

# NIGHT THOUGHTS

ON

LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY.

BY

EDWARD YOUNG, LL.D.

1681—  
1765—

WITH

A MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR, A CRITICAL VIEW OF HIS  
WRITINGS, AND EXPLANATORY NOTES.

BY

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## INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS.

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IN preparing this new edition of the "Night Thoughts," with a memoir of the author, a critical estimate of his celebrated writings, and notes explanatory of the text, the editor has been influenced in no small degree by a desire to make the Poem far more useful than it has hitherto been without notes. It has by no means the erudite character of the *Paradise Lost*, and does not, on this account, stand in so much need of explanatory observations; but it is not without its many learned and historical allusions, its recondite truths, its obscurities, intricacies, and difficulties, which, to most readers, greatly require elucidation.

The fact that it is extensively used in seminaries of learning, as a text book for grammatical analysis and rhetorical criticism, has also recommended it to the editor as a peculiarly fitting subject of his critical study and annotation. For this use it is, perhaps, not less valuable than the *Paradise Lost*, in expanding the intellect, giving scope to the imagination, exuberance to fancy, cultivation to literary taste, and improvement to the moral feelings. These Poems are so entirely different in their metrical structure and style of thought from the *Paradise Lost*, except in the single attribute of sublimity, that a study of the one for educational purposes, or for higher

ends, does by no means supersede the necessity or advantage of the study of the other also. In one particular, it occurs to us, that the "Night Thoughts" has the preference as a text book in schools: it abounds in figures of speech that are more or less faulty; and it will prove a valuable exercise to discover and point out the respects in which rhetorical propriety has been violated. In another particular it must be of eminent service in a course of education: it furnishes a great number of pithy sentences, easily remembered, and pregnant with the most important meaning, which, if lodged early in the mind, must exert a salutary influence in securing a wise improvement of time, a proper choice of objects of pursuit, a restraint upon the appetites and passions, an upward direction to the reason and affections, and a powerful auxiliary to the practice of the duties of religion.

Besides all this, the earnest effort to understand, and comprehend, and criticise a work so condensed and profound and vast in its conceptions, must powerfully serve to enlarge and invigorate all the intellectual powers.

It being the aim of the editor, in part, to embrace in his plan a provision for the wants of young persons, to whom the study of the Night Thoughts is peculiarly valuable, he has explained many words, forms of expression, and allusions, that might be perfectly intelligible to others without explanation. He desired also to meet the necessities of all whose early advantages of education may have been limited or neglected, so that the Poem might be read by all understandingly, profitably, and thus with satisfaction.

As will be perceived, he has contributed much to the intelligibility of the poem, and to an easy discovery of its great outlines of thought, by designating in a conspicuous manner the principal topics upon which it treats. This feature of the plan has cost no inconsiderable labour. The advantage thus afforded to the reader is two

fold. It furnishes a key to the several portions of the work, by which its treasures are laid open more readily to the mind : and it will be found very convenient for reference to subjects, when a person desires to employ but a few moments at a time in its perusal. The "Night Thoughts," not being very closely connected in its component parts, is particularly susceptible of such a division ; and what renders such a division the more convenient indeed, and needful, is that the thoughts are so weighty, so crowded often into a very limited space, that it is not easy, without fatigue, nor perhaps desirable, to read more than one or two hundred lines at a single perusal.

To readers of all classes it seems a desideratum to offer such an edition of this admirable poem as shall be attractive, and adapted to bring its wonderful conceptions into close contact with the mind and heart ; and that for these, among other reasons,—if read even occasionally, with due attention, and in the use of the explanatory notes, it will habituate the mind to just thoughts of death, that grand issue to which all are hastening ; and of eternity, the interests of which it most concerns all of us to provide for at an early day. It will impressively remind us of what we are all too apt to be forgetful and negligent, that

"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,  
Strong death, alone can heave the massy bar,  
This gross impediment of clay remove,  
And make us, embryos of existence, free."

It will convince us most effectually, our judgments at least, of the vanity of this world and of its pursuits, when compared with the claims of the world to come : that

"All, all on earth is shadow, all beyond

Is substance : the reverse is Folly's creed.  
How solid all when change shall be no more :”

It will thus guard us against improper and undue excitement from worldly objects and pursuits : it will also furnish alleviations of the severity of earthly sorrows and disappointments.

It will admonish us of the too common vice of every age—an unprofitable, if not universal, waste of time, the value of which is nowhere so eloquently portrayed as in this volume.

“ 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 destroyed  
Is suicide, where more than blood is spilt.  
\* \* \* \* Moments seize ;  
Heaven's on their wing : a moment we may wish,  
When worlds want wealth to buy.”

Again ; this poem is a well-filled magazine of offensive arms against scepticism, and of defensive arms for the security of the great Christian scheme of redemption. The sixth and seventh Nights are appropriated to this service. In the preface to the poem the author remarks : “ The dispute about religion may be reduced, I think, 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 : but if man is immortal, it will behoove him to be very serious about eternal 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.”

As a fair specimen of the grandeur and impressiveness, and useful

tendencies of this portion of the work, take the following, selected with no special care :—

“ Know’st thou the importance of a soul immortal ?  
Behold this midnight glory : worlds on worlds !  
Amazing pomp ! Redouble this amaze :  
Ten thousand add ; and twice ten thousand more :  
Then weigh the whole. One soul outweighs them all ;  
And calls the astonishing magnificence  
Of unintelligent creation poor.  
For this, believe not me : no man believe ;  
Trust not in words, but deeds ; and deeds no less  
Than those of the Supreme ; nor his, a few :  
Consult them all : consulted, all proclaim  
Thy soul’s importance.”

Another great advantage of the frequent perusal of the poem will be found in its eloquent inculcation of those great Christian doctrines which lie at the foundation of pure morals and sound religion. Faith in those doctrines may be acquired, or greatly strengthened by a familiar intercourse with the sublime communings of the “ Night-watcher.” His address to the true Godhead, in the last night, is wonderfully sublime and impressive. To the Son he says :

“ O thou Patron-God !  
Thou God and mortal ! thence more God to man !  
Man’s theme eternal ! man’s eternal theme !  
Thou can’st not ’scape uninjured from our praise.  
Uninjured from our praise can He escape,  
Who, disembosom’d from the Father, bows  
The heaven of heavens, to kiss the distant earth !  
Breathes out in agonies a sinless soul !  
Against the Cross Death’s iron sceptre breaks !  
From famished Ruin plucks her human prey !  
Throws wide the gates celestial to his foes !”

We have spoken of the "Night Thoughts" as a peculiarly valuable study for young persons. We should be guilty of a gross offence against the poem, to omit to add that the general strain of its meditations is such as to seize hold upon the sympathies, and to be adapted to the wants of those who are beginning to feel the infirmities of age; and there are but few poems, if any, so well suited to give their thoughts a profitable direction toward those grave realities, to the borders of which time is carrying them forward. If there is any class of persons to whom the high themes connected with death and immortality should be welcome, it must be they whose advanced years admonish them that the scenes of earth can be enjoyed but a short time longer. And how touchingly does the author describe the case of such!

"O my coevals! remnants of yourselves!  
 Poor human ruins tottering o'er the grave!  
 Shall we, shall aged men, like aged trees,  
 Strike deeper their vile root, and closer cling,  
 Still more enamored of this wretched soil?  
 Shall our pale, withered hands be still stretched out,  
 Trembling, at once, with eagerness and age?  
 With avarice, and convulsions, grasping hand?  
 Man wants but little, nor that little long."

It is not then a useless labor to prepare this edition of the "Night Thoughts," for the use of those who are on or within the precincts of old age; since, in reading, as the poet in writing it, their experience may accord with his:

"I chase the moments with a serious song,  
 Song soothes our pain; and age has pains to soothe."

We have spoken of the importance of the use of this poem in the education of the youthful mind, on account of the weighty senti-



ments briefly expressed, and the practical maxims of great value scattered through its pages. As an illustration of this remark the following may be offered.

“Oh Time! than gold more sacred.  
Part with it as with money, sparing: pay  
No moment but in purchase of its worth.  
And what its worth, ask death-beds; they can tell.”

“Tis greatly wise to talk with our past hours  
And ask them what report they bore to heav'n.”

“Earth's highest station ends in 'Here he lies;'  
And 'Dust to dust,' concludes her noblest song.”

“The grand morality is love of Thee.”

“A Christian is the highest style of man.”

“Believe, and show the reason of a man;  
Believe, and taste the pleasure of a god;  
Believe, and look with triumph on the tomb.”

“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.”

“And all may do what has by man been done.  
The more our spirits are enlarged on earth,  
The deeper draught shall they receive of heaven.”

It has been objected to this poem that it often indulges in a strain too gloomy; an objection which is fully presented and considered in the following “Estimate of the Writings of the Author,” and therefore it may now be sufficient just to enter our dissent from the objections, and to adduce in the author's vindication a few of the beautiful and triumphant lines with which he brings his poem to a close;

showing, that whatever effect it may have produced on other minds, it had not an unhappy one on his own; and giving us to understand that the complaint of gloominess must be ascribed to an exclusive attention to certain portions, the subjects of which could truthfully be endowed with no other characteristics; and to a neglect of those other portions which raise the enraptured and Christian mind to the very heavens, in joyful anticipations of what he describes as existing there, and in grateful thank-offerings to the Divine benevolence.

“Then, farewell, Night! Of darkness, now no more:  
 Joy breaks, shines, triumphs: 'tis eternal Day.  
 Shall that which rises out of nought complain  
 Of a few evils, paid with endless joys?  
 My soul! henceforth in sweetest union join  
 The two supports of human happiness,  
 Which some, erroneous, think can never meet;—  
 True taste of life, and constant thought of Death;  
 The thought of Death, sole victor of its dread!  
 Hope be thy joy, and probity thy skill;  
 Thy Patron He, whose diadem has dropp'd  
 Yon gems of heaven; eternity thy prize.”

In taking up the productions of any distinguished author there is naturally and universally felt a strong desire to learn something of his history and character: if he be a writer of genius, it is advantageous to most readers also, to be furnished with a critical account of his writings, as a preparation for reading them with an intelligent appreciation of the excellencies and defects, or as a means of awakening the attention to all those qualities and objects that are intrinsically most deserving of it. The author of the present edition has therefore deemed it important to draw up a memoir of Dr. Young, though the materials for it are by no means abundant. He has availed himself of all he could command, and has embodied more

particulars of interest than are to be found in any one of the published accounts he has seen. Perhaps he may be charged with occupying too much space in exhibiting one particular phase of the poet's character, but it was one that has awakened more curiosity, and has needed more explanation than any other. Besides, in offering this explanation incidents in themselves worthy of attention are brought to view, and thus a double end has been accomplished.

The "Critical Estimate" that follows the memoir is made up chiefly of those criticisms from other authors, which he has judged most suitable to convey a correct and comprehensive view of the characteristic traits of the writings to which they relate; arranged in a convenient order, and connected by such observations of his own as seemed to be required to place them in a just point of view.

In the preparation of the "Notes," the path is an untrodden one, and as it lies through many an obscure, wild, and intricate forest, and abrupt defile, while it also traverses many a beautiful garden, and commands many a sublime and picturesque view of nature and of redemption, the office of a guide is felt to be one that might advantageously have been confided to a person of higher qualifications; but as none such have appeared, or proffered their services, it is hoped the present attempt will be met with indulgence. If the annotator has fallen into mistakes himself, and has thus misled others in any part of the way, his only apology is, that he has put forth an honest and faithful endeavour to show his readers just what the "Night Thoughts" contain, clearing away all obstructions to a full and close view of the objects both of beauty and of deformity, of sublimity and of insignificance. Many a thoughtful and many a pleasant hour has been passed in this endeavour; but the author enjoys the additional satisfaction of having provided welcome and needful assistance to future readers of the immortal "Night

Thoughts." To them, in the act of reading, he would give the same advice which the poem gives in selecting a friend; "pause—ponder—sift." He would advise that at least a few minutes be devoted almost daily to the perusal of its eloquent pages; and that a fair trial be made, in the careful reading of the whole work, of its adaptation to enlarge and adorn the intellect, to improve the taste, to guide the affections and the voluntary powers, and to place before us those realities and those truths which it chiefly concerns us, as beings framed for immortality to know and to consider.

## LIFE AND CHARACTER OF EDWARD YOUNG, LL.D.

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THIS distinguished poet was born at Upham, in Hampshire (England), in June, 1681, his father being then rector of a church in that town, and a Fellow of Winchester College, but subsequently he was appointed chaplain to William and Mary, the sovereigns of Great Britain, and previous to his death, in 1705, was preferred to the deanery of Salisbury.

The higher branches of his education Young pursued in colleges of great repute and distinguished advantages—first at Winchester College, and afterwards at the University of Oxford. In 1708, he was nominated by Archbishop Tennison to a law fellowship in All-Souls, having owed these privileges in part to the merits of his father, yet in a good measure also to his own intellectual progress and scholar-like deportment. We must not conceal the report, however, that while connected with the last-named institution, his conduct was by no means irreproachable, and that he was not the ornament of religion and morality which he afterwards became.

There is some reason to believe that the disparaging report to which we have referred may have originated simply from the fact that he there became intimate with the younger Duke of Wharton, and that he was not ashamed to accept and enjoy the patronage as well as the companionship of this eccentric and dissolute nobleman, whom Pope, perhaps with some exaggeration, many years after thus portrayed :

“ Wharton, the scorn and wonder of our days,  
 Whose ruling passion was the lust of praise ;  
 Born with whate'er could win it from the wise

Women and fools must like him or he dies :  
 Though wondering senators hung on all he spoke,  
 The club must hail him master of the joke.

\* \* \* \* \*

Thus with each gift of Nature and of Art,  
 And wanting nothing but an honest heart ;  
 Grown all to all, from no one vice exempt ;  
 And most contemptible, to shun contempt ;  
 His passion still, to covet general praise ;  
 His life, to forfeit it a thousand ways :

\* \* \* \* \*

He dies, sad outcast of each church and state,  
 And, harder still ! flagitious, yet not great."

In regard to his connection with this man, and the patronage thus afforded him, we are to remember that the duke did not become a profligate at once, "the scorn and wonder of his day," so that an intimacy with him in early life may not have justly involved Young in reproach ; while, as to the debt of patronage, it may be said in extenuation of the act of becoming its recipient, that it was merely a continuation of a favor which the earlier Duke of Wharton had conferred on Young for the sake of his worthy father ; it was natural, therefore, that the present duke, who had probably been Young's schoolmate, and with whose genius and agreeable manners he may have been highly pleased, should continue the favor which his father had so worthily bestowed. Nor has any evidence been produced to show that while our author associated with this nobleman and enjoyed his pecuniary favors, he adopted any of his dishonorable and immoral practices. In 1717, he travelled with him into Ireland, and of this patronage Young afterwards, it is said, took pains to efface the remembrance. It would seem, from the testimony of Tindal, who was a fellow student with Young, and afterwards became a distinguished writer in favor of deism, that Young in that early period was zealously devoted to the defence of Christianity. "The other boys," said Tindal, "I can always answer, because I always know whence they have their arguments, which I have read a hundred times ; but that fellow, Young, is continually pestering me with something of his own."

Some of the alleged habits of Young during his collegiate life,

may, for their singularity, be worthy of record. At Oxford, the story was related, that when he engaged in the work of composing, he was accustomed to close his window blinds, even at mid-day, and to light his lamp; and that skulls and other bones, and some instruments of death, were placed around him, as the ornaments of his study. This singular habit may be regarded as being at once the indication and the promoter of that gloominess of imagination for which he became so distinguished, and which fitted him to write so impressively on various topics which are most largely treated in the "Night Thoughts," and in the "Last Day."

The following anecdote, as illustrative of Young's spirit and energy, may be worth relating. In the early part of his life he was fond of music, and touched the German flute with great skill. On one occasion, while sailing upon the Thames with several ladies, he performed a few tunes and then put the flute in his pocket. Just at this moment some officers rowing by insolently asked him why he stopped playing. "For the same reason that I began to play," said Young, "to please myself." One of them immediately ordered him to resume his playing, and threatened to put him into the river should he refuse to do it forthwith. The ladies becoming much alarmed at such rudeness, Young, for their sake, complied with the order, and played till both parties reached Vauxhall, where they passed the evening. Young, having closely examined the officer who issued the order, took an opportunity, in one of the dark walks, to tell him that he expected him to meet him at a certain place in the morning, to render him satisfaction for the insult of the preceding afternoon, and stated that he made choice of swords as the weapons to be used. The officer kept the appointment, but was much surprised to see Young advance towards him with a horse pistol, with which he declared he would instantly shoot the officer through the head if he did not proceed to dance a hornpipe. After some hesitation and remonstrance, the officer, not daring to decline, yielded to the demand, under the conviction, probably, of his own impertinence the day before, and made a satisfactory acknowledgment, and thus the affair ended.

At an early period of life the genius of Young for poetry began to be developed, and gave origin to several productions which gained

him considerable reputation. From his youth he is said to have felt that passion for glory which ordinarily indicates the possession of great talents, and which often counteracts a passion for the acquisition of property. But, with Young, both glory and fortune were simultaneously and eagerly pursued, both early and late in life. In Night VII. he declares :

“ Though disappointments in ambition pain,  
 And though success disgusts ; yet still, Lorenzo,  
 In vain we strive to pluck it from our hearts ;  
 By nature planted for the noblest ends.

\* \* \* \* \*

What is it, but the love of praise, inspires,  
 Matures, refines, embellishes, exalts  
 Earth's happiness ? From that, the delicate,  
 The grand, the marvellous of civil life,” &c.

It is represented to have been to him a great luxury to paint the miseries of the world, because it did not immediately gratify his ambitious aspirations ; and the remark has been made, that if he had been honored in his mature years with the name, place, and emoluments of a bishopric, it is quite doubtful whether the “Night Thoughts” would ever have been elaborated and given to the world. If this be so, we certainly have reason to congratulate ourselves and others that his ambitious designs were not crowned with success. That he was not indifferent to distinctions and emoluments of this sort, is plain enough, from his constant habit of dedicating his poetical productions to persons of noble birth and of opulence ; to such chiefly as were able to promote, if they saw fit, these upward aims of the poet. The same thing is plainly to be seen in some portions of the “Night Thoughts” themselves.

Among his first poetical adventures was an epistle to the Right Honorable George, Lord Lansdowne, published in 1712. In this poem, it has been truly observed, he began the siege of patronage, in which we find him still engaged, and still unsuccessfully, in the very decline of life,

“ Twice told the period spent on stubborn Troy,  
 Court favor, yet untaken, I besiege.”



His poem on the "Last Day" is prefaced by an inscription to no humbler personage than the queen. It is said, however, in explanation of this, that he had been employed as a writer to the Court, and to have received for this service a regular salary. To this fact Dean Swift is supposed to refer in his Rhapsody on Poetry. Speaking of the Court, he says :

"Whence Gay was banished in disgrace,  
Where Pope will never show his face,  
Where Y— must torture his invention  
To flatter knaves, or lose his pension."

The conclusion that Young was intended is plainly sustained by the following lines from the same poem :

"Attend ye Popes, and Youngs, and Gays,  
And tune your harps, and strew your bays,  
You panegyrics here provide,  
You cannot err on flattery's side."

For the purpose of illustrating the character and aims of the author at the period referred to, when he was about thirty years of age, the substance of the dedication to the queen is here adduced :— It awards great praise to the queen for the victories achieved under her reign and direction, but proceeds to say, that the author is more pleased to see her rise from this lower world, soaring above the clouds, passing the first and second heavens, and leaving the fixed stars behind her ; nor will he lose her there, he adds, but keep her still in view through the boundless space on the other side of creation, in her journey towards eternal bliss, till he beholds the heaven of heavens open, and angels receiving and conveying her still onward from the stretch of his imagination, which tires in her pursuit and falls back again to earth !

Another graphic illustration of the character and aims of the author about this period, is found in the history of his next publication, "The Force of Religion," which is founded on the incidents connected with the execution of Lady Jane Gray, and her husband Lord Guilford Dudley, 1554. In the dedication of it to the countess of Salisbury, he expresses the hope that it may be some excuse

for the author's presumption, that the story could not have been read without the thoughts of the countess of Salisbury, though it had been dedicated to another. "To behold," he adds, "a person *only* virtuous stirs in us a prudent regret; to behold a person *only* amiable to the sight, warms us with a religious indignation; but to turn our eyes to a countess of Salisbury, gives us pleasure and improvement; it works a sort of miracle; occasions the bias of our nature to fall off from sin, and makes our very senses and affections converts to our religion, and promoters of our duty." Such a complimentary effusion was probably not without its pecuniary reward.

After queen Anne's death, in 1714, he prepares a poem on the sad event, inscribed to Addison, in which he takes good care to introduce a flattering panegyric on the accession of George I. to the throne, and this, doubtless, was the chief design. Among other things, he declares, though at the very outset of his reign, that his new subjects bless the gods for such a king and asked no more. This poem was not introduced, however, by the author into his edition of his complete works. Perhaps he became ashamed of its flatteries and selfish designs.

His famous tragedy, "The Revenge," appeared in 1721, and, as a matter of course, was dedicated to some individual of noble rank and ample means. The duke of Wharton was selected for the distinction. "Your grace," says the dedication, "has been pleased to make yourself accessory to the following scenes, not only by suggesting the most beautiful incident in them, but by making all possible provision for the success of the whole." He further speaks in this document of his patron in the following courtly terms: "My present fortune is his bounty, and my future his care; which, I will venture to say, will be always remembered to his honor; since he, I know, intended his generosity as an encouragement to merit; though, through his very pardonable partiality to one who bears him so sincere a duty and respect, I suppose to receive the benefit of it." This dedication, having answered its purpose, was, like the others referred to, excluded from the author's own edition of his complete works. To the duke he appears to have been indebted for two annuities, one bearing date of March 24, 1719; the other was dated July 10, 1722: he also received a bond for a large amount in 1721.

“The Love of Fame,” the universal passion, embracing several *satires*, published in 1728, was dedicated to the duke of Dorset, Lord Wilmington, Sir Robert Walpole, &c. It is said that this poem secured to him from the duke of Grafton the handsome amount of two thousand pounds; yet this account is not universally credited.

His ability to flatter may be discerned in a few lines which we shall quote from the first of these *Satires*, addressed to the duke of Dorset.

“My verse is satire; Dorset, lend your ear,  
 And *patronise* a muse you cannot *fear*.  
 To poets sacred is a Dorset’s name,  
 Their wonted passport through the gates of fame.  
 \* \* \* \* \*

Satire! had I thy Dorset’s force divine,  
 A knave or fool should perish in each line;  
 Though for the first all Westminster should plead,  
 And for the last all Gresham intercede.”

None better than our author understood the susceptibility of the human heart to the influence of praise: none, perhaps, have more frequently employed it to advance his own fame or fortune. In this same satire he most truly says:—

“The *love of praise*, howe’er concealed by art,  
 Reigns, more or less, and glows in every heart:  
 The *proud*, to gain it, toils on toils endure;  
 The *modest* shun it, but to make it sure.  
 O’er globes and sceptres, now on thrones it swells;  
 Now trims the midnight lamp in college cells:  
 ’Tis Tory, Whig; it plots, prays, preaches, pleads,  
 Harangues in senates, squeaks in masquerades.  
 Nor ends with *life*; but nods in sable *plumes*,  
 Adorns our *hearse*, and flatters on our *tombs*.”

It would be difficult, perhaps, to exculpate our author from that offence which he so well satirizes in other poets. He was not always careful to bestow his exuberant praise upon deserving characters. In his desire to obtain the notice and the patronage of greatness, he was not always sufficiently discriminating in regard to another qua-

lity, more deserving—that of goodness. If he erred, it was not through ignorance or inadvertence; for in the satire already quoted, we find some very just invectives upon the prostitution of poetry to the adulation of vice.

“ Shall Poesy, like law, turn wrong to right,  
 And *dedications* wash an Æthiop white,  
 Set up each senseless wretch for nature’s boast,  
 On whom praise shines, as trophies on a post?  
 Shall funeral eloquence her colours spread,  
 And scatter roses on the wealthy dead?  
 Shall authors smile on such illustrious days,  
 And *satirise* with nothing—but their *praise*?”

It is the opinion of Croker that the comparative neglect into which Young’s works have fallen, may be attributed in some degree to his disgusting flattery of his patrons, male and female; all his wit, pathos, and force—and they are very great—not being able to counteract the effect of the deplorable adulation which he practised. From this fault, however, the “Night Thoughts” are almost entirely free.

In further illustration of our author’s peculiarities, as a seeker of royal and court patronage and distinction, it may be mentioned, that upon the accession of George II., and the delivery of his first speech to the Parliament, in 1728, a poem was soon published, on the basis of some remarks with reference to British seamen contained in that speech. “Ocean” was, accordingly, the title prefixed to it. It is addressed to the king. And how does he speak of him? Among other fine things, he says:—

“ To whom should I address my song?  
 To whom but thee?  
 The boundless *sea*,  
 And grateful muse to George belong.  
 \* \* \* \*  
 What hero’s praise  
 Can fire my lays  
 Like his with whom my lay begun?  
 Justice sincere,  
 And courage clear,  
 Rise the two columns of his throne.

How formed for sway !  
 Who look, obey :  
 They read the monarch in his port.  
 Their love and awe  
 Supply the law  
 And his own lustre makes the court.  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 By godlike arts  
 Enthron'd in hearts  
 Our bosom-lord o'er wills presides."

Our author had not yet become a clergyman. In 1714, he received his degree of Bachelor of Civil Law : in 1719, the degree of Doctor of Laws—the year in which died Addison, to whom English literature is so deeply indebted. A particular intimacy seems to have long subsisted between these two individuals. They were in the habit, it is said, of communicating to each other whatever verses they composed ; and when Addison died, it was beautifully and truthfully said of him by his surviving friend and admirer :

“ And guilt's chief foe in Addison has fled.”

