take fair days in winter for the spring, 440  
And turn our blessings into bane. Since oft'  
Man must compute that age he cannot feel,  
He scarce believes he's older for his years.  
Thus at life's latest eve we keep in store  
One disappointment, sure to crown the rest, 445  
The disappointment of a promis'd hour.

On this or similar, Philander! thou  
Whose mind was moral as the preacher's tongue,  
And strong to wield all science worth the name,  
How often we talk'd down the summer's sun, 450  
And cool'd our passions by the breezy stream!  
How often thaw'd and shorten'd winter's eve  
By conflict kind, that struck out latent truth,  
Best found so sought, to the recluse more coy!  
Thoughts disintangle passing o'er the lip; 455  
Clean runs the thread; if not, 'tis thrown away,  
Or kept to tie up nonsense for a song;  
Song fashionably fruitless, such as stains  
The fancy, and unhallow'd passion fires,  
Chiming her saints to Cytherea's fane. 460

Know'st thou, Lorenzo! what a friend contains?  
As bees mix'd nectar draw from fragrant flowers,  
So men from Friendship wisdom and delight;  
Twins ty'd by Nature, if they part they die.  
Hast thou no friend to set thy mind abroad? 465  
Good sense will stagnate. Thoughts shut up want air,

And spoil, like hales unopen'd to the sun;  
Had thought been all, sweet speech had been deny'd;  
Speech! thought's canal; speech! thought's criterion  
too:

Thought in the mine may come forth gold or dross;  
When coin'd in word, we know its real worth: 471  
If sterling, store it for thy future use;  
'Twill buy thee benefit, perhaps renown.  
Thought, too, deliver'd, is the more possess'd;  
Teaching we learn, and giving we retain 475  
The births of intellect, when dumb forgot.  
Speech ventilates our intellectual fire;  
Speech burnishes our mental magazine;  
Brightens for ornament, and whets for use.  
What numbers, sheath'd in credition, lie 480  
Plung'd to the hilts in venerable tomes,  
And rusted in, who might have borne an edge,  
And play'd a sprightly beam, if born to speech,  
If born blest heirs of half their mother's tongue!  
'Tis thought's exchange, which, like th'alternate push  
Of waves confiding, breaks the learned scum, 486  
And defecates the student's standing pool.

In contemplation is his proud resource?  
'Tis poor as proud, by converse unsustain'd.  
Rode thought runs wild in Contemplation's field; 490  
Converse, the menage, breaks it to the bit  
Of due restraint; and Emulation's spur  
Gives graceful energy, by rivals aw'd.



'Tis converse qualifies for solitude,  
As exercise for salutary rest: 495

By that untutor'd, Contemplation raves,  
And Nature's fool by Wisdom's is outdone.

Wisdom, tho' richer than Peruvian mines,  
And sweeter than the sweet ambrosial hive,

What is she but the means of happiness?  
That unobtain'd, than Folly more a fool;

A melancholy fool, without her bells,  
Friendship, the means of wisdom, richly gives

The precious end, which makes our wisdom wise.  
Nature, in zeal for human amity,

Denies or damps an undivided joy.  
Joy is an import; joy is an exchange;

Joy flies monopolists: it calls for two:  
Rich fruit! heav'n-planted! never pluck'd by one.

Needful auxiliars are our friends, to give  
To social man true relish of himself.

Full on ourselves descending in a line,  
Pleasure's bright beam is feeble in delight:

Delight intense is taken by rebound;  
Reverberated pleasures fire the breast.

Celestial Happiness! where'er the flocks  
To visit earth, one shrine the goddess finds,

And one alone, to make her sweet amends  
For absent heav'n—the bosom of a friend;

Where heart meets heart, reciprocally soft,  
Each other's pillow to repose divine.

Beware the counterfeit; in passion's flame  
Hearts melt, but melt like ice, soon harder froze.  
True love strikes root in reason, passion's foe:  
Virtue alone entenders us for life: 525  
I wrong her much—entenders us for ever.  
Of friendship's fairest fruits, the fruit most fair  
Is virtue kindling at a rival fire,  
And emulously rapid in her race.  
O the soft enmity! endearing strife! 530  
This carries Friendship to her noon-tide point,  
And gives the rivet of eternity.

From friendship, which outlives my former themes,  
Glorious survivor of old Time and Death!  
From friendship, thus, that flow'r of heav'nly seed, 535  
The wise extract earth's most Hyblean bliss,  
Superior wisdom, crown'd with smiling joy.

But for whom blossoms this Elysian flower?  
Abroad they find who cherish it at home.  
Lorenzo! pardon what my love extorts, 540  
An honest love, and not afraid to frown.  
Tho' choice of follies fasten on the great,  
None clings more obstinate than fancy fond  
That sacred friendship is their easy prey,  
Caught by the wafure of a golden lure, 545  
Or fascination of a high-born smile.  
Their smiles the great, and the coquette, throw out  
For others' hearts, tenacious of their own;  
And we no less of ours, when such the bait.



Ye Fortune's Cofferers ! ye Pow'rs of Wealth ! 550  
Can gold gain friendship ? Impudence of hope !  
As well mere man an angel might beget.  
Love, and love only, is the loan for love.  
Lorenzo ! pride repress, nor hope to find  
A friend, but what has found a friend in thee. 555  
All like the purchase, few the price will pay,  
And this makes friends such miracles below.

What if (since daring on so nice a theme)  
I shew thee friendship delicate as dear,  
Of tender violations apt to die ? 560  
Reserve will wound it, and distrust destroy.  
Deliberate on all things with thy friend :  
But since friends grow not thick on ev'ry bough,  
Nor ev'ry friend unrotten at the core,  
First on thy friend delib'rate with thyself ; 565  
Pause, ponder, list ; not eager in the choice,  
Nor jealous of the chosen : fixing fix ;  
Judge before friendship, then confide till death.  
Well for thy friend, but nobler far for thee.  
How gallant danger for earth's highest prize ! 570  
A friend is worth all hazards we can run.  
" Poor is the friendless master of a world.  
" A world in purchase for a friend is gain."

So sung he (angels hear that angel sing !  
Angels from friendship gather half their joy) 575  
So sung Philander, as his friend went round  
In the rich ichor, in the gen'rous blood



Of Bacchus, purple god of joyous wit,  
A brow solute, and ever-laughing eye.  
He drank long health and virtue to his friend, 580  
His friend! who warm'd him more, who more inspir'd.  
Friendship's the wine of life; but friendship new  
(Not such was his) is neither strong nor pure.  
O! for the bright complexion, cordial warmth,  
And elevating spirit of a friend, 585  
For twenty summers ripening by my side,  
All feculence of falsehood long thrown down,  
All social virtues rising in his soul,  
As crystal clear, and smiling as they rise!  
Here nectar flows; it sparkles in our sight; 590  
Rich to the taste, and genuine from the heart.  
High-flavour'd bliss for gods! on earth how rare!  
On earth how lost!—Philander is no more.

Think'st thou the theme intoxicates my song?  
Am I too warm?—Too warm I cannot be. 595  
I lov'd him much, but now I love him more.  
Like birds, whose beauties languish, half-conceal'd,  
Till, mounted on the wing, their glossy plumes  
Expanded, shine with azure, green, and gold;  
How blessings brighten as they take their flight! 600  
His flight Philander took, his upward flight,  
If ever soul ascended. Had he dropp'd,  
(That eagle genius!) O had he let fall  
One feather as he flew, I then had wrote  
What friends might flatter, prudent foes forbear, 605

Rivals scarce damn, and Zollos reprieve.  
 Yet what I can I must: it were profane  
 To quench a glory lighted at the skies,  
 And cast in shadows his illustrious close.  
 Strange! the theme most affecting, most sublime, 610  
 Momentous most to man, should sleep unsung!  
 And yet it sleeps, by genius unawak'd  
 Pagan or Christian, to the blush of Wit.  
 Man's highest triumph, man's profoundest fall,  
 The deathbed of the just! is yet undrawn 615  
 By mortal hand; it merits a divine:  
 Angels should paint it, angels ever there,  
 There on a post of honour and of joy.

Dare I presume, then? but Philander bids,  
 And glory tempts, and inclination calls. 620  
 Yet am I struck, as struck the soul beneath  
 Aërial groves' impenetrable gloom,  
 Or in some mighty ruin's solemn shade,  
 Or gazing, by pale lamps, on high-born dust  
 In vaults, thin courts of poor unflatter'd kings, 625  
 Or at the midnight altar's hallow'd flame.  
 It is religion to proceed: I pause—  
 And enter, aw'd the temple of my theme.  
 Is it his deathbed? No; it is his shrine:  
 Behold him there just rising to a god. 630

The chamber where the good man meets his fate  
 Is privileg'd beyond the common walk  
 Of virtuous life, quite in the verge of heav'n.

*Volume I.*

F



Fly, ye Profane! if not, draw near with awe,  
Receive the blessing, and adore the chance 635  
'That threw in this Bethesda your disease:  
If unreslor'd by this despair your cure;  
For here resistless Demonstration dwells.  
A deathbed 's a detector of the heart.  
Here tir'd Dissimulation drops her mask 640  
'Thro' Life's grimace, that mistress of the scene!  
Here real and apparent are the same.  
You see the man, you see his hold on heav'n,  
If sound his virtue, as Philander's found.  
Heav'n waits not the last moment; owns her friends  
On this side death, and points them out to men; 645  
A lecture silent, but of sov'reign pow'r!  
To Vice confusion, and to Virtue peace.

Whatever farce the boastful hero plays,  
Virtue alone has majesty in death, 650  
And greater still, the more the tyrant frowns.  
Philander! he severely frown'd on thee.  
"No warning giv'n! unceremonious fate!  
"A sudden rash from life's meridian joys!  
"A wrench from all we love! from all we are! 655  
"A restless bed of pain! a plunge opaque  
"Beyond conjecture! feeble Nature's dread!  
"Strong Reason's shudder at the dark unknown!  
"A sun extinguish'd! a just opening grave! 659  
"And, oh! the last, last: what? (can words express,  
"Thought reach it!) the last—silence of a friend!"

Where are those horrors, that amazement, where  
This hideous group of ills which singly shock,  
Demand from man.—I thought him man till now.

Thro' Nature's wreck, thro' vanquish'd agonies, 665  
(Like the stars struggling thro' this midnight gloom)  
What gleams of joy? what more than human peace?  
Where the frail mortal, the poor abject worm?  
No, not in death the mortal to be found.

His conduct is a legacy for all, 670  
Richer than Mammon's for his single heir.  
His comforters he comforts; great in ruin,  
With unreluctant grandeur gives, not yields,  
His soul sublime, and closes with his fate.

How our hearts burnt within us at the scene! 675  
Whence this brave bound o'er limits fix'd to man?  
His God sustains him in his final hour;  
His final hour brings glory to his God!  
Man's glory Heav'n vouchsafes to call her own.  
We gaze, we weep; mix'd tears of grief and joy! 680  
Amazement strikes! devotion bursts to flame!  
Christians adore! and Infidels believe.

As some tall tow'r, or lofty mountain's brow,  
Detains the sun, illustrious, from its height,  
While rising vapours and descending shades, 685  
With damps and darkness drown the spacious vale,  
Undamp't by doubt, undarken'd by despair,  
Philander thus augustly rears his head,  
At that black hour which gen'ral horror sheds

F ij

On the low level of th' inglorious throng: 670  
 Sweet peace, and heav'nly hope, and humble joy,  
 Divinely beam on his exalted soul;  
 Destruction gild and crown him for the skies  
 With incommunicable lustre bright. 674

*End of Night Second.*





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# THE COMPLAINT.

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## NIGHT III.

### NARCISSA.

*Humbly inscribed*

TO HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF P——.

---

*Ignoscenda quidem, scirent si ignoscere nunc.*

*Virg.*

---

FROM dreams, where thought in Fancy's maze runs  
To reason, that heav'n-lighted lamp in man, [mad,  
Once more I wake; and at the destin'd hour,  
Punctual as lovers to the moment sworn,  
I keep my assignation with my woe. 5

O! lost to virtue, lost to manly thought,  
Lost to the noble sallies of the soul!  
Who think it solitude to be alone.

Communion sweet! communion large and high!  
Our reason, guardian angel, and our God! 10

Then nearest these, when others most remote;  
And all, ere long, shall be remote but these:  
How dreadful, then, to meet them all alone,  
A stranger! unacknowledg'd! un approv'd!  
Now woo them, wed them, bind them to thy breast;  
To win thy wish creation has no more: 16

F ij

Or if we wish a fourth, it is a friend.——

But friends how mortal ! dang'rous the desire.

Take Phœbus to yourselves, ye basking Bards !  
Inebriate at fair Fortune's fountain-head, 20

And reeling thro' the wilderness of joy,  
Where Sense runs savage, broke from Reason's chain,  
And sings false peace, till smother'd by the pall.

My fortune is unlike, unlike my song,  
Unlike the deity my song invokes. 25

I to Day's soft-ey'd sister pay my court,  
(Endymion's rival) and her aid implore,  
Now first implor'd in succour to the Muse.

Thou who didst lately borrow Cynthia's \* form,  
And modestly forego thine own ! O thou ! 30

Who didst thyself, at midnight hours, inspire !  
Say, why not Cynthia, patroness of song ?

As thou her crescent, be thy character  
Assumes, still more a goddess by the change.

Are there demurring wits who dare dispute 35  
'This revolution in the world inspir'd ?

Ye train Pierian ! to the lunar sphere,  
In silent hour, address your ardent call

For aid immortal, less her brother's right.  
She with the spheres harmonious nightly leads 40

The mazy dance, and hears their matchless strain,  
A strain for gods, deny'd to mortal ear.

Transmit it heard, thou Silver Queen of heav'n !

\* At the Duke of Norfolk's masquerade.

What title or what name endears thee most?  
 Cynthia! Cyllene! Phœbe!—or dost hear  
 With higher gust, fair P——d of the skies?  
 Is that the soft enchantment calls thee down,  
 More pow'rful than of old Circean charm?  
 Come, but from heav'nly banquets with thee bring  
 The soul of song, and whisper in mine ear  
 The theft divine; or in propitious dreams  
 (For dreams are thine) transfuse it thro' the breast  
 Of thy first votary—but not thy last,  
 If, like thy namesake, thou art ever kind.

And kind thou wilt be, kind on such a theme;  
 A theme so like thee, a quite lunar theme,  
 Soft, modest, melancholy, female, fair!  
 A theme that rose all pale, and told my soul  
 'Twas night; on her fond hopes perpetual night;  
 A night which struck a damp, a deadlier damp,  
 Than that which smote me from Philander's tomb.  
 Narcissa follows ere his tomb is clos'd.  
 Woes cluster; rare are solitary woes;  
 They love a train; they tread each other's heel;  
 Her death invades his mournful right, and claims  
 The grief that started from my lids for him;  
 Seizes the faithless, alienated tear,  
 Or shares it ere it falls. So frequent Death,  
 Sorrow he more than causes; he confounds;  
 For human sighs his rival strokes contend,  
 And make distress distraction. Oh, Philander!



What was thy fate? a double fate to me;  
Portent and pain! a menace and a blow!  
Like the black raven how'ring o'er my peace,  
Not less a bird of omen than of prey. 75  
It call'd Narcissa long before her hour;  
It call'd her tender soul by break of bliss,  
From the first blossom, from the buds of joy;  
Those few our noxious fate unblasted leaves  
In this inclement clime of human life. 80

Sweet Harmonisi! and beautiful as sweet!  
And young as beautiful! and soft as young!  
And gay as soft! and innocent as gay!  
And happy (if aught happy here) as good!  
For Fortune fond, had built her nest on high. 85  
Like birds quite exquisite of note and plume,  
Transfix'd by Fate (who loves a lofty mark)  
How from the summit of the grove she fell,  
And left it unharmonious! all its charm  
Extinguish'd in the wonders of her song! 90  
Her song still vibrates in my ravis'd ear,  
Still melting there, and with voluptuous pain  
(O to forget her!) thrilling thro' my heart!

Song, beauty, youth, love, virtue, joy! this group  
Of bright ideas, flow'rs of Paradise, 95  
As yet unforfeit! in one blaze we bind,  
Kneel, and present it to the skies, as all  
We guess of heav'n; and these were all her own;  
And she was mine; and I was—was!—most blest—

Gay title of the deepest misery! 100  
As bodies grow more pond'rous robb'd of life,  
Good lost weighs more in grief than gain'd in joy.  
Like blossom'd trees o'erturn'd by vernal storm,  
Lovely in death the beauteous ruin lay;  
And if in death still lovely, lovelier there, 105  
Far lovelier! pity swells the tide of love.  
And will not the severe excuse a sigh?  
Scorn the proud man that is ashamed to weep.  
Our tears indulg'd indeed deserve our shame.  
Ye that e'er lost an angel, pity me! 110

Soon as the lustre languish'd in her eye,  
Dawning a dimmer day on human sight,  
And on her cheek; the residence of Spring,  
Pale Omen sat, and scatter'd fears around  
On all that saw, (and who would cease to gaze 115  
That once had seen?) with haste, parental haste,  
I flew, I snatch'd her from the rigid North,  
Her native bed, on which bleak Boreas blew,  
And bore her nearer to the sun; the sun  
(As if the sun could envy) check'd his beam, 120  
Deny'd his wonted succour; nor with more  
Regret beheld her drooping than the bells  
Of lilies, fairest lilies, not so fair!

Queen Lilies! and ye painted Populace  
Who dwell in fields, and lead ambrosial lives! 125  
In morn and ev'ning dew your beauties bathe,  
And drink the sun, which gives your cheeks to glow,



And outblush (mine excepted) ev'ry fair;  
You gladlier grew, ambitious of her hand,  
Which often cropt your odours, incense meet : 130  
To thought so pure! Ye lovely Fugitives!  
Coeval race with man! for man you smile;  
Why not smile at him too? You share, indeed,  
His sudden pass, but not his constant pain.

So man is made nought ministers delight : 135  
But what his glowing passions can engage;  
And glowing passions, bent on aught below,  
Must, soon or late, with anguish turn the scale;  
And anguish after rapture, how severe!  
Rapture? bold man! who tempts the wrath divine, 140  
By plucking fruit deny'd to mortal taste,  
While here presuming on the rights of Heav'n,  
For transport dost thou call on ev'ry hour,  
Lorenzo? At thy friend's expense be wise:  
I can not, on earth; 'twill pierce thee to the heart;  
A broken reed at best; but oft' a spear : 146  
On its sharp point Peace bleeds, and Hope expires.  
Turn, hopeless thought! turn from her.—Though  
Repenting rallies, and wakes ev'ry woe. [repell'd,  
Snatch'd ere thy prime! and in thy bridal hour! 150  
And when kind Fortune, with thy lover, smil'd!  
And when high-flavour'd thy fresh-op'ning joys!  
And when blind man pronounce'd thy bliss complete!  
And on a foreign shore, where strangers wept  
Strangers to thee, and, more surprising still, 155



Strangers to kindness, wept. Their eyes let fall  
 Inhuman tears; strange tears! that trickled down  
 From marble hearts! obdurate tenderness!  
 A tenderness that call'd them more severe,  
 In spite of Nature's soft persuasion steel'd: 160  
 While Nature melted Superstition rav'd;  
 That mourn'd the dead, and this deny'd a grave.

Their sighs incens'd; sighs foreign to the will!  
 Their will the tiger-suck'd outrag'd the storm:  
 For, oh! the curs'd ungodliness of Zeal! 165  
 While sinful flesh relented, spirit nurs'd  
 In blind Infallibility's embrace,  
 The sainted spirit petrify'd the breast,  
 Deny'd the charity of dust to spread  
 O'er dust! a charity their dogs enjoy. 170  
 What could I do? what succour? what resource?  
 With pious sacrilege a grave I stole;  
 With impious piety that grave I wrong'd;  
 Short in my duty, coward in my grief!  
 More like her murderer than friend, I crept. 175  
 With soft-suspended step, and, muffled deep  
 In midnight darkness, whisper'd my last sigh.  
 I whisper'd what should echo thro' their realms,  
 Nor writ her name, whose tomb should pierce the skies.  
 Presumptuous fear! how durst I dread her foes, 180  
 While Nature's loudest dictates I obey'd?  
 Pardon necessity, blest Shade! of grief  
 And indignation rival bursts I pour'd;



Half-execration mingled with my pray'r;  
Kindled at man, while I his God ador'd : 185  
Sore grudg'd the savage land her sacred dust;  
Stamp'd the curs'd soil; and with humanity  
(Deny'd Narcissa) with'd them all a grave.