Such (says Dodsley's Annual Register, 1765) was the success of the poem on the “ Last Day,” and of the poem entitled, “ Force of Religion,” in an age when the noblest productions were common, and even the meanest rewarded, that he was taken particular notice of by several of the nobility ; and the turn of his mind leading him to the church, he went into orders, and, in 1728, was made one of the king's chaplains : he afterwards, in 1730, obtained the living of Welwyn, in Hertfordshire, worth about five hundred pounds per annum ; and though ever in the full blaze of favour, he never had the fortune to rise to greater preferment. Indeed, during the last reign (George II.) the arts of poetry or of real eloquence were but little promoted or encouraged from the throne. Young could expect no great honours from a master who hated poetry, and styled all poets with the odious appellation of “ Buffoons.” For some years before the death of the late prince of Wales, Young, who was in favour with his royal highness, attended the court pretty constantly, but upon his decease all his hopes of church advancement vanished,

and towards the latter end of his life his very desires of fortune seemed to forsake him.

The poem already alluded to, and quoted in part, concludes with a "Wish," some stanzas of which will serve to throw light upon the author's character. They present it under an aspect quite unlike the manifestations of it hitherto furnished, and those which appear in the subsequent portion of his life.

( " In landscapes green  
 True bliss is seen,  
 With innocence, in shades, she sports;  
 In wealthy towns  
 Proud labour frowns,  
 And painted sorrow smiles in courts.

These scenes untried  
 Subdued my pride,  
 To Fortune's arrows bared my breast,  
 Till wisdom came,  
 A hoary dame !  
 And told me pleasure was in rest.

Oh may I steal  
 Along the vale  
 Of humble life, secure from foes !  
 My friend sincere,  
 My judgment clear,  
 And gentle business my repose.

My mind be strong  
 To combat wrong !  
 Grateful, O king ! for favours shown !  
 Soft to complain  
 For others' pain,  
 And bold to triumph o'er my own !

Prophetic schemes  
 And golden dreams  
 May I unsanguine cast away !  
 Have what I have,  
 And live, not leave,  
 Enamoured of the present day !

My hours my own,  
 My faults unknown,  
 My chief revenue in content !  
 Then leave one beam  
 Of honest fame,  
And scorn the laboured monument !

Unhurt my urn,  
 Till that great turn  
 When mighty nature's self shall die ;  
 Time cease to chide  
 With human pride,  
 Sunk in the ocean of eternity."

Soon after entering upon the duties of his charge in Welwyn, a playful incident occurred, which may be related as an illustration of his extemporaneous wit and humour. Walking in his garden, in company with two ladies, a servant announced to him that a gentleman was in the house who desired to speak with him. "Tell him," says Young, "I am too happily engaged to change my situation." The ladies insisted, however, that he should leave them and repair to the house, as his visitor was a man of rank, his patron, his friend. Their persuasions having no effect, one of the ladies took him by the right arm, and the other by the left, and led him to the garden-gate, when, discovering that resistance was vain, he politely bowed, laid his hand upon his breast, and in that expressive manner for which he was ever remarkable, he poured forth impromptu the following lines :—

"Thus Adam look'd when from the garden driven,  
 And thus disputed orders sent from heaven :  
 Like him I go, and yet to go am loth ;  
 Like him I go, for angels drove us both.  
 Hard was his fate, but mine still more unkind ;  
 His Eve went with him, but mine stays behind."



She did not "stay behind" always ; for, not many months subsequently to this incident, one of these persons, Lady Elizabeth Lee, walked with him to Hymen's altar, having at the time a son and two daughters by her former husband. This son was in the army, and died soon after this period. The eldest daughter married Mr.

Temple, a son of Lord Palmerston, and soon fell into consumption, and died at Lyons, in France, on her way to Nice, in 1736, within a year after her marriage, and at the early age of seventeen. She is the *Narcissa* of the "Night Thoughts," and some interesting particulars are therein given, in the text and notes, of her lamented end.

In the choice of a wife, it thus will be seen that Young was actuated by the same regard, as in other matters, to worldly honour and distinction; having been married, in 1731, to the person already mentioned—Lady Elizabeth Lee, daughter of the earl of Litchfield, and widow of Colonel Lee. We shall have something more to say of her in the notes to the "NIGHT THOUGHTS."

This justly celebrated poem was commenced, in 1741, having originated from great domestic affliction in the loss of his wife, and of her son and daughter. In the Seventh Night he thus pathetically writes:—

. . . "Friends, our chief treasure, how they drop!  
 LUCIA, NARCISSA fair, PHILANDER, gone!  
 The grave, like fabled Cerberus, has oped  
 A triple mouth; and, in an awful voice,  
 Loud calls my soul, and utters all I sing."

It may be added, however, in further illustration of our author's tastes and fixed habits of thought, that he inscribed the several books, except the seventh and eighth, of this his most popular poem, to distinguished and noble personages; and in Book IV., which he wrote at a somewhat advanced age, he lets us understand that he had been an assiduous aspirant after the favour of the great and the wealthy. He had now for ten years and more been occupying the rectory of Welwyn, besides the lordship of the manor connected with the rectory. No one can read the early portion of the Fourth Night, where he speaks of himself and his coevals, without discovering that his ambitious designs had been far from successful; that discontent was preying upon his mind, inducing a gloom which otherwise would not have rested upon it; that his views of the world are occasionally too much *embrowned* by indulging in the state of mind thus induced; and that his intellectual perceptions of the vanity of earthly grandeur and distinction had failed to impreg-



nate sufficiently the affections of his heart. He complains of younger men coming up on the stage of life and pushing him from the scene.

“ Ah me ! the dire effect  
 Of loitering here, of death defrauded long ;  
 Of old so gracious (and let that suffice)  
 My very master knows me not.  
 Shall I dare say, peculiar is the fate ?  
 I've been so long remembered, I'm forgot.  
 When in his courtiers' ears I pour my plaint,  
 They drink it as the nectar of the great,  
 And squeeze my hand, and beg me come to-morrow !  
 Refusal ! can'st thou wear a smoother form ?  
 Twice told the period spent on stubborn Troy,  
 Court-favour, yet untaken, I besiege ;  
 Ambition's ill-judged effort to be rich.  
 Alas ! ambition makes my little less,  
 Imbittering the possess'd. Why wish for more ?  
 Wishing, of all employments, is the worst !”

Yet he afterwards speaks of the goodness of Providence in assigning him a quiet moral position in which his heart was at rest, comparing himself to a shipwrecked mariner who had been thrown safe ashore on a single plank, the world (*a stately bark*) having gone to pieces on dangerous seas. How beautifully he thus carries out the figure :—

“ I hear the tumult of the distant throng  
 As that of seas remote, or dying storms,  
 And meditate on scenes more silent still ;  
 Pursue my theme, and fight the fear of death.”

He seems then to have been conscious of the folly of his previous ambitious course, at least while he was penning those impressive “ Night Thoughts ;” but there is evidence that some years afterwards he again fell into his old habits of seeking preferment or its emoluments.

“ If this song lives, posterity shall know  
 One, though in Britain born, with courtiers bred,  
 Who thought e'en gold might come a day too late,  
 Nor on his subtle death-bed plann'd his scheme

For future vacancies in Church or State,  
 Some avocation deeming it—to die ;  
 Unbit by rage canine of dying rich :  
 Guilt's blunder ! and the loudest laugh of hell !”

That at the time of writing this poem, he was inclined to meddle in the political contests of the country seems probable from some lines in the Eighth Night—

“Think no post needful that demands a knave.  
 When late our civil helm was shitting hands  
 So P—— thought : think better if you can.”

It must be added, however, that in composing the last lines of the poem he manifests a weariness of courting earthly patrons, and wisely counsels his soul to direct its regards to a more powerful and benignant Patron.

“Henceforth

Thy patron He, whose diadem has dropp'd  
 Yon gems of heaven : *eternity* thy prize :  
 And leave the racers of the world their own,  
 Their *feather*, and their *froth*. for endless toils :  
 They part with all for that which is not bread ;  
 They mortify, they *starve*, on wealth, fame, power ;  
 And laugh to scorn the *fools* that aim at *more*.”

These extracts, to which some characteristic and valuable additions might be made, constitute an accurate portrait of the interior as well as the exterior life of Dr. Young. Whatever inferences we may draw of an unfavourable nature with respect to his practical wisdom and consistency, we must see that his experience cannot fail to prove highly important to others ; that he writes not from observation merely, but from long and varied, and at length bitter experience of the vanity of this world, and of the folly of those who seek no higher honours, and no more substantial and satisfying pleasures than it is capable of bestowing even upon its most ardent votaries. When writing so eloquently upon fame, riches, pleasure, death, and eternity, he reminds us of Solomon in his old age writing his Ecclesiastes, in which he speaks of having tried the various experiences of human life in all its gayer and most pleasing scenes, and then con-

fesses himself obliged, in all honesty and truthfulness, to pronounce them "vanity of vanity." The testimony of such a man, writing from experience, as well as under the dictates of inspiration, should be received without hesitation: his admonitions are worthy of pre-eminent regard. So, upon learning the course of life pursued by Dr. Young, giving him some of the best opportunities of observing its more attractive scenes, and much experience of its distinctions and honours, we are prepared to yield the more entire deference to his statements, counsels, and conclusions. His disappointment at the gratifications of the present scene had been made beneficial to his spiritual interests, by carrying his imagination and his intellect forward to the scenes of an eternal state of being, revealed to him in the Holy Scriptures. Upon these he writes with great sublimity and power, and especially upon that wonderful process of redemption, which secures a blissful immortality to the pure in heart—to those made such by the same benignant process.

Yet these truths seem to have had so little effect in curing his inordinate love of the world, or his hankering after its emoluments, that some good men have even expressed a doubt of the soundness of Dr. Young's piety. The Rev. Richard Cecil, of London, holds this language in regard to him. "Young is, of all other men, one of the most striking examples of the disunion of piety from truth. If we read his most true, impassioned, and impressive estimate of the world and of religion, we shall think it impossible that he was uninfluenced by his subject. It is, however, a melancholy fact, that he was hunting after preferment at eighty years old, and felt and spoke like a disappointed man. The truth was pictured in his mind in most vivid colours. He felt it while he was writing. He felt himself on a retired spot, and he saw death, the mighty hunter, pursuing the unthinking world. He saw redemption—its necessity and its grandeur; and while he looked on it, he spoke as a man would speak whose mind and heart were deeply engrossed. Notwithstanding all this, the view did not reach his heart. Had I preached in his pulpit with the fervor and interest that his 'Night Thoughts' discover, he would have been terrified. He told a friend of mine, who went to him under religious fears, that he must *go more into the world!*"

Dr. Johnson seems to have entertained a somewhat similar opinion of our author. The bishop of St. Asaph having once remarked to him that from the writings of Horace it appeared that he was a very happy man, Johnson replied—"We have no reason to believe that, my lord; for Dr. Young, who pined for preferment, talks with contempt of it in his writings, and affects to despise everything that he did not despise."

It here becomes a pertinent and interesting inquiry, how it happens that, although Dr. Young lived nearly forty years after taking orders in the church, a period which included one entire reign, which was uncommonly long, and part of another, he was never thought worthy of the least preferment; at all events did not receive it. A plausible answer to this inquiry has been given by one of his biographers, Mr. Croft.

"The author of the 'Night Thoughts,' " he says, "ended his days upon a living which came to him from his college without any favor, and to which he probably had an eye when he determined on the Church. The neglect of Young is by some ascribed to his having attached himself to the prince of Wales, and to his having preached an offensive sermon at St. James's. It is said that in the preceding reign he had two hundred pounds a year through the patronage of Walpole, and that when any one spoke to the king in favor of Young his reply was, 'He has a pension.'" There is a very polite letter from archbishop Secker which throws some light on this inquiry; just enough at least to show at what a late period in life the author of the "Night Thoughts" solicited preferment.

"DEANERY OF ST. PAUL'S, July 8th, 1758.

"GOOD DR. YOUNG—I have long wondered that more suitable notice of your great merit hath not been taken by persons in power: but how to remedy the omission I see not. No encouragement hath ever been given me to mention things of this nature to his majesty. And, therefore, in all likelihood, the only consequence of doing it would be to weaken the little influence which else I may possibly have on some other occasions. Your fortune and your reputation set you above the need of advancement; and your sentiments, above that concern for it, on your own account, which, on that of the public, is sincerely felt by

"Your loving brother,

"THOS. CAUNT."

At length, in 1761, when Dr. Young had attained the age of fourscore, he was appointed Clerk of the Closet to the princess dowager of Wales.

One obstacle, it is said, must have stood not a little in the way of that preferment after which his whole life seems to have panted: though he took orders, he never entirely shook off politics; and thus if he gained some friends, he made many enemies.

It is further said, that in the latter part of his life he was in the habit of holding himself out for a man retired from the world; and he seems to have been taken, doubtless unwillingly, at his word. Notwithstanding his frequent complaints of being neglected, no hand was extended to draw him from that retirement of which he declared himself enamoured. As Croft further remarks—he who retires from the world will find himself in reality deserted as fast, if not faster, by the world.

The author's own sentiments and course in making poetry subservient to his interests and reputation, may be handsomely illustrated by an extract from the preface to his Satires. He had made some observations "which remind him of Plato's fable of the Birth of Love, one of the prettiest fables of all antiquity; which will hold likewise with regard to modern poetry. 'Love,' says he, 'is the son of the goddess of poverty and the god of riches: from his *father* he has daring genius, his elevation of thought, his building castles in the air, his prodigality, his neglect of things serious and useful, his vain opinion of his own merit, and his affection of preference and distinction: from his *mother* he inherits his indigence, which makes him a constant beggar of favours; that importunity with which he begs; his flattery, his servility, his fear of being despised, which is inseparable from him. This addition may be made:—that poetry, like love, is a little subject to *blindness*, which makes her mistake her way to preferments and honours: that she has her satirical *quiver*; and, lastly, that she retains a dutiful admiration of her *father's* family; but divides her favours, and generally lives with her *mother's* relatives. However, this is not necessity but choice. Were wisdom her governess, she might have much more of the father than the mother, especially in such an age as this which shows a due passion for her charms."

An anecdote may here be related, which is told by Ruffhead, in his life of Pope, concerning the singular course adopted by Young in preparing for the clerical profession. To the absolute truth of the anecdote, however, our assent is not easily given. When he determined to change the profession of law for divinity, instead of asking advice of Bishops Sherlock, Atterbury, or Hare, as to the course of study he should pursue, he directed his inquiry on the point to his poetical friend, Alexander Pope, who in a jocosé mood suggested to him the earnest study of the writings of Thomas Aquinas, one of the schoolmen of the dark ages. In compliance with the suggestion, regarded as sincere and profitable, Dr. Young procured the learned and mystic treasure, sought an obscure retreat in the suburbs of the city, where he might be free from interruption, and there devoted himself to the study of Aquinas. His witty guide in theology, hearing nothing of him for half a year, and apprehending he might have carried the jest farther than was profitable, found him just in time to prevent what Ruffhead calls "an irretrievable derangement." If it be true that he devoted six months' study to the writings of such an ingenious disputer as Aquinas, it may have contributed to the shrewdness and epigrammatical point and intellectual penetration displayed by our author; yet his earlier writings abound in similar characteristics. It is certain that if he had mastered the entire works of Aquinas, amounting to seventeen folio volumes, and those in the Latin tongue, he had sufficient employment for more than six months of hard, intellectual toil, especially when the character of those volumes, as described by Hallam, is taken into account. Every question, he says, is discussed with a remarkable observation of distinctions, and an unremitting desire both to comprehend and to distribute a subject; and to present it to the mind in every possible light, and to trace all its relations and consequences. The writings of the schoolmen embrace a vast compass of thought and learning; but their distinctions often confuse instead of giving light, and the difficulties which they encounter are too arduous for them; and we find it impossible, as must generally be the case, to read so much as a few pages consecutively.

It is quite possible, nay, very certain, that Dr. Young did not confine himself in preparing for the duties of the pulpit to the writings

of Aquinas; for his "Night Thoughts" indicate that he was no mean theologian; that he was a well-read divine. Nowhere are the great facts and doctrines of Christianity more clearly and impressively described than in that remarkable production. But while he thus made honourable attainments in the science of theology, and was an earnest and pathetic preacher, he seems to have been convinced that his surest road to honour and preferment was the path of poesy rather than theology. His publications, therefore, are of the poetic order, almost exclusively. Two or three essays in prose, and a few sermons, constitute the full amount of his prose authorship. Soon after taking orders, in 1729, he preached a sermon before the House of Commons, on the martyrdom of Charles I., entitled, "An Apology for Princes, or the Reverence due to Government." In 1754 he put out "The Centaur not Fabulous; in six Letters to a friend, on the Life in Vogue." The third letter is quite celebrated for the graphic portrait which it presents of "the gay, young, noble, ingenious, accomplished, and most wretched Altamont," whose last melancholy exclamations were—"my principles have poisoned my friend, my extravagance has beggared my boy, my unkindness has murdered my wife!" Under the name of Altamont Lord Easton is supposed to have been represented.

In 1759, among the last public efforts of his pen, and one of the most remarkable, was a "*Letter on Original Composition*," the purpose of which was to do justice to the death-bed of Addison, "to erect" (as he himself expresses it) "a monumental marble to the memory of an old friend." Of this letter it has been observed that when we consider it as the work of a man turned of eighty, 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. This work seems a brightening before death, and it had been well if the author had stopped here; but that taper which blazed as it declined, was at last shamefully exhibited to the public as burning in the socket, in a work called "The Resignation," the last but the worst of all Dr. Young's performances. But this failure in old age could no way diminish the fame that he had been

earning by a life of more than sixty years of excellence. As a poet he was still considered the only palladium left of ancient genius : and as a Christian, one of the finest examples of primeval piety."

The poem thus severely characterized was written at the request of the celebrated Mrs. Mary Wortley Montague, and addressed to the Hon. Mrs. Boscawen, the widow of a British admiral, to aid her in the exercise of due submission to providence in the death of her husband. Lady Montague having learned that her bereaved friend was in the habit of reading the "Night Thoughts," and had derived from them much consolation, proposed a visit to the author, and offered to accompany her. The visit was performed, much to the satisfaction of both. The conversation of Dr. Young proved to be highly soothing to the afflicted widow, and deeply interesting to her sympathizing friend. The visit of these ladies, in like manner, seems to have been eminently gratifying to the aged poet and divine. He compliments them highly in the poem, Mrs. Montague at least.

"Yet write I must. A lady sues :  
How shameful her request !  
My brain in labour for dull rhyme ;  
Hers teeming with the best !"

In a subsequent part of the same poem, addressing Mrs. Boscawen, he continues :

"And friend you have, and I the same,  
Whose prudent, soft address  
Will bring to life those healing thoughts  
Which died in your distress."

Lady Montague, by her visit to Dr. Young, seems to have been impressed not less favorably towards him ; having asserted, that his unbounded genius appeared to greater advantage in the companion than even in the author ; that the Christian was in him a character still more inspired, more enraptured, more sublime than the poet ; and that in his ordinary conversation,

"— letting down the golden chain from high,  
He drew his audience upward to the sky."



While the former part of this consolatory poem was being committed to the press by Mr. Samuel Richardson, the work was suddenly and unexpectedly arrested by the death of this individual, a particular friend of the poet; who accordingly introduces the painful incident in the part of the production which he was then writing. Thus, while engaged in consoling his noble acquaintance, he was unexpectedly brought into circumstances of affliction himself, which called for the same consolations he was endeavoring to administer—

“ Now need I, Madam! *your* support.

How exquisite the smart;  
How critically-timed the news  
Which strikes me to the heart!

\* \* \* \* \*

When heaven would kindly set us free,  
And earth's enchantments end;  
It takes the most effectual means,  
And robs us of a friend.”

He then introduces an honorable testimony to the genius and merit of Richardson, which is worth preservation.

“ Whose frequent aid brought kind relief

In my distress of thought,  
Ting'd with his beams my cloudy page  
And beautified a fault.

To touch our passions' secret springs,  
Was his peculiar care;  
And deep his happy genius dived  
In bosoms of the fair:

Nature, which favors to the few,  
All art beyond, imparts,  
To him presented at his birth  
The key of human hearts.

But not to me by him bequeath'd  
His gentle, smooth address;  
His fender hand to touch the wound  
In throbbing of distress.”

The Poem from which the above is taken was not prepared, the

author says, for publication, but was elicited by the fact that some extracts from the few copies which were given away, had been inserted in the public papers, and he feared that an imperfect edition might thus fall under the public eye. The critics, except Dr Johnson, one of the most eminent, have bestowed great severity of remark upon its literary demerits: but the advanced age at which it was composed may furnish a shield large enough to intercept all their darts. It would have been wise in him, however, if, as one suggests, he had, before publishing, considered the just remark of Horace:—

“Semel emissum, volat irrevocabile verbum:”

and if also he had answered the importunity of his friends, soliciting its publication, in the language of the same poet, who had then seen but few more than half the years of Dr. Young.

“Prima dicte mihi, summa dicende Camœna,  
Spectatum satis, et donatum jam rude quæris,  
Mæcenas, iterum antiquo me includere ludo?  
Non eadem est ætas, non mens.”

“Oh thou, to whom the Muse first tuned her lyre,  
Whose friendship shall her latest song inspire,  
Wherefore, Mæcenas, would you thus engage  
Your bard, dismissed with honor from the stage,  
Again to venture in the lists of fame,  
His youth, his genius, now no more the same.”

[Francis's Horace.]

It was about this period that our author received a visit from the excellent John Newton, of London, who has thus familiarly described it in a private letter to his wife, bearing date of January 6, 1759: “I put up at Welling (Welwyn), sent a note to Dr. Young, and received for answer that he would be glad to see me. I spent an hour with him. His conversation was agreeable, and much answerable to what I expected from the author of the ‘Night Thoughts.’ He seemed likewise pleased with me. It would have surprised you to hear how I let my tongue run before this great man. He approved my design of entering the ministry, and said many encourag-

ing things upon the subject; and when he dismissed me, desired that I would never pass near his house without calling upon him."

Here may also be inserted as properly as anywhere, an extract from one of Cowper's letters to Lady Hesketh, dated July 12, 1776. "Our mentioning Bishop Newton's treatise on the prophecies brings to my mind an anecdote of Dr. Young, who, you know, died lately at Welwyn. Dr. Cotton, who was intimate with him, paid him a visit about a fortnight before he was seized with his last illness. The old man was then in perfect health. The antiquity of his person, the gravity of utterance, and the earnestness with which he discoursed about religion, gave him, in the Doctor's eye, the appearance of a prophet. They had been delivering their sentiments on this book, when Young closed the conference thus:—"My friend, there are two considerations upon which my faith in Christ is built as upon a rock: the fall of man, the redemption of man, and the resurrection of man, the three cardinal articles of our religion, are such as human ingenuity could never have invented; therefore they must be divine. The other argument is this: if the prophecies have been fulfilled (of which there is abundant demonstration), the Scripture must be the word of God; and if the Scripture is the word of God, Christianity must be true."

After the date of the poem we have just been considering, the infirmities of old age rendered him incapable of any similar efforts, or of any important duty; and it is said that he suffered himself to be guided by his housekeeper, Mrs. Hallows, whose ascendancy in his family became the subject of ridicule, more ill-natured than witty, in a novel, published in 1755, called "The Card;" she being described under the name of Mrs. Fusby, while Young is characterized by the title of Dr. Elwes.

Concerning this person, a writer in the "Gentleman's Magazine" informs us that she was the daughter of a rector of All-Hallows, Hertford; and that upon the marriage of Miss Caroline Lee (the second daughter of Mrs. Young by her first husband), she was invited by the poet, who knew her family, to his house; that she had some fortune of her own, perhaps very small, as her father left a large number of children; that she was advanced in years, and was a woman of piety improved by reading; and that she was always

treated by him and by his guests, even those of the highest rank, with the politeness and respect due to a gentlewoman.

In the same magazine are found several letters of Mr. Jones, his curate and executor, to a friend in London, which furnish the information we now proceed to give of the closing years of his life.

The first bears date at Welwyn of July 25, 1762, and says:—"The old gentleman here seems to me to be in a pretty odd way of late, moping, dejected, self-willed, and as if surrounded with some perplexing circumstances. There is much mystery in almost all his temporal affairs, as well as in many of his speculative opinions. There is thought to be an irremovable obstruction to his happiness within his walls, as well as another without them: but the former is the more powerful and likely to continue so. He has this day been trying anew to engage me to stay with him. No lucrative views can tempt me to sacrifice my liberty or my health to such measures as are proposed here."

The next extract is from a letter, dated August 28, 1762. "I privately mentioned to you that the Doctor is in many respects a very unhappy man. If he would be advised by some who wish him well, he might be happy, though his state of health is lately much altered for the worse." The next letter, dated January 1, 1763, states that "the mismanagement, too well known, unhappily continues, and, still more unhappily, seems to be increasing, to the grief of friends, and to the ridicule of others, not a few. Penuriousness and obstinacy are two bad things; and a disregard to the general judgment and friendly wishes of the wiser part of mankind, another. There seems to be no hope, so long as the ascendancy is so great."

Under date of September 4, 1764, Mr. Jones thus writes: "My ancient gentleman here is still full of troubles, which moves my concern, though it moves only the secret laughter of many, and some untoward surmises in disfavor of himself and his household. The loss of a very large sum of money, £200, is talked of, whereof this vill (village) and neighborhood are full. Some disbelieve; others say it is no wonder, where about eighteen or more servants are sometimes taken in and dismissed in the course of a year. The gentleman himself is allowed by all to be more harmless and easy in his family than some one else, who hath too much the lead in it."

In a letter of April 2d, 1765, he communicates an account, in part, of his last illness: stating that he endured pains so severe as to require strong and frequent opiates; that Mrs. Hallows had that morning sent for the son of Dr. Young to attend him in his illness; that this son had in some way provoked the displeasure of his father, and that all social intercourse between them had been suspended; that when the father was applied to for permission to grant him an interview it was declined. "I heartily wish," says Mr. Jones, "the ancient man's heart may grow tender towards the son, though knowing him so well, I can scarce hope to hear such desirable news." Another writer states that this alienation arose from some irregularities of the son at college, on account of which he had been expelled.

We learn, however, from Boswell that, according to Dr. Johnson, the cause of the quarrel between the father and son was this:—the latter insisted that the housekeeper should be turned away, as in his judgment she had acquired an undue influence over his aged father, and was saucy to himself. The old lady could not conceal her resentment against him for saying to his father that an old man should not resign himself to the management of anybody.

The next letter, dated Welwyn, April 13th, 1765, bears the intelligence of Dr. Young's decease on the 5th. "I have now the pleasure to acquaint you that the late Dr. Young, though he had for many years kept his son at a distance, yet has now, at last, left him all his possessions, after the payment of certain legacies; so that the young gentleman, who bears a fair character, and behaves well, as far as I can hear or see, will, I hope, soon enjoy, and make a prudent use of a very handsome fortune. The father, on his death-bed, and since my return from London, was applied to, in the tenderest manner, by one of the physicians and by another person, to admit the son into his presence to make submission, to ask forgiveness, and to obtain his blessing. As to an interview with his son, he intimated that he chose to decline it, as his spirits were then low, and his nerves weak. With regard to the next particular, he said,—'I heartily forgive him;' and, upon mention of the last, he slowly lifted up his hand, and gently letting it fall, pronounced these words, 'God bless him!' After about a fortnight's illness, and bearing

excessive pain, he expired in the night of Good Friday last, the 5th inst., and was decently buried yesterday, about six in the afternoon, in the chancel of this church, close by the remains of his lady, under the communion table. The clergy, who are the trustees of his charity school, and one or two more, attending the funeral, the last office at interment being performed by me."

In the Doctor's will, Mr. Jones was remembered, and in testimony of respect for the manner in which he had discharged his duties to the parish, a handsome legacy was bequeathed to him. Another legacy, to the amount of £1,000, was ordered for his housekeeper; a sum that was thought to be not more than what was due to one whom he had never degraded by paying wages. The only remaining legacy was left to "his friend, Henry Stephens, a hatter at the Temple Gate.

In his will, which bore the date of February, 1760, he desires of his executors, *in a particular manner*, that all his manuscript books and writings whatever, might be burned, except his book of accounts. In a codicil, dated September, 1764, he made it his dying entreaty to his housekeeper, "that all his manuscripts might be destroyed as soon as he was dead, which would greatly oblige her deceased friend." These last injunctions were not strictly complied with. It is much to be regretted that such injunctions were made at all.

An inquiry is here naturally suggested, as to the manner in which Dr. Young usually disposed of his income. It has been hinted already that he not seldom descended to flattery of the great, with a view perhaps to improve his pecuniary resources; and that his receipts at times were large from the productions of his pen. The income of the rectory, moreover, was quite considerable. It is said that he lived at a moderate expense, rather inclining to parsimony than profusion; and that he annually made use of little more than half his income. Yet we have reason to believe that he employed an honorable share of it in answering the claims of humanity and religion, for it is the testimony of Dr. Warton that he was one of the most amiable and benevolent of men.

"The same humility," says a biographer, "which had marked a hatter and a housekeeper for his friends, had before bestowed the same title upon his footman, in an epitaph in Welwyn church-yard,

upon James Barker, dated 1749." This epitaph seems worthy of insertion in this place, as it serves to illustrate favorably the character and genius of its author.

"If fond of what is rare, attend!  
 Here lies an *honest man*,  
 Of perfect piety,  
 Of lamb-like patience,  
 My friend, *James Barker*;  
 To whom I pay this mean memorial,  
 For what deserves the greatest.  
 An example  
 Which shone through all the clouds of fortune,  
 Industrious in low estate,  
 The lesson and reproach of those above him.  
 To lay this little stone  
 Is my ambition;  
 While others rear  
 The polished marbles of the great.  
 Vain pomp!  
 A turf o'er virtue charms us more.  
 E. Y. 1749.

It is somewhat singular that he who could write so beautiful an epitaph for an humble friend and domestic, should have withheld the preparation of a fitting memorial of his lamented wife. We know not how to account for it, unless we suppose that he regarded the affectionate allusion to her decease, in the "Night Thoughts," a sufficient testimony of his grief, and of his remembrance of her.

His own epitaph, and that of his wife, was written by his surviving and only son, Frederick; and inscribed upon a monument erected by him in Welwyn church. It reads thus:—

M. S.  
 Optimi Parentis  
 EDVARDI YOUNG, LL.D  
 Hujus Ecclesiæ Rect.  
 Et Elizabethæ  
 Fœm. prænob.  
 Conjugis ejus amantissimæ,  
 Pio et gratissimo animo

Hoc marmor posuit  
 F. Y.  
 Filius superstes.

As we read this brief and simple memorial, we are reminded of those impressive lines of the gifted and eloquent poet, in whose interment and epitaph they are exactly verified.

“What though 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!”

While, in the death of Edward Young, the republic of letters sustained no common loss, we feel disappointment and grief that it created apparently but a feeble sensation in the British kingdom. Dodsley’s Annual Register for 1765 thus records the fact and the antecedent circumstances. Age, that impairs the faculties of the ordinary race of men, only seemed to light up his fire, and almost to the last his powers grew stronger. Such, however, was his fate, that towards the latter part of his life he was but little talked of; a manifest instance that when any man, how great soever, resolves to forsake the world, the world is willing enough to leave him. Our celebrated poet might, with great truth, say of himself, *that he had been so long remembered he was forgotten*; he even seemed to fall unwept of the Muses, and while all Grub street was in mourning at the death of a much inferior genius, he passed as silent to the grave as piety or modesty could wish.

It gives us pain, and almost enkindles our indignation, that a man of genius and of world-wide celebrity, as Dr. Young was, should have been borne to his grave in the most private manner possible, and with scarcely the most ordinary outward demonstrations of respect for his memory. Though he was the founder, and had been the munificent patron of a charity school in his own parish, neither master nor scholars were present at his funeral. The clerical trustees of the school, and but one or two other individuals were the only mourners visible on that occasion. It seems difficult to account for such shameful neglect. Either the community among whom he had passed more than thirty years of his life must have



been a very stupid one, or the decease of the aged and venerable poet must have been studiously concealed from them.

In presenting a general view of the character of Dr. Young, assisted by the brief and scattered notices of him which history has preserved, we may first mention, as very prominent, that melancholy disposition which is usually characteristic of poetic genius, but which, as in Cowper and Henry Kirke White, and others, occasionally alternated with a gay and buoyant frame of mind. The melancholy temperament caused him in his solitary walks to select the church-yard in preference to a more cheering scene: and also to prefer a solitary to a social ramble. While he excelled in conversation and occasionally indulged in mirth and lively satire, he loved to meditate for hours in uninterrupted solitude. Nor is this surprising when we discover the admirable results of those meditative hours. They must have proved hours of the richest luxury.

The turn of his mind (says the Annual Register) was naturally solemn; and he usually, when at home in the country, spent many hours of the day walking in his own church-yard among the tombs. His conversation, his writings, had all a reference to the life after this; and this turn of disposition mixed itself even with his improvements in gardening. He had, for instance, an alcove painted as if with a bench to repose on. Upon coming up near it, however, the deception was perceived, and this motto appeared:—

“*Invisibilia non decipiunt,*”

the meaning of which is,—“The things unseen do not deceive us.” Yet, notwithstanding this gloominess of temper, he was fond of innocent sports and amusements: he instituted an assembly and a bowling green in the parish of which he was rector, and often promoted the gaiety of the company in person. His wit was generally piquant, and ever levelled at those who testified any contempt for decency and religion.

His melancholy turn of mind is further discovered in a passage in one of his earliest poems, “The Last Day,” where he denominates his muse “The Melancholy Maid,”

“Whom dismal scenes delight,  
Frequent at tombs, and in the realms of night.”

But his melancholy was so modified by science, philosophy, and religion, that it was never allowed to infringe upon the sober duties and realities of life. It did not render him indifferent to the interests and welfare of society. He appeared among his acquaintance "neither as a man of sorrow," nor yet as "a fellow of infinite jest." We are informed that the dignity of a great and good man appeared in all his actions and in all his words; that when he conversed on religious subjects his manner was cheerful and happy; that, as in his writings, death, futurity, judgment, and the everlasting state were his common topics. His piety was neither enthusiastic nor gloomy. In the performance of all the public and private duties of religion he was regular and constant.

It may aid us, perhaps, in discovering the lights and shades of Young's character to introduce some shrewd observations of Beattie, the sweet poet of Scotland. He says:—

"When I first read Young my heart was broken to think of the poor man's afflictions. Afterwards I took it into my head that where there was so much lamentation there could not be excessive suffering; and I could not help applying to him sometimes these lines of a song,

"Believe me the shepherd but fayns  
He's wretched to show he has wit."

On talking with some of Dr. Young's friends in England, I have since found that my conjectures were right; for that while he was composing the "Night Thoughts" he was really as cheerful as any other man."

A satisfactory explanation of this apparent incongruity we have found in Boswell's Life of Johnson, in the account which he furnishes of an interview had by himself and Dr. J. with the son of Dr. Young at the old homestead after the decease of his father. Boswell having observed to Mr. Young that he had been informed that his father was a cheerful man, the latter answered:—"Sir, he was too well-bred a man not to be cheerful in company, but he was gloomy when alone. He never was cheerful after my mother's death, and he had met with many disappointments."

An instance at once of his pensive turn of mind and his cheerful-

ness of temper in society is found in a playful incident which he related to a friend when walking in his garden. "Here," said he, "I had put a handsome sun-dial with this inscription *Eheu fugaces!* which (speaking with a smile) was sadly and promptly verified, for by the next morning my dial had been carried off."

In his domestic and private character he was as amiable, as in his religious character he was venerable. One who knew him intimately gives us this interesting account of him:—"His politeness was such as I never saw equalled: it was invariable. To his superiors in rank, to his equals, and to his inferiors, it differed only in the degrees of elegance. I never heard him speak with roughness to his meanest servant: yet he well knew how to keep up his dignity, and, with all the majesty of superior worth, to repress the bold and the forward. In conversation upon lively subjects, he had a brilliancy of wit which was peculiar to himself. I know not how to describe it, but by saying, that it was both heightened and softened by the great and the amiable qualities of his soul. I have seen him ill and in pain, yet the serenity of his mind remained unruffled. I never heard a peevish expression fall from his lips; nor was he, at such times, less kindly and politely attentive to those around him, than when in the company of strangers, who came only to visit him for the first time."

A similar testimony is borne to him as a man and a companion, by Dr. Warton, who knew him well. He describes him as one of the most amiable and benevolent of men; most exemplary in his life and sincere in his religion; in conversation none said more brilliant things. Lord Melcombe, who was an excellent judge of wit and humour, says that when Young and Voltaire visited him at Eastbury, the English poet was far superior to the French in the variety and novelty of his *bons mots* and repartees. Tscherner, a noble foreigner, having spent four days with Dr. Young, in a letter to Count Haller, states that, at Welwyn, the author tastes all the ease and pleasure man can desire; that everything about him shows the man, each individual being placed by rule; that all is neat, without art; that he is very agreeable in conversation, and extremely polite.

His well known *epigram on Voltaire* may here be quoted as an

instance of his indulgence in the sallies of wit, though it may be regarded also as an example of his habitual indignation against indecency and irreligion. These were ever condemned in unmeasured tones by his satiric muse. Voltaire, when in England, had, in his presence, ridiculed Milton's allegory of Sin and Death; upon which Young, jealous of the reputation of his countryman, extemporaneously replied:—

“Thou art so witty, profligate, and thin,  
Thou seem'st a Milton with his Death and Sin.”

His satires abound in similar effusions of *wit and humour*, directed against the folly of being devoted to Fashion, and of aiming to appear what we are not. Some selections will serve to illustrate our author's aptitude for creating this kind of entertainment.

“The Court affords  
Much food for satire: it abounds in lords,  
'What lords are those saluting with a grin?'  
One is just *out*, and one as lately *in*.  
'How comes it then to pass we see preside  
On both their brows an equal share of pride?'  
Pride, that impartial passion, reigns through all,  
Attends our glory, nor deserts our fall.”

Speaking of some who strive to appear gay and happy, through the impulses of ambition, while their real circumstances in life prompt far other feelings, he says:—

“Hence aching bosoms wear a visage gay,  
And stifled groans frequent the ball and play.  
Completely dup'd by Monteuil and grimace.  
They take their *birth-day* suit, and *public* face:  
Their smiles are only part of what they wear,  
Put off at night with Lady *Bristol's* hair.  
What bodily fatigue is half so bad?  
With anxious *care* they labor to be *glad*.”

The low and unintellectual partialities of some men are thus characterized:—

“The *dunghill-breed* of men a *diamond* scorn  
And feel a passion for a *grain of corn*:—

Some stupid, plodding, money-loving wight,  
 Who wins their hearts by knowing black from white,  
 Who with much pains, exerting *all* his sense,  
 Can range aright his shillings, pounds, and pence."

Extravagant professions of love, in courtship, are thus satirised.

"Phillis and her Damon met.

Eternal love exactly hits her taste :  
 Phillis demands eternal love at *least*.  
 Embracing Phillis with soft-smiling eyes,  
*Eternal* love I vow the swain replies :  
 But say, my *all*, my mistress and my *friend* !  
 What day next week th' *eternity* shall *end* ?"

Of the fair sex he produces several sketches which abound in wit and humor. We have space for only two or three.

"Lemira's sick ; make haste ; the doctor call :  
 He comes ; but, where's his patient ? at the ball.  
 The doctor stares ; her woman curtsies low,  
 And cries, ' My lady, sir, is always so :  
 Diversions put her maladies to flight ;  
 True she can't *stand*, but she can *dance* all night.  
 I've known my lady (for she loves a tune)  
 For *fevers* take an opera in June :  
 And, though perhaps you'll think the practice bold,  
 A midnight park is sovereign for a *cold* :  
 With *colics* breakfasts of green fruit agree ;  
 With indigestions, supper just at three.'  
 A strange alternative, replies Sir Hans,  
 Must women have a *doctor* or a *dance* ?  
 Though sick to death, *abroad* they safely roam,  
 But droop and die, in perfect health, *at home* :  
 For want—but not of health, are ladies ill ;  
 And *tickets* cure beyond the *doctor's bill*."

"Fair Isabella is so fond of *fame*,  
 That her *dear self* is her eternal theme :  
 'Through hopes of contradiction oft she'll say  
 Methinks I look so wretchedly to-day !'"

The only apology for occupying so much space with the foregoing quotations is the desire to convey to those who have not read his

Satires, a just impression of the mental constitution of Dr. Young, exhibiting at different times, and in different productions of his genius, the opposite traits of gaiety and melancholy, the lights and shades of thought. He was not all gloom : nor did he always confine his thoughts to grave, serious, spiritual, eternal themes. When it was allowable to be gay and sprightly : when the topic of oral or written discussion permitted, none could be more gay and humorous ; but when he turned his meditations, or employed his conversational powers, or his pen, upon those themes of great and awful moment which are discussed in his immortal "Night Thoughts," he is not to be charged with melancholy, or enthusiasm, or misanthropy, because he speaks in language of most impressive seriousness, and often of thrilling pathos. He only adapts his language and his sentiments to the subject before him ; and those subjects, though not agreeable to the gay and thoughtless, are nevertheless subjects with which it is the highest interest of all to make themselves familiarly and practically acquainted. His primary object in this Poem, as is apparent from the title, (The Complaint,) was to portray the evils of life, and of course it must be allowed to employ strains of a sombre character. But it abounds in other pictures besides the dark and the sad—pictures upon which beams with unearthly splendor, the light introduced from the upper world, so that we are attracted heaven-ward as a relief from the sorrows of Earth. He never so paints the adversities of this life as to justify discontent, or attach blame to Divine Providence, or engender an oppressive melancholy.

*As a preacher*, the only anecdote recorded of him does honour to his conscientiousness and sensibility ; to his just appreciation of the value of the truth he was presenting, and the momentous importance of its being solemnly listened to by those who attended on his ministry. It is reported, that while he was discharging the duties of his sacred office at the Royal Chapel, he found on one occasion, that his most strenuous endeavours to render his audience attentive were unavailing ; upon which, his pity for their guilt and folly so prevailed over the dictates of decorum, that he abruptly resumed his seat in the pulpit, and burst into a flood of tears.

It will be seen in the Notes on Night VII., that we have been

obliged to utter our dissent from some of his theological views on the subject of Virtue, and its rewards, and in other places to expose some errors into which we think he has fallen. We are happy, however, to admit here an apology which we have fallen in with, which may account for some of the erroneous statements he has made, and furnish us with a convenient principle of interpretation which it may be useful to adopt. The apology is this:—The impassioned character of poetry is very apt to lead the head into error of some kind. His imagination may carry him beyond the point of sober truth. He is in danger of overcharging his descriptions, and imparting a fanciful air to his sentiments. He may be tempted, for the sake of exciting the reader's mind by means of novelty, or with a view to give his lines an epigrammatic smartness to indulge in paradox or exaggeration. The precise shade of thought intended to be expressed is sometimes rendered difficult by the fetters of metre or of rhyme. These incidental aberrations should not be too harshly judged; although there may be others of a more serious nature for which the heart of the writer must be responsible.

The same writer (in the *Christian Spectator*) has furnished some other excellent remarks, upon *the religious character of Dr. Young's poetry*, which we will here adopt. The poet dwells less on the experience than the theory of religion, though there are not wanting in him some happy delineations of the internal operations of grace. The renewal of genuine piety since the time of our poet, and especially from the commencement of the present century, has been highly propitious to the production of a purely religious poetry; still it is no small praise, that although religious poetry in the hands of the author of the "Night Thoughts" is not all which it might be, in deep practical and experimental views, it has notwithstanding so high a character for seriousness and truth, and embodies so many essential principles of Christianity, expressed in the liveliest imagery and with classical grace. It is perhaps a fault with Young in respect to the religion (or rather the religious influence) of his poetry, that while it impresses the mind with a general and salutary thoughtfulness, it does not often create any signal alarm in the sinner's conscience, or exhibit the truth in such a manner as to wrench from his grasp the idolized objects of this world, and subdue his spirit into

penitence. It seems fitted rather to convince the speculative infidel of the truth of religion, and to make the serious more serious, than powerfully to move the feelings of irreligious persons in respect to their immortal concerns. We can easily conceive that an ungodly man may escape from the really important views and well-intended expostulations in the "Night Thoughts" with only a love of melancholy or an admiration of genius. This effect, whenever it takes place, must be owing less, we think, to the author's theology, than to the splendor of his language and the care with which he has labored his periods. It is too much like the effect of that preaching which, in describing the general judgment, for instance, aims at brilliant language and striking figures—gracefully takes down the pillars of the creation, and employs our own poet's "swift archangel" who

"With his golden wing  
As blots and clouds, that darken and disgrace  
The scene divine, sweeps stars and suns aside."

The only notices which we can find of *his habits as a student* are very brief, yet not devoid of interest. In reading a book, when a passage pleased him, he was accustomed to turn down the leaf that he might give those passages a second reading. Many volumes, it is said, had so many leaves folded down as not to admit of being shut. After his death they were found in this condition; thus showing that human schemes are often doomed to remain but partially accomplished.

At the table he practised great moderation; and in the evening, after a slight refreshment, he retired as early as eight o'clock, even though he might have guests at his house, who of course would desire his company to a later hour. It is said that after his first sleep he passed the greater part of the night in meditation, and in the composition of his works.

He himself says, in the last book of the "Night Thoughts"—

"—— These thoughts, O Night, are thine:  
From thee they came, like lovers' secret sighs,  
While others slept."



When he rose from his bed, which was generally at a very early hour, his thoughts were so well digested and arranged in his mind, that he had no more to do than to commit them to paper.

We add that he must have cultivated the same intensity of thought as that which Milton, on account of his blindness, was obliged to exercise in preparing his larger poems. Every page of the "Night Thoughts" bears the clearest evidence of originating from a process of most elaborate and careful meditation. To this we may ascribe the wonderful condensation of thought which that poem exhibits; those priceless gems which are scattered through it; those aphoristic sentences of compressed wisdom and piety, which have been drawn from it and transferred widely into our popular literature and conversation. It not only evinces thought in the author, but, to understand, and appreciate, and digest what he has composed, the reader is required to exercise no small energy, and close application, of thought. Dr. Young was pre-eminently a man of thought; he was an ingenious, subtle, and powerful reasoner; he possessed a luxuriant though undisciplined imagination—more vigorous than accurate; more bold than tasteful. He was a close observer of men and manners, for which the best of opportunities had been enjoyed and not negligently improved. The workings of the human heart also, he often sketches with great fidelity to nature.

But remarks of this kind may be comprehended more advantageously, in the account which is to be subjoined of the leading characteristics of the author's numerous productions. It will confirm much of what we have said, to close our account of him, by introducing a few lines of respect and esteem which were addressed to him by his learned friend, Dr. Warton.

"But tell me, oh! what heavenly pleasure tell,  
 To think so greatly, and describe so well!  
 How wast thou pleased the wondrous theme to try,  
 And find the thought of man could rise so high!  
 Beyond this world the labour to pursue,  
 And open all eternity to view!  
 But thou art best delighted to rehearse  
 Heaven's holy dictates in exalted verse:

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

## A CRITICAL ESTIMATE OF THE WORKS OF DR. YOUNG.

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UNDER this head it is our purpose, not so much to offer criticisms of our own, as to present to our readers, generally in a condensed form, those criticisms which we have found in various authors, bearing upon this subject; including those of Dr. Johnson, in his *Life of Young*.

The writings of Dr. Young comprise Essays, Plays, and Poems. As an essayist, his *Centaur not Fabulous*, and his *Conjectures on Original Composition* are his chief productions. Of the former, it is thought, that although its general tendency is favourable to religion and morality, the pictures it exhibits of *the life in vogue* are often overcharged, and the diction, though sometimes animated and energetic, is commonly inflated and affected, or harsh and severe. Of the other work, though the style is considered as vitiated by affectation, and the mode of expression as being sometimes hyperbolical, the sentiments frequently are bold, original, penetrating, brilliant, and sublime. It was addressed, in the form of a letter in 1759, to Richardson, the author of *Clarissa*; and though he modestly expresses in that letter his despair of breaking through the frozen obstructions of age, and care's incumbent cloud, into that flow of thought and brightness of expression, which subjects so polite require, yet has it justly been pronounced to be more like the production of untamed, unbridled youth, than of jaded fourscore. In justification of this opinion may be quoted as a specimen, the following animated passage:—

“If there is a famine of invention in the land, we must travel, like Joseph’s brethren, far for food: we must visit the remote and rich ancients. But an inventive genius may safely stay at home; that, like the widow’s cruse, is divinely replenished from within, and affords us a miraculous delight. Why should it seem altogether impossible that Heaven’s latest editions of the human mind may be the most correct and fine? Jonson was very learned, as Samson was very strong, to his own hurt. Blind to the nature of tragedy, he pulled down all antiquity on his head, and buried himself under it.”

The chief design of this Letter on Composition was, as already stated in the Memoir, to do justice to the exemplary death-bed of Addison, and to erect a monumental marble to the memory of an old friend. Being an original author himself, Young therein reproaches Pope with being content with the honor of merely translating the Iliad of Homer, instead of aspiring to the glory of giving a second Homer to England. He censures Pope for his fall from Homer’s numbers, free as air, lofty and harmonious as the spheres, into childish shackles and tinkling sounds; also for putting Achilles into petticoats a second time. The English Homer only a few weeks before his death (in 1744) is said to have talked over an epic plan with the writer.

*As a dramatist*, he has not been successful in animating the beauties of art, with the energies of natural fire and spirit. He is superior to his contemporaries, Rowe and Congreve, in strength and warmth of conception; but inferior to them in eloquence and neatness of diction, beauty of cadence, correctness, chasteness, and regularity. None of his dramas, except the “Revenge,” have been adopted by the stage. While they are animated, brilliant, and classical; while they paint, in glowing language, the fury of rage and revenge, and the agonies of jealousy, love, and despair; it must be confessed that they abound in puerile rant and conceit, and are not without specimens of fustian and bombast. His three plays are distinguished by a similar catastrophe—that of suicide, a method by which, as Dryden remarked, a poet easily rids his scene of persons whom he wants not to keep alive.

“Of Young’s poems,” says Dr. Johnson, “it is difficult to give

any general character; for he has no uniformity of manner; one of his pieces has no great resemblance to another. He began to write early, and continued long; and at different times had different modes of poetic excellence in view. His numbers are sometimes smooth, and sometimes rugged; his style is sometimes concatenated and sometimes abrupt; sometimes diffusive and sometimes concise. His plan seems to have started into his mind at the present moment; and his thoughts appear the effect of chance, sometimes adverse and sometimes lucky, with very little operation of judgment. He was not one of those writers whom experience improves, and who, observing their own faults, become gradually correct. His poem on the 'Last Day,' his first great performance, has an equability and propriety which he afterwards either never endeavoured or never attained. Many paragraphs are noble, and few are mean; yet the whole is languid: the plan is too much extended, and a succession of images divides and weakens the general impression."

As a poet, his writings exhibit more fancy than judgment; more originality and invention, than correctness of taste and variety and extent of knowledge. He possessed, as Addison says of Lee, true poetic fire, yet clouded and obscured by thick volumes of smoke. But he possesses merit of the highest grade. Though an unequal, he is eminently an original writer; so much so, that the instances are very rare in which can be discovered a single line or expression borrowed from any other English writer. His defects and beauties are alike his own. Of the epigrammatic style of his satires there is no example: nor was he indebted to any poet, ancient or modern, for the plan of his "Night Thoughts."

*In lyric compositions* he did not excel. The general character of his versification is that of harshness and ruggedness, yet many passages may be adduced as beautiful exceptions. He published a short essay upon the structure and models of lyric poetry which abounds in original and just observations; in the commencement of which he says:—"How imperfect soever my own composition may be, yet am I willing to speak a word or two of the nature of lyric poetry; to show that I have, at least, some idea of perfection in that kind of poem in which I am engaged; and that I do not think myself poet enough entirely to rely on inspiration for my suc-

cess in it. He that has an idea of perfection in the work he undertakes *may* fail in it; he that has not, *must*: and yet he will be *vain*, for every little degree of beauty, how short or improper soever, will be looked on fondly by him, because it is more than he promised himself." Hence our author infers that the poetic class are more obnoxious to vanity than others, from which emanates that great sensibility of disrespect, that quick resentment which justly marks them out for the "genus irritabile" among mankind.