Glow's my resentment into guilt? what guilt  
Can equal violations of the dead? 190  
The dead how sacred! sacred is the dust  
Of this heav'n-labour'd form, erect, divine!  
'This heav'n-assum'd, majestic, robe of earth  
He deign'd to wear, who hung the vast expanse  
With azure bright, and cloth'd the sun in gold. 195  
When ev'ry passion sleeps that can offend;  
When strikes us ev'ry motive that can melt;  
When man can wreak his rancour uncontroll'd,  
That strongest curb on insult and ill-will;  
'Then! spleen to dust? the dust of innocence? 200  
An angel's dust!—This Lucifer transcends;  
When he contended for the Patriarch's bones,  
'Twas not the strife of malice, but of pride;  
The strife of pontiff pride, not pontiff gall.

Far less than this is shocking in a race 205  
Most wretched, but from streams of mutual love,  
And uncreated, but for love divine;  
And but for love divine this moment lost,  
By Fate resorb'd, and sunk in endless night.  
Man hard of heart to man! of horrid things 210  
Most horrid! 'mid stupendous highly strange!

Yet oft' his courtesies are smother wrongs ;  
Pride brandishes the favours he confers,  
And contumelious his humanity :  
What then his vengeance ? Hear it not, ye Stars ! 215  
And thou, pale Moon ! turn paler at the sound.  
Man is to man the forest, surest ill.  
A previous blast foretels the rising storm ;  
O'erwhelming turrets threaten ere they fall ;  
Volcano's bellow ere they disemogue ; 220  
Earth trembles ere her yawning jaws devour ;  
And smoke betray's the wide-consuming fire :  
Ruin from man is most conceal'd when near,  
And sends the dreadful tidings in the blow.  
Is this the flight of Fancy ? would it were ! 225  
Heav'n's sov'reign saves all beings, but himself,  
That hideous sight, a naked human heart.

Fir'd is the Muse ? and let the Muse be fir'd :  
Who not inflam'd when what he speaks he feels,  
And in the nerve most tender, in his friends ? 230  
Shame to mankind ! Philander had his foes ;  
He felt the truths I sing, and I in him :  
But he nor I feel more. Past ills, Narcissa !  
Are sunk in thee, thou recent wound of heart !  
Which bleeds with other cares, with other pangs ; 235  
Pangs num'rous as the num'rous ills that swarm'd  
O'er thy distinguish'd fate, and, clust'ring there,  
Thick as the locust on the land of Nile,  
Made death more deadly, and more dark the grave.



Reflect (if not forgot my touching tale) 240  
How was each circumstance with aspics arm'd?  
An aspice each, and all an hydra woe.  
What strong Herculean virtue could suffice?—  
Or is it virtue to be conquer'd here?  
This hoary cheek a train of tears bedews, 245  
And each tear mourns its own distinct distress,  
And each distress, distinctly mourn'd, demands  
Of grief still more, as heighten'd by the whole.  
A grief like this proprietors excludes:  
Not friends alone such obsequies deplore; 250  
They make mankind the mourner; carry sighs  
Far as the fatal Fame can wing her way,  
And turn the gayest thought of gayest age  
Down their right channel, thro' the vale of death.  
The vale of death! that hush'd Cimmerian vale, 255  
Where Darkness, brooding o'er unfinish'd fates,  
With raven wing incumbent, waits the day  
(Dread day!) that interdicts all future change!  
That subterranean world, that land of ruin!  
Fit walk, Lorenzo! for proud human thought! 260  
There let my thought expatiate, and explore  
Balsamic truths and healing sentiments,  
Of all most wanted, and most welcome, here.  
For gay Lorenzo's sake, and for thy own,  
My Soul! "The fruits of dying friends survey; 265  
"Expose the vain of life; weigh life and death;  
"Give Death his eulogy; thy fear subdue;

" And labour that first palm of noble minds,

" A manly scorn of terror from the tomb."

This harvest reap from thy Narcissa's grave. 270

As poets feign'd from Ajax' streaming blood

Arose, with grief inscrib'd, a mournful flow'r,

Let wisdom blossom from my mortal wound.

And first, of dying friends; what fruit from these?

It brings us more than triple aid; an aid 275

To chase our thoughtlessness, fear, pride, and guilt.

Our dying friends come o'er us like a cloud,

To damp our brainless ardours, and abate

That glare of life which often blinds the wise.

Our dying friends are pioneers, to smooth 280

Our rugged path to death; to break those bars

Of terror and abhorrence Nature throws

Cross our obfuscated way, and thus to make

Welcome, as safe, our port from ev'ry storm.

Each friend by Fate snatch'd from us is a plume

Pluck'd from the wing of human vanity, 286

Which makes us swoop from our aerial heights,

And, damp'd with omen of our own decease,

On drooping pinions of ambition lower'd,

Just skim earth's surface ere we break it up, 290

O'er putrid earth to scratch a little dust,

And save the world a nuisance. Smitten friends

Are angels sent on errands full of love;

For us they languish, and for us they die:

And shall they languish, shall they die, in vain? 295

G ij



Ungrateful, shall we grieve their hov'ring shades,  
Which wait the revolution in our hearts?  
Shall we disdain their silent, soft, address,  
Their posthumous advice, and pious pray'r?  
Senseless as herds that graze their hallow'd graves, 300  
Tread under foot their agonies and groans,  
Frustrate their anguish, and destroy their deaths?

Lorenzo! no; the thought of death indulge;  
Give it its wholesome empire! let it reign,  
That kind chastiser of thy soul, in joy! 305  
Its reign will spread thy glorious conquests far,  
And still the tumults of thy ruffled breast.  
Auspicious era! golden days, begin!  
The thought of death shall, like a god, inspire.  
And why not think on death? Is life the theme 310  
Of ev'ry thought? and wish of ev'ry hour?  
And song of ev'ry joy? surprising truth!  
The beaten spaniel's fondness not so strange.  
To wave the num'rous ills that seize on life  
As their own property, their lawful prey; 315  
Ere man has measur'd half his weary stage,  
His luxuries have left him no reserve,  
No maiden relishes, unbroach'd delights:  
On cold-serv'd repetitions he subsists,  
And in the tasteless present chews the past; 320  
Disgusted chews, and scarce can swallow down.  
Like lavish ancestors, his earlier years  
Have disinherited his future hours,



Which starve on orts, and glean their former field.

Live ever here, Lorenzo!—shocking thought!

So shocking, they who with disown it too; 316

Disown from shame what they from folly crave.

Live ever in the womb, nor see the light?

For what live ever here?—with lab'ring step

To tread our former footsteps? pace the round 330

Eternal? to climb life's worn heavy wheel,

Which draws up nothing new? to beat, and beat,

The beaten track? to bid each wretched day

The former mock? to forfeit on the same,

And yawn our joys? or thank a misery 335

For change, tho' sad? to see what we have seen?

Hear, till unheard, the same old flabber'd tale?

To taste the tasted, and at each return

Less tasteful? o'er our palates to decant

Another vintage? strain a flatter year 340

Thro' loaded vessels, and a laxer tone?

Crazy machines to grind earth's wasted fruits!

Ill ground, and worse concocted! load, not life!

The rational soul kennels of excess!

Still-streaming thoroughfares of dull debauch! 345

Trembling each gulp, lest death should snatch the bowl.

Such of our fine ones is the wish refin'd!

So would they have it: elegant desire!

Why not invite the bellowing stalls and wilds?

But such examples might their riot awe. 350

Thro' want of virtue, that is, want of thought,

G II

(Tho' on bright thought they fatter all their flights)  
To what are they reduc'd? to love and hate  
The same vain world; to censure and espouse  
This painted shrew of life, who calls them fool 355  
Each moment of each day; to flatter bad  
Tiro' dread of worse; to cling to this rude rock,  
Barren, to them, of good, and sharp with ill,  
And hourly blacken'd with impending storms,  
And infamous for wrecks of human hope— 360  
Scar'd at the gloomy gulf that yawns beneath.  
Such are their triumphs! such their pangs of joy!

'Tis time, high time, to shift this dismal scene.  
This hogg'd, this hideous state, what art can cure?  
One only, but that one what all may reach: 365  
Virtue—she, wonder-working goddess! charms  
That rock to bloom, and tames the painted shrew;  
And, what will more surprize, Lorenzo! gives  
To life's sick, nauseous, iteration, change,  
And straightens Nature's circle to a line. 370  
Believ'st thou this, Lorenzo! lend an ear,  
A patient ear, thou'lt blush to disbelieve.

A languid, leaden iteration reigns,  
And ever must, o'er those whose joys are joys  
Of sight, smell, taste. The cockow-seasons sing 375  
The same dull note to such as nothing prize  
But what those seasons, from the teeming earth,  
To doting sense indulge: but nobler minds,  
Which relish fruits unripen'd by the sun,

Make their days various, various as the dyes 380  
On the dove's neck, which wanton in his rays.  
On minds of dove-like innocence possess'd,  
On lighten'd minds, that bask in virtue's beams,  
Nothing hangs tedious, nothing old revolves  
In that for which they long, for which they live. 385  
Their glorious efforts, wing'd with heav'nly hope,  
Each rising morning sees still higher rise;  
Each bounteous dawn its novelty presents  
To worth maturing, new strength, lustre, fame;  
While Nature's circle, like a chariot-wheel 390  
Rolling beneath their elevated ames,  
Makes their fair prospect fairer ev'ry hour,  
Advancing virtue in a line to bliss;  
Virtue, which Christian motives best inspire!  
And bliss, which Christian schemes alone ensure! 395  
And shall we then, for virtue's sake, commence  
Apostates, and turn infidels for joy?  
A truth it is few doubt, but fewer trust,  
"He sins against this life who slights the next."  
What is this life? how few their fav'rite know? 400  
Fond in the dark, and blind in our embrace,  
By passionately loving life we make  
Lov'd Life unlovely, hugging her to death.  
We give to time eternity's regard,  
And, dreaming, take our passage for our port. 405  
Life has no value as an end, but means;  
An end deplorable! a means divine!



When 'tis our all, 'tis nothing; worse than nought;  
A nest of pains; when held as nothing, much.  
Like some fair hum'rists, life is most enjoy'd 410  
When courted least; most worth when disesteem'd;  
Then 'tis the seat of comfort, rich in peace;  
In prospect richer far; important! awful!  
Not to be mention'd but with shouts of praise!  
Not to be thought on but with tides of joy! 415  
The mighty basis of eternal bliss!

Where now the barren rock? the painted shrew?  
Where now, Lorenzo! life's eternal round?  
Have I not made my triple promise good?  
Vain is the world, but only to the vain. 420  
To what compare we then this varying scene,  
Whose worth, ambiguous, rises and declines?  
Waxes and wanes? (in all propitious Night  
Assists me here) compare it to the moon;  
Dark in herself, and indigent, but rich 425  
In borrow'd lustre from a higher sphere.  
When gross guilt interposes, lab'ring earth,  
O'ershadow'd, mourns a deep eclipse of joy;  
Her joys, at brightest, pallid to that font  
Of full effulgent glory whence they flow. 430

Nor is that glory distant. Oh, Lorenzo!  
A good man and an angel! these between  
How thin the barrier? what divides their fate?  
Perhaps a moment, or perhaps a year;  
Or if an age, it is a moment still; 435



A moment, or eternity's forgot.  
Then be what once they were who now are gods;  
Be what Philander was, and claim the skies.  
Starts timid Nature at the gloomy pass?  
The soft transition call it, and be cheer'd: 440  
Such it is often, and why not to thee?  
To hope the best is pious, brave, and wise,  
And may itself procure what it presumes.  
Life is much flatter'd, Death is much traduc'd;  
Compare the rivals, and the kinder crown. 445  
"Strange competition!"—True, Lorenzo! strange!  
So little life can cast into the scale.

Life makes the soul dependent on the dust,  
Death gives her wings to mount above the spheres.  
Thro' chinks, styl'd organs, dim life peeps at light;  
Death bursts th' involving cloud, and all is day: 451  
All eye, all ear, the disembod' d power.  
Death has feign'd evils nature shall not feel;  
Life ill's substantial wisdom cannot shun.  
Is not the mighty Mind, that son of heav'n! 455  
By tyrant Life dethron'd, imprison'd, pain'd?  
By Death enlarg'd, ennobled, deify'd?  
Death but intombs the body, life the soul.

"Is Death then guiltless? How he marks his way  
"With dreadful waste of what deserves to shine! 460  
"Art, genius, fortune, elevated power!  
"With various lustres these light up the world,  
"Which death puts out, and darkens human race."



I grant, Lorenzo! this indictment just:  
The sage, peer, potentate, king, conqueror! 465  
Death humbles these; more barbarous Life the man.  
Life is the triumph of our mould'ring clay;  
Death of the spirit infinite! divine!  
Death has no dread but what frail life imparts,  
Nor life true joy but what kind death improves. 470  
No bliss has life to boast, till death can give  
Far greater. Life's a debtor to the grave;  
Dark lattice! letting in eternal day.

Lorenzo! blush at fondness for a life  
Which sends celestial souls on errands vile, 475  
To cater for the sense, and serve at boards  
Where ev'ry ranger of the wilds, perhaps  
Each reptile, justly claims our upper-hand.  
Luxurious feast! a soul, a soul immortal,  
In all the dainties of a brute bemir'd! 480  
Lorenzo! blush at terror for a death  
Which gives thee to repose in festive bowers,  
Where nectars sparkle, angels minister,  
And more than angels share, and raise, and crown,  
And eternize, the birth, bloom, bursts of bliss. 485  
What need I more? O Death! the palm is thine.

Then welcome, Death! thy dreaded harbingers,  
Age and disease; Disease, tho' long my guest,  
That plucks my nerves, those tender strings of life,  
Which pluck'd a little more will toll the bell 490  
That calls my few friends to my funeral;



Where feeble Nature drops, perhaps, a tear,  
While Reason and Religion, better taught,  
Congratulate the dead, and crown his tomb  
With wreath triumphant. Death is victory; 495  
It binds in chains the raging ills of life:  
Lust and Ambition, Wrath and Avarice,  
Dragg'd at his chariot-wheel, applaud his power.  
That ills corrosive, cares importunate,  
Are not immortal too, O Death! is thine. 500  
Our day of dissolution!—name it right,  
'Tis our great pay-day: 'tis our harvest, rich  
And ripe. What tho' the sickle, sometimes keen,  
Just scars us as we reap the golden grain?  
More than thy balm, O Gilend! heals the wound. 505  
Birth's feeble cry, and Death's deep dismal groan,  
Are slender tributes low-tax'd Nature pays  
For mighty gain: the gain of each a life!  
But, O! the last the former so transcends,  
Life dies compar'd; Life lives beyond the grave. 510  
And feel I, Death! no joy from thought of thee?  
Death! the great counsellor, who man inspires  
With ev'ry nobler thought and fairer deed!  
Death! the deliverer who rescues man!  
Death! the rewarder, who the rescu'd crowns! 515  
Death! that absolves my birth, a curse without it!  
Rich Death! that realizes all my cares,  
Toils, virtues, hopes; without it a chimera!  
Death! of all pain the period, not of joy:

Joy's source and subject still subsist unhurt; 520  
One in my soul, and one in her great fire,  
'Tho' the four winds were warring for my dust.  
Yes, and from winds and waves, and central night,  
'Tho' prison'd there, my dust, too, I reclaim,  
(To dust when drop proud Nature's proudest spheres)  
And live entire. Death is the crown of life: 526  
Were death deny'd, poor man would live in vain:  
Were death deny'd, to live would not be life:  
Were death deny'd, ev'n fools would wish to die.  
Death wounds to cure; we fall, we rise, we reign! 530  
Spring from our fetters, fasten in the skies,  
Where blooming Eden withers in our sight.  
Death gives us more than was in Eden lost:  
This king of terrors is the prince of peace.  
When shall I die to vanity, pain, death? 534  
When shall I die?—when shall I live for ever? 536

*End of Night Third.*



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# THE COMPLAINT.

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## NIGHT IV.

### THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

Containing

OUR ONLY CURE FOR THE FEAR OF DEATH,  
AND PROPER SENTIMENTS OF HEART ON THAT  
INESTIMABLE BLESSING.

*Humbly inscribed*

TO THE HON. MR. YORKE.

A much-indebted Muse, O Yorke! intrudes.  
Amid the smiles of fortune and of youth,  
Thine ear is patient of a serious song.  
How deep implanted in the breast of man  
The dread of death? I sing its sov'reign cure. 5  
Why start at Death? where is he? Death arriv'd,  
Is past; not come, or gone; he's never here.  
Ere hope, sensation fails. Black-boding man  
Receives, not suffers, Death's tremendous blow. 9  
The knell, the shroud, the mattock, and the grave;  
The deep damp vault, the darkness, and the worm;  
These are the hugbears of a winter's eve,  
The terrors of the living, not the dead;  
Imagination's fool, and Error's wretch.

*Volume I.*

H

Man makes a death which Nature never made, 15  
Then on the point of his own fancy falls,  
And feels a thousand deaths in fearing one.

But were Death frightful, what has age to fear?  
If prudent, age should meet the friendly foe,  
And shelter in his hospitable gloom. 20

I scarce can meet a monument but holds  
My younger; ev'ry date cries—"Come away."  
And what recalls me? look the world around,  
And tell me what. The wisest cannot tell.

Should any born of woman give his thought 25  
Full range on just Dislike's unbounded field;  
Of things the vanity, of men the flaws;

Flaws in the best; the many flaw all o'er;  
As leopards spotted, or as Ethiops dark;  
Vivacious ill; good dying immature; 30

(How immature Narcissa's marble tells)  
And at its death bequeathing endless pain;  
His heart, tho' bold, would sicken at the sight,  
And spend itself in sighs for future scenes.

But grant to life (and just it is to grant 35  
To lucky life) some perquisites of joy;  
A time there is when, like a thrice-told tale,

Long-rifled life of sweet can yield no more,  
But from our comment on the comedy,  
Pleasing reflections on parts well-sustain'd, 40

Or purpos'd emendations where we fail'd,  
Or hopes of plaudits from our candid Judge,

When, on their exit, souls are bid unrobe,  
Toss Fortune back her tinsel and her plume,  
And drop this mask of flesh behind the scene. 45

With me that time is come; my world is dead;  
A new world rises, and new manners reign.  
Foreign comedians, a spruce band! arrive,  
To push me from the scene, or hiss me there.  
What a pert race starts up! the strangers gaze, 50  
And I at them; my neighbour is unknown;  
Nor that the worst. Ah me! the dire effect  
Of loit'ring here, of death defrauded long.  
Of old so gracious (and let that suffice)  
My very master knows me not. — 55

Shall I dare say peculiar is the fate?  
I've been so long remember'd I'm forgot.  
An object ever pressing dims the sight,  
And hides behind its ardour to be seen.  
When in his courtiers' ears I pour my plaint, 60  
They drink it as the nectar of the great,  
And squeeze my hand, and beg me come to-morrow.  
Refusal! canst thou wear a smoother form?

Indulge me, nor conceive I drop my theme.  
Who cheapens life abates the fear of death. 65  
Twice told the period spent on stubborn Troy,  
Court-favour, yet untaken, I besiege,  
Ambition's ill-judg'd effort to be rich.  
Alas! ambition makes my little less,  
Embitt'ring the possess'd. Why wish for more? 70

Wishing, of all employments is the worst;  
Philosophy's reverse, and health's decay!  
Were I as plump as stult'd Theology,  
Wishing would waste me to this shade again.  
Were I as wealthy as a South-sea dream, 75  
Wishing is an expedient to be poor.  
Wishing, that constant hectic of a fool,  
Caught at a court, purg'd off by purer air  
And simpler diet, gifts of rural life!