Of his earlier productions, the *Last Day*, *Vanquished Love*, and *Paraphrase on Job*, have deservedly obtained the greatest popularity. They have all their brighter passages; particularly the *Last Day*, and the *Paraphrase*. But many lines are stiff and incorrect. The author in his too great care to fabricate the ornaments of wit and thus to please the fancy, often sacrifices a more important object, that of reaching and moulding the heart.

His *Universal Passion* (or *Satires*) was published before the appearance of Pope's satirical epistles; and has therefore the merit of giving the lead to that kind of writing. It contains much appropriate satire, good verse, and laughable humour.

In the foregoing Memoir of the author some specimens of the satires are introduced, from which their general character may be discovered. They have, says one, the fault of Seneca, of Ovid, of Cowley; a profusion and an unseasonable application of wit. A lover of originality, he did not study or regard models. Had he endeavoured to imitate Juvenal and Persius, this fault would have been avoided. Those great masters, it is further said, were too much engrossed by the importance of their subjects, to fall into the puerility of witticism. But here, in defence of Dr. Young, it may be replied, that in depicting the foibles, and follies, and absurdities of human character and conduct, his witticisms for the most part seem not to be at all out of place. It is true that they may be wanting in dignity, and stateliness, and gravity: but so are the things he satirizes. It is a good rule of rhetoric that the style be suited to the subject: and it was Dr. Young's opinion, as we learn from the preface to those satires, that to smile at vice and folly and turn them into ridicule, as it gives them the greatest offence, is to be preferred to other treatment of them. He asserts, moreover,

that laughing satire bids the fairest for success. The world is too proud to be fond of a serious tutor; and when the author is in a passion, the laugh generally, as in conversation, turns against him. Of this delicate satire, he adds, Horace is the best master: he appears in good humour while he censures; and therefore his censure has the more weight, as supposed to proceed from judgment, not from passion. Juvenal, on the other hand, is ever in a passion; he has little valuable except his eloquence and morality; the last of which (says our author) I have had in my eye, but rather for emulation than imitation, through my whole work.

The remarks of Dr. Aikin, which we subjoin, upon the production now under review, seem to be discriminating, just, and candid.

Like all other theorists on the mind, who aim at simplicity in their explanation of the varieties of human character, he has laid more stress upon his fundamental principle (love of fame) than it will properly bear; and in many of the portraits which he draws, the love of fame can scarcely be recognized as a leading feature. In reality, Young was a writer of much more fancy than judgment. He paints with a brilliant touch and strong colouring, but with little attention to nature; and his satires are rather exercises of wit and invention than grave exposures of human follies and vices. He, indeed, runs through the ordinary catalogue of fashionable excesses, but in such a style of whimsical exaggeration that his examples have the air of mere creatures of the imagination. His pieces are, however, entertaining, and are marked with the stamp of original genius. Having but less egotism than those of Pope, they have a less splenetic air; and the author's aim seems to be so much more to show his wit than to indulge his rancour, that his severest strokes give little pain.

It has been observed that Young's satires are strings of epigrams. His sketches of characters are generally terminated by a *point*, and many of his couplets might be received as proverbial maxims or sentences. A common figure of speech with him is the *antithesis*, where two members of a sentence, apparently in opposition to each other, are connected by a subtile turn in the sense. Thus,

“A shameless woman is the worst of men.  
Because she's right she's ever in the wrong.”

With wit, or the association of distant ideas by some unexpected resemblance, he abounds. Almost every page affords instances of his inventive powers in this respect; some, truly beautiful; others, odd and quaint. For example:—

“ Like cats in air-pumps, to subsist we strive  
On joys too thin to keep the soul alive.”

There is little of the majestic or dignified in Young's satires: not that he was incapable of sublimity, but because the view he took of men and manners generally excluded it. His second satire is on Women; for his politeness did not prevent him from employing the lash with even peculiar force on the tender sex. They will feel themselves, however, little hurt by these attacks, for his ridicule consists in presenting a series of caricatures, drawn rather from fancy than observation; and he does not treat the whole sex with that contempt which is perpetually breaking out in the writings of Pope and Swift.

Dr. Young, in his preface to the “Love of Fame,” has made some observations on the use of satire as a means of reformation, which deserve a place here,—

“It is possible that satire may not do much good; men may rise in their affections to their follies, as they do to their friends, when they are abused by others. It is much to be feared that misconduct will never be chased out of the world by satire; all therefore that is to be said for it is, that misconduct will certainly never be chased out of the world by satire, if no satires are written; nor is that term unapplicable to graver compositions. Ethics, heathen and christian, and the Scriptures themselves, are in a great measure a satire on the weakness and iniquity of men; and some part of that satire is in verse too; nay, in the first ages, philosophy and poetry were the same thing: wisdom wore no other dress, so that I hope these satires will be the more easily pardoned that misfortune by the severe. If they like not the fashion, let them take them by the weight; for some weight they have, or the author has failed in his aim. Nay, historians themselves may be considered as satirists, and satirists most severe; since such are most human actions, that to *relate* is to expose them.

It is somewhat surprising that none of the distinguished critics



from whom we have quoted, animadvert upon one marked feature of these satires, which must offend every person of refined education and religious culture: it is the grossness and vulgarity to which the author occasionally descends. In this respect the satires were better suited to the taste of the degenerate period in which they were written than to our own, which has been improved by the influences of a more spiritual and thorough Christianity than was then inculcated. They are too conformed to the style of compositions that sprung up under the corrupting auspices of the court of Charles II., and seem indeed to have been designed by our author to gratify most a class of people that were familiar with the loose moralities and indelicate vocabulary of a court: and hence the reading of the satires may, on the whole, with much profit be dispensed with, especially by persons of immature minds.

It is proper to say, not in justification of the author's introducing such expressions as we here censure, but in explanation of his being led into the use of them, that unfortunately he had sought and acquired a very familiar acquaintance with men of courtly habits and of courtly vices: that he was familiar with such men as Pope, and Swift, and others who indulged freely in such ideas and expressions in their published writings. And lest the censure here pronounced upon certain limited portions of these satires should prejudice any mind against the "Night Thoughts," it is proper to add that the former production was written some years before the latter; it was written before the author entered upon the sacred office, and before he had felt the salutary influence of deep affliction in causing him to chasten his mind and heart before the doctrines of the Cross. The "Night Thoughts" are of a very different order of composition from the satires, being entirely free from the taint of grossness and vulgarity which characterize some of the expressions and allusions which we have felt it our duty to expose, as found in the earlier production.

The following general observations on Dr. Young's poetry are from the pen of Dr. Johnson:—

"It must be allowed of Young's poetry, that it abounds in thought, but without much accuracy of selection. When he lays hold of an illustration, he pursues it beyond expectation, some-

times happily, as in his parallel of *quicksilver* with *pleasure*, which I have heard repeated with approbation by a lady of whose praise he would have been justly proud, and what is very ingenious, very subtle, and almost exact; but sometimes he is less lucky, as when, in his 'Night Thoughts,' having it dropped into his mind that the orbs, floating in space, might be called the *dust* of creation, he thinks of a cluster of grapes, and says, that they all hang on the great vine, drinking the 'nectareous juice of immortal life.' The parallel adverted to above, runs as follows:—

“Pleasures are few, and fewer we enjoy;  
Pleasure, like quicksilver, is bright and coy;  
We strive to grasp it with our utmost skill,  
Still it eludes us, and it glitters still:  
If seized at last, compute your mighty gains;  
What is it, but rank poison in your veins?”

“His conceits are sometimes quite valueless. In the 'Last Day,' he hopes to illustrate the re-assembling of the atoms that compose the human body at the 'trump of doom,' by the collection of bees into a swarm at the tinkling of a pan.

“The prophet says of Tyre, that 'her merchants are princes.' Young says of Tyre in his 'Merchant,'

'Her merchants princes, and each deck a throne.'

Let burlesque try to go beyond him. He has the trick of joining the turgid and familiar: to buy the alliance of Britain, 'climes were paid down.' Antithesis is his favorite: 'they for kindness hate:' and, 'because she's right, she's ever in the wrong.'

“His versification is his own. Neither his blank nor his rhyming lines have any resemblance to those of former writers. He picks up no hemistichs, he copies no favourite expressions. He seems to have laid up no stores of thought or of diction, but to owe all to the fortuitous suggestions of the present moment: yet I have reason to believe that when he had formed a new design, he then laboured it with very patient industry; and that he composed with great labour, and frequent revisions. His verses are formed by no certain model. He is no more like himself in his different productions than he is

like others. He seems never to have studied prosody, nor to have had any direction but from his own ear: but with all his defects, he was a man of genius and a poet.

### THE NIGHT THOUGHTS.

About the year 1741, it pleased Divine Providence to deprive Dr. Young, within a short period, of his wife, and of the son and daughter whom she had by her first husband. For these Dr. Young manifests as tender a regard as if they had been his own offspring. Meeting with these great domestic losses in such rapid succession, at a tolerably advanced period of life (being nearly sixty years old), disgusted with the world, and deprived so suddenly of all his tenderest social attractions, it was then, as a French writer remarks, that he may in a sense be said to have descended alive into the tomb of his friends, and to have buried himself with them; and, drawing the curtain between the world and himself he no more sought consolation except in the future world, and his genius, far from being idle or mute under his affliction, seemed to wait for these three strokes of lightning to dart itself forward into the sombre empire of death and to penetrate even to the happy regions of which it is the passage.

For the "Night Thoughts,"—a species of composition which he may be said to have created; a mass of the grandest and richest poetry which human genius has ever produced, he has received unbounded applause. It is to this work, begun when

"He long had buried what gives life to live,  
Firmness of nerve, and energy of thought,"

that he deserves, and will continue to deserve his reputation. He appears to have been sensible of its peculiar merit, since he denominated his writings when collected, "*The Works of the Author of the Night Thoughts.*" It may not improperly be considered as a good poetical contrast to Thomson's "Seasons;" the one delighting as much to exhibit the gloomy, as the other the cheerful face of things. In the article of sublimity, it may vie with "Paradise Lost" itself; though in every other literary respect almost, it would be absurd to

attempt a comparison between them. The beauties of the "Night Thoughts" are numerous, and its blemishes are not few.

Among its distinguishing excellencies, are the spirit of sublime piety and strict morality which animates the whole; dignity of thought and language, bold and lively descriptions, proper and well-supported similes, and striking repetitions, or breaks in the expression.

Among its principal faults, are, the unnecessary repetition of the same ideas and images, redundancy of metaphor, extravagant ideas and expressions, crowded and ill-chosen epithets, allusions drawn out beyond their proper bounds, a puerile play on words, the use of inelegant images or terms, and negligence of the harmony of versification. Yet with all its faults, it irresistibly seizes the mind of the reader, arrests his attention, and powerfully interests him in the midnight sorrows of the plaintive bard. It has a merit which no production, except one of real genius, ever possesses: with scarce any facts or incidents to awaken curiosity, it speaks to the heart through the medium of the imagination.

No ordinary genius was required to communicate any poetical interest to a poem on such a plan, and of such a class of subjects. Yet this is one of the few poems on which the broad stamp of popularity has been prominently impressed. Editions have been multiplied from every press in the country. It is to be seen on the shelf of the cottager, with the Family Bible and the Pilgrim's Progress; and it ranks among the first and favourite materials of the poetical library. What is more remarkable, is, that the French are fond of Young, though they cannot understand either Milton or Shakspeare. It is said that Napoleon was particularly gratified with the "Night Thoughts" and Ossian.

Young is, in fact, more of the orator than of the poet; but his oratory is still of a character distinct from the eloquence of prose. The "Night Thoughts" please us much in the same manner as we are captivated by the wonders of fiction, only, in this poem, the vastness, the grandeur, the novelty consist, not in strange or romantic incidents, but in the unexpected turns and adventurous sallies, the dazzling pomp of metaphor, the infinite succession of combinations and intersections of thought, the stratagems of expression, which occur throughout this long poetical homily; so that, forbid-

ding as the subject is from its severity, he has continued to enliven it with all the graces of wit, chastened by the majesty of truth. Add to this, there is a charm in that stern and pensive melancholy which is the character of the "Night Thoughts;" a sentimental charm which hangs about moonlight graves, and whispering night winds, and funereal cypress, in which those persons especially love to indulge, who have known no deeper wounds of sensibility than those of fictitious griefs or philosophical pensiveness.

In this poem there is a luxuriance of faults as well as of beauties. Johnson terms it "a wilderness of thought." The perpetual enigma of the style at length wearies; the antitheses pall upon us; we even grow fatigued with admiration. The faults of Young are, however, the faults of genius, and they are amply redeemed by the splendor that is thrown around them. It is not, perhaps, peculiar to Young's poetry that very young and very old persons are the most partial to the "Night Thoughts:" the reason of this may be found in the progress of taste. It pleases the more before the taste has attained the period of refined cultivation, because we are then less sensible of the defects of his style, and are most susceptible of that indistinct feeling of awe which the Gothic gloom of his poetry is adapted to excite. It pleases us as age advances on account of the sympathetic views of life which make the poetry of Young seem to an old man doubly natural. The author had passed his sixtieth year when he published the *First Night*; and there is, it must be owned, something of the querulousness, as well as the sageness of age, in the general strain of his sentiments. But his long *complaint* terminates, as it should do, in *consolation*; and the *Ninth Night* is the one, which, next to the first three, is the most generally read and the most frequently adverted to.

It may be profitable as well as interesting here to introduce part of a sketch from the *Edinburgh Review*, of that *school of English poetry to which Dr. Young belonged*, and which differed so essentially from that of the preceding century. The *Restoration* (of Charles II.), says the author of this sketch, Lord Jeffrey, brought in a French taste upon us, and what was called a classical and a polite taste; and the wings of our English muses were clipped and trimmed, and their flights regulated at the expense of all that was pecu-

liar, and much of what was brightest in their beauty. The king and his courtiers during their long exile, had of course imbibed the taste of their protectors; and, coming from the gay court of France, with something of that additional profligacy that belonged to their outcast and adventurer character, were likely enough to be revolted by the very excellencies of our native literature. The grand and sublime tone of our greater poets appeared to them dull, morose, and gloomy; and the fine play of their rich and unrestrained fancy, mere childishness and folly: while their frequent lapses and perpetual irregularity were set down as clear indications of barbarity and ignorance. At this particular moment too in England, the best of its recent models labored under the reproach of republicanism; and the courtiers were not only disposed to see all its peculiarities with an eye of scorn and aversion, but had even, a good deal to say in favor of that very opposite style to which they had been habituated. It was a witty, and a grand, and a splendid style. It showed more scholarship and art, than the luxuriant negligence of the old English school; and was not only free from many of its hazards, and some of its faults, but possessed merits of its own, of a character more likely to please those who had then the power of conferring celebrity, or condemning to derision. Then it was a style which it was peculiarly easy to justify by argument; and in support of which great authorities, as well as imposing names, were always ready to be produced. It came upon us with the air and the pretension of being the style of cultivated Europe, and a true copy of the style of polished antiquity.

Compared with the former style of English poets, this new continental one was more worldly and more townish; holding more of reason, and ridicule and authority; more elaborate and more assuming; addressed more to the judgment than to the feelings; and somewhat ostentatiously accommodated to the habits, or supposed habits, of persons in fashionable life. Instead of tenderness and fancy, we had satire and sophistry; artificial declamation, in place of the spontaneous animations of genius; and, for the universal language of Shakespeare, the personalities, the party politics, and the brutal obscenities of Dryden. Of this continental style, Addison was the consummation; and if it had not been redeemed about the same

time by the fine talents of Pope, would probably have so far discredited it, as to have brought us back to our original faith half a century before. Pope has incomparably more spirit, and taste, and animation; but Pope is a satirist, and a moralist, and a wit, and a critic, and a fine writer, much more than he is a poet. He has all the delicacies and proprieties and felicities of diction; but he has not a great deal of fancy, and scarcely ever touches any of the greater passions. He is much the best, we think, of the classical continental school; but he is not to be compared with the masters, nor with the pupils, of that Old English one from which there had been so lamentable an apostacy. There are no pictures of nature or of simple emotion in all his writings. He is the poet of town life, and of high life, and of literary life; and seems so much afraid of incurring ridicule by the display of natural feeling or unregulated fancy, that it is difficult not to imagine that he thought such ridicule could have been very well directed.

With the wits of Queen Anne this foreign school attained the summit of its reputation; and has ever since, we think, been declining, though by slow and imperceptible gradations. Thomson was the first writer of any eminence who receded from it, and made some steps back to the force and animation of our original poetry. Young exhibits, in our judgment, a curious combination, or contrast rather, of the two steps of which we have been speaking. Though incapable either of tenderness or of passion, he had a richness and activity of fancy that belonged rather to the days of James and Elizabeth, than to those of George and Anne: but then, instead of indulging it, as the older writers would have done, in easy and playful inventions, in splendid descriptions, or glowing illustrations, he is led by the restraints and established taste of his age to work it up into strained and fantastical epigrams, or into cold and revolting hyperboles. Instead of letting it flow gracefully on, in an easy and sparkling current, he perpetually forces it out in jets, or makes it stagnate in formal canals; and thinking it necessary to write like Pope, when the bent of his genius led him rather to copy what was best in Cowley and most fantastic in Shakespeare, he has produced something which has produced wonder instead of admiration, and is felt by every one to be at once ingenious, incongruous, and unnatural.

But to proceed no further with this instructive and illustrative sketch of English poetry, and to confine ourselves more particularly to the consideration of the Night Thoughts, it would be easy to select a long series of specimens of pathetic and sublime composition. But, as has been correctly observed, amid the profusion of beautiful passages that may be cited, the description of *Conscience* from her secret stand noting down the follies of a bacchanalian society (II., 262, &c.); the epitaph upon the departed world; the issuing of *Satan* from his dungeon on the Day of Judgment; all these are distinguished by great strength and boldness of invention, and rise in many parts to the terrible and sublime. The simile of the *traveller*, with which *The Consolation* opens, is highly pleasing, striking, and beautiful.

“ As when a traveller, a long day past  
 In painful search of what he cannot find  
 At night’s approach, content with the next cot,  
 There ruminates, awhile, his labor lost :  
 Then cheers his heart with what his fate affords,  
 And chants his sonnet to deceive the time,  
 Till the due season calls him to repose :  
 Thus I, long travell’d in the ways of men,  
 And dancing with the rest, the giddy maze,  
 Where disappointment smiles at hope’s career ;  
 Warn’d by the languor of life’s evening ray,  
 At length have housed me in an humble shed ;  
 Where, future wandering banish’d from my thought,  
 And waiting, patient, the sweet hour of rest,  
 I chase the moments with a serious song.  
 Song soothes our pains ; and age has pains to soothe.”

Dr. Young’s account of the nature and faculties of an immortal soul, of *different natures marvellously mixed*, clogged by the finite and perishable materials of its house of clay, is profound, striking, comprehensive, and, what in him is rare, closely consecutive. His arguments in favor of infinite duration in a future state, though not in all cases logically conclusive, are beautifully poetic.

“ O ye blest scenes of permanent delight,—  
 Could ye so rich in rapture fear an end,  
 That ghastly thought would drink up all your joy  
 And quite unparadise the realms of light !”



“Amongst our poets,” says a talented English writer, “those who display the greatest power of mind, are Milton, Pope, and Young. Had Young possessed the requisite of taste, he would perhaps have rivalled even Milton in power; but such is his choice of images and words, that by frequent and sudden introduction of heterogeneous and inferior ideas, he nullifies what would otherwise be sublime, and, by breaking the chain of associations, strikes out, as it were, the key-stone of the arch. Nor is this all: the ponderous magnitude of his images, heaped together without room for adjustment in the mind, resembles rather the accumulation of loose masses of uncemented granite, than the majestic mountain, of which each separate portion helps to constitute a mighty whole. Still we must acknowledge of this immortal poet, that his path was in the heavens, and that his soul was suited to the celestial sphere in which it seemed to live and expand as in its native element. We can feel no doubt that his own conceptions were magnificent as the stars amongst which his spirit wandered, and had his mode of conveying these conceptions to the minds of others been equal to their own original sublimity, he would have stood pre-eminent amongst our poets in the region of power.

“After all, it is not so much in extended passages, as in distinct thoughts, and single expressions, that we feel and acknowledge the power of this dignified and majestic writer. ‘Silence and darkness! solemn sisters’ is a striking illustration of how great an extent of sublimity may be embodied in a few simple and well-chosen words; and it is unquestionably to beauties of this description that Young is indebted for his high rank amongst the English poets.”

Perhaps enough has been said in the way of criticism and illustration; but, nevertheless, it seems desirable to add some observations of Dr. Aikin, the well-known editor of some of the older British poets. They are here added, because, in the main, they have our cordial assent; but those which refer to the theological aspects and religious tendencies of the poem we cannot but regard as in a great measure unfounded. It is certain that some of its theological statements and reflections will not please the man of the world, because he cannot appreciate the higher doctrines and facts of evangelical religion: they will be considered gloomy, unsocial,

perhaps also incredible. But the difficulty in such a case is not chargeable to the error of the poet, but to the disqualification of the reader. We believe it to be so in the present instance. Dr. Aikin was evidently a better critic in the literature than in the theology of Young.

With these preliminary statements and qualifications, which seem to be called for in all fairness, we copy the excellent observations of the writer referred to: and the rather, as they embody his views of the history of this remarkable poem—the process by which it was wrought out—or the circumstances that gave it some of its prominent characteristics.

“Dr. Young was a man of warm feelings, ambitious both of fame and advancement. He set out in life upon an eager pursuit of what is chiefly valued by men of the world; attached himself to patrons, some of them such as moral delicacy would have shunned, and was not sparing in adulation. His rewards, however, were much inferior to his expectations: he lived, as he himself says, ‘to be so long remembered, that he was forgot,’ and he was obliged to bury his chagrin in a country parsonage. He also met with domestic losses of the most affecting kind, and he possessed little vigor of mind to bear up under misfortune. In this state he sat down to write his ‘Complaint’ (for that is the other title of the *Night Thoughts*) at a time when he was haunted with ‘the ghosts of his departed joys,’ and every past pleasure ‘pained him to the heart.’ His first object, therefore, is to dress the world in the colours of that ‘night’ through which he surveyed it; to paint it as a scene

Where’s naught substantial but our misery;  
Where joy (if joy) but heightens our distress.

In his progress he endeavours to pluck up by the roots every comfort proceeding from worldly hopes or human philosophy, and to humble the soul to the dust by a sense of its own vileness, and the vanity of everything terrestrial. This prepares the way for the administration of the grand and sole remedy for the evils of life—the hope of immortality as presented in the Christian revelation. His view of this scheme is of the most awful kind. He conceives a wrathful and avenging God, on the point of dooming all his offend-

ing, that is all his rational, creatures to eternal destruction, but diverted from his purpose by the ransom paid in the sufferings and death of his Son. I do not take upon me to pronounce concerning the soundness of his theology; but so deep is the power it spreads over his whole poem, that, in effect, it overpowers the light of his consolations. There is a kind of captious austerity in all his reasonings concerning the things of this world, that charges with guilt and folly every attempt to be happy in it. Every circumstance is dwelt upon that can image life as vain and miserable; and lest any gladsome note should cheer the transitory scene, he perpetually sounds in the ears the knell of death. Such a picture of this world I am sure, is ill calculated to inspire love for its Creator; and I think it as little fitted to foster the mutual charities of life, and put men in good humour with each other. What a contrast to the amiable theology of the Seasons!"

"No writer, perhaps, ever equalled Young in the strength and brilliancy which he imparts to those sentiments which are fundamental to his design. He presents them in every possible shape, enforces them by every imaginable argument, sometimes compresses them into a maxim, sometimes expands them into a sentence of rhetoric, sets them off by contrast, and illustrates them by similitude."

"It has already been observed, in speaking of his satires, how much he abounds in antithesis. This work is quite overrun with them; they often occupy several successive lines; and while some strike with the force of lightning, others idly gleam like a meteor. It is the same with his other figures: some are almost unrivalled in sublimity; many are to be admired for their novelty and ingenuity; many are amusing only by their extravagance. It was the author's aim to say everything wittily: no wonder, therefore, that he has often strayed into the paths of false wit. It is one of his characteristics to run a thought quite out of breath; so that what was striking at the commencement is rendered flat and tiresome by amplification. Indeed without this talent of amplifying he could never have produced a work of the length of the Night Thoughts from so small a stock of fundamental ideas."

"I cannot foresee how far the vivacity of his style, and the fre-

quent recurrence of novel and striking conceptions, will lead you on through a performance which, I believe, appears tedious to most readers before they arrive at the termination. Some of the earlier books will afford you a complete specimen of his manner and furnish you with some of his finest passages. You will, doubtless, not stop short of the third book, entitled "Narcissa," the theme of which he characterises as

Soft, modest, melancholy, female, fair.

It will show you the author's powers in the pathetic, where the topic called them forth to the fullest exertion; and you will probably find that he has mingled too much fancy and playfulness with his grief, to render it highly affecting."

"The versification of Young is entirely modelled by his style of writing. That being pointed, sententious, and broken into short detached clauses, his lines almost constantly are terminated with a pause in the sense, so as to preclude all the varied and lengthened melody of which blank verse is capable. Taken singly, however, they are generally free from harshness, and sometimes are eminently musical."

Thus far, and in the main excellently, writes this discriminating and able critic. It will aid the reader to form a more just estimate of the poem in some particulars, to adduce, in contrast, the sentiment of a late eminent clergyman and instructor of our own land, the Rev. Joseph Emerson, of Connecticut, whose theological education and attainments had qualified him to judge more accurately than Dr. Aikin, upon the religious tendencies and utilities of the poem. These sentiments were expressed in one of those familiar but able lectures which he was accustomed to deliver to select audiences at his Seminary and elsewhere, upon several of the English poets. Those lectures were partly extempore and partly written, and were accompanied with the reading of the Poem in course to his audiences. From his written notes, in lecturing upon the Night Thoughts, the following sentences have been given to the world in his memoir:—

"YOUNG:—To this great and venerable bard, I can say, Hail thou dear companion of my early youth; most faithful counsellor

of my advancing days ; precious, invaluable friend, for more than twenty, more than thirty summers ripening by my side ; balm of my sorrows ; pillow of my weary, throbbing head ; sweetener of my sweetest joys. Some have considered him too dark, too dismal, too gloomy. Dark and dismal, indeed, are many of his pictures ; but, I think, not more so than their originals. If so, we should not blame the painter, but the subjects. But even granting that the darkness of his grief has added some shades of horror to his portraits ; his redeeming pictures are most glorious. What other pencil has given us such paintings of the cross ? of the beauties of Immanuel, and the glories of salvation ?

“ To me, the ‘ Night Thoughts ’ is a poem, on the whole, most animating and delightful ; amazingly energetic ; full of the richest instruction ; improving to the mind ; much of it worthy of being committed to memory ; possessing some faults—some passages unfit to be read—obscure—extravagant—tinged occasionally with flattery.”

Having thus presented both sides of the question as to the theological excellencies and defects of the “ Night Thoughts,” we may remark, that it becomes an inquiry of great interest, what influence this remarkable poem has actually exerted over the intellect, the conscience, the sensibilities, the moral tastes, the conduct, and the destiny, of its numerous readers and admirers ? Bearing upon this inquiry, we have found a passage in Dr. Cheever’s Review of the Life and Correspondence of John Foster, which has greatly interested us : he says :—

“ Young’s ‘ Night Thoughts ’ occupied a conspicuous place among the books which attracted Foster’s early notice, and under the influence of which the characteristics of his mind were much formed and developed. The strain of gloomy and profound sublimity which distinguishes the poem suited perfectly the original bent of his intellect, the character of his imagination, and his tendencies of feeling, so that it wrought upon him with a powerful effect. It even had much to do with the moulding of his style, as well as the sustaining and enriching of his native sublimity of sentiment. Almost all Foster’s pages are tinged with the sombre, thoughtful grandeur of the night-watcher ; they reflect the lonely magnificence of midnight and the stars. And there are images in Young which describe

the tenor of Foster's meditative life, occupied, so much of it, with intense contemplations on the future life, in pacing to and fro upon the beach of that immortal sea, which brought us hither. For no one ever saw him but he seemed to

"Walk thoughtful on the solemn, silent shore  
Of that vast ocean we must sail so soon."

His love and admiration of Young's Night Thoughts he carried with him through life."

On the whole, (as one correctly observes,) this work has produced a deep impression, has served to mould opinions, tastes, and character. It is read with equal interest by all classes. The old read it for its sober views of life, the young for its poetry. Christians love it for its truth; persons indifferent to religion are gained by the affectionate warmth of its appeals to their self-interest. All perhaps admire it for its pathos and its pensiveness. The love of melancholy, so deeply seated in many minds, also accounts for no small part of its fascinations.

# THE COMPLAINT.





# NIGHT I.

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## ON LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY.

---

To the Right Honourable Arthur Onslow, Esq.,  
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

---

Tired 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 pinions flies from woe,  
And lights on lids unsullied 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.

1. *Sleep*: An example of the figure called personification. It is represented as an animated being—as a god of downy pinions—in the bestowment of his favour discriminating between the sons of affluence and of poverty. Compare Night IX. 2176—86.

7. *I wake*: This expression suggested to the poet an impressive contrast—“how happy they who *wake no more*.” The poem abounds in striking, and often ingenious, contrasts; and to this feature it owes much of its liveliness, impressiveness, and power.

I wake, emerging from a sea of dreams  
 Tumultuous ; where my wreck'd desponding thought      10  
 From wave to wave of fancied misery  
 At random drove, her helm of reason lost ;  
 Though now restored, 'tis only change of pain,  
 (A bitter change!) severer for severe.  
 The day too short for my distress ; and night,      15  
 E'en in the zenith of her dark domain,  
 Is sunshine to the colour of my fate.

## THE REIGN OF NIGHT.

Night, sable 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.

13. *Restored* : That is, the helm of reason, upon the soul's awaking out of sleep.

16. *Zenith* : central portion ; the zenith being that point of the celestial concave which is directly over the head of the spectator. The strength, or rather the extravagance of the author's expressions cannot escape notice. He describes his fate as not only more dark than midnight ; but as so much darker than midnight as midnight is darker than the blaze of sunshine.

18. *Sable goddess* : Night is here personified ; described as a sable goddess, seated upon an ebon throne and stretching her leaden sceptre over a slumbering world. The imagery is beautifully expressive. The whole passage displays to great advantage the imagination of the poet. The epithet *sable* is taken from the name of a small animal that possesses exceedingly valuable fur which is dark and glossy. *Ebon*, black, from ebony, a valuable wood of dark colour. Her sceptre is appropriately denominated a *leaden* one, conveying the idea of her exerting a dull, oppressive influence over her subjects.

Silence and Darkness ! solemn sisters ! twins  
 From ancient Night, who nurse the tender thought  
 To reason, and on reason build resolve,  
 (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 ?

30

35

## ADDRESS TO THE AUTHOR OF LIGHT.

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

28. *Silence and Darkness* : A beautiful appeal is made to these imaginary personages for assistance, who are here poetically represented as sisters, the children of ancient Night, which existed before the alternation of Night and Day in the historic period of our earth. They are described as nursing the *tender thought to reason*, or as leading us from incipient thoughts on any subject to a connected train of thought—to conclusions. It is their office also to *build resolve on reason*, that is, superadd to the conclusions of reasoning the strong determination of the will, "that column of true majesty in man." There is some incongruity in the figurative language of this passage, which it may be rhetorically useful to point out. Silence and darkness are represented, beautifully and appropriately, as the *nurses* of thought, maturing into conclusions : but when the author speaks of their building resolve upon reason, &c., he unwisely and unhappily changes the figure, and introduces a confused image. They are now converted into architects, and the child they were nursing has become the pedestal of a *column*.

37. *Morning stars* : A reference to the sublime description of the creation in the book of Job, 38 : 7—"when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." The "sons of God" and "the morning stars," according to the parallelism in Hebrew poetry, denote the same objects, and these are the angels of God. The epithet *morning stars* is remarkably appropriate, alluding to the brilliant star which, during a part of the year, adorns the morning sky—the planet Venus. In Rev. 22 : 16, the Redeemer calls himself "the bright and morning star."

40. *Strike wisdom*, &c. : An expression borrowed from the process of striking sparks of fire with flint upon steel.

My soul, which flies to thee, her trust, her treasure,  
As misers to their gold, while others rest.

Through this opaque of nature and of soul,  
This double night, transmit one pitying ray,  
To lighten and to cheer. Oh, lead my mind 45

(A mind that fain would wander from its woe),  
Lead it through 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 arrear :  
Nor let the phial of thy vengeance, pour'd  
On this devoted head, be pour'd in vain.

#### MY DEPARTED HOURS.

✓ 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

43. *This opaque, &c.* : This darkness of nature (at night) and of my own soul.

46. *Fain* : gladly.

50. *Teach, &c.* : Teach my best reason that which is reasonable : cause the best actings of my intellectual powers to be more strictly conformed to what is reasonable, true, and fit.

52. *Pay her long arrear* : Pay what I have long owed her : that is, pursue a wise course in future, and not that which I have done heretofore.

53. *Vengeance* : Displeasure. Reference is made to domestic afflictions which are afterwards fully detailed.

56. *To give it then a tongue* : To cause Time to speak to us.

59. *Knell* : The clock, as it strikes, may be regarded as warning us of departed hours, just as the tolling church bell admonishes us of departed friends. It is also a *signal* (61) of important business to be speedily accomplished.

It is the signal that demands despatch :  
 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 !  
 And can eternity belong to me,  
 Poor pensioner on the bounties of an hour ?

65

## CONTRASTS IN MAN.

Wit

How poor, how rich, how abject, how august,  
 How complicate, how wonderful is man !  
 How passing wonder HE who made him such !  
 Who centred in our make such strange extremes !  
 From diff'rent natures, marvellously mix'd,  
 Connection exquisite of distant worlds !  
 Distinguish'd link in being's endless chain !  
 Midway from nothing to the Deity !  
 A beam ethereal, sullied and absorpt !  
 Though sullied and dishonour'd, still divine !  
 Dim miniature of greatness absolute !  
 An heir of glory ! a frail child of dust !  
 ✓ Helpless immortal ! insect infinite !  
 A worm ! a god !—I tremble at myself,  
 ✓ And in myself am lost. At home, a stranger,  
 Thought wanders up and down, surprised, aghast,  
 And wond'ring at her own. How reason reels !  
 O what a miracle to man is man,  
 Triumphantly distress'd ! what joy ! what dread !  
 Alternately transported and alarm'd !  
 What can preserve my life ? or what destroy ?

70

75

80

85

(Propriety)

68. *How poor, how rich, &c.* : This passage is remarkable for the opposite lights in which man is presented, and displays to great advantage the author's fondness for bringing out contrasts. The reader will notice the following—*poor, rich ; abject, august ; from nothing to the Deity : miniature of greatness absolute ; heir of glory, child of dust ; insect infinite : a worm, a god ; &c.*

84. *Her own* : Her own properties, condition, and prospects.

An angel's arm can't snatch me from the grave;  
Legions of angels can't confine me there.

90

## NIGHT PROCLAIMS THE SOUL IMMORTAL.

'Tis past conjecture: all things rise in proof.  
While o'er my limbs sleep's soft dominion spreads,  
What though my soul fantastic measures trod  
O'er fairy fields, or mourn'd along the gloom  
Of pathless woods, or, down the craggy steep  
Hurl'd headlong, swam with pain the mantled pool  
Or scaled the cliff, or danced 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,  
Active, aerial, towering, unconfined,  
Unfetter'd with her gross companion's fall.  
E'en silent night proclaims my soul immortal:  
E'en silent night proclaims eternal day.  
For human weal Heav'n husbands all events:  
Dull sleep instructs, nor sport vain dreams in vain.

95

100

105

## THE BURIED LIVE.

Why then their loss deplore that are not lost?  
Why wanders wretched thought their tombs around  
In infidel distress? Are angels there?  
Slumbers, raked up in dust, ethereal fire?  
They live, they greatly live a life on earth

110

96. *Mantled*: The idea is probably that which Thomson more fully expresses in his "Summer."

"where the pool

stands *mantled o'er with green*, etc.,

105. *Husbands all events*: Directs skilfully, or makes useful all events. Even sleep, and fantastic dreams, are not without their moral use.

110. *Slumbers, raked up, &c.*: Does ethereal fire (the soul) slumber, covered up in dust; in the dust of the body it once occupied?

111. *They greatly live, &c.*: They, in an emphatic sense, live a life which on earth was unkindled, unconceived: their life is of a far superior order to what they passed or conceived on earth. Instead, therefore, of being proper

Unkindled, unconceived ; 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 : } reversal  
institutions 115

How populous, how vital is the grave !

This is creation's melancholy vault,  
The vale funereal, the sad cypress gloom,  
The land of apparitions, empty shades !

All, all on earth is shadow, all beyond 120

Is substance ; the reverse is folly's creed :

How solid all where change shall be no more !

THIS LIFE, ONLY THE COMMENCEMENT OF BEING.

This is the bud of being, the dim dawn,  
The twilight of our day, the vestibule.

objects of pity, they let fall upon us, inhabitants of this world, the tear of pity, and more justly may denominate us the dead, than be regarded themselves as the dead. The thought is an ingenious and striking one.

115. *This is the desert, &c.* : This (scene of human life) is the desert, &c. ; another striking thought. We are accustomed to speak of the grave as a *solitude*, a *desert* ; but, says our author, this is a mistake. The grave is more populous, more *vital* (full of that which had enjoyed *life*), than the earth's surface. The dead are more numerous than the living. In another place, Young says :—"Where is the dust which has not been alive ?"

118. *Sad cypress gloom* : The branches of the cypress awaken feelings of sadness from association, as they were anciently borne in funereal processions, and in the East, to this day, the evergreen cypress forms an appropriate ornament of the grave-yard.

123. *Bud of being* : The author employs a great variety of figures to convey forcibly the idea that in this life we have scarcely begun to live ; that our principal career lies beyond the present scene of things. This is compared to a *bud*, or flower yet unexpanded : next, to the *dim dawn*, or early *twilight*, which is followed by a long and brilliant day ; next, to the *vestibule* of a theatre—the porch, or entrance chamber. The theatre itself is represented as being yet shut, and its doors are opened only to the strong arm of death. When this takes place we shall then witness those scenes which are more worthy of the name of life than the present state exhibits.

The author, to impress the same thought, metaphorically denominates us, in the present state, mere *embryos of existence*—beings not yet fully formed to enjoy or to possess existence.

Life's theatre as yet is shut, and Death, 125  
 Strong Death, alone can heave the massy bar,  
 This gross impediment of clay remove, *to earth*  
 And make us embryos of existence free. *free*  
 From real life, but little more remote  
 Is he, not yet a candidate for light,  
 The future embryo, slumb'ring in his sire. *> per m?* 130  
 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.

THE BURIAL OF CELESTIAL HOPES.  
*on earth*

Yet man, fool man, here buries all his thoughts; 135  
 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, 140  
 On life's fair tree, fast by the throne of God.  
 What golden joys ambrosial clust'ring glow *fruit metaphora*  
*explained?*

133. *Yon ambient azure shell*: The blue sky.

134. *The life of gods*: The life of angels. The author very frequently in this poem, uses the term *gods* in this subordinate sense; sometimes also to denote men in the heavenly state, (Night IV. 496) from the immense advancement which they shall have there attained in all that ennoble our nature and renders it happy. Thus in Night III., 432-7.

"A good man and an angel! those 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;  
 A moment, or eternity's forgot.  
 Then be *what once they were who now are gods*."

138. *Here pinions all his wishes, &c.*: Here binds the wings of all his wishes. Our wishes are represented as furnished with wings capable of bearing us upward to *infinite* (to infinity), that is, to enjoyments immeasurably superior to those found on earth. But man, *fool man*, confines his wishes to the low and inferior objects of earth.

142. *Golden joys ambrosial*: Rich, mellow fruits, of fragrant odour, and yielding the highest joys.



In his full beam, and ripen for the just,  
 Where momentary ages are no more! — *but. y. was a cyclical metaphor -*  
 Where Time, and Pain, and Chance, and Death expire! 145 *ingenious*  
 And is it in the flight of threescore years  
 To push eternity from human thought,  
 And smother souls immortal in the dust? ; *dust + fire*  
 A soul immortal, spending all her fires, *images sustained*  
 Wasting her strength in strenuous idleness, o 150  
 Thrown into tumult, raptured or alarm'd  
 At aught this scene can threaten or indulge,  
 Resembles ocean into tempest wrought, *great tumult for slight cause*  
 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, *cocoon*

Till darken'd reason lay quite clouded o'er 140

With soft conceit of endless comfort here,

Nor yet put forth her wings to reach the skies!

144. *Momentary ages* : The ages of earth are but moments when compared with immortality.

153. *Resembles ocean, &c.* : What can be more expressive of the absurdity of human conduct than this original simile! It embraces somewhat of the ludicrous, in order to convey the severer censure.

158. *Like a worm, &c.* : A silkworm. The figure, though appropriate, is carried out perhaps to an extent beyond what good taste approves. It will be better understood from an account of the habits of this animal. The silkworm (says Brande), in its caterpillar state, which may be considered as the first stage of its existence, after acquiring its full growth (about three inches in length), proceeds to enclose itself in an oval-shaped ball or cocoon, which is formed by an exceedingly slender and long filament of fine, yellow silk, emitted from the stomach of the insect preparatory to its assuming the shape of the chrysalis or moth. In this latter stage, after emancipating itself from its silken prison, it seeks its mate, which has undergone a similar transformation; and in two or three days afterwards, the female having deposited her eggs (from 300 to 500 in number), both insects terminate their existence.

## WAKING DREAMS FATAL.

Night visions may befriend (as sung above :)	
Our waking dreams are fatal. How I dreamt	
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 noontide trances hung	
With gorgeous tapestries of pictured 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,	
Starting I woke, and found myself undone.	
Where now my frenzy's pompous furniture?	175
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

## PERPETUITY ESSENTIAL TO BLISS.

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,

170. *Tapestries*: Hangings of wool and silk, often interlaid with gold and silver, and adorned with figures of men, animals, landscapes, &c.

173. *Millions at a meal, &c.*: Death is represented in this passage as a hungry, insatiate, and gigantic monster. An allusion is made, perhaps, to the fabled Polyphemus of Homer's *Odyssey*, who, like a beast of prey, devoured in his cave several of the companions of Ulysses.

181. *Ye blest scenes*: Those of immortality, here contrasted with earthly scenes, and their vast superiority shown.

184. *Fear an end*: The word *end* should receive, in reading, a strong emphasis, that the full meaning of the passage may be reached.

That ghastly thought would drink up all your joy, 185  
 And quite unparadise the realms of light.  
 Safe are you lodged 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 sithe, whose ample sweep  
 Strikes empires from the root : each moment plays 195

186. *Unparadise the realms of light* : That is, destroy their peculiar attractiveness, and their power to satisfy the cravings of the soul.

188. *Baleful influence* : Allusion is here made to the exploded astrological notion that the sun, moon, planets, and stars, in certain positions at the time of one's birth, exert a deleterious influence over his earthly destiny. Great prominence is given to the absurd doctrines of astrology in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Book X., 656—663 :—

"To the blank moon  
 Her office they prescribed ; to the other five  
 Their planetary motions and aspects  
 In sextile, square, and trine, and opposite  
 Of noxious efficacy ; and when to join  
 In synod unbenign ; and taught the fixed  
 Their influence malignant, &c."

Absurd as this doctrine, of determining men's fates by the relative position of the heavenly bodies, may appear to us, it was held among all the ancient nations, and has continued even to the present day in some countries. "Only a short period has elapsed," says Dr. Thomas Dick, "since the princes and legislators of Europe were directed in the most important concerns of the state by the predictions of astrologers. In the time of Queen Catharine de Medicis, astrology was so much in vogue, that nothing, however trifling, was to be done without consulting the stars."

190. *Here, &c.* : On this earth every hour teems with revolutions.

191. *Or the best, &c.* : The best revolutions, or changes, are *more mortal*, more short-lived than common events (common births of fate).

193. *Each moment, &c.* : A beautiful parallel is run in this passage between each *moment* with its *sickle*, and TIME with its enormous *scythe* ; the one operating fatally upon the sweet comforts of domestic life, the other in its ample sweep laying empires in the dust. The personification of *moment* and *time* is admirably sustained.

His little weapon in the narrower sphere  
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 found them air.  
O had I weigh'd it ere my fond embrace!  
What darts of agony had miss'd my heart!

## DOMESTIC GRIEFS.

Death! great proprietor of all! 'tis thine 205  
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.  
Amidst such mighty plunder, why exhaust  
Thy partial quiver on a mark so mean? 210  
Why thy peculiar rancour wreak'd on me?  
Insatiate 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.

205. *Great proprietor, &c.*: The universal reign of death, extending to empires, to the solar system, and the stars, as well as to individual members of the human family, is exhibited in a style equally sublime and pathetic.

208. *From his sphere*: This phraseology is conformed, not to the real state of things, but to that exploded system of astronomy according to which the heavenly bodies were each placed in an immense crystalline hollow firm globe or sphere perfectly transparent, which revolved and carried around the heavenly body, that was set in it. The term sphere is sometimes applied to the orbit in which such a body moves; the course it describes.

210. *Partial quiver, &c.*: Why expend your arrows so disproportionately upon me; more copiously than upon other men?

214. *Ere thrice yon moon, &c.*: Ere three lunar months had elapsed. The author here refers to the death of three beloved relatives, which occurred in rapid succession, though not within so short a period as, with a sort of poetic license, under the influence of grief, the author here represents the case. These relatives were his wife; her daughter by a former husband, bearing in the poem the name of *Narcissa*; and, probably, the brother of

O Cynthia! why so pale? dost thou lament  
 Thy wretched neighbour? grieve to see thy wheel <sup>light</sup> <sub>wheel</sub> } 215  
 Of ceaseless change outwhirl'd in human life!  
 How wanes my borrow'd bliss! from Fortune's smile, <sup>light</sup>  
 Precarious courtesy! not virtue's sure,  
 Self-given, solar ray of sound delight. 220

## THE PAST CONTRASTED WITH THE PRESENT.

In ev'ry varied posture, place, and hour,

Narcissa, an officer in the army, who is thought by some to have been described under the name of *Philander*. According to one account these all died in 1741, which comports with the language of this passage; but according to that found in Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*, Mrs. Temple died in 1736, Mr. Temple in 1740 (supposed to be referred to under the name of *Philander*), and Mrs. Young in 1741. To these individuals there will be occasion soon to refer again.

It may be remarked that this last account renders it necessary to suppose an enormous poetic license in the use of such language as

"And thrice ere thrice yon moon had filled her horn."

The repetition of this emphatic word four times in two lines deserves remark as an instance of our author's aiming at effect, and here, at the expense of historical truthfulness, if the last account is reliable. The objection to refer *Philander* to Mr. Temple is, that in Night III. that person is described as dying just before Narcissa; but we may regard this anachronism as a matter of poetic license.

215. *O Cynthia*: The address to the moon (which received the name of Cynthia from the Latin poets), is equally ingenious and pathetic. The author greatly admired this luminary, and frequently poured out to her his emotions of tender regard, as at the beginning of the Third Night.

216. *Neighbour*: The poet himself.

218-20. *How wanes, &c.*: The term here used is more appropriate than any other, from its allusion to the diminishing visible surface of the moon in the last two quarters of each revolution around the earth. The lines that follow are quite obscure, but their meaning may be expressed thus:—How the bliss diminishes which I borrowed from Fortune's smile (a courtesy of uncertain and brief duration), not from Virtue's sun, self-given, solar ray of sound delight! The smile of Fortune is *precarious*, depending on contingencies: Virtue sends out, like the *sun*, a *sure ray*, proceeding from itself, an unchanging source of bliss.

How widow'd ev'ry thought of ev'ry joy!  
 Thought, busy thought! too busy for my peace!  
 Through the dark postern of time long elapsed,  
 Led softly, by the stillness of the night, 225  
 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

222. *Widow'd*: Stripped.

224. *Postern of time*: Back door or gate of time. Allusion is made to a small private door in the rear wall of a castle or fortification, the passage to which was usually narrow and *dark*.

229. *Ghosts*, etc.: Mere images of my departed joys.

231. *I rue*, &c.: I regret the riches of my former *condition*, ere these sad bereavements were encountered.

232. *Comfort's blasted clusters*: A beautiful allusion to a fruitful grape vine prematurely injured by the frost.

237. *Are angels all beside?* Are none of the human race mortal but myself; are they angels removed beyond the reach of sorrow?

239. *Has Fate entail'd*: The primary idea expressed by the word *Fate* being false, it should not have been used by a Christian poet. The best apology that can be made for him, is to suppose that he uses it as a brief expression of the same import as *Divine Providence*. According to many heathen Philosophers, fate, or destiny, was a secret and invisible power, or virtue, which with incomprehensible wisdom regulated all those occurrences of this world which to human eyes appear irregular and fortuitous. The Stoics, on the other hand, understood by destiny a certain concatenation of things, which from all eternity follow each other of absolute necessity,

The mother's throes on all of woman born, 240  
 Not more the children than sure heirs of pain.

## EVILS THAT BESIEGE MANKIND.

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, plunged in mines, forgets a sun was made;  
 There, beings, deathless as their haughty lord, *metaphor*  
 Are hammer'd to the galling oar for life; *for oppression*  
 And plough the winter's wave and reap despair.  
 Some for hard masters, broken under arms, 250  
 In battle lopp'd away with half their limbs,  
 Beg bitter bread through realms their valour saved, *justified*  
 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!

there being no power able to interrupt their connexion. To this invisible power even the gods were compelled to succumb. See Brande's Dictionary.

246. *Forgets a sun was made*: He has been so long engaged under ground in mining operations, without coming up to the light, that he forgets the existence of the sun: of course he foregoes the pleasures and advantages of his delightful beams. It is said, that in some of the deep mines in England rooms are constructed for the accommodation of families; and that children are there born, and arrive at maturity, without ever seeing the wonders and beauties of the world above ground.

250. *Broken under arms, &c.*: Injured in military service, *with half their limbs lopp'd away in battle*. Other editions place a comma after *away*, which obscures the sense, unless we give an unauthorized meaning to the word before it.

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.

## DISEASE AND DEATH ARE UNDISCRIMINATING.

Happy ! did sorrow seize on such alone :  
 Not prudence can defend, or virtue save ;  
 Disease invades the chastest temperance,  
 And punishment the guiltless ; and alarm, 270  
 Through thickest shades, pursues the fond of peace.

Man's caution often into danger turns,  
 And, his guard falling, crushes him to death.  
 Not happiness herself makes good her name ;  
Our very wishes give us not our wish. 275

How distant oft the thing we doat on most  
 From that for which we doat, felicity !  
 The smoothest course of Nature has its pains,  
 And truest friends, through error, wound our rest.

Without misfortune what calamities ! 280  
And what hostilities without a foe !

262-3. *Since in pains you rue, &c.* : Since, in a state of pain, (engendered by disease) you lament more fashionable visits—visits to places of dissipation, more fashionable and more common than the visits to a hospital here recommended. *Visit here* : visit the groaning hospitals (257).

264. *Give, and reduce, &c.* : Spend some of your money upon the needy objects you will find in the hospital ; and thus have less to spend upon yourself in excessive sensual gratifications.

267. *Such alone* : The sons of pleasure (262).

270. *The guiltless* : That is, those comparatively so.

273. *His guard* : That structure which had been erected for a defence.

275. *Our very wishes, &c.* : That is, our very wishes, even when the objects were attained, have not given us the felicity which we anticipated.

280-1. *Without misfortune, &c.* : That is, although we should be exempt from signal adversities, yet there are calamities to be encountered ; and though we have no open foe, we meet with events hostile to our peace and welfare.



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.

. THE MAP OF EARTH, A TRUE MAP OF MAN.

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, envenom'd passions bite,  
Rav'nous calamities our vitals seize,  
And threat'ning Fate wide opens to devour. *hell-mouth* 295

HUMAN HAPPINESS EVANESCENT.

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  
Swoln thought a second channel ; who divide,  
They weaken, too, the torrent of their grief. 305

284. *Than cause to sigh* : Should fail.

295. *Fate* : Death, or the grave.

301. *While it sinks, exalts* : While it sinks our spirits, exalts our character, improves our feelings.