Blest be that hand divine which gently laid 80  
My heart at rest beneath this humble shed.  
The world's a stately bark; on dang'rous seas  
With pleasure seen, but boarded at our peril:  
Here on a single plank, thrown safe ashore,  
I hear the tumult of the distant throng, 85  
As that of seas remote, or dying storms,  
And meditate on scenes more silent still,  
Pursue my thiermy, and fight the fear of death.  
Here, like a shepherd gazing from his hut,  
Touching his reed, or leaning on his staff, 90  
Eager Ambition's fiery chase I see;  
I see the circling hunt of noisy men  
Burst law's inclosure, leap the mounds of right,  
Pursuing and pursued, each other's prey;  
As wolves for rapine, as the fox for wiles, 95  
Till Death, that mighty hunter, earths them all.

Why all this toil for triumphs of an hour?  
What tho' we wade in wealth, or soar in fame?



Earth's highest station ends in, "Here he lies;"  
And "dust to dust" concludes her noblest song. 100  
If this song lives, posterity shall know  
One, tho' in Britain born, with courtiers bred,  
Who thought ev'n gold might come a day too late,  
Nor on his subtle death-bed plann'd his scheme  
For future vacancies in church or state, 105  
Some avocation deeming it—to die;  
Unbit by rage canine of dying rich,  
Guilt's blunder! and the loudest laugh of Hell.

O my Coëvals! remnants of yourselves!  
Poor human ruins tott'ring o'er the grave! 110  
Shall we, shall aged men, like aged trees,  
Strike deeper their vile root, and closer cling,  
Still more enamour'd of this wretched soil?  
Shall our pale wither'd hands be still stretch'd out,  
Trembling, at once, with eagerness and age? 115  
With av'rice and convulsions, grasping hard?  
Grasping at air! for what has earth beside?  
Man wants but little, nor that little long:  
How soon must he resign his very dust,  
Which frugal Nature lent him for an hour! 120  
Years unexperienc'd rush on num'rous ill:  
And soon as man, exempt from time, has found  
The key of life, it opes the gates of death.

When in this vale of years I backward look,  
And miss such numbers, numbers, too, of such 125  
Firmer in health, and greener in their age,

And stricter on their guard; and sit fir' far  
To play life's subtle game, I scarce believe  
I still survive. And am I fond of life,  
Who scarce can think it possible I live? 130  
Alive by miracle! or, what is next,  
Alive by Mead! if I am still alive,  
Who long have bury'd what gives life to live,  
Firmness of nerve, and energy of thought.  
Life's lee is not more shallow than impure 135  
And vapid: Sense and Reason shew the door,  
Call for my bier, and point me to the dust.

O thou great Arbitrer of life and death!  
Nature's immortal, immaterial soul!  
Whose all-prolific beam late call'd me forth 140  
From darkness, tanning darkness, where I lay  
The worm's inferior, and, in rank, beneath  
The dust I tread on, high to bear my brow,  
To drink the spirit of the golden day,  
And triumph in existence, and couldst know 145  
No motive but my bliss, and hast ordain'd  
A rise in blessing! with the Patriarch's joy  
Thy call I follow to the land unknown;  
I trust in thee, and know in whom I trust:  
Or life or death is equal; neither weighs; 150  
All weight in this—O let me live to thee!

Tho' Nature's terrors, thus, may be repress'd,  
Still frowns grim Death; guilt points the tyrant's spear.  
And whence all human guilt? From death forgot.

Ah me! too long I set at nought the swarms 155  
Of friendly warnings which around me flew,  
And smil'd unsmitten. Small my cause to smile!  
Death's admonitions, like shafts upwards shot,  
More dreadful by delay, the longer ere  
They strike our hearts the deeper is their wound : 160  
O think how deep, Lorenzo! here it stings;  
Who can appease its anguish? How it burns!  
What hand the barb'd, envenom'd, thought can draw?  
What healing hand can pour the balm of peace,  
And turn my sight undaunted on the tomb? 165  
With joy,—with grief, that healing hand I see:  
Ah! too conspicuous! it is fix'd on high.  
On high?—what means my frenzy? I blaspheme:  
Alas! how low? how far beneath the skies?  
The skies it form'd, and now it bleeds for me— 170  
But bleeds the balm I want—yet still it bleeds;  
Draw the dire steel—ah, no! the dreadful blessing  
What heart or can sustain or dares forego?  
There hangs all human hope; that nail supports  
The falling universe: that gone we drop; 175  
Horror receives us, and the dismal wish  
Creation had been smother'd in her birth—  
Darkness his curtain, and his bed the dust,  
When stars and sun are dust beneath his throne;  
In heav'n itself can such indulgence dwell? 180  
O what a groan was there! a groan not his:  
He seiz'd our dreadful right, the load sustain'd,

And heav'd the mountain from a guilty world.  
A thousand worlds, so bought, were bought too dear;  
Sensations new in angels' bosoms rise, 185  
Suspend their song, and make a pause in bliss.

O for their song to reach my lofty theme!  
Inspire me, Night! with all thy tuneful spheres,  
Whilst I with seraphs share seraphic themes,  
And shew to men the dignity of man; 190  
Lest I blaspheme my subject with my song.  
Shall Pagan pages glow celestial flame,  
And Christian languish? On our hearts, not heads,  
Falls the soul infamy. My heart! awake:  
What can awake thee, unawak'd by this, 195  
"Expendéd Diety on human weal?"  
Feel the great truths which burst the tenfold night  
Of Heathen error with a golden flood  
Of endless day. To feel is to be fir'd;  
And to believe, Lorenzo! is to feel. 200

Thou most indulgent, most tremendous Pow'r!  
Still more tremendous for thy wondrous love!  
That arms with awe more awful thy commands,  
And foul transgression dips in sev'nfold guilt;  
How our hearts tremble at thy love immense! 205  
In love immense, inviolably just!  
Thou, rather than thy justice should be stain'd,  
Didst stain the cross; and, work of wonders far  
The greatest, that thy dearest far might bleed.

Bold thought! shall I dare speak it or repress? 210

Should man more execrate or boast the guilt  
Which rous'd such vengeance? which such love inflam'd?  
O'er guilt (how mountainous!) with outstretch'd arms  
Stern Justice and soft-smiling Love, embrace,  
Supporting, in full majesty, thy throne, 215  
When seem'd its majesty to need support,  
Or that, or man, inevitably lost:  
What but the fathomless of thought divine  
Could labour such expedient from despair,  
And rescue both? Both rescue! both exalt! 220  
O how are both exalted by the deed!  
The wondrous deed! or shall I call it more?  
A wonder in Omnipotence itself!  
A mystery no less to gods than men!  
Not thus our infidels th' Eternal draw, 225  
A God all-o'er consummate, absolute,  
Full orb'd, in his whole round of rays complete:  
They set at odds Heav'n's jarring attributes,  
And with one excellence another wound;  
Maim Heav'n's perfection, break its equal beams, 230  
Bid mercy triumph over—God himself,  
Undeify'd by their opprobrious praise.  
A God all mercy is a God unjust.

Ye brainless Wits! ye baptiz'd infidels!  
Ye worse for mending! wash'd to fouler stains! 235  
The ransom was paid down; the fund of heav'n,  
Heav'n's inexhaustible, exhausted fund,  
Amazing and amaz'd, pour'd forth the price,



All price beyond : tho' curious to compute,  
Archangels fail'd to cast the mighty sum : 240  
Its value vast ungrasp'd by minds create,  
For ever hides and glows in the Supreme.

And was the ransom paid ? it was ; and paid  
(What can exalt the bounty more ?) for you.  
The sun beheld it.—No, the shocking scene 245  
Drove back his chariot : midnight veil'd his face ;  
Not such as this, not such as Nature makes ;  
A midnight Nature shudder'd to behold ;  
A midnight new ! a dread eclipse (without  
Opposing spheres) from her Creator's frown ! 250  
Sun ! didst thou fly thy Maker's pain ? or start  
At that enormous load of human guilt  
Which bow'd his blessed head, o'erwhelm'd his cross,  
Made groan the centre, burst earth's marble womb  
With pangs, strange pangs ! deliver'd of her dead ? 255  
Hell howl'd ; and heav'n that hour let fall a tear :  
Heav'n wept, that men might smile ! Heav'n bled, that  
Might never die !—— [man

And is devotion virtue ? 'tis compell'd.  
What heart of stone but glows at thoughts like these ?  
Such contemplations mount us, and should mount 261  
The mind still higher, nor ever glance on man  
Unraptur'd, uninflam'd.—Where roll my thoughts  
To rest from wonders ? other wonders rise,  
And strike where'er they roll : my soul is caught : 265  
Heav'n's sov'reign blessings, clust'ring from the cross,



Rush on her, in a throng, and close her round,  
The pris'ner of amaze!—In his blest life  
I see the path, and in his death the price,  
And in his great ascent the proof supreme, 270  
Of immortality.—And did he rise?

Hear, O ye Nations! hear it, O ye Dead!  
He rose! he rose! he burst the bars of death.  
Lift up your heads, ye everlasting Gates!  
And give the King of glory to come in. 275

Who is the King of glory? he who left  
His throne of glory for the pang of death.  
Lift up your heads, ye everlasting Gates!  
And give the King of glory to come in.  
Who is the King of glory? he who slew 280

The rav'nous foe that gorg'd all human race!  
The King of glory he, whose glory fill'd  
Heav'n with amazement at his love to man,  
And with divine complacency beheld  
Pow'rs most illumin'd wilder'd in the theme. 285

The theme, the joy, how then shall man sustain?  
Oh, the burst gates! crush'd sling! demolish'd throne!  
Last gasp of vanquish'd Death. Shout, earth and heav'n,  
This sum of good to man! whose nature then  
Took wing, and mounted with him from the tomb.  
Then, then, I rose; then first Humanity 291  
Triumphant past the crystal ports of light,  
(Stupendous guest!) and seiz'd eternal youth,  
Seiz'd in our name. E'er since 'tis blasphemous

To call man mortal. Man's mortality 295  
Was then transferr'd to death; and heav'n's duration  
Unalienably seal'd to this frail frame,  
This child of dust.—Man, all-immortal! hail;  
Hail, Heav'n! all lavish of strange gifts to man!  
Thine all the glory, man's the boundless bliss. 300

Where am I rapt by this triumphant theme,  
On Christian joy's exulting wing, above  
Th'Aonian mount!—Alas! small cause for joy!  
What if to pain immortal? if extent  
Of being, to preclude a close of woe? 305  
Where, then, my boast of immortality?  
I boast it still, tho' cover'd o'er with guilt:  
For guilt, not innocence, his life he pour'd;  
'Tis guilt alone can justify his death;  
Nor that, unless his death can justify 310  
Relenting guilt in Heav'n's indulgent sight.  
If, sick of folly, I relent, he writes  
My name in heav'n with that inverted spear  
(A spear deep-dipt in blood!) which pierc'd his side,  
And open'd there a font for all mankind, 315  
Who strive, who combat crimes, to drink and live:  
This, only this, subdues the fear of death.

And what is this?—Survey the wondrous cure,  
And at each step let higher wonder rise!  
“ Pardon for infinite offence! and pardon 320  
“ Thro' means that speak its value infinite!  
“ A pardon bought with blood! with blood divine!

" With blood divine of him I made my foe!  
 " Peristed to provoke! tho' woo'd and aw'd;  
 " Bleft, and chastis'd, a flagrant rebel still! 325  
 " A rebel 'midst the thunders of his throne!  
 " Nor I alone! a rebel universe!  
 " My species up in arms! not one exempt!  
 " Yet for ahe foulest of the soul he dies,  
 " Most joy'd for the redeem'd from deepest guilt!  
 " As if our race were held of highest rank, 331  
 " And Godhead dearer, as more kind to man!"  
 Bound ev'ry heart! and ev'ry bosom burn!  
 O what a scale of miracles is here!  
 Its lowest round high planted on the skies, 335  
 Its tow'ring summit lost beyond the thought  
 Of man or angel! Oh that I could climb  
 The wonderful ascent with equal praise!  
 Praise! slow for ever, (if astonishment  
 Will give thee leave) my praise! for ever slow; 340  
 Praise ardent, cordial, constant, to high Heav'n  
 More fragrant than Arabian sacrific'd,  
 And all her spicy mountains in a flame.  
 So dear, so due to Heav'n, shall Praise desert  
 With her soft plume (from plausive angels' wing 345  
 First pluck'd by man) to tickle mortal ears,  
 Thus diving in the pockets of the great?  
 Is praise the perquisite of ev'ry paw,  
 Tho' black as hell, that grapples well for gold?  
 Oh love of gold! thou meanest of amours! 350

Shall Praise<sup>r</sup> her odours waste on virtues dead,  
Embalm the base, perfume the stench of guilt,  
Earn dirty bread by washing Ethiops fair,  
Removing filth, or sinking it from sight,  
A scavenger in scenes where vacant posts, 355  
Like gibbets yet untenanted, expect  
Their future ornaments? From courts and thrones  
Return, apostate Praise! thou vagabond!  
Thou prostitute! to thy first love return,  
Thy first, thy greatest, once unrivall'd theme. 360  
There flow redundant, like Meander flow,  
Back to thy fountain, to that parent pow'r  
Who gives the tongue to sound, the thought to soar,  
The soul to be. Men homage pay to men,  
Thoughtless beneath whose dreadful eye they bow,  
In mutual awe profound, of clay to clay, 366  
Of guilt to guilt, and turn their backs on thee,  
Great Sire! whom thrones celestial ceaseless sing,  
To prostrate angels an amazing scene!  
O the presumption of man's awe for man!— 370  
Man's Author! End! Restorer! Law! and Judge!  
Thine all; Day thine, and thine this gloom of Night,  
With all her wealth, with all her radiant worlds.  
What night eternal but a frown from thee?  
What heav'n's meridian glory but thy smile? 375  
And shall not praise be thine, not human praise,  
While heav'n's high host on hallelujahs live?  
O may I breathe no longer than I breathe

My soul in praise to him who gave my soul,  
And all her infinite of prospect fair, 380  
Cut thro' the shades of hell, great Love! by thee,  
Oh most adorable! most unador'd!  
Where shall that praise begin which ne'er should end?  
Where'er I turn, what claim on all applause!  
How is Night's sable mantle labour'd o'er, 385  
How richly wrought with attributes divine!  
What wisdom shines! what love! This midnight pomp,  
This gorgeous arch, with golden worlds inlaid!  
Built with divine ambition! nought to thee;  
For others this profusion. Thou apart, 390  
Above! beyond! Oh tell me, mighty Mind!  
Where art thou? Shall I dive into the deep?  
Call to the sun? or ask the roaring winds  
For their Creator? shall I question loud  
The thunder, if in that th' Almighty dwells? 395  
Or holds he furious storms in straiten'd reins,  
And bids fierce whirlwinds wheel his rapid car?  
What mean these questions?—Trembling I retract;  
My prostrate soul adores the present God.  
Praise I a distant Deity? He tunes 400  
My voice (if tun'd;) the nerve that writes sustains:  
Wrapp'd in his being I resound his praise:  
But tho' past all diffus'd, without a shore  
His essence, local is his throne (as meet)  
To gather the dispers'd (as standards call 405  
The list'd from afar;) to fix a point,



A central point, collective of his sons,  
Since finite ev'ry nature but his own.

The nameless He, whose nod is Nature's birth,  
And Nature's shield the shadow of his hand; 410  
Her dissolution his suspended smile!  
The great First-Last! pavilion'd high he sits  
In darkness, from excessive splendour borne,  
By gods unseen, unless thro' lustre lost.  
His glory, to created glory, bright, 415  
As that to central horrors: he looks down  
On all that fears, and spans immensity.

'Tho' night unnumber'd worlds unfolds to view,  
Boundless Creation! what art thou? a beam,  
A mere efflorescence of his majesty. 420  
And shall an atom of this atom-world  
Mutter, in dust and sin, the theme of heav'n?  
Down to the centre should I send my thought  
'Thro' beds of glitt'ring ore and glowing gems;  
'Their beggar'd blaze wants lustre for my lay; 425  
Goes out in darkness: if, on tow'ring wing,  
I send it thro' the boundless vault of stars,  
(The stars, tho' rich, what dross their gold to thee,  
Great! good! wise! wonderful! eternal King!)  
If to those conscious stars thy throne around, 430  
Praise ever-pouring, and imbibing bliss,  
And ask their strain; they want it, more they want,  
Poor their abundance, humble their sublime,  
Languid their energy, their ardent cold;



Indebted still, their highest rapture burns, 435  
Short of its mark, defective, tho' divine.

Still more—this theme is man's, and man's alone;  
Their vast appointments reach it not; they see  
On earth a bounty not indulg'd on high,  
And downward look for heav'n's superior praise! 440  
First-born of Ether! high in fields of light!  
View man, to see the glory of your God!  
Could angels envy, they had envy'd here:  
And some did envy; and the rest, tho' gods,  
Yet still gods unredeem'd, (there triumphs man, 445  
Tempted to weigh the dust against the skies)  
They less would feel, tho' more adorn my theme.  
They sung creation (for in that they shar'd)  
How rose in melody that child of Love!  
Creation's great superior, man! is thine; 450  
Thine is redemption; they just gave the key;  
'Tis thine to raise and eternize the song,  
Tho' human, yet divine; for should not this  
Raise man o'er man, and kindle seraphs here?  
Redemption! 'twas creation more sublime; 455  
Redemption! 'twas the labour of the Skies;  
Far more than labour—it was death in heav'n.  
A truth so strange, 'twere bold to think it true,  
If not far bolder still to disbelieve. 459

Here pause and ponder. Was there death in heav'n?  
What then on earth? on earth, which struck the blow?  
Who struck it? Who?—O how is man enlarg'd,

Seen thro' this medium! How the pygmy tow'rs!  
How counterpois'd his origin from dust!  
How counterpois'd to dust his sad return! 465  
How voided his vast distance from the skies!  
How near he presses on the seraph's wing!  
Which is the seraph? which the born of clay?  
How this demonstrates, thro' the thickest cloud  
Of guilt and clay condens'd, the son of Heav'n! 470  
The double form; the made; and the re-made!  
And shall Heav'n's double property be lost?  
Man's double madness only can destroy.  
To man the bleeding Cross has promis'd all;  
The bleeding Cross has sworn eternal grace. 475  
Who gave his life; what grace shall he deny?  
O Ye! who from this rock of ages leap  
Apostates, plunging headlong in the deep!  
What cordial joy, what consolation strong,  
Whatever winds arise, or billows roll! 480  
Our int'rest in the Master of the storm;  
Cling there; and in wreck'd Nature's ruins smile,  
While vile apostates tremble in a calm.

Man! know thyself: all wisdom centres there.  
To none man seems ignoble but to man. 485  
Angels that grandeur men o'erlook admire:  
How long shall human nature be their book,  
Degen'rate Mortal! and unread by thee?  
The beam dim reason sheds: shews wonders there:  
What high contents! illustrious faculties! 490

But the grand comment, which displays at full  
 Our human height, scarce sever'd from divine,  
 By Heav'n compos'd, was publish'd on the cross.

Who looks on that, and sees not in himself  
 An awful stranger, a terrestrial god?

A glorious partner with the Deity  
 In that high attribute, immortal life?

If a God bleeds, he bleeds not for a worm.

I gaze, and as I gaze my mounting soul

Catches strange fire, Eternity! at thee,

And drops the world—or, rather, more enjoys.

How chang'd the face of Nature! how improv'd!

What seem'd a chaos shines a glorious world,

Or what a world an Eden; heighten'd all!

It is another scene! another self!

And still another, as time rolls along,

And that a self far more illustrious still.

Beyond long ages, yet roll'd up in shades

Unpierc'd by bold Conjecture's keenest ray,

What evolutions of surprising Fate!

How Nature opens, and receives my soul

In boundless walks of raptur'd thought! where gods

Encounter and embrace me! What new births

Of strange adventure, foreign to the sun,

Where what now charms, perhaps what'er exists,

Old time, and fair creation, are forgot!