303-4. *Bids me give swoln thought a second channel* : That is, bids me make known my excessive griefs to others, and thus create another channel by which they may pass off. Thought, or emotion, is spoken of under the figure of a torrent which, when swollen, or raised by immense rains, is reduced by being conducted into a second channel.

Take, then, O world! thy much indebted tear;

I 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!

Would 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.

O Thou happy wretch! by blindness thou art blest;

By dotage dandled to perpetual smiles. 315

Know, smiler! at thy peril art thou pleased;

Thy pleasure is the promise of thy pain.

Misfortune, like a creditor severe,

But rises in demand of her delay;

She makes a scourge of past prosperity, 320

To sting thee more, and double thy distress.

THE FAVOURS OF FORTUNE MAY JUSTLY CAUSE ALARM.

Lorenzo, Fortune makes her court to thee:

306. *Thy much indebted tear*: The tear I have long owed thee.

321. *To sting thee more, &c.*: This passage suggests a somewhat similar remark of Cæsar, in his Commentaries, Book I. ch. 14. "Consuësse enim Deos immortales, quo gravius homines ex commutatione rerum doleant, quos pro scelere eorum ulcisci velint, his secundoires interdum res et diuturniorem impunitatem concedere."

322. *Lorenzo*: It has been disputed whether the individual bearing this name, and so frequently addressed in this poem, was the son of the author, (which was for a time the common opinion), or a fictitious character, which has, however, its counterpart in almost every community. Evidence may be collected from the poem itself and known incidents, to show that the former opinion is unfounded. He is never addressed, or spoken of, as his son, and things are attributed to him which seem not to be consistent with that opinion; for example, in the line here quoted, it is said, "Fortune makes her court to thee." In Night V. he is represented as "burning for the sublimity of life, to hang his airy seat on high." In Night VIII. he is described as having "travelled far;" and in Night V.,

"So wept Lorenzo fair Clarissa's fate;  
Who gave that angel boy on whom he dotes."

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.  
 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 :

325

So in the beginning of the same we read—

“Lorenzo, to recriminate is just,  
 I grant the man is vain who writes for praise.”

The inapplicability of the above statements to the son of the author is apparent from the fact that at the time the Night Thoughts referred to were composed, his son (he had but one) was only from eight to twelve years old. But the poem either broadly asserts, or plainly implies, that the Lorenzo intended by the author was an accomplished man of the world, a man of unbounded ambition, an infidel blasphemer, and a careless libertine. We agree then with Chambers in the opinion, that it seems to be a mere fancy sketch, and, like the character of Childe Harold, in the hands of Byron, it afforded the poet scope for dark and powerful painting and was made the vehicle for bursts of indignant virtue, sorrow, regret, and admonition. This artificial character, as the same writer further observes, pervades the whole poem, and is essentially a part of its structure ; but it still leaves to our admiration many noble and sublime passages where the poet speaks as from inspiration—with “the voice of one crying in the wilderness,” of life, death, and immortality.

323. *The syren sings* : This name is applied to Fortune in the previous line. The Syrens, or Sirens, according to ancient fable, were two or three attractive females, or female divinities, dwelling upon the shore of Sicily, who by their melodious songs so charmed mariners sailing along, that they stopped their vessels, forgot their homes, and remained listening till they perished from hunger. Another version of the fable is, that by their ravishing music they enticed men into their hands and then devoured them.

*Fortune*, poetically represented as a goddess, but in fact only indicating the various goods of a prosperous worldly life, is, therefore, described here as alluring, with a view to injure, her favourites, or at least with such a tendency.

325. *But to secure, &c.* : But with a view to secure thy joys.

326. *Sacred to the storm* : Due only to the storm.

329. *And in its favours, &c.* : In this line and the preceding, the author drops the language of figure and speaks plainly. What he had called the smiles of Fortune, and of Fate, a phraseology suited to the notions of pagan-

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.

## DEATH OF PHILANDER.

Mine died with thee, Philander ! thy last sigh 345  
 Dissolved the charm ; the disenchanted earth  
 Lost all her lustre. Where her glitt'ring 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

ism, are here more appropriately and truly denominated the favours of heaven.

335. *Nature's tumult* : The agitation or high excitement naturally springing from great prosperity.

338. *Revolted joys* : Objects that once produced joy but have ceased to afford it.

344. *Fond as he seems* : Much delighted (with them) as he seems.

345. *Philander* : As some suppose, the son-in-law of the author, who, according to one account, died in 1736, and, according to another in 1741. But compare note (214). The expressions of the author's grief are, to say the least, quite as strong as the circumstances seem capable of producing, if not a little stronger.

350. *The great magician* : Philander is so called from the wonderful and incomprehensible *charm* which, when living, he gave to earth, and to all the scenes of domestic enjoyment in which he participated.

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,  
 Smiled 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; 365  
 We penetrate, we prophesy in vain. *could come any time*  
 Time is dealt out by particles, and each,  
 Ere mingled with the streaming sands of life, *particle of sand talking*

355. *Of virtuous praise*: To the credit of Philander it is here asserted that his glowing cheek had been flushed with the ambition of *virtuous* praise, of praise for virtuous deeds; not for deeds of questionable morality or of decided immorality.

The *seed* of Death is personified, though not very properly. It is hard to conceive of a seed acting the part of a *miner*, or exhibiting *treachery*. practising *smiles*, and *beckoning* to the worm. If these things had been said of Death, the figure would not have offended a correct and delicate taste.

360. *Conditionally wise*: Man's foresight is wise only on conditions; either within certain narrow limits, or on the supposition that events occur as were anticipated. Man's foresight is not absolute, irrespective of contingencies or unlooked for emergencies. That the above is a just account of the author's meaning is not confidently asserted, for the expression is obscure and unusual.

363. *To labouring thought is born*: Is produced, as the result of painful, earnest thinking.

365. *Doomsday*: The awful day of final judgment.

368. *Streaming sands of life*: Successive flowing sands, or moments of life; those that have passed by. Each particle of Time is sworn not to reveal the period "*where* (a man's) *eternity begins*."

By Fate's inviolable oath is sworn  
 Deep silence, "Where eternity begins." 370

## DANGER OF PROCRASTINATION.

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,

372. *No prerogative in human hours*: No exclusive privilege, no inalienable ownership, in human hours. Their continued possession cannot be counted upon.

374. *Presumption on to-morrow's dawn*: The author does not mean to assert that it is a bold and unwarrantable thought to calculate upon the occurrence of to-morrow's dawn, but to presume confidently that we shall ourselves live to see it, and be allowed then to prosecute our favourite schemes. We all have an instinctive and most useful belief in the constancy of Nature, and in the regular succession of days; without which belief all enterprise and progress would be arrested, and human interests sadly neglected and deranged. Still we are not to forget, that while the diurnal and annual revolutions of the earth may continue in beautiful and mathematical regularity, we at the same time have no ground for the assurance that our own earthly existence shall not terminate before another morrow greets the world.

375. *In another world*: That is, *our* to-morrow may be in another world; not in this.

377-8. This *Perhaps*, this *Peradventure*; this "*it may be.*" These adverbs are of the same meaning, and are used, grammatically, as a substantive, or rather in the place of a substantive expression, to which the demonstrative *this* is applied.

381. *As we, &c.*: As if we could outspin the *Fatal Sisters*. This line should be inclosed in a parenthesis, since it interrupts the grammatical connexion between the preceding and the following line. An allusion is here

And, big with life's futurities, expire.

Not e'en Philander had bespoke his shroud,

Nor had he cause; a warning was denied :

How many fall as sudden, not as safe ;

385

As sudden, though for years admonish'd home !

Of human ills the last extreme beware ;

Beware, Lorenzo ! a slow sudden death.

How dreadful that deliberate surprise !

*death always  
a shock.*

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

made to the three sister goddesses of Roman and Grecian mythology that are represented as *spinning* the destinies of men. They were collectively called *the Fates, Parcæ* by the Latins ; *Moiræ* (i. e. "the Dispensers") by the Greeks. Their individual names in Hesiod are *Clotho* (spinster), *Lachesis* (allotter), and *Atropos* (unchangeable). The first of these attached the thread ; the second spun it ; and the third cut or broke the thread at the appointed hour of death. To *outspin the Fatal Sisters*, is, therefore, to protract our lives beyond the divinely-appointed termination.

382. *Big with life's futurities* : Confidently expecting to realize in the present life many future events.

386. *Admonish'd home* : Admonished respecting the grave, to which, as to a common home, all are directing their steps. See Night II. (360-1).

388. *Slow sudden death* : This expression at first view seems to involve a flat contradiction ; but we may interpret it to mean a death resulting from a protracted disease, yet sudden and unexpected in its consummation. Such, often, is death resulting from the disease called consumption.

393. *Procrastination* : The act or habit of putting off to to-morrow what should be done to-day. With the procrastinator, "to-morrow is still the fatal time when all is to be done, or to be rectified : to-morrow comes, it goes, and still I please myself with the shadow, whilst I lose the reality ; unmindful that the present time alone is ours ; the future is yet unborn, and the past is dead ; and can only live—as parents in their children,—in the actions it has produced. The time we live ought not to be computed by the number of years, but by the use that has been made of them. It is not the extent of ground, but the yearly rent, that gives value to the estate."—*Dr. Dodd.*

The vast concerns of an eternal scene.  
If not so frequent, would not this be strange ?  
That 'tis so frequent, this is stranger still.

## DELUSIVE PROMISES OF REFORMATION.

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 lodged in their own hands is Folly's vails ;  
 That lodged 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 through ev'ry stage (when young, indeed, . . . )  
 In full content we sometimes nobly rest,  
 Unanxious for ourselves, and only wish, 415  
 As duteous sons, our fathers were more wise.

400. *Are about to live*: Are just about to begin to live, that is, as they should. In Night II. 149-150, the author says:—

"We waste, not use our time: we breathe, not live."

"Time wasted is existence, used is *life*."

404. *Reversion*: Prospective change.

405. *Their own*: Their own praise.

407-8. *Folly's vails, &c.*: The present time is the *avails*, the perquisite, the gain of Folly; it is all devoted to Folly—to unwise pursuits. *Time lodged in Fate's hands*, that is, Time future (which is in the hands, or at the sovereign disposal, of *Providence*), they design to occupy wisely.

416. *As duteous sons, &c.*: The delicate but cutting satire of this passage deserves particular notice. The idea is obviously this—when young men we consider ourselves as already wise enough—make no exertion, and entertain no wish to acquire more wisdom; but nobly extend our wishes in that line to our less discerning fathers. \*



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 ;  
 In all the magnanimity of thought  
 Resolves, and re-resolves ; then dies the same.

420

## ALL MEN ARE THOUGHT MORTAL BUT OURSELVES.

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 passed 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.

E'en 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, though longer far, would fail,

And the lark listen to my midnight song.

## THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE POETS.

The sprightly lark's shrill matin wakes the morn ;

425. *Themselves* : All men think *themselves* mortal, when some alarming, &c.

433. *We drop it* : That is, the thought of death. What can be more exquisitely beautiful in poetry, or more justly descriptive of the sad inconsistency of human nature, than the passage embraced in the last five lines !

436-7. *Though longer far, &c.* : That is, far longer than it is. *And the lark listen, &c.* : My midnight song would be protracted till the dawn of day

438. *The sprightly lark's shrill matin, &c.* : Morning song. We cannot forbear our admiration of the charming idea here introduced—imagining only

Grief's sharpest thorn hard pressing on my breast,  
I strive, with wakeful melody, to cheer

440

*his poem*  
of course, that the shrill and sprightly matin of the lark *waked up the morn*; thus dispelling the shadows of the night. Who ever listened (says Mrs. Ellis) to this voice on a clear spring morning, when nature was first rising from her wintry bed, when the furze was in bloom, and the lambs at play, and the primrose and the violet scented the delicious south wind that came with the glad tidings of renovated life—who ever listened to the song of the lark on such a morning, while the dew was upon the grass, and the sun was smiling through a cloudless sky, without feeling that the spirit of joy was still alive within, around, and above him, and that those wild and happy strains, floating in softened melody upon the scented air, were the outpourings of a gratitude too rapturous for words?

440. *With wakeful melody*: The poet's grief was such that he sought to solace himself during the weary hours of night with the *wakeful melody* of the verse he was composing; in which occupation he compares himself with *Philomel*, or the Nightingale, which pours out her charming utterances to the nocturnal stars. The sweet songster derives this name from the mythological story of the transformation of *Philomela*, the daughter of an Athenian king, into a nightingale. With the poets, and Milton especially, this bird seems to have been a particular favourite. How beautifully he speaks of it in *Par. Lost*, Book IV. 598-603.

"Now came still ev'ning on, and twilight grey  
Had in her sober liv'ry all things clad;  
Silence accompanied: for beast and bird,  
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests,  
Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale:  
She all night long her am'rous descant sung:  
Silence was pleased."

I am much disposed to think (shrewdly remarks Mrs. Ellis, in her "Poetry of Life") that this bird owes half its celebrity to the circumstance of its singing in the night, when the visionary, wrapped in the mantle of deep thought, wanders forth to gaze upon the stars, and to court the refreshment of silence and solitude. It is then that the voice of the nightingale thrills upon his ear, and he feels that a kindred spirit is awake, perhaps, like him, to sweet remembrances, to sorrows too deep for tears, and joys for which music alone can find a voice. He listens, and the ever-varying melody rises and falls upon the wandering wind; he pines for some spiritual communion with this unseen being; he longs to ask why sleep is banished from a breast so tuned to harmony; joy, and joy alone, it cannot be, which inspires that solitary lay: no, there are tones of tenderness too much like grief, and is not grief the bond of fellowship by which impassioned souls are held together? Thus, the nightingale pours upon the heart of the poet strains which thrill

The sullen gloom, sweet Philomel ! like thee,  
 And call the stars to listen ; ev'ry star  
 Is deaf to mine, enamour'd of thy lay,  
 Yet be not vain ; there are who thine excel,  
 And charm through 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, though not blind, like thee, Mæonides ! 450  
Or, Milton, thee ! ah, could I reach your strain !

with those sensations that have given pathos to his muse, and he pays her back by celebrating her midnight minstrelsy in song.

444. *There are who thine excel* : Having complimented the sweet Bird of Night upon her gaining a favourable audience of the stars while his own lay was neglected by them, the author passes to other songsters that in his judgment far excel the nightingale, as *they charm through distant ages*. He was accustomed, he says, while a prisoner of darkness, that is, during the period of darkness, to repeat to the silent hours (a highly poetic thought), *their rage divine* (the products of their inspired, energetic, vehement genius). He refers, in the first place, to *blind Mæonides*, or Homer, the immortal poet of Greece, and author of the Iliad and the Odyssey : he next refers to another blind poet, the equally immortal bard of Britain, and pours out a fervent wish that he himself might be endued with a capacity to reach their elevated strain. And, in the third place, introduces, in the same honourable connexion, the more recent British bard, *who made Mæonides our own*, by an admirable translation of the Iliad and the Odyssey into the English language. "*Man too he sung,*" in his elaborate "Essay on Man." It was, however, of man in the present life exclusively. Our author chiefly occupies himself with man as an immortal being, and expresses in the concluding lines an eloquent regret that the able translator of Homer had not, by extending his "Essay on Man," saved him the labor, perhaps the disgrace, of composing the poem that follows—

"O had he, mounted on his wing of fire,  
 Soar'd where I sink, and sung immortal man,  
 How had it bless'd mankind, and rescued me!"

451. *Or, Milton, thee* : (Like) thee. Some of the most touching lines in the *Paradise Lost* are those in which the bard alludes to the calamity of his blindness. There is one in which he compares himself (as in this passage he is compared) with the Grecian bard. He also compares himself with the nightingale. The passage will thus happily illustrate this portion

Or his who made Mæonides our own.

Man, too, he sung; immortal man I sing.

Oft bursts my song beyond the bounds of life;

What now but immortality can please?

O had he press'd his theme, pursued 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 rescued me!

of the Night Thoughts, while it must gratify every lover of charming poetry. It is taken from Book III. 32—50. (See notes on the passage in Boyd's Milton.)

"Nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget  
 Those other two equal'd with me in fate,  
 So were I equal'd with them in renown,  
 Blind Thamyras and blind Mæonides,  
 And Tiresias and Phineus prophets old:  
 Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move  
 Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird  
 Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid  
 Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year  
 Seasons return, but not to me returns  
 Day, or the sweet approach of ev'n or morn,  
 Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,  
 Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;  
 But cloud instead and ever-during dark  
 Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men  
 Cut off, and for the Book of knowledge fair  
 Presented with a universal blank  
 Of Nature's works to me expung'd and ras'd,  
 And Wisdom at one entrance quite shut out."

From  
on  
man

455  
the originality  
to show

460  
most precise  
ground

Hope should  
go for  
away  
Hope  
united

## NIGHT II.

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### ON TIME, DEATH, AND FRIENDSHIP.

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To the Right Honourable the Earl of Wilmington.

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WHEN the cock crew he wept,—smote by that eye  
Which looks on me, on all; that Pow'r who bids  
This midnight sentinel, with clarion shrill, — *Apocalypse*  
(Emblem of that which shall awake the dead)

1. *He wept*: The scene referred to is thus touchingly related by the Evangelist Luke, xxii. 60—62, “and immediately, while he yet spake, *the cock crew. And the Lord turned and looked on Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.*”

This affecting scene was probably suggested to the poet, on hearing the shrill notes of the cock, during his night studies and meditations. He makes an ingenious and important use of an event commonly regarded as most insignificant, by suggesting that the cock crows, at the bidding of Christ, to *rouse souls from slumber that they may cherish thoughts of heaven.* He is led to this idea by considering the clarion of the cock as an emblem of that all-awakening trump that shall sublimely usher in the resurrection morn, when all the armies of the dead shall rise from their multitudinous graves to enter upon a new state of being.

Rouse souls from slumber into thoughts of Heav'n. 5  
 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 listed: life is war;  
Eternal war with woe: who bears it best 10  
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, though dead, 15  
 May still befriend—What themes? Time's wondrous price,  
 Death, friendship, and Philander's final scene!

## AVARICE OF TIME.

So could I touch these themes as might obtain  
 Thine ear, nor leave thy heart quite disengaged,  
 The good deed would delight me; half impress 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 live as they desire.  
 Where is that thrift, that avarice of time, 25  
 (O glorious avarice!) thought of death inspires,  
 As rumour'd robberies endear our gold?

12-13. *Themes may profit*: Themes (which) may profit. *Where most thy need* (is).

16. *Price*: Value.

19. *Thine ear*: The attention of thine ear. *Disengaged*: uninfluenced.

21. *An Iris*: A rainbow, which, among the Greeks, was under this name personified and imagined as a goddess. The rainbow was also considered to be the path by which the goddess descended from Olympus (the residence of the gods) and returned thither, in executing the commands of Juno, her imperial mistress.

25. *That thrift*: That economical management.

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 arrear.  
 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  
 Fain 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.

28-9. *More a load than lead* : A heavier burden, and no more valued, than a load of lead, whilst it is really more precious than so much gold.

30. *Granted* : (is) granted.

32. *Our wealth in days, &c.* : We give to our days their proper value when we act as wisdom demands ; when we, in the language of the poet, *discharge the debt* of wisdom.

35. *Composition* : Bargaining, or mutual arrangement.

40. *O Mead* : The name of the author's physician, to whose medical skill he attributes his recent recovery from alarming illness. *That time is mine*, that it is my property ; that I have yet an interest in it, *to thee I owe*.

What an admirable and unexpected turn does the ingenious author now give to the train of thought ! *Fain* (gladly) *would I pay thee with eternity*. That is, with endless fame upon the page of an imperishable poem. This is plain from the three following lines.

46. *Esculapian* : Medical—a term borrowed from the name of the fabled god of medicine, Esculapius, or Æsculapius. In proportion (says Prof. Fiske) as men in the early ages were ignorant of the efficacy and use of remedies for disease, there was the greater admiration of those who were distinguished in the art of healing, and the greater readiness to deify them. Hence the deification of Æsculapius, who was viewed as the god of medi-

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 ; 50  
 And what its worth, ask death-beds ; they can tell.  
 Part with it as with life, reluctant ; big  
 With holy hope of nobler time to come :  
 Time higher aim'd, still nearer the great mark  
 Of men and angels ; virtue more divine. 55

AMUSEMENT, THE UNIVERSAL DEMAND.

Is this our duty, wisdom, glory, gain ?  
 (These Heav'n benign in vital union binds)  
 And sport we like the natives of the bough,  
 When vernal suns inspire ? Amusement reigns  
 Man's great demand : to trifle is to live : 60  
 And is it then a trifle, too, to die ?  
 Thou say'st I preach, Lorenzo ! 'Tis confest.  
 What if, for once, I preach thee quite awake ?  
 Who wants amusement in the flame of battle ?

cine, and said to be the son of Apollo and the nymph Coronis. Hygeia, the goddess of health, was called his daughter. At first the practice in medicine was limited almost wholly to the curing of external wounds. The great renown which Æsculapius, and his descendants, the Asclepiades obtained, is a proof of the novelty and rarity of the healing art in those times, in which in fact it was considered as a miraculous gift from the gods. The Asclepiades established several schools in medicine. It was not until a later period that the Greeks became acquainted with anatomy. Hippocrates was the first who investigated the science systematically, or wrote upon the subject.

50. *Of its worth* : Of something equally valuable.

54. *Time higher aim'd* : Hope of time higher aimed ; *aimed*, in the direction of its pursuits, *still nearer the great mark of men and angels*, namely, *a more divine virtue* than has yet been attained by us on earth.

57. *These, &c.* : The author's remark is deserving of special attention ;—that heaven, in great kindness to man, has bound in indissoluble union our glory and our gain to duty and wisdom.

59. *Inspire* : Impart animation.



Is it not treason to the soul immortal, 65  
 Her foes in arms, eternity the prize ?  
 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, - 70  
 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,  
 And earth and skies seem dust upon the scale.

## LORENZO'S APOLOGY FOR A LIFE OF AMUSEMENT.

Redeem we time ?—Its loss we dearly buy. 75  
 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. 80  
 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 : 85  
 This the good heart's prerogative to raise

75. *Redeem we time ?* Do we make a proper use of time ? *Its loss we dearly buy ;* that thing is dearly bought which has cost us the sacrifice of the proper use of time ; which has caused us to waste or pervert the gift of time.

81. *Still be thine :* Still be thy occupation. How wretched is it (says Dr. Dodd), to hear people complain, that the day hangs heavy upon them ; that they don't know what to do with themselves ! How monstrous are such expressions among creatures who can apply themselves to the duties of religion and meditation ; to the reading of useful books ; who may exercise themselves in the noble pursuits of knowledge and virtue, and every hour of their lives make themselves wiser and better than they were before !

84. *All :* all time.

A royal tribute from the poorest hours ;  
 Immense revenue ! ev'ry moment pays.  
 If nothing more than purpose is thy pow'r,  
 Thy purpose firm is equal to the deed : 90  
 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 heav'n. 95

## THE VAST IMPORTANCE OF TIME.

On all important time, through every age,  
 Tho' much, and warm, the wise have urged ; the man  
 Is yet unborn who duly weighs an hour.  
 "I've lost a day"—the prince who nobly cried,  
 Had been an emperor without his crown ; 100  
 '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,

87 *A royal tribute* : A large revenue.

88. *Ev'ry moment pays* : Every moment pays an immense revenue. The grammatical construction would have been made plainer by removing the exclamation point to the end of the line. It was placed after *revenue* for rhetorical effect.

95. *Thoughts are heard, &c.* : This line enjoins upon us a most weighty, but a sadly neglected duty ;—*guard well thy thought*, which means the same as *indulge no improper, unmanly thought*. This precept is enforced by a consideration the most striking, and expressed in a highly original manner ; *our thoughts are heard in heaven*. Our thoughts have a *voice* which is heard in heaven. The simple idea is, Heaven, or God, knows our thoughts.

99. *The prince, &c.* Reference is here made to the Roman emperor Vespasian, who is said to have made it, during his whole life, a practice to call himself to an account every night for the actions of the previous day ; and when, upon the review of any day, he could discover no good or useful action done by him, he entered upon his diary this record, *diem perdidit*—"I have lost a day."

104. *That God in man* : Reason.

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 adored.

## PRODIGAL WASTE OF TIME.

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 unstifled would recal)  
 Drives headlong towards 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

107. *The supreme* (blessing).

115. *We censure Nature, &c.*: This sentiment reminds us of those excellent observations which Seneca, the Roman philosopher, has made on the same topic. He says—we all of us complain of the shortness of time, and yet have much more than we know what to do with. Our lives are either spent in doing nothing at all, or in doing nothing to the purpose, or in doing nothing that we ought to do. We are always complaining that our days are few, and acting as though there would be no end to them.

120. *Brainless art*: Referring to the art or *invention* (117) we practise to make time pass rapidly and in a way that shall prevent reflection upon grave and religious subjects. The author justly characterizes the art as *brainless*, or irrational—one unworthy of an intelligent and immortal being.

125. *Takes off our chariot-wheels*: An expression borrowed from the writings of Moses—Exod. xiv. 24–5. “ And it came to pass that in the morning watch the Lord looked into the host of the Egyptians through the pillar

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

of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, and *took off their chariot wheels that they drove them heavily, &c.*"

127. *Blest leisure is our curse*: The antithesis should be noticed. Leisure, a blessing, an opportunity of good, in itself, through human folly becomes a curse, a torment, and an injury.

129-130. *As Atlas groan'd, &c.*: In Roman mythology, Atlas was the son of the giant Iapetus. Hesiod represents him as supporting the heaven on his head and hands. Homer calls him the *wise, or deep-thinking*, "who knows all the depths of the sea, and keeps the long pillars which hold heaven and earth asunder." In the progress of time additions were made to the legend. He is represented as a king in the north-western borders of Africa, who, having refused to Perseus the offices of hospitality, was changed into a mountain, by his looking on the head of the Gorgon Medusa which Perseus displayed for that purpose. The mountain took the name of Atlas. Another legend is, that Atlas resided in Lybia, was devoted to astronomy, and that, having ascended a high mountain for the purpose of making astronomical observations, he fell from it into the sea, in memory of which event the mountain and the sea were named after him. The story of his supporting the heavens may have been suggested either by the height of the mountain, or by the habits of Atlas as an astronomer, by supposing him to have been the inventor of the artificial sphere. Artists accordingly represent him as bearing our immense sphere upon his shoulders.

131. *For mercy to the next amusement*: As aiding us to rid ourselves of time, of *hateful time* (134). To get rid of it, we procure amusements even at the expense of *fields* that we are obliged to *mortgage*, and would even endure *imprisonment* if that would relieve us of the hateful commodity yet on hand. Yet, strange inconsistency! when Death proposes to take it all at a stroke, we marvellously change our opinion of its value, as the author finely illustrates human feeling respecting this matter in the remainder of this paragraph.

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.

## CAUSE AND CURE OF THE COMPLAINTS AGAINST TIME.

Leave to thy foes these errors and these ills ; 145  
 To Nature just, their cause and cure explore.  
 Not short Heav'n'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, used is life ; 150  
 And bare existence, man, to live ordain'd,  
 Wrings and oppresses with enormous weight.  
 And why ? since time was given 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,

139. *Time, in advance, &c.* : A most beautiful and original illustration.

146. *Cause and cure* : The former is our prodigal waste of time : the latter is our proper use of it, as explained in the following lines.

151. *Man* : object of the verbs, *wrings* and *oppresses*. *Ordained* is a participle agreeing with *man*.

153. *For use, not waste* : There are five things, says Dr. Dodd, in which a terrible waste of time is too commonly made ; in sleep, in meals, in dress (each absolutely necessary, yet each, alas ! how much abused by us), in idle and impertinent visits, and useless conversation when in company, and in vain and romantic thinking when alone.

157. *Feel his error if unseen* : Might from his painful sensations, if not from his intellectual perceptions, discover when he was misapplying his time. *Doom'd*, in the line above, means *appointed to be*.

And feeling, fly to labour for his cure ;  
 Not blund'ring, split on idleness for ease.  
 Life's cares are comforts † such by Heav'n design'd ; 160  
 He that hath 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

158. *Fly to labour for his cure* : An ancient philosopher well remarked ;—  
 “love labour : if you do not want it for food, you may for physic.”

159. *Split on idleness* : Allusion is made to a vessel dashing upon a rock and going to pieces. The figure is a strong one, and suited to impress us with the dangerous mistake those make who imagine that want of employment will be a source of ease. It will give as much ease to the mind, as the fatal rock gives to the vessel that is split upon it.

160. *Cares are comforts* : Our author abounds in pleasant and unexpected contrasts, as in this instance : so further on, *the rock of rest*. Dionysius, the Elder, on one occasion was asked if he was at leisure and had no business to attend to. “The gods forbid,” exclaimed he, “that ever it should be so with me ; for a bow, they say, will break if it be over-bent ; but the mind if it be over-slack.”

161. *Must make them, &c.* : No man, says Dr. Dodd, can be happy in total idleness : he that should be condemned to lie torpid and motionless “would fly for recreation to the mines and the gallies.” And it is well when nature or fortune find employment for those who would not have known how to procure it for themselves. Sir William Temple relates the story of an old man near the Hague, “who,” says he, “served my house from his dairy, and grew so rich that he gave it over, bought a house and furnished it at the Hague, resolving to live at ease the rest of his life ; but at length grew so weary of being idle, that he sold it, and returned to his dairy.” That old man has had many imitators.

163. *The rack of rest* : The rack is an instrument of torture, to which *rest* is here compared, because a total want of employment brings uneasiness and torment.

The ancient Romans (as a learned writer observes) were such haters of idleness that, whereas, in their theology, *Agnotia*, who was to stir up to action ; *Stimula*, who was to impel men to diligence ; and *Strenua*, who was to give them constancy and firmness, were all three received as deities, and were worshipped in temples within the city ; they would not receive *Quiet*, or *Rest*, as a goddess in public, but built a temple for her in one of their highways, without the city walls.

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 unnat'ral quarrel with ourselves; 170  
 Our thoughts at enmity; our bosom-broil;  
 We push Time from us, and we wish 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 loth to part.

O 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 deceased, 180  
 And smiles an angel, or a fury frowns.

Nor death nor life delight us. If time past  
 And time possess both pain us, what can please?  
 That which the Deity to please ordain'd,  
 Time used. The man who consecrates his hours 185  
 By vig'rous effort and an honest aim,  
 At once he draws the sting of life and death;  
 He walks with Nature, and her paths are peace.

166. *Time turns torment*: Becomes a source of torment. For an excellent illustration of this idea we may turn to Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*.

"Their only labour is to kill the time;  
 And labour dire it is, and weary woe.  
 They sit, they loll, turn o'er some idle rhyme,  
 Or saunter forth, with tottering steps and slow:  
 This soon too rude an exercise they find;  
 Straight on the couch their limbs again they throw,  
 Where hours on hours they sighing lie reclined,  
 And court the vapory god soft-breathing in the wind."

171. *Our bosom-broil*: Contending passions.

173. *Lustrums*: The Roman *lustrum* was a period of five years; at the end of which period the feast called *Lustralia* was observed, during which the censor purified the people by various sacrifices and ceremonies.

180. *The spirit walks, &c.*: The spirit (or ghost) of every deceased day walks (behind us) *and smiles, &c.*

## TIME—ITS NATURE, ORIGIN, AND SPEED.

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 ! no : on the long destined 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 through 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

190. *Time's nature* : See (194). It is a god—an omnipotent wonder-worker (196).

192. *Because untouch'd. &c.* : Because time cannot be handled or seen. *All-sensual*, (entirely sensual) man looks upon it as nothing.

194 *'Tis Fortune's* : Everything, but time, belongs to Fortune, or is beyond our control.

198. *Heaven's stranger* : A stranger sent to us from heaven.

203-4. *On emanation bent* : Purposing an emanation from himself ; intent on originating some effect. *And big with Nature*, about to give birth to the various objects of nature.

205. *Time was born* : The date of the creation of the universe is described as the *origin* of time. Its origin is farther indicated (209) as *something cut off from eternity, mysterious circle, and cast beneath the skies*.



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 sire ;  
 In his immutability to rest,  
 When worlds, that count his circles now, unhinged, 220  
 (Fate the loud signal sounding) headlong rush *Apocalypse*  
 To timeless night and chaos, whence they rose.

212. *Horologe machinery* : Time-measuring (hour-telling) machinery, by which expression our author indicates the moving bodies of the solar and stellar systems.

213. *His children, play, &c.* : Hours, days, and months, and years, are here beautifully represented as the children of Time, playing *like numerous wings* (birds with wings) *around him, as he flies* towards his own sire, Eternity (218). It is a pity that our author did not content himself with this representation ; but, ever fond of displaying his ingenuity, he spoils the effect of the passage by immediately representing the hours, &c., not as smaller birds sporting around the parent bird, but as plumes or feathers of unequal size, giving shape to the ample pinions (wings) of Time, as the *offspring of Eternity*, and hastening to join his sire. This rapid change of figure is in exceedingly bad taste. Either of the above representations, alone, is appropriate ; but if one is correct the other is false, and of course they should not have both been brought forward. The *hours &c.*, could not be little birds fluttering around their mightier sire, and at the same time the feathers that composed his *ample pinions*.

220. *Unhinged* : It is difficult to perceive the propriety of this epithet in its application to the rolling worlds of space. They are not moving on hinges, and hence when it shall please their Creator to stop their movements and reduce them again to chaos, the act will be something quite different from that which this epithet expresses. The author may have used it on the authority of Milton, who applies it to the world, but without reference to its motion in its orbit.

" His constellations set  
 And the well-balanced world on hinges hung."

221. *Fate* : A Pagan term in a Christian sense ; *Providence*, or God acting in conformity to his own fixed purpose.

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.

## THE LORENZOS OF THE AGE.

Ye well array'd! ye lilies of our land!

223-4. *With levities new-wing, &c.*: The author here speaks of the *too rapid flight* of man's short day *being hastened* by the *frivolities* that *give new wings* to it. The period of a person's life on earth is here represented by a bird in rapid motion: whereas, a few lines above, the whole duration of the visible universe was presented under the same figure.

225. *Or*: The first of these, in poetic usage, means *either*.

231. *Parian tomb*: Tomb constructed of the Parian marble—marble from one of the Grecian islands (Paros); distinguished for its durability, beauty, and expensiveness. In Dr. Clarke's Travels (quoted by Anthon) is a long and particular account of the varieties of marble found in different parts of Greece, and out of which the world-renowned statuary of ancient Greece was formed. The qualities (he informs us) that give great value to the Parian over the Pentelican are, that of hardening by exposure to atmospheric air, and the consequent property of resisting decomposition through a series of ages. The Pentelican is white, and hence in the early periods of Grecian art was preferred. Of this the famous Parthenon at Athens was built; but the finest Grecian sculpture which has been preserved to the present time, is generally of Parian marble. The statues and bas-reliefs executed in this kind of marble retain, with all the delicate softness of wax, the mild lustre even of their original polish, while those which were constructed of Pentelican marble have been decomposed, and sometimes exhibit a surface as earthy and as rude as common limestone. The true Parian marble has generally somewhat of a faint bluish tinge among the white, and often has blue veins in different parts of it. In one of his Odes, Horace thus alludes to it—Bk. I. Od. 19.

“Urit me Glycère nitor,  
*Splendentis Pario marmore purtus.*”

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, sauce, and song,  
 And robes, and notions, framed in foreign looms!  
 O ye Lorenzos of our age! who deem 245  
 One moment unamused a misery  
 Not made for feeble man; who call aloud  
 For ev'ry bauble drivell'd o'er by sense,  
 For rattles and conceits of ev'ry cast; *Toys*  
 For change of follies and relays of joy, 250

235. *Ye lilies male, &c.*: A witty comparison, suggested by what was said of the lilies of the field, by the great Teacher, that *they neither toil nor spin* (Mat. 6 : 28). Our author is characterizing the fops or dandies of his age.

238. *Who nothing can support*: Who can carry nothing. The turn next given to the thought is full of humour—*yourselves most insupportable*.

241. *In Leo*: One of the constellations or signs of the Zodiac in which the sun appears during winter; the constellations being usually represented on celestial charts under the figures of various animals to which the relative positions of the prominent stars which they contain are conceived to bear some resemblance.

242. *Favonius*: The west wind which prevailed at the commencement of spring. It also had the name of *Zephyrus*, or Zephyr. Milton thus writes of it in his Allegro.

"The frolic wind that breathes the spring,  
 Zephyr with Aurora playing  
 As he met her once a Maying, &c."

244. *Notions*: Fanciful things. It seems that the phrase Yankee *notions*, is not exactly original with us: but was used by our author a century ago and more.

248. *Drivell'd o'er by sense*: Over which the senses were foolishly and constantly employed.

250. *Relays of joy*: Succession of joys, in allusion to horses provided at regular intervals for the use of the messengers of Eastern kings.

To drag your patient through 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 ? *-short list.* 255

## THE OPERATIONS OF CONSCIENCE.

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,  
 List'ning, o'erhears the whispers of our camp,  
 Our dawning purposes of heart explores,  
 And steals our embryos of iniquity. *repeated*  
 As all-rapacious usurers conceal 270  
 Their Doomsday-book from all-consuming heirs ;

256. *O treach'rous Conscience, &c.* : With this line commences an admirable personification of this distinguishing and authoritative faculty of the human soul ; that by which we take cognizance of actions as right or wrong—by which also we approve the former and disapprove of the latter ; and by which we are, further, ordered to practise the right and abstain from the wrong. By the operations of this faculty we are led, moreover, to anticipate the retributions of another state of existence.

She is called *treacherous*, by our author, in allusion to the fact that she seems now to be asleep, and to pay no regard to actions for each of which hereafter, with tremendous severity, she will call us to a full account.

257. *Syren song* : Explained Night I. (323) .

269. *Embryos of iniquity* : The purposes that may have been formed to commit any acts of iniquity, and which in a certain time would grow into outward acts.

271. *Doomsday-book* : Book of accounts ; involving the idea of ruin to

Thus, with indulgence most severe, she treats  
 Us spendthrifts of inestimable time ;  
Unnoted, notes each moment misapplied ;  
 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 ?

## TIME'S MOMENTOUS VALUE.

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,

those against whom charges are therein made. The name may have been suggested by the analogy between the reckoning connected with such a book, affecting the destiny in this life, and that more solemn and decisive reckoning which is connected with the "books" the Scriptures speak of as forthcoming in the day of final *doom*—the day of judgment, when the accounts of our lifetime on earth will be presented, and a corresponding sentence awarded.

The rapacity of the usurer induces him to conceal from extravagant heirs of a fortune not yet in their possession, the swelling account which his books show against them, lest they should be alarmed at its amount, and become more prudent in their expenditure, and thus diminish the gains of the usurer from money loaned them. This illustrates finely the subject in hand.

274. *Unnoted* : That is, by us. The play upon the word *note* is worthy of remark ; *unnoted, notes*.

280. *Such that sleeper* : Such is, &c.

286. *Each night we die* : We seem to die. Death is often, from the apparent resemblance, called *sleep*.

288. *If trifling kills, &c.* : The thoughts expressed immediately above and the language in which they are conveyed, for their terseness originality,

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 ;

and impressiveness, deserve our attentive study and meditation. As an illustration, in part, of what is implied in *trifling* with time, the following pithy observations of a recent English writer deserve profound regard.

Individuals there are who are doing something, though it would be difficult to specify what. They are busy, but it is a busy idleness. To annihilate time, to quiet conscience, to banish care, to keep *ennui* out of one door, and serious thoughts out of the other, gives them all their occupation. And, betwixt their flattering visits and frivolous enjoyments, their midnight diversions, their haggard mornings, and shortened days, their yawning attempts at reading, and sulky application to matters of business which they cannot well evade ; betwixt mobs of callers, and shoals of ceremonious notes, they fuss and fret themselves into the pleasant belief that they are the most worried and hard-driven of mortal men. To flit about from house to house ; to pay futile visits, where, if the talk were written down, it would amount to little more than the chattering of a swallow ; to bestow all your thoughts on graceful attitudes, and nimble movements, and polished attire ; to roam from land to land, with so little information in your head, or so little taste for the sublime and beautiful in your soul, that could a swallow publish his travels, and did you publish yours, we should probably find the one a counterpart of the other : the winged traveller enlarging on the discomforts of his nest, and the wingless one on the miseries of his hotel or his chateau ; you describing the places of amusement, or enlarging on the vastness of the country and the abundance of the game, and your rival eloquent on the self-same things. Oh, it is a thought not ridiculous, but appalling. If the earthly history of some were written down ; if a faithful record were kept of the way they spend their time ; if all the hours of idle vacancy or idler occupancy were put together, and the very small amount of useful diligence deducted, the life of a bird or quadruped would be a nobler one—more worthy of its powers, and more equal to its Creator's end in forming it. *Such a register is kept.* Though the trifler does not chronicle his own vain words and wasted hours, they chronicle themselves. They find their indelible place in that *book* of remembrance with which human hand cannot tamper, and from which no erasure save one can blot them.

293. *All exerts* : It is unusual to connect the adjective *all*, with a verb in the singular, but perhaps the expression may here be justified on the ground that concentration is thus given to the thought ; as though it were said *totality exerts (itself)*. Or it may be regarded as equivalent to the phrase, *every-*

More than creation labours !—labours more !  
 And is there in creation, what, amidst 295  
 This tumult universal, wing'd despatch,  
 And ardent energy, supinely yawns ?—  
 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 in 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

*thing exerts itself*, thus bringing up the idea of a universal individuality being engaged. This thought is expressed in the words that follow and which may be regarded as explanatory of the clause we have been considering—*in effort all*, that is, all things are employed.

294. *Labours more* ? Does more than creation labour ?

300. *Hair-hung* : Hung by a hair. All the epithets here applied to the *fate* of man are exceedingly appropriate, and admirably well chosen.

305. *Throw empires*, &c. : Empires are less valuable than years. Even *moments* should be *seized* and appropriated, since *Heav'n's on their wing*. If not seized *at once* they are gone ; they are *on the wing*.

A few remarks from Robertson's Charles V. are appropriate. "Though it requires neither deep reflection nor extraordinary discernment to discover that the state of royalty is not exempt from carè and disappointment ; though most of those who are exalted to a throne find solicitude, and satiety, and disgust to be their perpetual attendants in that envied pre-eminence ; yet to descend voluntarily from the supreme to a subordinate station, and to relinquish the possession of power in order to attain the enjoyment of happiness, seems to be an effort too great for the human mind. Several instances, indeed, occur in history, of monarchs who have quitted a throne, and have ended their days in retirement. But they were either weak princes, from whose hands some stronger rival had wrested their sceptre, and compelled them to descend with reluctance into a private station. Dioclesian is perhaps the only prince capable of holding the reins of government, who ever resigned them from deliberate choice, and who continued during many years to enjoy the tranquillity of retirement without fetching one penitent sigh, or casting back one look of desire, towards the power or dignity which he had abandoned."

In the advice given by Dr. Young, *Throw empires away*, we are reminded

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 re-import  
 The period past, re-give 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-power'd to cancel, expiate, raise, adorn,  
 And reinstate us on the rock of peace.  
 Let it not share its predecessor's fate,  
 Nor, like its eldest sisters, die a fool. 320

of the singular example of Charles V. who when only about fifty-five years old, voluntarily relinquished to his son Philip his vast dominions, embracing Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Italy, and Spain, and retired to a monastery in Spain, that he might be altogether relieved from the cares of government, and the pursuits of ambition, and prepare himself for another world, of his approach to which he had for some time been painfully admonished by the inroads upon his constitution of an incurable disorder. It has been said that he renounced his authority over his extensive dominions, in disgust, because he could not make them greater, and because his favourite schemes were defeated and abandoned ; and because he sickened at the unsubstantial enjoyment of power and dominion. But while these things may have had some share in bringing about the result, it is probable that the chief cause was the declining state of his health, which unfitted him for a proper care of such vast dominions.

306. *A moment we may wish, &c.* : The volumes of biography teem with instances of this melancholy truth.

311. *O for yesterdays to come* : a striking way of expressing the wish for a repetition of our past days, or for the privilege of enjoying them once more that we might more wisely occupy them in thought and action.

315. *The gods indulge* : A heathen mode of expression entirely unworthy of a Christian poet.

320. *Its eldest sisters* : a beautiful personification for the days that have preceded the present. But while this figure pleases us, we are immediately offended by the incongruity of what follows. It is asked, *shall it evaporate in fume* (smoke), *fly off fuliginous* (sooty), and *stain, &c.* Who would think of



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 clemencies of Heav'n !

## SMILING YESTERDAYS.

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 backward with a smile ;  
 Nor, like the Parthian, wound him as they fly : 335

asking such questions in regard to a person ? What possible application have they to a *day*, considered as one of a large family of *sisters* ? It is a prominent fault even of this highly-gifted poet to spoil a figure by either carrying it too far, by changing it into another, or by appending some things that are incongruous, of course changing even a bright and beautiful image into an obscure and confused one.

324. *More wretched*, &c. : "When once," says a powerful writer, "this life of wondrous opportunities and awful advantages is over ; when the twenty or fifty years of probation are fled away ; when mortal existence, with its facilities for personal improvement and serviceableness to others, is gone beyond recall ; when the trifler looks back to the long pilgrimage, with all the doors of hope and doors of usefulness, past which he skipped in his frisky forgetfulness ; what anguish will it move to think that he has gambolled through such a world without salvation to himself, without any real benefit to his brethren, a busy trifler, a vivacious idler, a clever fool !

325. *Him* : Reference is made to the *son of foresight*, &c., described (331-4).

335. *Like the Parthian*, &c. : This singular mode of warfare was practised by that ancient oriental nation, and is thus alluded to by Horace, the great Roman satirist—

"*Miles (timet) sagittas et celerem fugam  
 Parthi.*"—Od. 13, Book II.

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 god-like passion for eternals quench'd; 340  
 All relish of realities expired;  
 Renounced all correspondence with the skies:  
 Or freedom chain'd; quite wingless 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;  
 Embruted ev'ry faculty divine:  
 Heart-buried in the rubbish of the world,  
 The world, that gulf of souls, immortal souls,  
 Souls elevate, angelic, wing'd with fire 350  
 To reach the distant skies, and triumph there  
 On thrones, which shall not mourn their masters changed;  
 Though we from earth, ethereal they that fell.  
 Such veneration due, O man, to man.

## CONTEMPT OF THE WORLD.

Who venerate themselves the world despise 355

"Nec patitur Scythas  
 Et *versis animosum equis*  
*Parthum dicere.*"—Od. 19, Bk. I.

The mode of fighting (says Anthon) was peculiar, and well calculated to annoy. When apparently in full retreat, they would turn round on their steeds and discharge their arrows with the most unerring accuracy; and hence, to borrow the language of an ancient writer, it was victory to them if a counterfeited flight threw their enemies into disorder.

The fitness of the comparison in the text will, in view of this account, be easily and fully appreciated.

345. *Prone to the centre*: That is, of the earth.

350. *Elevate*: Elevated.

352. *Masters changed*: Men, in place of the angels that were hurled from them on account of their apostacy.

353. *Though we are of an humble origin*—from the earth; while they that fell are ethereal in their nature.

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 banquets, 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 deplored;  
 Lamenting, or lamented, all our lot! 365

## PAST HOURS.

Is death at distance? No: he has been on thee;  
 And giv'n sure earnest of his final blow.  
 Those hours which lately smiled, 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

356. *Escutcheon'd world*: Gay, ornamented world. In the days of chivalry knights were distinguished from each other by the emblems or devices imprinted on their *escutcheon* (shield), sometimes upon their banner, sometimes upon a short garment which they wore above their armor, hence denominated a *coat of arms*. Military companies, families of distinction, and nations, have long been accustomed to employ certain emblems by way of distinction or honor. These devices or emblems are usually called a *coat of arms*, and in modern times are often impressed on carriages or articles of furniture. The science of heraldry takes charge of these very important modes of distinction!

367. *Earnest*: Pledge, premonition.

369. *Pallid to thought*: Pallid not to the eye, but to thought, or in view of the mind.

370. *Which nothing disembogues*: Which empties nothing out again, but retains what it has received.

375. *Stars are dust*: Are reduced to dust; the present tense used, instead

'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, though gray, is still a child.  
 Loose then from earth the grasp of fond desire,  
 Weigh anchor, and some happier clime explore.

## THE SUN-DIAL ADMONISHES.

Art thou so moor'd thou canst 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,

of the future, to indicate the more certain accomplishment of the event and to present it more vividly before the mind. The line is a very impressive one.

379-384. This passage has several obscurities, but we shall endeavor to bring out the author's meaning. *Their answers form, &c.* : the history of our past hours constitutes *experience*, or is a record of it. *If Wisdom's friend, &c.* : If our past hours have been a friend to wisdom, (have been wisely employed,) they are her best friend : if not thus employed, they have been her worst foe. *O reconcile them* : Oh reconcile your hours to wisdom ; employ them hereafter as wisdom counsels you. *Kind Experience cries, &c.* : Experience kindly admonishes you that earthly pursuits are vain. The history of past hours utters this language. Even the success of worldly enterprises has served to make us despair of any happier result.

387-9. The expressions *loose*, *weigh anchor*, and *moored*, are appropriate to the figure of a vessel at anchor, in which the reader is imagined to be.

390. *A ply* : A turn, or direction.

And sleep, till Earth herself shall be no more ; 395  
 Since then (as emmets, their small world o'erthrown)  
 We, sore amazed, 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 bowls, the proud Assyrian pale,  
 Erewhile high-flush'd with insolence and wine ?  
 Like that the dial speaks, and points to thee,  
 Lorenzo ! loth to break thy banquet up : 410  
 '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 amazed !  
 Man's make encloses the sure seeds of death ;  
 Life feeds the murderer : ingrate ! he thrives  
 On her own meal, and then his nurse devours.

## ALL MISTAKE THEIR TIME OF DAY.

But here, Lorenzo, the delusion lies ; 420

395-6. The illustration drawn from the emmets (or ants) is remarkably graphic.

399. *Controller of the skies* : Not in the sense of ruler of the skies ; but our own choice *decides* whether we shall inhabit heaven or not.

407. *Proud Assyrian pale* : The Assyrian monarch, Belshazzar. The fact alluded to is fully described in the prophecy of Daniel, chap. iv.

414. *Magi* : men who pretended by aid of astrology, to foretell events.

417. *Man's make* · Man's bodily structure, or, constitution.

419. *On her own meal* : On the same food that life does, and then devours

That solar shadow, as it measures life,  
 It life resembles too: Life speeds away  
 From point to point, though 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; gnomons, 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;  
 E'en age itself. Fresh hopes are hourly sown

*his nurse* (life). The same food which supports life furnishes material for death and the grave to feed upon, to devour.

421. *Solar shadow*: Shadow on the sun-dial.

427. *Gnomons*: The *gnomon* is the index or pin on the sun-dial, which in the sun-light casts a shadow, and thus indicates upon a graduated circle the time of day. Dials were invented by the Chaldeans in a remote antiquity.

429. *More glorious reason*: More glorious than the sun. Warnings are delivered in vain unless men are in the exercise of reason, just as the dial is useless if the sun does not shine.

431. *That sedentary shadow*: That slowly moving, or, as it seems, stationary shadow, travels fast in the view of reason.

435. *A Wilmington, &c.*: The Earl of Wilmington to whom this *Night* is addressed. The meaning probably is, that his calculations are behind the real time: he is older than he supposes; he has less time than he imagines for the accomplishment of the plans he may have formed. So far as a gentle reproof is conveyed in this statement, our author, lest it should give offence to the titled dignitary, softens it not a little by involving all men in the same charge—and *all mankind mistake their time of day*. So understood, this line explains the one before it.

In furrow'd brows. So gentle's 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 promised hour.

## UTILITY OF RATIONAL CONVERSATION.

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 our latent truth,  
 Best found, so sought ; to the recluse more coy !

438. *In furrow'd brows*: The idea of new hopes continually arising even in advanced life, could not have been more beautifully expressed.

443. *Older for his years*: Older *in consequence* of the years he has passed; or older, *notwithstanding* the years he has seen.

447. *Similar*: Similar subjects. *Philander! thou whose mind, &c.*: The grammatical construction here is obscure, and at first glance seems imperfect; but it may be defended, by suggesting that, from *thou* to *name* (449) inclusive, the words are merely descriptive of Philander, who, being dead, is here addressed by the rhetorical figure of Apostrophe. *Thou* stands in apposition with Philander. The words from *thou* to *name* might, with advantage to the reader, have been included in a parenthesis.