Is this extravagant? of man we form

Extravagant conception to be just:



Conception unconfin'd wants wings to reach him ;  
Beyond its reach the Godhead only more. 320  
He the great Father! kindled at one flame  
The world of rationals; one spirit pour'd  
From spirits' awful Fountain; pour'd himself  
Thro' all their souls, but not in equal stream,  
Profuse, or frugal, of th' inspiring God, 325  
As his wise plan demanded; and when past  
Their various trials, in their various spheres,  
If they continue rational, as made,  
Reforms them all into himself again,  
His throne their centre, and his smile their crown. 330  
Why doubt we, then, the glorious truth to sing,  
Tho' yet un Sung, as deem'd, perhaps, too bold?  
Angels are men of a superior kind;  
Angels are men in lighter habit clad,  
High o'er celestial mountains wing'd in flight; 335  
And men are angels, loaded for an hour,  
Who wade this miry vale, and climb with pain,  
And slipp'ry step, the bottom of the sleep.  
Angels their failings, mortals have their praise:  
While here, of corps ethereal, such enroll'd, 340  
And summon'd to the glorious standard soon,  
Which flames eternal crimson thro' the skies.  
Nor are our brothers thoughtless of their kin,  
Yet absent; but not absent from their love.  
Michael has fought our battles; Raphael sung 345  
Our triumphs; Gabriel on our errands flown,

Scot by the Sov'reign: and are these, O Man!  
Thy friends, thy warm allies? and thou (shame burn  
The cheek to cinder!) rival to the brute?

Religion's all. Descending from the skies 550  
To wretched man, the goddess in her left  
Holds out this world, and in her right the next.  
Religion! the sole voucher man is man;  
Supporter sole of man above himself;  
Ev'n in this night of frailty, change, and death, 555  
She gives the soul a soul that acts a god.

Religion! providence! an after-state!  
Here is firm footing; here is solid rock;  
This can support us; all is sea besides;  
Sinks under us; beforms, and then devours. 560  
His hand the good man fastens on the skies,  
And bids earth roll; nor feels her idle whirl.

As when a wretch, from thick polluted air,  
Darkness and stench, and suffocating damps,  
And dungeon horrors, by kind Fate discharg'd, 565  
Climbs some fair eminence, where ether pure  
Surrounds him, and Elysian-prospects rise,  
His heart exults, his spirits cast their load,  
As if new-born he triumphs in the change;  
So joys the soul, when from inglorious aims 570  
And sordid sweets, from feculence and froth  
Of ties terrestrial set at large, she mounts  
To Reason's region, her own element,  
Breathes hopes immortal, and affects the skies.





Religion! thou the soul of happiness, 575  
And, groaning Calvary! of thee: there shine  
The noblest truths; there strongest motives sling;  
There sacred violence assaults the soul;  
There nothing but compulsion is forborne.  
Can love allure us? or can terror awe? 580  
He weeps!—the falling drop puts out the sun.  
He sighs!—the sigh earth's deep foundation shakes.  
If in his love so terrible, what then  
His wrath inflam'd? his tenderness on fire?  
Like soft, smooth oil, outblazing other fires? 585  
Can pray'r, can praise, avert it?—Thou, my all!  
My theme! my inspiration! and my crown!  
My strength in age! my rise in low estate!  
My soul's ambition, pleasure, wealth!—my world!  
My light in darkness! and my life in death! 590  
My boast thro' time! bliss thro' eternity!  
Eternity, too short to speak thy praise,  
Or fathom thy profound of love to man!  
To man of men the meanest, ev'n to me;  
My sacrifice! my God!—what things are these! 595  
What then art thou? by what name shall I call thee?  
Knew I the name devout archangels use,  
Devout archangels should the name enjoy,  
By me unrivall'd; thousands more sublime,  
None half so dear as that which, tho' unspoke, 600  
Still glows at heart. O how Omnipotence  
Is lost in love! thou great Philanthropist!



Father of angels! but the friend of man!  
Like Jacob, fondest of the younger born!  
Thou who didst save him, snatch the smoking brand  
From out the flames, and quench it in thy blood! 606  
How art thou pleas'd by bounty to distress!  
To make us groan beneath our gratitude,  
Too big for birth! to favour and confound;  
To challenge, and to distance all return! 610  
Of lavish love stupendous heights to soar,  
And leave Praise panting in the distant vale!  
Thy right too great defrauds thee of thy due,  
And sacrilegious our sublimest song.  
But since the naked will obtains thy smile, 615  
Beneath this monument of praise unpaid,  
And future life symphonious to my strain,  
(That noblest hymn to Heav'n!) for ever lie  
Intomb'd my fear of death! and ev'ry fear,  
The dread of ev'ry evil, but thy frown. 620

Whom see I yonder so demurely smile?  
Laughter a labour, and might break their rest.  
Ye Quietists! in homage to the skies!  
Serene! of soft address! who mildly make  
An unobtrusive tender of your hearts, 625  
Abhorring violence! who halt indeed,  
But, for the blessing, wrestle not with Heav'n!  
Think you my song too turbulent? too warm?  
Are passions, then, the pagans of the soul?  
Reason alone baptiz'd? alone ordain'd 630

To touch things sacred? Oh for warmer still!  
Guilt chills my zeal, and age benumbs my pow'r:  
Oh for an humbler heart and prouder song!  
Thou, my much-injur'd Theme! with that soft eye  
Which melted o'er doom'd Salem, deign to look 635  
Compassion to the coldness of my breast,  
And pardon to the winter in my strain.

Oh ye cold-hearted, frozen, Formalists!  
On such a theme 'tis impious to be calm:  
Passion is reason, transport temper, here. 640  
Shall Heav'n, which gave me ardour, and has shown  
Her own for man so strongly, not disdain  
What smooth emollients in theology,  
Recumbent Virtue's downy doctors, preach,  
That prose of piety, a lukewarm praise? 645  
Rise odours sweet from incense uninflam'd?  
Devotion when lukewarm is undevout;  
But when it glows, its heat is struck to heav'n;  
To human hearts her golden harps are strung;  
High heav'n's orchestra chaunts amen to man. 650

Hear I, or dream I hear their distant strain,  
Sweet to the soul, and tasting strong of heav'n,  
Soft-wafted on celestial Pity's plume,  
Thro' the vast spaces of the universe,  
To cheer me in this melancholy gloom? 655  
Oh when will death (now single) like a friend  
Admit me of their choir? Oh when will death  
This mould'ring, old, partition-wall throw down?

Give beings, one in nature, one abode?  
Oh Death divine! that giv'st us to the skies: 660  
Great future! glorious patron of the past  
And present! when shall I thy shrine adore?  
From Nature's continent; immensely wide,  
Immensely blest, this little isle of life,  
This dark incarcerating colony 665  
Divides us. Happy day that breaks our chain!  
That manumits; that calls from exile home;  
That leads to Nature's great metropolis,  
And re-admits us, thro' the guardian hand  
Of elder brothers, to our Father's throne, 670  
Who hears our Advocate, and, thro' his wounds  
Beholding man, allows that tender name.  
'Tis this makes Christian triumph a command;  
'Tis this makes joy a duty to the wise.  
'Tis impious in a good man to be sad. 675  
See'st thou, Lorenzo, where hangs all our hope?  
Touch'd by the cross we live, or more than die;  
That touch which touch'd not angels; more divine  
Than that which touch'd confusion into form,  
And darkness into glory: partial touch! 680  
Ineffably pre-eminent regard!  
Sacred to man, and sov'reign thro' the whole  
Long golden chain of miracles, which hangs  
From heav'n thro' all duration, and supports,  
In one illustrious and amazing plan, 685  
Thy welfare, Nature! and thy God's renown.

That touch, with charms celestial, heals the soul;  
Diseas'd, drives pain from guilt, lights life in death;  
'Turns earth to heav'n, to heav'nly thrones transforms  
The ghastly ruins of the mould'ring tomb. 690

Dost ask me when? When he who dy'd returns;  
Returns, how chang'd! where then the man of woe?  
In Glory's terrors all the Godhead burns,  
And all his courts, enrapt by the tide  
Of deities triumphant in his train, 695  
Leave a stupendous solitude in heaven;  
Replenish'd soon, replenish'd with increase  
Of pomp and multitude; a radiant band  
Of angels new, of angels from the tomb.

Is this by fancy thrown remote? and rise 700  
Dark doubts between the promise and event?  
I send thee not to volumes for thy cure;  
Read Nature; Nature is a friend to truth;  
Nature is Christian; preaches to mankind,  
And bids dead matter aid us in our creed. 705  
Hast thou ne'er seen the comet's flaming flight?  
'Th' illustrious stranger passing, terror sheds  
On gazing nations from his fiery train,  
Of length enormous, takes his ample round  
Thro' depths of ether; coasts unnumber'd worlds 710  
Of more than solar glory; doubles wide  
Heav'n's mighty cape; and then revisits earth,  
From the long travel of a thousand years.  
'Thus at the destin'd period shall return

He, once on earth, who bids the comet blaze, 715  
And with him all our triumph o'er the tomb,

Nature is dumb on this important point,  
Or Hope precarious in low whisper breathes;  
Faith speaks aloud, distinct; ev'n adders hear,  
But turn, and dart into the dark again. 720

Faith builds a bridge across the gulf of death,  
To break the shock blind Nature cannot shun,  
And lands Thought smoothly on the farther shore.  
Death's terror is the mountain faith removes,  
That mountain-barrier between man and peace. 725

'Tis faith disarms Destruction, and absolves  
From ev'ry clam'rous charge the guiltless tomb.

Why disbelieve? Lorenzo!—"Reason bids,  
"All-sacred Reason,"—Hold her sacred still;  
Nor shalt thou want a rival in thy flame: 730  
All-sacred Reason! source and soul of all  
Demanding praise on earth, or earth above!  
My heart is thine: deep in its inmost folds  
Live thou with life; live dearer of the two.

Wear I the blessed cross, by Fortune stamp'd 735  
On passive Nature before Thought was born?

My birth's blind bigot! fir'd with local zeal!  
No; Reason rebaptiz'd me when adult;

Weigh'd true and false in her impartial scale;  
My heart became the convert of my head, 740

And made that choice which once was but my fate.  
"On argument alone my faith is built."



Reason pursu'd is faith; and unpursu'd,  
Where proof invites, 'tis reason then no more:  
And such our proof, that or our faith is right, 745  
Or Reason lies, and Heav'n design'd it wrong,  
Absolve we this? what then is blasphemy?

Fond as we are, and justly fond of faith,  
Reason, we grant, demands our first regard;  
'The mother honour'd, as the daughter dear. 750  
Reason the root, fair Faith is but the flower:  
'The fading flow'r shall die, but Reason lives  
Immortal, as her Father in the skies.

When faith is virtue, reason makes it so,  
Wrong not the Christian; think not reason your's;  
'Tis reason our great Master holds so dear; 756  
'Tis reason's injur'd rights his wrath resents;  
'Tis Reason's voice obey'd his glories crown:  
To give lost reason life he pour'd his own.

Believe, and shew the reason of a man; 760  
Believe, and taste the pleasure of a god;  
Believe, and look with triumph on the tomb.  
'Thro' reason's wounds alone thy faith can die,  
Which dying, tenfold terror gives to Death,  
And dips in venom his twice-mortal sting. 765

Learn hence what honours, what loud prans, due  
To those who push our antidote aside;  
Those boasted friends to reason and to man,  
Whose fatal love stabs ev'ry joy, and leaves  
Death's terror heighten'd, gnawing on his heart. 770



These pompous sons of reason idoliz'd,  
And vilify'd at once; of reason dead,  
Then deify'd, as monarchs were of old;  
What conduct plants proud laurels on their brow?  
While love of truth thro' all their camp resounds, 775  
They draw Pride's curtain o'er the noon-tide ray,  
Spike up their inch of reason on the point  
Of philosophic wit, call'd Argument,  
And then exulting in their taper, cry,  
"Behold the sun;" and, Indian-like, adore. 780

Talk they of morals? O thou bleeding Love!  
Thou Maker of new morals to mankind!  
The grand morality is love of thee.  
As wise as Socrates, if such they were,  
(Nor will they bate of that sublime renown) 785  
As wise as Socrates might justly stand  
The definition of a modern fool.

A Christian is the highest style of man.  
And is there who the blessed cross wipes off,  
As a foul blot, from his dishonour'd brow? 790  
If angels tremble, 'tis at such a sight:  
The wretch they quit, desponding of their charge,  
More struck with grief or wonder who can tell?

Ye sold to sense! ye Citizens of earth!  
(For such alone the Christian banner fly) 795  
Know ye how wise your choice, how great your gain?  
Behold the picture of earth's happiest man:  
"He calls his wish, it comes; he sends it back,

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" And says he call'd another; that arrives,  
" Meets the same welcome; yet he still calls on; 800  
" Till one calls him, who varies not his call,  
" But holds him fast, in chains of darkness bound,  
" Till Nature dies, and Judgment sets him free;  
" A freedom far less welcome than his chain."

But grant man happy; grant him happy long;  
Add to life's highest prize her latest hour; 806  
That hour, so late, is nimble in approach,  
That, like a post, comes on in full career.  
How swift the shuttle flies that weaves thy shroud!  
Where is the fable of thy former years? 810  
Thrown down the gulf of time; as far from thee  
As they had ne'er been thine: the day in hand,  
Like a bird struggling to get loose, is going;  
Scarcely now possess'd, so suddenly 'tis gone;  
And each swift moment fled, is death advanc'd 815  
By strides as swift. Eternity is all;  
And whose eternity? who triumphs there?  
Bathing for ever in the font of bliss!  
For ever basking in the Deity!  
Lorenzo! who?—thy conscience shall reply. 820

O give it leave to speak; 'twill speak ere long,  
Thy leave unask'd. Lorenzo! hear it now,  
While useful its advice, its accent mild.  
By the great edict, the divine decree,  
Truth is deposited with man's last hour; 825  
An honest hour, and faithful to her trust;

Truth ! eldest daughter of the Deity ;  
Truth ! of his council when he made the worlds ;  
Nor less, when he shall judge the worlds he made ;  
Tho' silent long, and sleeping ne'er-so sound, 830  
Smother'd with errors, and oppress'd with toys,  
That heaven-commission'd hour no sooner calls,  
But from her cavern in the soul's abyss,  
Like him they fable under *Ætna* whelm'd,  
The goddess bursts in thunder and in flame, 835  
Loudly convinces, and severely pains.  
Dark dæmons I discharge, and hydra-stings ;  
'The keen vibration of bright truth—is hell ;  
Just definition ! tho' by schools untaught.  
Ye deaf to truth ! peruse this parson'd page, 840  
And trust, for once, a prophet and a priest ;  
" Men may live fools, but fools they cannot die." 843

*End of Night Fourth.*

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# THE COMPLAINT.

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## NIGHT V.

### THE RELAPSE.

*Humbly inscribed to the*

RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF LITCHFIELD.

LORENZO! to recriminate is just.  
Fondness for fame is avarice of air.  
I grant the man is vain who writes for praise.  
Praise no man e'er deserv'd, who fought no more.  
As just thy second charge. I grant the Muse 5  
Has often blush'd at her degen'rate sons,  
Retain'd by sense to plead her filthy cause,  
'To raise the low, to magnify the mean,  
And subtilize the gross into refin'd;  
As if to magic numbers' pow'rful charm 10  
'Twas given to make a civet of their song  
Obscene, and sweeten ordure to perfume.  
Wit, a true Pagan, deifies the brute,  
And lifts our swine-enjoyments from the mire.  
The fact notorious, nor obscure the cause. 15  
We wear the chains of pleasure and of pride:  
These share the man, and these distract him too;  
Draw different ways, and clash in their commands.

Pride, like an eagle, builds among the stars;  
But Pleasure, lark-like, nests upon the ground.  
Joys shar'd by brute creation Pride resents;  
Pleasure embraces: man would both enjoy,  
And both at once: a point how hard to gain!  
But what can't Wit, when stung by strong desire?

Wit dares attempt this arduous enterprise.  
Since joys of sense can't rise to Reason's taste,  
In subtle Sophistry's laborious forge  
Wit hammers out a reason new, that stoops  
To sordid scenes, and meets them with applause.  
Wit calls the Graces the chaste zone to loose,  
Nor less than a plump god to fill the bowl:  
A thousand phantoms and a thousand spells,  
A thousand opiates scatters to delude,  
To fascinate, inebriate, lay asleep,  
And the fool'd mind of man delightfully confound.  
Thus that which shock'd the judgment shocks no more;  
That which gave Pride offence no more offends.  
Pleasure and Pride, by nature mortal foes,  
At war eternal, which in man shall reign,  
By Wit's address patch up a fatal peace,  
And hand in hand lead on the rank debauch,  
From rank refin'd to delicate and gay.  
Art, cursed Art! wipes off th' indebted blush  
From Nature's cheek, and bronzes ev'ry shame.  
Man smiles in ruin, glories in his guilt,  
And Infamy stands candidate for praise.



All writ by man in favour of the soul,  
These sensual ethics far, in bulk, transcend.  
The flow'rs of eloquence, profusely pour'd  
O'er spotted Vice, fill half the letter'd world. 50  
Can pow'rs of genius exorcise their page,  
And consecrate enormities with song!

But let not these inexpiable strains  
Condemn the Muse that knows her dignity,  
Nor meanly stops at time, but holds the world 55  
As 'tis, in Nature's ample field, a point,  
A point in her esteem, from whence to start,  
And run the round of universal space,  
To visit being universal there,  
And being's Source, that utmost flight of mind! 60  
Yet spite of this so vast circumference,  
Well knows but what is moral nought is great.  
Sing Syrens only? do not angels sing?  
There is in Poesy a decent pride,  
Which well becomes her when she speaks to Prose, 65  
Her younger sister, happily not more wise.

Think'st thou, Lorenzo! to find pastimes here?  
No guilty passion blown into a flame,  
No foible flatter'd, dignity disgrac'd,  
No fairy field of fiction, all on flow'r, 70  
No rainbow colours here, or silken tale;  
But solemn counsels, images of awe,  
Truths which Eternity lets fall on man,  
With double weight, thro' these revolving spheres,



This death-deep silence; and incumbent shade: 75  
 Thoughts such as shall revisit your last hour,  
 Visit uncall'd, and live when life expires; 80  
 And thy dark pencil, Midnight! darker still  
 In melancholy dipp'd, imbrowns the whole. 85

Yet this, even this, my laughter-loving Friends!  
 Lorenzo! and thy brothers of the smile! 90  
 If what imports you most can most engage,  
 Shall steal your ear, and chain you to my song.  
 Or if you fail me, know the wife shall taste  
 The truths I sing; the truths I sing shall feel: 95  
 And, feeling, give assent; and their assent  
 Is ample recompense; is more than praise.  
 But chiefly thine, O Litchfield! nor mistake;  
 Think not unintroduc'd I force my way:  
 Narcissa, not unknown, not unall'd 100  
 By virtue, or by blood, illustrious Youth!  
 To thee, from blooming amaranthine bow'rs,  
 Where all the language harmony, descends  
 Uncall'd, and asks admittance for the Muse;  
 A Muse that will not pain thee with thy praise: 105  
 Thy praise she drops, by nobler still inspir'd.

O thou, blest'd Spirit! whether the supreme,  
 Great antemundane Father! in whose breast  
 Embryo creation, unborn being, dwelt,  
 And all its various revolutions roll'd 110  
 Present, tho' future, prior to themselves;  
 Whose breath can blow it into nought again,



Or from his throne some delegated pow'r,  
Who, studious of our peace, dost turn the thought  
From vain and vile to solid and sublime!  
Unseen thou lead'st me to delicious draughts  
Of inspiration, from a purer stream,  
And fuller of the God, than that which burst  
From fam'd Castalia; nor is yet allay'd  
My sacred thirst, tho' long my soul has rang'd  
Thro' pleasing paths of moral and divine,  
By thee sustain'd, and lighted by the stars.

By them best lighted are the paths of thought;  
Nights are their days, their most-illumin'd hours.  
By day the soul, o'erborne by life's career,  
Stunn'd by the din, and giddy with the glare,  
Reels far from reason, jostled by the throng.  
By day the soul is passive, all her thoughts  
Impos'd, precarious, broken, ere mature.  
By night, from objects free, from passion cool,  
Thoughts uncontroll'd, and unimpress'd, the births  
Of pure election, arbitrary range,  
Not to the limits of one world confin'd,  
But from ethereal travels light on earth,  
As voyagers drop anchor for repose.

Let Indians, and the gay, like Indians, fond  
Of feather'd sopperies, the sun adore;  
Darkness has more divinity for me;  
It strikes thought inward; it drives back the soul  
To settle on herself, our point supreme!

There lies our theatre; there sits our judge.  
Darkness the curtain drops o'er life's dull scene;  
'Tis the kind hand of Providence stretch'd out  
'Twixt man and vanity; 'tis Reason's reign,  
And Virtue's too; these tutelary shades 135  
Are man's asylum from the tainted throng;  
Night is the good man's friend, and guardian too;  
It no less rescues virtue than inspires.

Virtue, for ever frail as fair, below,  
Her tender nature suffers in the crowd, 140  
Nor touches on the world without a stain.  
The world's infectious; few bring back at eve,  
Immaculate, the manners of the morn.  
Something we thought is blotted; we resolv'd  
Is shaken; we rehouse'd returns again. 145  
Each salutation may slide in a sin  
Unthought before, or fix a former flaw.  
Nor is it strange; light, motion, concourse, noise,  
All scatter us abroad. Thought, outward-bound,  
Neglectful of our home-affairs, flies off 150  
In fume and dissipation, quits her charge,  
And leaves the breast unguarded to the foe.

Present example gets within our guard,  
And acts with double force, by few repell'd.  
Ambition fires ambition; love of gain 155  
Strikes, like a pestilence, from breast to breast:  
Riot, pride, perfidy, blue vapours, breathe  
And inhumanity is caught from man,

*Volume I.*

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From smiling man! A slight, a single glance,  
And shot at random, often has brought home 160  
A sudden fever to the throbbing heart  
Of envy, rancour, or impure desire.  
We see, we hear, with peril; Safety dwells  
Remote from multitude. The world's a school  
Of wrong, and what proficients swarm around! 165  
We must or imitate or disapprove;  
Must list as their accomplices or foes:  
That stains our innocence, this wounds our peace.  
From Nature's birth, hence, Wisdom has been smit  
With sweet recess, and languish'd for the shade. 170  
This sacred shade and solitude what is it?  
'Tis the felt presence of the Deity.  
Few are the faults we flatter when alone;  
Vice sinks in her allurements, is ungilt,  
And looks, like other objects, black by night. 175  
By night an Atheist half-believes a God.  
Night is fair Virtue's immemorial friend.  
The conscious moon, thro' ev'ry distant age,  
Has held a lamp to Wisdom, and let fall,  
On Contemplation's eye, her purging ray. 180  
The fam'd Athenian, he who woo'd from heav'n  
Philosophy the fair, to dwell with men,  
And form their manners, not inflame their pride,  
While o'er his head, as fearful to molest  
His lab'ring mind, the stars in silence slide, 185  
And seem all gazing on their future guest,

See him soliciting his ardent suit  
In private audience: all the live-long night,  
Rigid in thought, and motionless, he stands,  
Nor quits his theme or posture till the sun 190  
(Rude drunkard! rising rosy from the main)  
Disturbs his nobler intellectual beam,  
And gives him to the tumult of the world.  
Hail, precious Moments! stol'n from the black waste  
Of murder'd time! auspicious Midnight! hail! 195  
The world excluded, every passion bos'd,  
And open'd a calm intercourse with Heav'n,  
Here the soul sits in council, ponders past,  
Predestines future action; sees, not feels,  
Tumultuous life, and reasons with the storm, 200  
All her lies answers, and thinks down her charms.

What awful joy! what mental liberty!  
I am not pent in darkness; rather say  
(If not too bold) in darkness I'm imbow'r'd.  
Delightful gloom! the clost'ring thoughts around 205  
Spontaneous rise, and blossom in the shade,  
But droop by day, and sicken in the sun.  
Thought borrows light elsewhere: from that first fire,  
Fountain of animation! whence descends  
Urania, my celestial guest! who deigns 210  
Nightly to visit me, so mean; and now,  
Conscious how needful discipline to man,  
From pleasing dalliance with the charms of night,  
My wapt'ring thought recalls, to what excites

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Far other beat of heart, Narcissa's tomb, 215  
Or is it feeble Nature calls me back,  
And breaks my spirit into grief again?  
Is it a Stygian vapour in my blood?  
A cold slow puddle creeping thro' my veins?  
Or is it thus with all men?—Thus with all. 220  
What are we? how unequal! now we soar,  
And now we sink: To be the same transcends  
Our present prowess. Dearly pays the soul  
For lodging ill; too dearly rents her clay.  
Reason, a baffled counsellor! but adds 225  
The blush of weakness to the bane of wee.  
The noblest spirit, fighting her hard fate  
In this damp, dusky region, charg'd with storms,  
But feebly flutters, yet untaught to fly;  
Or, flying, short her flight, and sure her fall: 230  
Our utmost strength, when down, to rise again;  
And not to yield, tho' beaten, all our praise.  
'Tis vain to seek in men for more than man.  
Tho' proud in promise, big in previous thought,  
Experience damps our triumph. I, who late 235  
Emerging from the shadows of the grave,  
Where grief detain'd me pris'ner, mounting high,  
Threw wide the gates of everlasting day,  
And call'd mankind to glory, shook off pain,  
Mortality shook off, in ether pure, 240  
And struck the stars, now feel my spirits fail;  
They drop me from the zenith; down I rush,



Like him whom fable fledg'd with waxen wings,  
In sorrow drown'd—but not in sorrow lost.  
How wretched is the man who never mourn'd! 245  
I dive for precious pearl in Sorrow's stream :  
Not so the thoughtless man that only grieves,  
Takes all the torment, and rejects the gain,  
(Inestimable gain!) and gives Heav'n leave  
To make him but more wretched, not more wise. 250

If wisdom is our lesson (and what else  
Ennobles man? what else have angels learn'd?)  
Grief! more proficient in thy school are made,  
Than Genius or proud Learning e'er could boast.  
Voracious Learning, often over-fed, 255  
Digests not into sense her motley meal.  
This bookcase, with dark booty almost burst,  
This forager on others' wisdom, leaves  
Her native farm, her reason, quite untill'd;  
With mix'd manure she surfeits the rank soil, 260  
Dung'd, but not dress'd, and rich to beggary :  
A pomp untameable of words prevails :  
Her servant's wealth incumber'd Wisdom mourns.

And what says Genius? "Let the dull be wise."  
Genius, too hard for right, can prove it wrong, 265  
And loves to boast, where blash men less inspir'd.  
It pleads exemption from the laws of sense,  
Considers reason as a leveller,  
And scorns to share a blessing with the crowd.  
That wise it could be thinks an ample claim: 270

To glory and to pleasure gives the rest.  
Crassus but sleeps, Ardello is undone.  
Wisdom less shudders at a fool than wit.

But Wisdom smiles, when humbled mortals weep,  
When Sorrow wounds the breast, as ploughs the glebe,  
And hearts obdurate feel her soft'ning shower; 276  
Her seed celestial, then, glad Wisdom sows;  
Her golden harvest triumphs in the soil.

If so, Narcissa! welcome my Relapse;  
I'll raise a tax on my calamity, 280

And reap rich compensation from my pain.  
I'll range the plenteous intellectual field,  
And gather ev'ry thought of sov'reign power  
To chase the moral maladies of man;  
Thoughts which may bear transplanting to the skies,  
Tho' natives of this coarse penurious soil; 286

Nor wholly wither there where seraphs sing,  
Refin'd, exalted, not annull'd, in heav'n:  
Reason, the sun that gives them birth, the same  
In either clime, tho' more illustrious there. 290  
These choicely cull'd, and elegantly rang'd,  
Shall form a garland for Narcissa's tomb,  
And, peradventure, of no fading flow'rs.

Say, on what themes shall puzzled choice descend?  
"The importance of contemplating the tomb; 295  
"Why men decline it; suicide's foul birth;  
"The various kinds of grief; the faults of age;  
"And death's dread character—invite my song."

And, first, the importance of our end survey'd.  
Friends counsel quick dismissal of our grief, 300  
Mistaken kindness ! our hearts heal too soon.  
Are they more kind than He who struck the blow ?  
Who bid it do his errand in our hearts,  
And banish peace till nobler guests arrive,  
And bring it back a true and endless peace ? 305  
Calamities are friends : as glaring day  
Of these unnumber'd lustres robs our sight,  
Prosperity puts out unnumber'd thoughts  
Of import high, and light divine to man.

The man how bless'd who, sick of gaudy scenes, 310  
(Scenes apt to thrust between us and ourselves !)  
Is led by choice to take his fav'rite walk  
Beneath Death's gloomy, silent, cypress shades,  
Unpierc'd by Vanity's fantastic ray ;  
To read his monuments, to weigh his dust, 315  
Visit his vaults, and dwell among the tombs !  
Lorenzo ! read with me Narcissa's stone ;  
(Narcissa was thy fav'rite) let us read  
Her moral stone ; few doctors preach so well ;  
Few orators so tenderly can touch 320  
The feeling heart. What pathos in the date !  
Apt words can strike ; and yet in them we see  
Faint images of what we here enjoy.  
What cause have we to build on length of life ?  
Temptations seize, when fear is laid asleep, 325  
And ill foreboded is our strongest guard.



See from her tomb, as from an humble shrine,  
Truth, radiant goddess! fallies on my soul,  
And puts Delusion's dusky train to flight;  
Dispels the mist our sultry passions raise, 330  
From objects low, terrestrial, and obscene,  
And shews the real estimate of things,  
Which no man, unafflicted, ever saw;  
Pulls off the veil from Virtue's rising charms;  
Detects temptation in a thousand lies. 335  
Truth bids me look on men as autumn leaves,  
And all they bleed for as the summer's dust  
Driv'n by the whirlwind: lighted by her beams,  
I widen my horizon, gain new powers,  
See things invisible, feel things remote, 340  
Am present with futurities; think nought  
To man so foreign as the joys possess'd,  
Nought so much his as those beyond the grave.

No folly keeps its colour in her sight;  
Pale worldly Wisdom loses all her charms. 345  
In pompous promise from her schemes profound,  
If future fate she plans, 'tis all in leaves,  
Like Sybil, unsubstantial, fleeting bliss!  
At the first blast it vanishes in air.  
Not so celestial. Wouldst thou know, Lorenzo! 350  
How differ worldly wisdom and divine?  
Just as the waning and the waxing moon.  
More empty worldly wisdom ev'ry day,  
And ev'ry day more fair her rival shines.

When later, there's less time to play the fool. 355  
Soon our whole term for wisdom is expir'd,  
(Thou know'st she calls no council in the grave)  
And everlasting fool is writ in fire,  
Or real wisdom wafts us to the skies.

As worldly schemes resemble Sybils' leaves, 360  
The good man's days to Sybils' books compare,  
(In ancient story read, thou know'st the tale)  
In price still rising as in number less,  
Inestimable quite his final hour.

For that who thrones can offer, offer thrones; 365  
Insolvent worlds the purchase cannot pay.

"Oh let me die his death!" all Nature cries.

"Then live his life!"—All Nature falters there;

Our great physician daily to consult,  
To commune with the grave our only cure. 370

What grave prescribes the best?—A friend's; and  
From a friend's grave how soon we disengage! [yet  
Ev'n to the dearest, as his marble, cold.

Why are friends ravish'd from us? 'tis to bind,  
By soft Affection's ties, on human hearts 375

The thought of death, which reason, too supine,  
Or misemploy'd, so rarely fastens there.

Nor reason nor affection, no, nor both  
Combin'd, can break the witchcrafts of the world.

Behold th' inexorable hour at hand! 380  
Behold th' inexorable hour forgot!

And to forget it the chief aim of life,



Tho' well to ponder it is life's chief end.

Is death, that ever-threat'ning, ne'er remote,

That all-important, and that only sure, 385

(Come when he will) an unexpected guest?

Nay, tho' invited by the loudest calls

Of blind Imprudence, unexpected still,

Tho' num'rous messengers are sent before,

To warn his great arrival? What the cause, 390

The wondrous cause, of this mysterious ill?

All heav'n looks down astonish'd at the sight.

Is it that Life has sown her joys so thick,

We can't thrust in a single care between?

Is it that Life has such a swarm of cares, 395

The thought of death can't enter for the throng?

Is it that Time steals on with downy feet,

Nor wakes Indulgence from her golden dream?

To-day is so like yesterday, it cheats;

We take the lying sister for the same. 400

Life glides away, Lorenzo! like a brook,

For ever changing, unperceiv'd the change,

In the same brook none ever bath'd him twice;

To the same life none ever twice awoke.

We call the brook the same; the same we think 405

Our life, tho' still more rapid in its flow,

Nor mark the much irrevocably laps'd,

And mingled with the sea. Or shall we say

(Retaining still the brook to bear us on)

That life is like a vessel on the stream? 410



In life embark'd, we smoothly down the tide  
Of time descend, but not on time intent;  
Amus'd, unconscious of the gliding wave,  
Till on a sudden we perceive a shock;  
We start, awake, look out: what see we there? 415  
Our brittle bark is burst on Charon's shore.

Is this the cause death flies all human thought?  
Or is it judgment, by the Will struck blind,  
That domineering mistress of the soul!  
Like him so strong by Dalilah the fair? 420  
Or is it fear turns startled Reason back,  
From looking down a precipice so steep?  
'Tis dreadful, and the dread is wisely plac'd  
By Nature, conscious of the make of man.  
A dreadful friend it is, a terror kind, 425  
A flaming sword to guard the tree of Life.  
By that unaw'd, in life's most smiling hour  
The good man would repine; would suffer joys,  
And burn impatient for his promis'd skies.  
The bad, on each punctilious pique of pride, 430  
Or gloom of humour, would give rage the rein,  
Bound o'er the barrier, rush into the dark,  
And mar the scenes of Providence below.

What groan was that, Lorenzo?—Furies! rise,  
And drown, in your less execrable yell, 435  
Britannia's shame. There took her gloomy flight,  
On wing impetuous, a black fullen soul,  
Blasted from hell, with horrid lust of death.



Thy friend, the brave, the gallant Altamont;  
So call'd, so thought—and then he fled the field, 440  
Less base the fear of death than fear of life.  
O Britain! infamous for suicide!  
An island in thy manners! far disjoin'd  
From the whole world of rationals beside!  
In ambient waves plunge thy polluted head, 445  
Wash the dire stain, nor shock the continent.

But thou be shock'd while I detect the cause  
Of self-assault, expose the monster's birth,  
And bid Abhorrence hiss it round the world.  
Blame not thy clime, nor chide the distant sun; 450  
The sun is innocent, thy clime absolv'd.  
Immoral climes kind Nature never made.  
The cause I sing in Eden might prevail,  
And proves it is thy folly, not thy fate.

The soul of man, (let man in homage bow 455  
Who names his soul) a native of the skies!  
High-born and free, her freedom should maintain,  
Unfold, unmortgag'd for earth's little bribes.  
Th' illustrious stranger, in this foreign land,  
Like strangers, jealous of her dignity, 460  
Studious of home, and ardent to return,  
Of earth suspicious, earth's enchanted cup  
With cool reserve light touching, should indulge,  
On immortality, her godlike taste; 464  
There take large draughts; make her chief banquet  
But some reject this sustenance divine, [there.

To beggarly vile appetites descend,  
Ask alms of earth for guests that came from heav'n!  
Sink into slaves, and sell, for present hire,  
Their rich reversion, and (what shares its fate) 470  
Their native freedom, to the prince who sways  
This nether world: and when his payments fail,  
When his foul basket gorges them no more,  
Or their pall'd palates loath the basket full,  
Are instantly, with wild demoniac rage, 475  
For breaking all the chains of Providence,  
And bursting their confinement, tho' fast barr'd  
By laws divine and human, guarded strong  
With horrors doubled to defend the pass,  
The blackest Nature or dire guilt, can raise, 480  
And moated round with fathomless destruction,  
Sure to receive and overwhelm them in their fall.

Such, Britons! is the cause, to you unknown,  
Or, worse, o'erlook'd, o'erlook'd by magistrates,  
Thus criminals themselves. I grant the deed 485  
Is madness, but the madness of the heart.  
And what is that? our utmost bound of guilt.  
A sensual unreflecting life is big  
With monstrous births, and suicide, to crown  
The black infernal brood. The bold to break 490  
Heav'n's law supreme, and desperately rush  
Thro' sacred Nature's murder, on their own,  
Because they never think of death, they die.  
'Tis equally man's duty, glory, gain,

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At once to shun and meditate his end. 495  
When by the bed of languishment we sit,  
(The seat of Wisdom! if our choice, not fate)  
Or o'er our dying friends in anguish hang,  
Wipe the cold dew, or stay the sinking head,  
Number their moments, and in ev'ry clock 500  
Start at the voice of an eternity;  
See the dim lamp of life just feebly lift  
An agonizing beam, at us to gaze,  
'Then sink again, and quiver into death,  
'That most pathetic herald of our own, 505  
How read we such sad scenes? As sent to man  
In perfect vengeance? no; in pity sent,  
'To melt him down, like wax, and then impress,  
Indelible, Death's image on his heart,  
Bleeding for others, trembling for himself. 510  
We bleed, we tremble, we forget, we smile.  
'The mind turns fool before the cheek is dry,  
Our quick-returning folly cancels all,  
As the tide rushing razes what is writ  
In yielding sands, and smooths the letter'd shore. 515  
Lorenzo! hast thou ever weigh'd a sigh?  
Or study'd the philosophy of tears?  
(A science yet unlectur'd in our schools!)  
Hast thou descended deep into the breast,  
And seen their source? if not, descend with me, 520  
And trace these briny riv'lets to their springs.  
Our sun'ral tears from diff'rent causes rise:

As if from sep'rate cisterns in the soul,  
Of various kinds they flow. From tender hearts,  
By soft contagion call'd, some burst at once, 525  
And stream obsequious to the leading eye:  
Some ask more time, by curious art distill'd.  
Some hearts, in secret hard, unapt to melt,  
Struck by the magic of the public eye,  
Like Moses' smitten rock, gush out again: 530  
Some weep to share the fame of the deceas'd,  
So high in merit, and to them so dear:  
They dwell on praises which they think they share,  
And thus, without a blush, commend themselves.  
Some mourn in proof that something they could love;  
They weep not to relieve their grief, but shew. 536  
Some weep in perfect justice to the dead,  
As conscious all their love is in arrears.  
Some mischievously weep, not unappris'd.  
Tears sometimes aid the conquest of an eye. 540  
With what address the soft Ephesians draw  
Their sable network o'er entangled hearts?  
As seen thro' crystal, how their roses glow,  
While liquid pearl runs trickling down their cheek?  
Of her's not prouder Egypt's wanton queen, 545  
Carousing gems, herself dissolv'd in love.  
Some weep at death, abstracted from the dead,  
And celebrate, like Charles, their own decease.  
By kind construction some are deem'd to weep,  
Because a decent veil conceals their joy. 550

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Some weep in earnest, and yet weep in vain,  
As deep in indiscretion as in woe.  
Passion, blind passion! impotently pours  
Tears that deserve more tears, while Reason sleeps,  
Or gazes, like an idiot, unconcern'd, 555  
Nor comprehends the meaning of the storm;  
Knows not it speaks to her, and her alone.  
Irrationals all sorrow are beneath,  
That noble gift! that privilege of man!  
From sorrow's pang, the birth of endless joy: 560  
But these are barren of that birth divine;  
They weep impetuous as the summer-storm,  
And full as soon the cruel grief soon tam'd,  
They make a pastime of the stingless tale;  
Far as the deep-resounding knell they spread 565  
The dreadful news, and hardly feel it more:  
No grain of wisdom pays them for their woe.  
Half-round the globe the tears pump'd up by death  
Are spent in wat'ring vanities of life;  
In making folly flourish still more fair. 570  
When the sick soul, her wonted stay withdrawn,  
Reclines on earth, and sorrows in the dust,  
Instead of learning there her true support,  
Tho' there thrown down her true support to learn,  
Without Heav'n's aid, impatient to be blest, 575  
She crawls to the next shrub or bramble vile,  
Tho' from the stately cedar's arms she fell;  
With stale foresworn embraces clings anew,



The stranger weds, and blossoms, as before,  
 In all the fruitless sopperies of life, 580  
 Presents her weed, well-fancy'd, at the ball,  
 And raffles for the death's-head on the ring.

So wept Aurelia, till the destin'd youth  
 Stept in with his receipt for making smiles,  
 And blanching fables into bridal bloom. 585

So wept Lorenzo fair Clarissa's fate,  
 Who gave that angel-boy on whom he dotes,  
 And dy'd to give him, orphan'd in his birth!  
 Not such, Narcissa! my distress for thee.

I'll make an altar of thy sacred tomb, 590  
 To sacrifice to Wisdom.—What wast thou?

"Young, gay, and fortunate!" Each yields a theme:  
 I'll dwell on each, to shun thought more severe;  
 (Heav'n knows I labour with severer still!)

I'll dwell on each, and quite exhaust thy death. 595  
 A soul without reflection, like a pile  
 Without inhabitant, to ruin runs.

And, first, thy youth: what says it to gray hairs?  
 Narcissa! I'm become thy pupil now.—

Early, bright, transient, chaste, as morning dew, 600  
 She sparkled, was exhal'd, and went to heav'n.  
 Time on this head has snow'd, yet still 'tis borne,  
 Aloft, nor thinks but on another's grave.

Cover'd with shame I speak it, age severe  
 Old worn-out vice sets down for virtue fair; 605  
 With graceless gravity chastising youth,

That youth chafis'd surpassing in a fault,  
Father of all, forgetfulness of death;  
As if, like objects pressing on the sight,  
Death had advanc'd too near us to be seen; 610  
Or that life's loan time ripen'd into right,  
And men might plead prescription from the grave,  
Deathless, from repetition of reprieve,  
Deathless? far from it! such are dead already;  
Their hearts are bury'd, and the world their grave.

Tell me, some God! my guardian Angel! tell 616  
What thus infateates? what enchantment plants  
The phantom of an age 'twixt us and Death,  
Already at the door? He knocks; we hear him,  
And yet we will not hear. What mail defends 620  
Our untouch'd hearts? what miracle turns off  
The pointed thought, which from a thousand quivers  
Is daily darted, and is daily smunn'd?  
We stand, as in a battle, throngs on throngs  
Around us falling, wounded oft' ourselves, 625  
Tho' bleeding with our wounds, immortal still!  
We see Time's furrows on another's brow,  
And Death intrench'd, preparing his assault:  
How few themselves in that just mirror see!  
Or, seeing, draw their inference as strong! 630  
There death is certain; doubtful here: he must,  
And soon: we may, within an age, expire.  
Tho' gray our heads, our thoughts and aims are green;  
Like damag'd clocks, whose hand and bell dissent;

Folly sings six, while Nature points at twelve. 635

Abſurd Longevity! More, more, it cries:  
More life, more wealth, more trash of ev'ry kind.  
And wherefore mad for more, when reliſh fails?  
Object and appetite muſt club for joy:

Shall Folly labour hard to mend the bow, 640

Bawbles, I mean, that ſtrike us from without,  
While Nature is relaxing ev'ry ſtring!

Aſk Thought for joy; grow rich, and hoard within.

Think you the ſoul, when this life's rattles ceaſe,

Has nothing of more manly to ſucceed? 645

Contract the taſte immortal; learn ev'n now

To reliſh what alone ſubſiſts hereafter.

Divine, or none, henceforth, your joys for ever.

Of age the glory is to wiſh to die:

That wiſh is praiſe and promiſe; it applauds 650

Paſt life, and promiſes our future bliſs.

What weakneſs ſee not children in their ſires!

Grand-climaſterical abſurdities!

Gray-hair'd authority, to faults of youth

How ſhocking! it makes folly thrice a fool, 655

And our firſt childhood might our laſt deſpiſe.

Peace and eſteem is all that age can hope:

Nothing but wiſdom gives the firſt; the laſt

Nothing but the repute of being wiſe.

Folly bars both: our age is quite undone. 660

What folly can be ranker? like our ſhadows,

Our wiſhes lengthen as our ſun declines.

No wish should loiter, then, this side the grave.  
Our hearts should leave the world before the knell  
Calls for our carcases to mend the soil. 665  
Enough to live in tempest; die in port :  
Age should fly concourse, cover in retreat  
Defects of judgment, and the will's subdue;  
Walk thoughtful on the silent solemn shore  
Of that vast ocean it must sail so soon, 670  
And put good works on board, and wait the wind  
That shortly blows us into worlds unknown :  
If unconsider'd, too, a dreadful scene!

All should be prophets to themselves; foresee  
Their future fate; their future fate foretaste: 675  
This art would waste the bitterness of death.  
The thought of death alone the fear destroys :  
A disaffection to that precious thought  
Is more than midnight darkness on the soul,  
Which sleeps beneath it on a precipice, 680  
Puff'd off by the first blast, and lost for ever.

Dost ask, Lorenzo, why so warmly press,  
By repetition hammer'd on thine ear,  
The thought of death? That thought is the machine,  
The grand machine! that heaves us from the dust, 685  
And rears us into men. That thought, ply'd home,  
Will soon reduce the ghastly precipice  
O'erhanging hell, will soften the descent,  
And gently slope our passage to the grave.  
How warmly to be wish'd! what heart of flesh 690

Would trifle with tremendous? dare extremes?  
Yawn o'er the fate of infinite? what hand,  
Beyond the blackest brand of censure bold,  
(To speak a language too well known to thee)  
Would at a moment give its all to Chance, 695  
And stamp the dye for an eternity?

Aid me, Narcissa! aid me to keep pace  
With Destiny, and, ere her scissars cut  
My thread of life, to break this tougher thread  
Of moral death, that ties me to the world. 700  
Sting thou my slumb'ring reason to send forth  
A thought of observation on the foe;  
To fally, and survey the rapid march  
Of his ten thousand messengers to man,  
Who, Jehu-like, behind him turns them all. 705  
All accident apart, by Nature sign'd,  
My warrant is gone out, tho' dormant yet;  
Perhaps behind one moment lurks my fate.

Must I then forward only look for Death?  
Backward I turn mine eye, and find him there. 710  
Man is a self-survivor ev'ry year.  
Man, like a stream, is in perpetual flow.  
Death's a destroyer of quotidian prey:  
My youth, my noon-tide his; my yesterday:  
The bold invader shares the present hour. 715  
Each moment on the former shuts the grave.  
While man is growing, life is in decrease,  
And cradles rock us nearer to the tomb.





Our birth is nothing but our death begun,  
As tapers waste that instant they take fire. 720

Shall we then fear lest that should come to pass  
Which comes to pass each moment of our lives?  
If fear we must, let that death turn us pale  
Which murders strength and ardour; what remains  
Should rather call on Death than dread his call. 725  
Ye partners of my fault, and my decline!  
Thoughtless of death, but when your neighbour's knell  
(Rude visitant!) knocks hard at your dull sense,  
And with its thunder scarce obtains your ear!  
Be death your theme in ev'ry place and hour; 730  
Nor longer want, ye monumental Sires!  
A brother tomb to tell you you shall die.  
That death you dread (so great is Nature's skill!)  
Know you shall court before you shall enjoy.

But you are learn'd; in volumes deep you sit, 735  
In wisdom shallow. Pompous ignorance!  
Would you be still more learned than the learn'd?  
Learn well to know how much need not be known,  
And what that knowledge which impairs your sense.  
Our needful knowledge, like our needful food, 740  
Unbedg'd, lies open in life's common field,  
And bids all welcome to the vital feast.  
You scorn what lies before you in the page  
Of Nature and Experience, moral truth;  
Of indispenfable, eternal fruit, 745  
Fruit on which mortals feeding turn to gods;



And dive in science for distinguish'd names,  
Dishonest fomentation of your pride,  
Sinking in virtue as you rise in fame,  
Your learning, like the lunar beam, affords 750  
Light, but not heat; it leaves you underout,  
Frozen at heart, while speculation shines.  
Awake, ye curious Indagators! fond  
Of knowing all but what avails you know.  
If you would learn Death's character, attend. 755  
All casts of conduct, all degrees of health,  
All dyes of fortune, and all dates of age,  
Together shook in his impartial urn,  
Come forth at random; or, if choice is made,  
The choice is quite sarcastic, and insults 760  
All bold conjecture and fond hopes of man.  
What countless multitudes not only leave,  
But deeply disappoint us, by their deaths!  
Tho' great our sorrow, greater our surprise.

Like other tyrants, Death delights to smite 765  
What, smitten, most proclaims the pride of pow'r  
And arbitrary nod. His joy supreme  
To bid the wretch survive the fortunate;  
The feeble wrap th' athletic in his shroud; 769  
And weeping fathers build their children's tomb:  
Me thine, Narcissa!—What tho' short thy date?  
Virtue, not rolling suns, the mind matures.  
That life is long which answers life's great end.  
The time that bears no fruit deserves no name.

The man of wisdom is the man of years. 775

In hoary youth Methusalems may die;

O how misdated on their flatt'ring tombs!

Narcissa's youth has lectur'd me thus far:

And can her gaiety give counsel too?

That, like the Jews' fam'd oracle of gems, 780

Sparkles instruction; such as throws new light,

And opens more the character of Death,

Ill known to thee, Lorenzo! this thy vaunt!

"Give Death his due, the wretched and the old;

"Ev'n let him sweep his rubbish to the grave; 785

"Let him not violate kind Nature's laws,

"But own man born to live as well as die."

Wretched and old thou giv'st him; young and gay

He takes; and plunder is a tyrant's joy.

What if I prove, "the farthest from the fear 790

"Are often nearest to the stroke of fate?"

All more than common menaces an end.

A blaze betokens brevity of life.

As if bright embers should emit a flame,

Glad spirits sparkled from Narcissa's eye, 795

And made Youth younger, and taught Life to live.

As Nature's opposites wage endless war,

For this offence, as treason to the deep

Inviolable stupor of his reign,

Where lust and turbulent ambition sleep, 800

Death took swift vengeance. As he life detests,

More life is still more odious; and, reduc'd

By conquest, aggrandizes more his pow'r.  
But wherefore aggrandiz'd? By Heav'n's decree  
To plant the soul on her eternal guard, 805  
In awful expectation of our end.  
'Thus runs Death's dread commission; "Strike, but so  
" As most alarms the living by the dead."  
Hence stratagem delights him, and surprise,  
And cruel sport with man's securities. 810  
Not simple conquest, triumph is his aim;  
And where least fear'd, there conquest triumphs most.  
This proves my bold assertion not too bold.

What are his arts to lay our fears asleep?  
Tiberian arts his purposes wrap up 815  
In deep Dissimulation's darkest night.  
Like princes unconfess'd in foreign courts,  
Who travel under cover, Death assumes  
The name and look of Life, and dwells among us:  
He takes all shapes that serve his black designs: 820  
Tho' master of a wider empire far  
Than that o'er which the Roman Eagle flew,  
Like Nero, he's a fiddler, charioteer;  
Or drives his phaeton in female guise;  
Quite unsuspected, till the wheel beneath 825  
His disarray'd oblation he devours.

He most affects the forms least like himself,  
His slender self: hence burly corpulence  
Is his familiar wear, and sleek disguise.  
Behind the rosy bloom he loves to lurk, 830

Or ambush in a smile; or, wanton, dive  
In dimples deep; Love's eddies, which draw in  
Unwary hearts, and sink them in despair.  
Such on Narcissa's couch he loiter'd long  
Unknown, and when detected, still was seen 835  
To smile: such peace has innocence in death!

Most happy they! whom least his arts deceive.  
One eye on death, and one still fix'd on heav'n,  
Becomes a mortal and immortal man.  
Long on his wiles a piqu'd and jealous spy, 840  
I've seen, or dream'd I saw, the tyrant dress,  
Lay by his horrors; and put on his smiles.  
Say, Muse! for thou remember'st, call it back,  
And shew Lorenzo the surprising scene;  
If 'twas a dream, his genius can explain. 845

'Twas in a circle of the gay I stood:  
Death would have enter'd; Nature push'd him back:  
Supported by a doctor of renown,  
His point he gain'd; then artfully dismiss'd  
The sage; for Death design'd to be conceal'd: 850  
He gave an old vivacious usurer  
His meagre aspect, and his naked bones,  
In gratitude for plumping up his prey,  
A pamper'd spendthrift, whose fantastic air,  
Well-fashion'd figure, and cockaded brow, 855  
He took in change, and underneath the pride  
Of costly linen took'd his filthy throud.  
His crooked bow he straighten'd to a cane,

And hid his deadly shafts in Myrn's eye.

The dreadful masquerader, thus equipp'd, 860  
Out-fallies on adventures. Ask you where?

Where is he not? For his peculiar haunts  
Let this suffice; sure as night follows day,

Death treads in Pleasure's footsteps round the world,  
When Pleasure treads the paths which Reason shuns.

When against Reason Riot shuts the door, 866  
And gaiety supplies the place of sense,

Then, foremost at the banquet and the ball,  
Death leads the dance, or stamps the deadly dye,

Nor ever fails the midnight bowl to crown. 870  
Gaily carousing to his gay compeers,

Only he laughs to see them laugh at him,  
As absent far; and when the revel burns,

When Fear is banish'd, and triumphant Thought,  
Calling for all the joys beneath the moon, 875

Against him turns the key, and bids him sup  
With their progenitors—he drops his mask,

Frowns out at full; they start, despair, expire.  
Scarce with more sudden terror and surprise,

From his black mask of nitre, touch'd by fire, 880  
He bursts, expands, roars, blazes, and devours.

And is not this triumphant treachery,  
And more than simple conquest, in the fiend?

And now, Lorenzo, dost thou wrap thy soul  
In soft security, because unknown 885

Which moment is commission'd to destroy?



In death's uncertainty thy danger lies.  
Is death uncertain? therefore thou be fix'd,  
Fix'd as a centinel, all eye, all ear,  
All expectation of the coming foe. 890  
Rouse, stand in arms, nor lean against thy spear,  
Lest Slumber steal one moment o'er thy soul,  
And Fate surprise thee nodding. Watch, be strong;  
Thus give each day the merit and renown  
Of dying well, tho' doom'd but once to die: 895  
Nor let life's period, hidden, (as from most)  
Hide, too, from thee the precious use of life.  
Early, not sudden, was Narcissa's fate:  
Soon, not surprising, Death his visit paid:  
Her thought went forth to meet him on his way, 900  
Nor Gaiety forgot it was to die.  
Tho' Fortune, too, (our third and final theme)  
As an accomplice, play'd her gaudy plumes,  
And ev'ry glitt'ring gewgaw, on her sight,  
To dazzle and debauch it from its mark. 905  
Death's dreadful advent is the mark of man,  
And ev'ry thought that misses it is blind.  
Fortune with Youth and Gaiety conspir'd  
To weave a triple wreath of happiness,  
(If happiness on earth) to crown her brow: 910  
And could Death charge thro' such a shining shield?  
That shining shield invites the tyrant's spear,  
As if to damp our elevated aims,  
And strongly preach humility to man.





O how portentous is prosperity! 915  
 How, comet-like, it threatens while it shines! 920  
 Few years but yield us proof of Death's ambition,  
 To cull his victims from the fairest fold,  
 And sheath his shafts in all the pride of life,  
 When flooded with abundance, purpled o'er  
 With recent honours, bloom'd with ev'ry bliss,  
 Set up in ostentation, made the gaze,  
 The gaudy centre, of the public eye;  
 When Fortune, thus, has toss'd her child in air,  
 Snatch'd from the covert of an humble state;  
 How often have I seen him dropt at once,  
 Our morning's envy! and our ev'ning's sigh!  
 As if her bounties were the signal giv'n,  
 The flow'ry wreath, to mark the sacrifice,  
 And call Death's arrows on the destin'd prey; 930  
 High Fortune seems in cruel league with Fate.  
 Ask you for what? to glee his war on man  
 The deeper dread, and more illustrious spoil;  
 Thus to keep daring mortals more in awe,  
 And burn Lorenzo still for the sublime  
 Of life! to hang his airy nest on high,  
 On the slight timber of the topmost bough,  
 Rock'd at each breeze, and menacing a fall;  
 Granting grim Death at equal distance there,  
 Yet peace begins just where ambition ends. 940  
 What makes man wretched? happiness deny'd?  
 Lorenzo! no; 'tis happiness disdain'd:

She comes too meanly dress'd to win our smile,  
And calls herself Content, a homely name!  
Our flame is transport, and content our scorn. 945  
Ambition turns, and shuts the door against her,  
And weds a toil, a tempest, in her stead;  
A tempest to warm transport near of kin.  
Unknowing what our mortal state admits,  
Life's modest joys we ruin while we raise, 950  
And all our ecstasies are wounds to peace;  
Peace, the fall portion of mankind below.  
And since thy peace is dear, ambitious Youth!  
Of fortune fond! as thoughtless of thy fate!  
As late I drew Death's picture, to stir up 955  
Thy wholesome fears; now, drawn in contrast, see  
Gay Fortune's, thy vain hopes to reprimand.  
See, high in air the sportive goddess hangs,  
Unlocks her casket, spreads her glitt'ring ware,  
And calls the giddy winds to puff abroad 960  
Her random bounties o'er the gaping throng.  
All rush rapacious; friends o'er trodden friends,  
Sons o'er their fathers, subjects o'er their kings,  
Priests o'er their gods, and lovers o'er the fair,  
(Still more ador'd) to snatch the golden show'r. 965  
Gold glitters most where virtue shines no more,  
As stars from absent sons have leave to shine.  
O what a precious pack of votaries,  
Unkenne'd from the prisons and the stews,  
Pour in, all op'ning in their idol's praise! 970



All, ardent, eye each wafture of her hand,  
And, wide-expanding their voracious jaws,  
Morfel on morfel swallow down unchew'd,  
Untasted, thro' mad appetite for more;  
Gorg'd to the throat, yet lean and rav'nous still: 975  
Sagacious all to trace the smallest game,  
And bold to seize the greatest. If (blest chance!)  
Court-zephyrs sweetly breathe, they launch, they fly,  
O'er just, o'er sacred, all forbidden ground,  
Drunk with the burning scent of place or pow'r, 980  
Staunch to the foot of Lucre till they die.

Or if for men you take them, as I mark  
Their manners, thou their various fates survey.  
With aim mismeasur'd, and impetuous speed,  
Some, darting, strike their ardent wish far off, 985  
Thro' fury to possess it: some succeed,  
But stumble, and let fall the taken prize.  
From some, by sudden blasts, 'tis whirl'd away,  
And lodg'd in bosoms that ne'er dream'd of gain.  
To some it sticks so close, that, when torn off, 990  
Torn is the man, and mortal is the wound.  
Some, o'er-enamour'd of their bags, run mad,  
Groan under gold, yet weep for want of bread.  
Together some (unhappy rivals!) seize,  
And rend abundance into poverty; 995  
Loud croaks the raven of the law, and smiles;  
Smiles, too, the goddess; but smiles most at those  
(just victims of exorbitant desire!)

Who perish at their own request, and, whelm'd  
Beneath her load of lavish grants, expire. 1000  
Fortune is famous for her numbers slain;  
The number small which happiness can bear.  
Tho' various for a while their fates, at last  
One curse involves them all: at Death's approach  
All read their riches backward into loss, 1005  
And mourn in just proportion to their store.

And Death's approach (if orthodox my song)  
Is hasten'd by the lure of Fortune's smiles.  
And art thou still a glutton of bright gold?  
And art thou still rapacious of thy ruin? 1010  
Death loves a shining mark, a signal blow;  
A blow which, while it executes, alarms,  
And startles thousands with a signal fall.  
As when some stately growth of oak, or pine,  
Which nods aloft, and proudly spreads her shade,  
The sun's defiance, and the flock's defence, 1016  
By the strong strokes of lab'ring hinds subdu'd,  
Loud groans her last, and, rushing from her height,  
In cumbrous ruin thunders to the ground;  
The conscious forest trembles at the shock, 1020  
And hill, and stream, and distant dale, rebound.

These high-aim'd darts of Death, and these alone,  
Should I collect, my quiver would be full;  
A quiver which, suspended in mid air,  
Or near heav'n's archer, in the zodiac, hung, 1025  
(So could it be) should draw the public eye,

The gaze and contemplation of mankind !  
A constellation awful, yet benign,  
To guide the gay thro' life's tempestuous wave,  
Nor suffer them to strike the common rock ; 1030  
" From greater danger to grow more secure,  
" And, wrapt in happiness, forget their fate."

Lyfander, happy past the common lot,  
Was warn'd of danger, but too gay to fear.  
He woo'd the fair Aspasia ; she was kind. 1035  
In youth, form, fortune, fame, they both were blest'd :  
All who knew envy'd ; yet in envy lov'd :  
Can Fancy form more finish'd happiness ?  
Fix'd was the nuptial hour. Her stately dome  
Rose on the sounding beach. The glittering spires  
Float in the wave, and break against the shore ; 1041  
So break those glitt'ring shadows, human joys.  
The faithless morning smil'd : he takes his leave  
To re-embrace, in ecstasies, at eve :  
The rising storm forbids : the news arrives ; 1045  
Untold she saw it in her servant's eye.  
She felt it seen, (her heart was apt to feel)  
And drown'd, without the furious ocean's aid,  
In suffocating sorrows shares his tomb.  
Now round the sumptuous bridal monument 1050  
The guilty billows innocently roar,  
And the rough sailor passing, drops a tear.  
A tear ?—can tears suffice ?—but not for me.  
How vain our efforts ! and our arts how vain !





The distant train of thought I took, to shun, 1055  
Has thrown me on my fate.—These dy'd together;  
Happy in ruin! undivorc'd by death!  
Or ne'er to meet, or ne'er to part, is peace.—  
Narcissa! Pity bleeds at thought of thee;  
Yet thou wast only near me, not myself. 1060  
Survive myself?—that cures all other woe.  
Narcissa lives; Philander is forgot.  
O the soft commerce! O the tender ties,  
Close twisted with the fibres of the heart! 1064  
Which, broken, break them, and drain off the soul  
Of human joy, and make it pain to live.—  
And is it then to live? When such friends part  
'Tis the survivor dies.—My Heart! no more. 1068

*End of Night Fifth.*



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# THE COMPLAINT.

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## NIGHT VI.

### THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

#### IN TWO PARTS.

Concerning the

*Nature, Proof, and Importance, of Immortality.*

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#### PART I.

Where, among other things,

Glory and Riches are particularly considered.

*Humbly inscribed to the*

RIGHT HON. HENRY PELHAM,

First Lord Commissioner of the Treasury, and Chamberlain of the  
Exchequer.

#### PREFACE.

*FEW* ages have been deeper in dispute about religion than this. The dispute about religion, and the practice of it, seldom go together. The shorter, therefore, the dispute the better. I think it may be reduced to this single question, *Is man immortal, or is he not?* If he is not, all our disputes are mere amusements, or trials of skill. In this case, truth, reason, religion, which give our discourses such pomp and solemnity, are (as will be shown) mere empty sounds, without any meaning in them: but if man is immortal, it will behove him to be very serious about eter-

nal consequences; or, in other words, to be truly religious. And this great fundamental truth, unestablished, or unawakened in the minds of men, is, I conceive, the real source and support of all our infidelity, how remote soever the particular objections advanced may seem to be from it. *Sensible appearances affect most men much more than abstract reasonings; and we daily see bodies drop around us, but the soul is invisible. The power which inclination has over the judgment, is greater than can be well conceived by those that have not had an experience of it; and of what number is it the sad interest that souls should not survive! The Heathen world confessed that they rather hoped, than firmly believed, immortality! and how many Heathens have we still amongst us! The sacred Page assures us, that life and immortality is brought to light by the Gospel; but by how many is the Gospel rejected or overlooked! From these considerations, and from my being, accidentally, privy to the sentiments of some particular persons, I have been long persuaded that most, if not all our infidels (whatever name they take, and whatever scheme, for argument's sake, and to keep themselves in countenance, they patronize) are supported in their deplorable error by some doubt of their immortality at the bottom: and I am satisfied, that men once thoroughly convinced of their immortality are not far from being Christians: for it is hard to conceive that a man, fully conscious eternal pain or happiness will certainly be his lot, should not earnestly and impartially inquire after the*



*surest means of escaping one, and securing the other : and of such an earnest and impartial inquiry I well know the consequence.*

*Here, therefore, in proof of this most fundamental truth, some plain arguments are offered ; arguments derived from principles which infidels admit in common with believers ; arguments which appear to me altogether irresistible, and such as, I am satisfied, will have great weight with all who give themselves the small trouble of looking seriously into their own bosoms, and of observing, with any tolerable degree of attention, what daily passes round about them in the world. If some arguments shall here occur which others have declined, they are submitted, with all deference, to better judgments, in this, of all points, the most important ! for as to the being of a God, that is no longer disputed ; but it is undisputed for this reason only, viz. because where the least pretence to reason is admitted, it must for ever be indisputable : and, of consequence, no man can be betrayed into a dispute of that nature by vanity, which has a principal share in animating our modern combatants against other articles of our belief.*

SAR \* (for I know not yet her name in heaven)

Not early, like Narcissa, left the scene,

Nor sudden, like Philander. What avail ?

This seeming mitigation but inflames ;

This fancy'd medicine heightens the disease.

5

\* Referring to Night the Fifth.

Volume I.

O

The longer known, the closer still she grew,  
And gradual parting is a gradual death.  
'Tis the grim tyrant's engine which extorts,  
By tardy pressure's still-increasing weight,  
From hardest hearts confession of distress. 10

O the long dark approach, thro' years of pain,  
Death's gall'ry ! (might I dare to call it so)  
With dismal doubt and sable terror hung,  
Sick Hope's pale lamp its only glimm'ring ray :  
There Fate my melancholy walk ordain'd, 15  
Forbid Self-love itself to flatter there.  
How oft' I gaz'd, prophetically sad !  
How oft' I saw her dead, while yet in smiles !  
In smiles she sunk her grief to lessen mine :  
She spoke me comfort, and increas'd my pain. 20  
Like pow'ful armies trenching at a town,  
By slow and silent, but resistless, sap,  
In his pale progress gently gaining ground,  
Death urg'd his deadly siege ; in spite of art,  
Of all the balmy blessings Nature lends 25  
To succour frail humanity. Ye Stars !  
(Not now first made familiar to my sight)  
And thou, Q Moon ! bear witness ; many a night  
He tore the pillow from beneath my head,  
'Ty'd down my fore attention to the shock, 30  
By ceaseless depredations on a life  
Dearer than that he left me. Dreadful post  
Of observation ! darker ev'ry hour !

Let's dread the day that drove me to the brink,  
And pointed at eternity below, 35  
When my soul shudder'd at faturity;  
When, on a moment's point, the important dye  
Of life and death spun doubtful, ere it fell,  
And turn'd up life, my title to more woe.

But why more woe? more comfort let it be. 40  
Nothing is dead but that which wish'd to die;  
Nothing is dead but wretchedness and pain;  
Nothing is dead but what incumber'd, gall'd,  
Block'd up the pass, and barr'd from real life.  
Where dwells that wish most ardent of the wife? 45  
Too dark the sun to see it; highest stars  
Too low to reach it; Death, great Death alone,  
O'er stars and sun triumphant, lands us there.

Nor dreadful our transition, tho' the mind,  
An artist at creating self-alarms, 50  
Rich in expedients for inquietude,  
Is prone to paint it dreadful. Who can take  
Death's portrait true? the tyrant never sat.  
Our sketch all random strokes, conjecture all;  
Close shuts the grave, nor tells one single tale. 55  
Death and his image rising in the brain  
Bear faint resemblance; never are alike;  
Fear shakes the pencil; Fancy loves excess,  
Dark Ignorance is lavish of her shades;  
And these the formidable picture draw. 60

But grant the worst, 'tis past; new prospects rise,

O ij



And drop a veil eternal o'er her tomb.  
Far other views our contemplation claim,  
Views that o'erpay the rigours of our life;  
Views that suspend our agonies in death. 65  
Wrapt in the thought of immortality,  
Wrapt in the single, the triumphant thought!  
Long life might lapse, age unperceiv'd come on,  
And find the soul unfated with her theme.  
Its Nature, Proof, Importance, fire my song. 70  
O that my song could emulate my soul!  
Like her immortal. No!—the soul disdains  
A mark so mean: far nobler hope inflames;  
If endless ages can outweigh an hour,  
Let not the laurel, but the palm, inspire. 75

Thy nature, Immortality! who knows?  
And yet who knows it not? it is but life  
In stronger thread of brighter colour spun,  
And spun for ever; dipt by cruel Fate  
In Stygian dye, how black, how brittle, here! 80  
How short our correspondence with the sun!  
And while it lasts inglorious! our best deeds  
How wanting in their weight! our highest joys  
Small cordials to support us in our pain,  
And give us strength to suffer. But how great 85  
To mingle int'rests, converse, amities,  
With all the sons of Reason, scatter'd wide  
Thro' habitable space, wherever borne,  
Howe'er endow'd! to live free citizens



Of universal Nature! to lay hold, 95  
By more than feeble faith, on the Supreme!  
To call heav'n's rich unfathomable mines  
(Mines which support archangels in their state)  
Our own! to rise in science as in bliss,  
Initiate in the secrets of the skies! 100  
To read creation; read its mighty plan  
In the bare bosom of the Deity!  
The plan and execution to collate!  
To see, before each glance of piercing thought,  
All cloud, all shadow, blown remote, and leave 105  
No mystery—but that of love divine,  
Which lifts us on the seraph's flaming wing,  
From earth's aceldama, this field of blood,  
Of inward anguish, and of outward ill,  
From darkness and from dust, to such a scene! 110  
Love's element! true joy's illustrious home!  
From earth's sad contrast (now deplor'd) more fair!  
What exquisite vicissitude of fate!  
Bless'd absolution of our blackest hour!

Lorenzo! these are thoughts that make man man,  
The wise illumine, aggrandize the great. 115  
How great, (while yet we tread the kindred clod,  
And ev'ry moment fear to sink beneath  
The clod we tread, soon trodden by our sons)  
How great, in the wild whirl of time's pursuits, 120  
To stop, and pause; involv'd in high presage,  
Thro' the long vista of a thousand years,

O ij



To stand contemplating our distant selves,  
As in a magnifying mirror seen,  
Enlarg'd, ennobled, elevate, divine! 120  
To prophesy our own futurities!  
To gaze in thought on what all thought transcends!  
To talk, with fellow-candidates, of joys  
As far beyond conception as desert,  
Ourselves th' astonish'd talkers and the tale! 125

Lorenzo! swells thy bosom at the thought?  
The swell becomes thee: 'tis an honest pride.  
Revere thyself;—and yet thyself despise.  
His nature no man can o'er-rate, and none  
Can under-rate his merit. Take good heed, 130  
Nor there be modest where thou shouldst be proud;  
That almost universal error shun.  
How just our pride, when we behold those heights!  
Not those Ambition paints in air, but those  
Reason points out, and ardent Virtue gains, 135  
And angels emulate. Our pride how just!  
When mount we? when these shackles cast? when quit  
This cell of the creation? this small nest,  
Stuck in a corner of the universe,  
Wrapt up in fleecy cloud and fine-spun air? 140  
Fine-spun to sear, but gross and seculent  
To souls celestial; souls ordain'd to breathe  
Ambrosial gales, and drink a purer sky;  
Greatly triumphant on Time's farther shore,  
Where Virtue reigns, enrich'd with full arrears, 145



While Pomp imperial begs an alms of Peace,

In empire high, or in proud science deep,

Ye born of Earth! on what can you confer,

With half the dignity, with half the gain,

The gust, the glow, of rational delight, 150

As on this theme, which angels praise and share?

Man's fates and favours are a theme in heav'n.

What wretched repetition cloy's us here!

What periodic potions for the sick!

Dissemper'd bodies! and dissemper'd minds! 155

In an eternity what scenes shall strike!

Adventures thicken! novelties surprise!

What webs of wonder shall unravel there!

What full day pour on all the paths of heav'n,

And light th' Almighty's footsteps in the deep! 160

How shall the blessed day of our discharge

Unwind, at once, the labyrinths of Fate,

And straighten its inextricable maze!

If inextinguishable thirst in man

To know, how rich, how full, our banquet there! 165

There, not the moral world alone unfolds;

The world material, lately seen in shades,

And in those shades by fragments only seen,

And seen those fragments by the lab'ring eye,

Unbroken, then, illustrious, and entire, 170

Its ample sphere, its universal frame,

In full dimensions, swells to the survey,

And enters, at one glance, the ravish'd sight.

From some superior point, (where who can tell?  
Suffice it 'tis a point where gods reside) 175  
How shall the stranger man's illumin'd eye,  
In the vast ocean of unbounded space,  
Behold an infinite of floating worlds  
Divide the crystal waves of ether pure,  
In endless voyage without port? The least 180  
Of these disseminated orbs how great!  
Great as they are, what numbers these surpass,  
Huge as leviathan to that small race,  
Those twinkling multitudes of little life,  
He swallows unperceiv'd! Stupendous these? 185  
Yet what are these stupendous to the whole?  
As particles, as atoms ill-perceiv'd;  
As circulating globules in our veins;  
So vast the plan. Fecundity divine!  
Exub'rant Source! perhaps I wrong thee still. 190  
If admiration is a source of joy,  
What transport hence! yet this the least in heav'n.  
What this to that illustrious robe He wears,  
Who toss'd this mass of wonders from his hand,  
A specimen, an earnest, of his power? 195  
'Tis to that glory, whence all glory flows,  
As the mead's meanest flow'ret to the sun,  
Which gave it birth. But what this sun of heav'n?  
This bliss supreme of the supremely blest?  
Death, only death, the question can resolve. 200  
By death cheap bought th' ideas of our joy;

The bare ideas! solid happiness  
So distant from its shadow chas'd below.

And chase we still the phantom thro' the fire,  
O'er bog, and brake, and precipice, till death? 205  
And toil we still for sublunary pay?

Defy the dangers of the field and flood,  
Or, spider-like, spin out our precious all,  
Our more than vitals spin, (if no regard  
To great futurity) in curious webs 210

Of subtle thought and exquisite design,  
(Fine network of the brain!) to catch a fly!  
The momentary buzz of vain renown!  
A name! a mortal immortality!

Or (meaner still!) instead of grasping air, 215  
For sordid lustre plunge we in the mire?  
Drudge, sweat, thro' ev'ry shame, for ev'ry gain,  
For vile contaminating trash; throw up  
Our hope in heav'n, our dignity with man,  
And delvy the dirt matur'd to gold? 220

Ambition, Avarice, the two dæmons these  
Which goad thro' ev'ry slough our human herd,  
Hard-travell'd from the cradle to the grave.  
How low the wretches sloop! how steep they climb!  
These dæmons burn mankind, but most possess 225  
Lorenzo's bosom, and turn out the skies.

Is it in time to hide eternity?  
And why not in an atom on the shore  
To cover ocean? or a mote the sun?



Glory and wealth! have they this blinding pow'r? 230  
What if to them I prove Lorenzo blind?  
Would it surprise thee? be thou then surpris'd;  
Thou neither know'st: their nature learn from me.

Mark well, as foreign as these subjects seem,  
What close connexion ties them to my theme. 235  
First, what is true ambition? The pursuit  
Of glory nothing less than man can share.  
Were they as vain as gaudy-minded man,  
As flatulent with fumes of self-applause,  
Their arts and conquests animals might boast, 240  
And claim their laurel crowns as well as we,  
But not celestial. Here we stand alone,  
As in our form, distinct, pre-eminent:  
If prone in thought, our stature is our shame,  
And man should blush his forehead meets the skies.  
The visible and present are for brutes; 246  
A slender portion, and a narrow bound!  
These reason, with an energy divine,  
O'erleaps, and claims the future and unseen  
The vast unseen! the future fathomless! 250  
When the great soul buoys up to this high point,  
Leaving gross Nature's sediments below.  
Then, and then only, Adam's offspring quits  
The sage and hero of the fields and woods,  
Asserts his rank, and rises into man. 255  
This is ambition; this is human fire.

Can parts or place (two bold pretenders!) make  
Lorenzo great, and pluck him from the throng?





Genius and art, ambition's boasted wings,  
Our boast but ill deserve: a feeble aid! 160  
Dedalian engin'ry! If these alone  
Assist our flight, Fame's flight is Glory's fall.  
Heart-merit wanting, mount we ne'er so high,  
Our height is but the gibbet of our name.  
A celebrated wretch when I behold, 165  
When I behold a genius bright and base,  
Of tow'ring talents and terrestrial aims,  
Methinks I see, as thrown from her high sphere,  
The glorious fragments of a soul immortal,  
With rubbish mix'd, and glitt'ring in the dust: 170  
Struck at the splendid melancholy sight,  
At once compassion soft, and envy, rise——  
But wherefore envy? talents angel-bright,  
If wanting worth, are shining instruments  
In false Ambition's hand, to finish faults 175  
Illustrious, and give Infamy renown.

Great ill is an achievement of great pow'rs.  
Plain sense but rarely leads us far astray.  
Reason the means, affections chuse our end.  
Means have no merit, if our end amiss. 180  
If wrong our hearts, our heads are right in vain.  
What is a Pelham's head to Pelham's heart?  
Hearts are proprietors of all applause.  
Right ends and means make wisdom. Worldly-wise  
Is but half-witted at its highest praise. 185  
Let genius, then, despair to make thee great,



Nor flatter station. What is station high?  
'Tis a proud mendicant; it boasts and begs;  
It begs an alms of homage from the throng,  
And oft' the throng denies its charity. 290  
Monarchs and Ministers are awful names;  
Whoever wear them challenge our devoir.  
Religion, public order, both exact  
External homage and a supple knee,  
To beings pompously set up, to serve 295  
The meanest slave: all more is Merit's due,  
Her sacred and inviolable right,  
Nor ever paid the monarch, but the man.  
Our hearts ne'er bow but to superior worth,  
Nor ever fail of their allegiance there. 300  
Fools, indeed, drop the man in their account,  
And vote the mantle into majesty.  
Let the small savage boast his silver fur,  
His royal robe unborrow'd, and unbought,  
His own, descending fairly from his fires; 305  
Shall man be proud to wear his livery,  
And souls in ermin scorn a soul without?  
Can place or lessen us or aggrandize?  
Pygmies are pygmies still, tho' perch'd on Alps,  
And pyramids are pyramids in vales. 310  
Each man makes his own stature, builds himself.  
Virtue alone outbuilds the pyramids;  
Her monuments shall last when Egypt's fall.  
Of these sure truths dost thou demand the cause?

The cause is lodg'd in immortality. 315  
Hear, and assent: Thy bosom burns for pow'r;  
What station charms thee? I'll install thee there;  
'Tis thine. And art thou greater than before?  
Then thou before wast something less than man.  
Has thy new post betray'd thee into pride? 320  
That treacherous pride betrays thy dignity;  
That pride defames humanity, and calls  
The being mean which flasks or strings can raise:  
That pride, like hooded hawks, in darkness soars,  
From blindness hold, and tow'ring to the skies. 325  
'Tis born of Ignorance, which knows not man:  
An angel's second, nor his second long.  
A Nero, quitting his imperial throne,  
And courting glory from the tinkling string,  
But faintly shadows an immortal soul, 330  
With empire's self to pride or rapture fir'd.  
If nobler motives minister no cure,  
Ev'n vanity forbids thee to be vain.

High worth is elevated place: 'tis more,  
It makes the post stand candidate for thee; 335  
Makes more than monarchs, makes an honest man;  
Tho' no Exchequer it commands, 'tis wealth;  
And tho' it wears no ribband, 'tis renown:  
Renown that would not quit thee tho' disgrac'd,  
Nor leave thee pendant on a master's smile. 340  
Other ambition Nature interdicts;  
Nature proclaims it most absurd in man,

By pointing at his origin and end;  
Milk and a swathe, at first, his whole demand;  
His whole domain, at last, a turf or stone; 345  
To whom, between, a world may seem too small.

Souls truly great dart forward on the wing  
Of just ambition, to the grand result,  
The curtain's fall; there see the buskin'd chief  
Unhod behind this momentary scene, 350  
Reduc'd to his own stature, low or high,  
As vice or virtue sinks him, or sublimes;  
And laugh at this fantastic mummery,  
This antic prelude of grotesque events,  
Where dwarfs are often stilted, and betray 355  
A littleness of soul by worlds o'er-run,  
And nations laid in blood: Dread sacrifice  
To Christian pride! which had with horror shock'd  
The darkest Pagans, offer'd to their gods.

O thou Most Christian! enemy to peace! 360  
Again in arms? again provoking Fate?  
That prince, and that alone, is truly great,  
Who draws the sword reluctant, gladly sheaths;  
On empire builds what empire far outweighs,  
And makes his throne a scaffold to the skies. 365

Why this so rare? because forgot of all  
The day of death; that venerable day  
Which sits as judge; that day which shall pronounce  
On all our days, absolve them, or condemn.  
Lorenzo! never shut thy thought against it; 370

Be levers ne'er so full, afford it room,  
And give it audience in the cabinet.  
That friend consulted, flatteries apart,  
Will tell thee fair if thou art great or mean.

To dote on aught may leave us, or be left, 375  
Is that ambition? then let flames descend,  
Point to the centre their inverted spires,  
And learn humiliation from a soul  
Which boasts her lineage from celestial fire.

Yet these are they the world pronounces wise; 380  
The world, which cancels Nature's right and wrong,  
And casts new wisdom: ev'n the grave man lends  
His solemn face to countenance the coin.

Wisdom for parts is madness for the whole.  
This stamps the paradox, and gives us leave 385  
To call the wisest weak, the richest poor,  
The most ambitious unambitious, mean,  
In triumph mean, and abject on a throne.

Nothing can make it less than mad in man  
To put forth all his ardour, all his art, 390  
And give his soul her full unbounded flight,  
But reaching him who gave her wings to fly.

When blind Ambition quite mistakes her road,  
And downward pores for that which shines above,  
Substantial happiness and true renown, 395  
Then, like an idiot gazing on the brook,  
We leap at stars, and fasten in the mud;  
At glory grasp, and sink in infamy.



Ambition! pow'rful fource of good and ill:  
Thy strength in man, like length of wing in birds, 400  
When disengag'd from earth, with greater ease, swift  
And swifter flight, transports us to the skies:  
By toys entangled, or in guilt hemm'd,  
It turns a curse: it is our chain and scourge,  
In this dark dungeon, where confin'd we lie, 405  
Close-grated by the sordid bars of sense,  
All prospect of eternity shut out,  
And but for execution ne'er set free.

With error in ambition justly charg'd,  
Find we Lorenzo wiser in his wealth? 410  
What if thy rental I reform, and draw  
An inventory new to set thee right:  
Where thy true treasure? Gold says, "Not in me:"  
And, "Not in me," the Diamond. Gold is poor;  
India's insolvent: seek it in thyself; 415  
Seek in thy naked self; and find it there:  
In being so defended, form'd, endow'd;  
Sky-born, sky-guided, sky-returning race:  
Erect, immortal, rational, divine!  
In senses which inherit earth and heav'n: 420  
Enjoy the various riches Nature yields;  
Far nobler: give the riches they enjoy;  
Give taste to fruits, and harmony to groves;  
Their radiant beams to gold, and gold's bright fire;  
Take in, at once, the landscape of the world;  
At a small inlet, which a grain might close,



And half create the wondrous world they see.  
Our senses, as our reason, are divine.  
But for the magic organ's pow'rful charm,  
Earth were a rude uncolour'd chaos still. 430  
Objects are but th' occasion, ours th' exploit;  
Ours is the cloth, the pencil, and the paint,  
Which Nature's admirable picture draws,  
And beautifies creation's ample dome.  
Like Milton's Eve, when gazing on the lake, 435  
Man makes the matchless image man admires.  
Say then, shall man, his thoughts all sent abroad,  
Superior wonders in himself forgot,  
His admiration waste on objects round,  
When Heav'n makes him the soul of all he sees? 440  
Aburd! not rare! so great, so mean, is man.

What wealth in senses such as these! what wealth  
In fancy, fir'd to form a falser scene  
Than sense surveys! in Mem'ry's firm record,  
Which, should it perish, could this world recall 445  
From the dark shadows of o'erwhelming years!  
In colours fresh, originally bright,  
Preserve its portrait, and report its fate!  
What wealth in intellect, that sov'reign pow'r!  
Which sense and fancy summons to the bar; 450  
Interrogates, approves, or reprehends;  
And from the mass those underlings import,  
From their materials sifted and refin'd,  
And in Truth's balance accurately weigh'd,

Forms art and science, government and law,  
The solid basis, and the beauteous frame,  
The vitals, and the grace, of civil life!  
And manners (sad exception!) set aside,  
Strikes out, with master hand, a copy fair  
Of his idea, whose indulgent thought  
Long, long ere Chaos term'd, plann'd human bliss.

What wealth in souls that soar, dive, range arround,  
Disdaining limit or from place or time,  
And bear, at once, in thought extensive, hear  
Th' Almighty Fiat, and the trumpet's sound!  
Bold on creation's outside walk, and view  
What was, and is, and more than e'er shall be;  
Commanding, with omnipotence of thought,  
Creations new in Fancy's field to rise  
Souls that can grasp whate'er th' Almighty made,  
And wander wild thro' things impossible;  
What wealth in faculties of endless growth,  
In quenchless passions violent to crave,  
In liberty to chuse, in pow'r to reach,  
And in duration (how thy riches rise!  
Duration to perpetuate—boundless bliss!

Ask you what pow'r resides in feeble man  
That bliss to gain? Is virtue's, then, unknown?  
Virtue! our present peace, our future prize:  
Man's unprecarious, natural estate,  
Improvceable at will, in virtue lies;  
Its tenure sure, its income is divine.

High-built abundance, heap on heap! for what?  
To breed new wants, and beggar us the more,  
Then make a richer scramble for the throng? 485  
Soon as this feeble pulse, which leaps so long,  
Almost by miracle, is tir'd with play,  
Like rubbish, from discharging engines thrown,  
Our magazines of hoarded trifles fly;  
Fly diverse; fly to foreigners, to foes; 490  
New masters chant, and call the former fool,  
(How justly!) for dependence on their stay.  
Wide scatter, first, our playthings, then our dust.

Dost court abundance for the sake of peace?  
Learn, and lament thy self-defeated scheme. 495  
Riches enable to be richer still,  
And richer still what mortal can resist?  
Thus wealth (a cruel taskmaster!) enjoins  
New toils, succeeding toils, an endless train!  
And murders peace, which taught it first to shine. 500  
The poor are half as wretched as the rich,  
Whose proud and painful privilege it is  
At once to bear a double load of woe,  
To feel the stings of envy and of want,  
Outrageous want! both ladies cannot cure. 505

A competence is vital to content;  
Much wealth is corpulence, if not disease:  
Sick, or incumber'd, is our happiness.  
A competence is all we can enjoy.  
O be content, where Heav'n can give no more! 510

More, like a flash of water from a lock,  
Quickens our spirit's movement for an hour,  
But soon its force is spent, nor rise our joys  
Above our native temper's common stream.  
Hence disappointment lurks in ev'ry prize, 515  
As bees in flow'rs, and slings us with success.

The rich man, who denies it, proudly feigns,  
Nor knows the wise are privy to the lie.  
Much learning shews how little mortals know;  
Much wealth, how little worldlings can enjoy: 520  
At best it babies us with endless toys,  
And keeps us children till we drop to dust.  
As monkeys at a mirror stand amaz'd,  
They fail to find what they so plainly see:  
Thus men, in shining riches, see the face 525  
Of Happiness, nor know it is a shade;  
But gaze, and touch, and peep, and peep again,  
And wish, and wonder it is absent still.

How few can rescue opulence from want!  
Who lives to Nature rarely can be poor; 530  
Who lives to fancy never can rich.  
Poor is the man in debt; the man of gold,  
In debt to Fortune, trembles at her pow'r:  
The man of reason smiles at her and death.  
O what a patrimony this! a being 535  
Of such inherent strength and majesty,  
Not worlds possess can raise it; worlds destroy'd  
Can't injure; which holds on its glorious course



When thine, O Nature! ends - too blest to mourn  
Creation's obsequies. What treasure this! 540

The monarch is a beggar to the man.

Immortal! ages past, yet nothing gone!

Morn without eye! a race without a goal!

Unshorten'd by progression infinite!

Futurity for ever future! life 545

Beginning still where computation ends!

'Tis the description of a deity!

'Tis the description of the meanest slave!

The meanest slave darts then Lorenzo scorn?

The meanest slave thy sov'reign glory shares: 550

Proud Youth! fastidious of the lower world!

Man's lawful pride includes humility;

Stoops to the lowest; is too great to find

Inferiors: all immortal! brothers all!

Proprietors eternal of thy love. 555

Immortal! what can strike the sense so strong,

As this the soul? it thunders to the thought,

Reason amazes, gratitude o'erwhelms:

No more we slumber on the brink of Fate;

Rous'd at the sound, th' exulting soul ascends, 560

And breathes her native air, an air that feeds

Ambitions high; and fans ethereal fires;

Quick-kindles all that is divine within us,

Nor leaves one loit'ring thought beneath the stars.

Has not Lorenzo's bosom caught the flame? 565

Immortal! were but one immortal, how



Would others envy! how would thrones adore!  
Because 'tis common, is the blessing lost?  
How this ties up the bounteous hand of Heav'n!  
O vain, vain, vain, all else! eternity! 570  
A glorious and a needful refuge that,  
From vile imprisonment in abject views.  
'Tis immortality, 'tis that alone,  
Amid life's pains, abasements, emptiness,  
The soul can comfort, elevate, and fill: 575  
That only, and that amply, this performs;  
Lifts us above life's pains, her joys above;  
Their terror those, and these their lustre lose;  
Eternity depending covers all;  
Eternity depending all achieves; 580  
Sets earth at distance; casts her into shades;  
Blends her distinctions; abrogates her pow'rs;  
The low, the lofty, joyous, and severe,  
Fortune's dread frowns, and fascinating smiles,  
Make one promiscuous and neglected heap, 585  
The man beneath; if I may call him man,  
Whom immortality's full force inspires.  
Nothing terrestrial touches his high thought;  
Suns shine unseen, and thunders roll unheard,  
By minds quite conscious of their high descent, 590  
Their present province, and their future prize;  
Divinely darting upward ev'ry with,  
Warm on the wing, in glorious absence lost!  
Doubt you this truth? why labours your belief?



If earth's whole orb, by some due-distant eye 595  
Were seen at once, her tow'ring Alps would sink,  
And levell'd Atlas leave an even sphere.  
Thus earth, and all that earthly minds admire,  
Is swallow'd in Eternity's vast round.  
To that stupendous view, when souls awake, 600  
So large of late, so mountainous to man,  
Time's toys subside, and equal all below.

Enthusiastic this? then all are weak  
But rank enthusiasts. To this godlike height  
Some souls have soar'd, or martyrs ne'er had bled:  
And all may do what has by man been done. 606  
Who, beaten by these sublunary storms,  
Boundless, interminable joys can weigh  
Unraptur'd, unexalted, uninflam'd?  
What slave unblest'd, who from to-morrow's dawn 610  
Expects an empire? he forgets his chain,  
And, thron'd in thought, his absent sceptre waves.

And what a sceptre waits us! what a throne!  
Her own immense appointments to compute,  
'Or comprehend her high prerogatives, 615  
In this her dark minority, how toils,  
How vainly pants, the human soul divine!  
Too great the bounty seems for earthly joy;  
What heart but trembles at so strange a bliss?

In spite of all the truths the Muse has sung, 620  
Ne'er to be priz'd enough! enough revolv'd!  
Are there who wrap the world so close about them,

They see no farther than the clouds, and dance  
On heedless Vanity's fantastic toe,  
Till, stumbling at a straw, in their career, 615  
Headlong they plunge, where end both dance and song?  
Are there, Lorenzo? is it possible?  
Are there on earth (let me not call them men)  
Who lodge a soul immortal in their breasts,  
Unconscious as the mountain of its ore, 630  
Or rock of its inestimable gem!  
When rocks shall melt, and mountains vanish, these  
Shall know their treasure; treasure then no more.  
Are there (still more amazing!) who resist  
The rising thought? who smother, in its birth, 635  
The glorious truth? who struggle to be brutes?  
Who thro' this bosom-barrier burst their way,  
And, with revers'd ambition, strive to sink?  
Who labour downwards thro' th' opposing powers  
Of instinct, reason, and the world against them, 640  
To dismal hopes, and shelter in the shock  
Of endless night? night darker than the grave's?  
Who fight the proofs of immortality?  
With horrid zeal, and execrable arts,  
Work all their engines, level their black fires, 645  
To blot from man this attribute divine,  
(Than vital blood far dearer to the wife)  
Blasphemers, and rank Atheists to themselves?  
To contradict them, see all Nature rise!  
What object, what event, the moon beneath, 650

But argues, or endears, an after-scene?  
To reason proves, or weds it to desire?  
All things proclaim it needful; some advance  
One precious step beyond, and prove it sure.  
A thousand arguments swarm round my pen, 655  
From heav'n, and earth, and man. Indulge a few,  
By Nature, as her common habit, worn;  
So pressing Providence a truth to teach,  
Which truth untought, all other truths were vain.

Thou! whose all-providential eye surveys, 660  
Whose hand directs, whose spirit fills and warms  
Creation, and holds empire far beyond!  
Eternity's Inhabitant august!  
Of two eternities amazing Lord!  
One past ere man's or angel's had begun, 665  
Aid! while I rescue from the foe's assault  
Thy glorious Immortality in man;  
A theme for ever, and for all, of weight,  
Of moment infinite! but relish'd most  
By those who love thee most, who most adore, 670

Nature, thy daughter, ever-changing birth  
Of thee the Great Immutable, to man  
Speaks wisdom; is his oracle supreme;  
And he who most consults her is most wise.  
Lorenzo! to this heav'nly Delphos haste, 675  
And come back all-immortal, all-divine.  
Look Nature through, tis revolution all:  
All change, no death: day follows night, and night

The dying day : stars rise, and set, and rise :  
Earth takes the example. See, the Summer gay, 680  
With her green chaplet and ambrosial flowers,  
Droops into pallid Autumn : Winter gray,  
Horrid with frost, and turbulent with storm,  
Blows Autumn, and his golden fruits, away,  
Then melts into the spring : soft Spring, with breath  
Favonian, from warm chambers of the south, 686  
Recalls the first. All, to resourish, fades :  
As in a wheel all sinks to reascend :  
Emblems of man, who passes, not expires.

With this minute distinction, emblems just, 690  
Nature revolves, but man advances ; both  
Eternal : that a circle, this a line :  
That gravitates, this soars. Th' aspiring soul,  
Ardent and tremulous, like flame, ascends,  
Zeal and humility her wings, to heav'n. 695  
The world of matter, with its various forms,  
All dies into new life. Life born from death  
Rolls the vast mass, and shall for ever roll.  
No single atom, once in being, lost,  
With change of counsel charges the Most High. 700

What hence infer Lorenzo ? can it be ?  
Matter immortal ? and shall spirit die ?  
Above the nobler shall less noble rise ?  
Shall man alone, for whom all else revives,  
No resurrection know ? shall man alone, 705  
Imperial man ! be sown in barren ground,

Less privileg'd than grain on which he feeds?  
Is man, in whom alone is pow'r to prize  
The bliss of being, or, with previous pain,  
Deplore its period, by the spleen of Fate  
Severely doom'd Death's single unredeem'd?  
If Nature's revolution speaks aloud  
In her gradation, hear her louder still.  
Look Nature through, 'tis neat gradation all.  
By what minute degrees her scale ascends!  
Each middle nature join'd at each extreme,  
To that above it join'd, to that beneath.  
Parts into parts reciprocally shot,  
Abhor divorce. What love of union reigns!  
Here dormant matter waits a call to life;  
Half-life, half-death, join there: here life and sense,  
There sense from reason steals a glimm'ring ray:  
Reason shines out in man. But how preserv'd  
The chain unbroken upward, to the realms  
Of incorporeal life? those realms of bliss  
Where Death hath no dominion? Grant a make  
Half-mortal, half-immortal; earthy part,  
And part ethereal: grant the soul of man  
Eternal, or in man the series ends.  
Wide yawns the gap; connexion is no more;  
Check'd Reason halts; her next step wants support;  
Striving to climb, she tumbles from her scheme  
A scheme Analogy pronounc'd so true;  
Analogy! man's surest guide below.





Thus far all Nature calls on thy belief; 936  
And will Lorenzo, careless of the call,  
False attestation on all Nature charge,  
Rather than violate his league with Death?  
Renounce his reason, rather than renounce  
The dust below'd, and run the risk of heav'n? 740  
O what indignity to deathless souls!  
What treason to the majesty of man!  
Of man immortal! Hear the lofty style:  
"If so decreed, th' Almighty will be done.  
"Let earth dissolve, yon' pond'rous orbs descend, 745  
"And grind us into dust. The soul is safe;  
"The man emerges; mounts above the wreck,  
"As, tow'ring flame from Nature's fun'ral pyre;  
"O'er devastation, as a gainer, smiles:  
"His charter, his inviolable rights, 750  
"Well-pleas'd to learn from Thunder's impotence,  
"Death's pointless darts, and Hell's defeated storms."

But these chimeras touch not thee, Lorenzo!  
The glories of the world thy sev'nfold shield.  
Other ambition than of crowns in air,  
And superlunary felicities,  
Thy bosom warm. I'll cool it, if I can,  
And turn those glories that enchant against thee.  
What ties thee to this life proclaims the next,  
If wise, the cause that wounds thee is thy cure. 760

Come, my Ambitious! let us mount together,  
(To mount Lorenzo never can refuse)  
And from the clouds, where Pride delights to dwell,



Look down on earth.—What seest thou? wondrous  
‘Terrestrial wonders, that eclipse the skies. [things!  
What lengths of labour’d lands! what loaded seas! 766  
Loaded by man for pleasure, wealth, or war!  
Seas, winds, and planets, into service brought,  
His art acknowledge, and promote his ends.  
Nor can th’ eternal rocks his will withstand: 770  
What levell’d mountains! and what lifted vales!  
O’er vales and mountains sumptuous cities swell,  
And gild our landscape with their glitt’ring spires.  
Some ‘mid the wond’ring waves majestic rise,  
And Neptune holds a mirror to their charms. 775  
Far greater still! (what cannot mortal might?)  
See wide dominions ravish’d from the deep!  
The narrow’d deep with indignation foams.  
Or southward turn, to delicate and grand,  
The finer arts there ripen in the sun. 780  
How the tall temples, as to meet their gods,  
Ascend the skies! the proud triumphal arch  
Shews us half heav’n beneath its ample head.  
High thro’ mid air, here streams are taught to flow;  
Whole rivers there, laid by in basons, sleep. 785  
Here plains turn oceans; these vast oceans join  
Thro’ kingdoms channell’d deep from shore to shore,  
And chang’d creation takes its face from man.  
Beats thy brave breast for formidable scenes,  
Where fame and empire wait upon the sword? 790  
See fields in blood; hear naval thunders rise;  
Britannia’s voice! that awes the world to peace.

How yon' enormous mole projecting breaks  
The mid-sea, furious waves! their roar amidst  
Out-speaks the Deity, and says, "O Main! 795  
"Thus far, nor farther; new restraints obey."  
Earth's disembowel'd! measur'd are the skies!  
Stars are detected in their deep recess!  
Creation widens! vanquish'd Nature yields!  
Her secrets are extorted! art prevails! 800  
What monument of genius, spirit, power!

And now, Lorenzo! raptur'd at this scene,  
Whose glories render heav'n superfluous! say,  
Whose footsteps these?—Immortals have been here;  
Could less than souls immortal this have done? 805  
Earth's cover'd o'er with proofs of souls immortal,  
And proofs of immortality forgot.

To flatter thy grand foible, I confess  
These are Ambition's works; and these are great:  
But this, the least immortal souls can do,  
Transcend them all.—But what can these transcend?  
Dost ask me what?—one sigh for the distressed.  
What then for Infidels? a deeper sigh.  
'Tis moral grandeur makes the mighty man.  
How little they who think aught great below? 815  
All our ambitious death defeats but one,  
And that it crowns.—Here cease we; but, ere long,  
More pow'rful proof shall take the field against thee,  
Stronger than death, and smiling at the tomb. 819

*End of Night Sixth.*

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END OF VOLUME FIRST.



BELL'S EDITION,  
The POETS of GREAT BRITAIN  
COMPLETE, FROM  
CHAUCER to CHURCHILL.



YOUNG VOLUME II.  
Deil!at preform your quarrells; and then  
Fall prostrate, for you touch it, lest you die.