451-2. *Thaw'd and shorten'd winter's eve*: To be taken of course in a figurative sense; meaning that their mutual conversation was conducted with so much pleasant warmth that the coldness of the winter evening was made to appear less intense, and its length failed to be observed.

454. *Best found, so sought*: The meaning is, that the collision of two or more minds in free and rational conversation is the most thorough and the most easy mode of eliciting truth, which to the recluse or private student is

Thoughts disentangle, 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 ?

*N. J. J.* As bees mix'd nectar draw from fragrant flow'rs,  
 So men from friendship, wisdom and delight ;  
 Twins tied by Nature ; if they part they die.  
 Hast thou no friend to set thy mind abroad ? 465

*Hay* Good sense will stagnate. Thoughts shut up, want air,  
 And spoil, like bales unopen'd to the sun.

Had thought been all, sweet speech had been denied :  
 Speech, thought's canal ! speech, thought's criterion too !

*Canal*  
*MINE* Thought in the mine may come forth gold or dross ; 470  
*MINTIN* When coin'd in word, we know its real worth :  
 If sterling, store it for thy future use ;

more coy, difficult to be approached. Allusion is made in this word to a modest, retiring maiden, whose acquaintance is sought.

" Like Daphne she, as lovely and as coy."— *Waller*.

This figure under which Truth is represented is beautiful in itself, yet it fails to be approved by good taste, from its incongruity with the figure under which Truth had in the same connexion been represented, namely, that of sparks struck out by the collision of flint and steel.

456. *The thread* : The thread of thought. The comparison is well carried out in this passage.

457. *To tie up nonsense for a song* : A severe satire upon the particular class of songs, a description of which is subjoined ; trashy, profitless, polluting to the imagination and provocative of unhallowed passion, *chiming her saints to Cytherea's fane*, that is to say, *moving the devotees of unhallowed passion to the temple of Venus*, one of whose classical names is Cytherea.

464. *Twins tied by Nature* : A beautiful figure, and a most useful thought. Wisdom and Delight are born together, and live united in bonds indissoluble, *if they part they die*. And these are said to be derived from *Friendship*, from Friendship exerting itself in rational communications. They should (for the sake of congruity) have been represented as the offspring of Friendship.

465. *To set thy mind abroad* : At liberty—to cause your thoughts to flow.

472. *If sterling* : If of excellent quality, of standard worth.





Converse, the menage, breaks it to the bit  
 Of due restraint, and emulation's spur  
 Gives graceful energy, by rivals awed.  
 'Tis converse qualifies for solitude,  
 As exercise for solitary rest :  
 By that untutor'd, Contemplation raves,  
 And Nature's fool by Wisdom's is outdone.

495

FRIENDSHIP, THE MEANS OF HAPPINESS.

Wisdom, though 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.

500

505

497. *Nature's fool* : or the idiot, *is outdone by Wisdom's fool*, the educated fool ; the man of learning and study, whose mind has not been disciplined by rational intercourse with persons of refinement and of sound sense.

501. *That* : happiness.

502. *Fool, without her bells* : Our author here probably alludes to the ancient practice among kings, and other persons of rank, of employing a buffoon, to act as a jester and a butt of ridicule. He is described as being usually dressed most fantastically, with a cap having a red stripe on the top, which was called a *coxcomb* ; he also is said to have carried a short stick, with a head carved on the end, and surmounted in some cases with a small bladder, partly filled with peas and gravel, with which he made frolicksome attacks upon those who sought to be amused by him. It is probable that tinkling bells constituted in many cases a part of his finery.

505-6. To promote human amity (friendship), Nature denies or damps all joys which are not divided or shared with others.

Needful auxiliars are our friends, to give 510  
 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 breas<sup>t</sup> 515  
 Celestial happiness ! whene'er she stoops

510. *Needful auxiliars, &c.* : To take friendship from life, says Cicero, would be almost the same thing as to take the sun from the world: "Solem a mundo tollere videntur qui amicitiam e vita tollunt." It is indeed the sunshine of those who otherwise would walk in darkness; it beams with unclouded radiance on our moral path, and is itself warmth and beauty to the very path along which it invites us to proceed. He knows not how poor all the splendors of worldly prosperity are in themselves who enjoys them with that increase of happiness which friendship has given to them; and he who is still rich enough to have a friend cannot know what extreme poverty and misery are, because the only misery which is truly misery is that which has no one to comfort it.—*Brown's Phil.*, vol. iii. 387.

512. *Full*: Exclusively.

515. *Reverberated*: Reflected; those pleasures which we derive from others. An illustration of these may be found in the sincere and elegant friendship which subsisted between Scipio, one of the greatest of Roman generals, and Lælius, one of the wisest and most eloquent of Roman citizens. It is portrayed by Cicero in his work *De Amicitia*—who in regard to those distinguished fellow countrymen remarks:—"What a consolation is it to have a second-self, to whom we have nothing secret, and into whose heart we may pour our own with perfect unreserve! Could we taste prosperity so sensibly, if we had no one to share with us in our joy? And what a relief is it in adversity to have a friend still more affected with it than ourselves." But the friendship of these individuals derived much of its value and beauty from its eminent disinterestedness, and the foundation it had in a high esteem of each other's virtues. "We both," says Lælius, "derived great advantages from it, but these were not our views when we began to love each other."

Nothing upon earth (says Dr. Dodd), can be so desirable as such an amity. But in vain do we seek it among the ignorant, the vain, the selfish, or men of loose and profligate principles. We must soon be ashamed of loving the man whom we cannot esteem. It is David and Jonathan, it is Damon and Pythias, Tully and Atticus, Scipio and Lælius, and such only who can truly taste and dignify pure friendship; and such only can say with Ovid, "Nos duo turba sumus;" we two are a multitude.

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, 520  
 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.

FRIENDSHIP, NOT TO BE BOUGHT WITH GOLD.

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.

536. *Hyblean bliss* : Honey'd, exquisite bliss ; the epithet is drawn from *Hybla*, a town in Sicily, famous for its honey.

538. *Elysian flower* : Delightful flower—beautiful and fragrant. *Elysium*, according to the conceptions of the classical poets, was a region of perpetual spring, of verdant fields, enamelled with beautiful flowers ; abounding also in shady groves, and watered with charming streams. In one of Milton's poems we have an allusion to the subject.

“That Orpheus self may heave his head  
 From golden slumber on a bed  
 Of heap'd *Elysian flowers*.”

Though choice of follies fasten on the great,  
 None clings more obstinate than fancy fond,  
 That sacred friendship is their easy prey,  
 Caught by the wafture of a golden lure, 545  
 Or fascination of a high-born smile.  
 Their smiles, the great and the coquet throw out  
 For other 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  
 You do your rent-rolls most felonious wrong,  
 By taking our attachment to yourselves.  
 Can gold gain friendship ? Impudence of hope !  
 As well mere man an angel might beget.  
 Love, and love only, is the loan for love. 555  
 Lorenzo, pride repress, nor hope to find  
 A friend, but what has found a friend in thee.  
 All like the purchase, few the price will pay ;  
 And this makes friends such miracles below.

## HOW TO OBTAIN, AND TO TREAT A FRIEND.

What if (since daring on so nice a theme) 560  
 I show thee friendship delicate as dear,  
 Of tender violations apt to die ?  
 Reserve will wound it, and distrust destroy ;  
 Deliberate on all things with thy friend :  
 But since friends grow not thick on ev'ry bough, 565  
 Nor ev'ry friend unrotten at the core ;  
 First on thy friend delib'rate with thyself ;  
 Pause, ponder, sift ; not eager in the choice,

545. *Wafture* : Waving.

550. *Cofferers* : Treasurers, hoarders.

555. *Loan for love* : Means of securing the love of others.

558. *Like the purchase* : Like a friend.

560 *Daring* : Daring to write.

565. *Friends grow, &c.* : Friends are here compared to fruit.

Nor jealous of the chosen : fixing, fix :  
 Judge before friendship, then confide till death. 570  
 Well for thy friend, but nobler far for thee.  
 How gallant danger for earth's highest prize !  
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.' 575  
 So sung he, (angels hear that angel sing !  
 Angels from friendship gather half their joy !)  
 So sung Philander, as his friend went round  
 In the rich ichor, in the gen'rous blood  
 Of Bacchus, purple god of joyous wit, 580

569. *Jealous of the chosen* : Suspicious, or doubtful, of the friendly dispositions of those you choose as friends.

*Fixing, fix* : Establishing your choice, do it firmly and permanently.

570. *Judge before friendship* : Dr. Thomas Brown has well observed that, if we were sufficiently aware how great a command over our whole life we give to any one whom we admit to our intimacy ; how ready we are to adopt the errors of those whom we love, and to regard their very faults not merely as excusable, but as objects of imitation, or at least to imitate them without thinking whether they ought to be imitated, and without knowing even that we are imitating them, we should be a little more careful than we usually are in making a choice which is to decide in a great measure whether we are to be virtuous or vicious, happy or miserable ; or which in most cases, if we still continue happy, upon the whole must often disturb our happiness, and, if we still continue virtuous, make virtue a greater effort.

It is before we *yield* ourselves then to the regard, that we should strive to estimate the object of it, and to estimate his value, not by the gratification of a single day, but by the influence which he may continue to exercise on our life.—*Philos. of Mind*, vol. iii. 389.

578. *His friend went round* : The name of his friend went round at the convivial table in drinking to his health and prosperity ; a practice not to be commended, being fraught with evils, as experience abundantly and most sadly demonstrates.

579. *Ichor* : Juice that flows in the veins of the gods ; used by our author as synonymous with *generous blood*, the blood of *Bacchus*, who in Pagan mythology was the inventor and the god of wine, and of all the dissipation resulting from its use. Under this figure of ichor and blood, simply wine is intended.

A brow solute, and ever-laughing eye.  
 He drank long health and virtue to his friend ;  
 His friend ! who warm'd him more, who more inspired ;  
 Friendship's the wine of life ; but friendship new  
 (Not such was his) is neither strong nor pure. 585  
 O ! for the bright complexion, cordial warmth,  
 And elevating spirit of a friend,  
 For twenty summers ripening by my side ;  
 All feculence of falsehood long thrown down ;  
 All social virtues rising in his soul ; 590  
 As crystal clear, and smiling as they rise !  
 Here nectar flows ! it sparkles in our sight ;  
 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. 595

## DEPARTED FRIENDS.

Think'st thou the theme intoxicates my song ?  
 Am I too warm ?—Too warm I cannot be.  
 I loved him much, but now I love him more.  
 Like birds, whose beauties languish, half-conceal'd,  
 Till mounted on the wing, their glossy plumes 600  
 Expanded shine with azure, green, and gold ;-

581. *Brow solute* : a brow relaxed not careworn.

584. *Friendship's the wine of life* : A beautiful observation, meaning that friendship produces an exhilarating and cheerful glow of feeling, similar to that which is experienced from drinking the juice of the grape. Would that young men, and all others, would subscribe to the truth of this observation ; and, instead, of using the intoxicating beverage, employ as a safe and valuable substitute, the excitement of a virtuous friendship—the *wine of life* !

The figure is well carried out in the following lines, running a parallel between friendship and wine. When *new*, it is *neither strong nor pure* ; but after *twenty summers ripening*, &c. ; all *feculence* (dregs) *long thrown down* ; virtues, *rising—smiling—sparkles—rich to the taste*, &c.

592. *Nectar* : The fabled drink of the gods ; the name is applied by poets to any peculiarly delightful drink.

How blessings brighten as they take their flight ;  
 His flight Philander took : his upward flight,  
 If ever soul ascended. Had he dropt,  
 (That eagle genius !) O had he let fall 605  
 One feather as he flew, I then had wrote  
 What friends might flatter, prudent foes forbear,  
 Rivals scarce damn, and Zoilus reprieve.  
 Yet what I can I must : it were profane  
 To quench a glory lighted at the skies, 610  
 And cast in shadows his illustrious close.  
 Strange ; the theme most affecting, most sublime,  
 Momentous most to man, should sleep unsung !  
 And yet it sleeps, by genius unawaked,  
 Painim or Christian, to the blush of wit. 615  
 Man's highest triumph, man's profoundest fall,  
 The death-bed of the just ! is yet undrawn  
 By mortal hand : it merits a divine :  
 Angels should paint it, angels ever there ;  
 There, on a post of honour and of joy. 620

## DEATH-BED OF THE JUST.

Dare I presume, then ? But Philander bids,  
 And glory tempts, and inclination calls.  
 Yet am I struck, as struck the soul beneath  
 Aerial groves' impenetrable gloom,  
 Or in some mighty ruin's solemn shade, 625

602. *As they take their flight* : We do not fully appreciate our friends nor understand their excellencies till death removes them. The comparison employed to illustrate this idea is admirable, *Like birds, &c.*

608. *Rivals, &c.* : Rivals scarce condemn as a literary performance, and *Zoilus reprieve*, or delay the execution of the sentence of condemnation. *Zoilus* was a sophist and grammarian of Amphipolis, who had indulged in great severity of criticism upon the poems of Homer and the writings of Plato and others.

615. *Painim* : Pagan.

619. *Ever there* : At the death-bed of the just.



Or gazing, by pale lamps, on high-born dust  
 In vaults, thin courts of poor unflatter'd kings,  
 Or at the midnight altar's hallow'd flame.

It is religion to proceed : I pause—

And enter, awed, the temple of my fame.

630

Is it his death-bed ? No ; it is his shrine :

Behold him there just rising to a god.

The chamber where the good man meets his fate

Is privileged beyond the common walk

Of virtuous life, quite in the verge of heav'n.

635

Fly, ye profane ! if not, draw near with awe,

Receive the blessing, and adore the chance

That throw in this Bethesda your disease :

If unrestored by this, despair your cure ;

For here resistless demonstration dwells :

640

A death-bed's a detector of the heart.

Here tired dissimulation drops her mask

Through life's grimace, that mistress of the scene !

631. *Shrine* : A miniature temple. There is an allusion to the Pagan idea of the apotheosis or deification of the eminently virtuous or distinguished dead. The name *god* is used here, however, not in the Pagan sense, but in that of angel, or glorified spirit.

636. *Fly, ye profane* : An imitation of the language of the heathen priestess.—Virgil's *Æn.* 6 : 258.

“Procul, O ! procul este, profani,

Conclamat vates, totoque absistite luco :”

638. *This Bethesda* : See John v. 2—4. This is the name of a bath, or reservoir of water, existing at Jerusalem in the time of our Saviour, at which great cures were miraculously effected. It was hence called *Bethesda* (or house of mercy), there being five apartments erected around it for the accommodation of the sick.

641. *A detector of the heart* : As an instance of this, on his death-bed, the penitent Earl of Rochester was touched (says Dr. Dodd) with very strong compunction for the various indecencies he had diffused from his pen ; and was extremely solicitous to suppress and stifle them, as suited only to serve the cause of vice and profaneness. He ingenuously declared “that that absurd and foolish philosophy which the world had so much admired, as propagated by the late Mr. Hobbs and others, had undone him, and many more of the best parts in the nation.”

Here real and apparent are the same.  
 You see the man, you see his hold on heav'n, 645  
 If sound his virtue; as Philander's sound.  
 Heav'n waits not the last moment; owns her friends  
 On this side death, and points them out to men;  
 A lecture silent, but of sov'reign pow'r!  
 To vice confusion, and to virtue peace. 650

Whatever farce the boastful hero plays,  
 Virtue alone has majesty in death, *DEATH*  
 And greater still, the more the tyrant frowns.  
 Philander! he severely frown'd on thee;  
 'No warning giv'n! unceremonious fate! 655

A sudden rush from life's meridian joys!  
 A wrench from all we love! from all we are!  
 A restless bed of pain! a plunge opaque  
 Beyond conjecture! feeble nature's dread!  
 Strong reason's shudder at the dark unknown! 660

A sun extinguish'd! a just opening grave!  
 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) 665  
 Demands from man?—I thought him man till now.

Thro' nature's wreck, thro' vanquish'd agonies,  
 (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? 670  
 No, not in death the mortal to be found.  
 His conduct is a legacy for all,  
 Richer than Mammon's for his single heir.

673. *Mammon*: The Syriac name for the god of wealth. It is used in Scripture as synonymous with wealth, or riches. By a liberty granted to poets, Milton has designated Mammon as one of the fallen angels, and has portrayed his character in the most admirable manner—

“Mammon, the least erected spirit that fell  
 From Heav'n: for e'en in Heaven his looks and thoughts  
 Were always downward bent, admiring more  
 The riches of Heav'n's pavement, trodden gold,

His comforters he comforts ; great in ruin,  
 With unreluctant grandeur gives, not yields, 675  
 His soul sublime, and closes with his fate.

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

As some tall tow'r, or lofty mountain's brow, 685  
 Detains the sun illustrious, from its height,  
 While rising vapours and descending shades,  
 With damps and darkness drown the spacious vale,  
 Undamp't by doubt, undarken'd by despair,  
 Philander thus augustly rears his head, 690  
 At that black hour which gen'ral horror sheds  
 On the low level of th' inglorious throng :  
 Sweet peace, and heav'nly hope, and humble joy,  
 Divinely beam on his exalted soul ;  
 Destruction gild, and crown him for the skies, 695  
 With incommunicable lustre bright.

Than aught divine or holy else enjoy'd  
 In vision beatific. By him first  
 Man also, and by his suggestion taught,  
 Ransack'd the centre, and with implous hands  
 Riff'd the bowels of their mother Earth  
 For treasures better hid."

[Bk. I. 679—688.

677. *Hearts burnt within us* : An expression taken from Luke 24 : 32.

686. *From its height* : On account of its height.

695. *Destruction gild* : Gild the scene of destruction—throw lustre and beauty upon death's destroying process.

## NIGHT III.

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### NARCISSA.

Ignoscenda quidem, scirent si ignoscere manes.—VIRGIL.

---

Inscribed to her Grace the Duchess of Portland.

---

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

5

#### PLEASURES OF SELF-COMMUNION.

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 !

1-2. *From dreams, &c.* : An admirable though brief description is given in these lines, of *dreams* and *reason*, which are the emphatic words.

5. *Assignation* : Appointment for meeting

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! unacknowledged! unapproved!  
 Now woo them, wed them, bind them to thy breast; 15  
 To win thy wish, creation has no more.  
 Or if we wish a fourth, it is a friend.—  
 But friends, how mortal! dangerous the desire.

## CYNTHIA PREFERRED TO PHŒBUS.

Take Phœbus to yourselves, ye basking bards!

10. *Our reason, &c.*: The communion, eulogized here, subsists between Reason (our guardian angel), and our God.

11. *Then nearest, &c.*: These are nearest when other objects are most remote.

19. *Phœbus*: A Roman name applied to the god *Apollo*, also to the sun. In the age of Homer he was celebrated as the god of archery, prophecy, and music; by later poets he was also honored as the god of day and of the sun.

The earliest and most natural form of idolatry was the worship of the stars, and especially of the sun, whose splendor, light, heat, and salutary influence upon all nature, were taken as the supernatural and independent powers of a deity. Hence the ancient fiction ascribing personality to this luminary, which was worshipped by the Egyptians under the name of *Horus*, by the Persians under that of *Mithras*, by the later Greeks and Romans under that of *Phœbus* and *Apollo*.

Although the Greeks and Romans worshipped *Apollo* as the god and dispenser of light, and in view of this attribute named him *Phœbus*, yet they conceived another distinct divinity, distinguished from *Apollo*, especially in the earlier fables, under the literal name applied to designate the sun, namely, *Sol* or *Helius*. These words, therefore, were employed to express not only the actual body in the heavens, but also a supposed being having a separate and personal existence. It is probable that the worship of this god was early introduced into Greece. Many temples were consecrated to *Helius*. The island *Rhodes* in particular was sacred to him, where was erected his celebrated colossal statue, which was about one hundred feet high, and placed across the harbor so that a large vessel could sail between its legs.—*Fisk's Cl. Manual*.

In the text the term *Phœbus* is used only of the physical luminary, which has an advantage above the term *sun* from the elegant associations which it

20

Inebriate at fair Fortune's fountain-head ;  
And reeling through 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-eyed sister pay my court,  
 (Endymion's rival) and her aid implore ;  
 Now first implored in succour to the muse.  
 Thou, who didst lately borrow Cynthia's form,

awakens in the mind of the classical student, and in other minds when those associations are made known to them.

*Ye basking bards*: Ye bards lying at ease under his luxurious influence.

26. *Day's soft-eyed sister*, &c. : Our author, somewhat after Pagan fashion, pays his poetic homage to the *Moon*, described here by this most beautiful and original expression. He represents himself as *Endymion's rival* in his attachment to this soft-eyed divinity, for as such he speaks of her. Fabulous history informs us that Endymion, the founder of the city of Elis, in Greece, gained the affections of *Selene*, or the Moon, who bore him fifty daughters, the rest of the story is not needful for the illustration of our author.

29. *Cynthia's form*: The Duchess of Portland, to whom this "Night" is dedicated, is said at the Duke of Norfolk's masquerade to have assumed the dress or appearance ascribed in fable to the goddess *Cynthia* or *Diana*—the goddess of the night—the goddess of the Moon. This goddess was described besides under the names of *Cyllene*, *Phæbe*, (45,) *Selene*, *Delia*, *Hecate*, &c. As goddess of the moon, *Cynthia*, or *Diana*, was represented, by the artists, in long robes, with a long, starred veil, having a torch in her hand, and a crescent on her head. As in Apollo the sun was deified and adored, so was the moon in Diana. She was also recognized as the goddess of hunting or the chase, of which in her youth she was passionately fond. Under this character she received from Jupiter a bow with arrows, and a train of sixty nymphs. He granted her petition also to be permitted to live a virgin, and she was, therefore, the goddess of chastity. Yet some accounts represent her as having given her affections to Endymion (note 26). At Ephesus was built a most magnificent temple in honor of this goddess, and in that place it would seem from Acts 19 : 24—35, that she was the prominent object of Pagan worship. The dimensions of her temple were 425 feet by 220. It was adorned with 127 marble pillars, 60 feet in height, and with a splendid image of the goddess. It was one of the seven wonders of the world. The Colossus, referred to in a former note, was another of those wonders. For

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, she thy character  
 Assumes, still more a goddess by the change.  
 Are there demurring wits, who dare dispute 35  
 This revolution in the world inspired?  
 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, denied to mortal ear.  
 Transmit it heard, thou silver queen of heav'n!  
 What title or what name endears thee most?  
 Cynthia! Cyllene! Phœbe!—or dost hear 45  
 With higher gust, fair Portland of the skies?

a more full account, Fiske's Manual of Classical Literature may be consulted.

37. *Ye train Pierian*: By this name (derived from Pieria, sacred to them) are designated the nine *Muses*, those nymphs or subordinate deities to whose guardianship were assigned particular branches of knowledge and the fine arts, particularly music and song: hence our author appropriately directs them, in requiring aid, to call upon the *lunar sphere*, the moon—in the following lines, described as the *silver queen of heaven*, as leading the *mazy dance* with the *harmonious spheres* of night, and hearing their *matchless strain*.

Here is an allusion to the Platonic doctrine of the "music of the spheres"—the music produced by their harmonious revolution, too delicate to be caught by human ear, but easily appreciated and highly relished by the celestials. Shakspeare, in his Merchant of Venice, (Act V., Scene 1,) thus happily describes it—

"There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st  
 But in his motion like an angel sings,  
 Still quiring to the young-ey'd Cherubim;  
 Such harmony is in immortal sounds!  
 But whilst this muddy vesture of decay  
 Doth grossly close us in, we cannot hear it."

39. *Her brother's right*: The right of Phœbus, or the Sun.

46. *Fair Portland, &c.*: A fulsome compliment to the lady to whom this "Night" is addressed.

Is that the soft enchantment calls thee down,  
 More pow'ful than of old Circean charm ?  
 Come, but from heav'nly banquets with thee bring  
 The soul of song, and whisper in mine ear 50  
 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.

## DEATH OF NARCISSA.

And kind thou wilt be, kind on such a theme ; 55  
 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 60  
 Than that which smote me from Philander's tomb.  
Narcissa follows ere his tomb is closed.  
 Woes cluster ; rare are solitary woes ;  
 They love a train ; they tread each other's heel ;  
 Her death invades his mournful right, and claims 65  
 The grief that started from my lids for him ;  
 Seizes the faithless alienated tear,  
 Or shares it ere it falls. So frequent death,

48. *Circean charm* : *Circe*, according to Homer, was one of the ocean nymphs who dwelt upon an island, attended by four other nymphs. Those persons who visited her dwelling were luxuriously entertained with food, and then on tasting a magic cup which she presented, were changed at once into swine. Milton in his *Comus* thus introduces the fable—

“ Of Bacchus and of *Circe* born, great Comus,  
 Deep skilled in all his mother's witcheries,  
 And here to every thirsty wanderer  
 By sly enticement gives his baneful cup,  
 With many murmurs mixed, whose pleasing poison  
 The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,  
 And the inglorious likeness of a beast  
 Fixes instead, unmoulding reason's mintage  
 Character'd in the face.”

65. *His mournful right* : His right to my grief, to my grieving for him.



Sorrow he more than causes ; he confounds ;  
 For human sighs his rival strokes contend, 70  
 And make distress distraction. O Philander !  
 What was thy fate ? a double fate to me ;  
 Portent and pain ! a menace and a blow !  
 Like the black raven hov'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 Harmonist ! and beautiful as sweet !  
 And young as beautiful ! and soft as young !

73. *Portent and pain* : Betokening, as well as inflicting sorrow.

75. *Bird of omen* : An allusion to the ancient Roman practice of pretending to foretell the future by observing the flight of such birds as the eagle and vulture, and the chattering and singing of others, as the owl, the crow (or raven), and the cock.

The raven, strikingly sagacious and venerable in its appearance (we use the words of Mrs. Ellis), is still believed by the superstitious to be a bird of ill omen ; and much as we may be disposed to despise such prognostications as the flight or the cry of different birds, there is something in the habits, but especially in the voice of the raven which gives it a strange and almost fearful character. It seems to hold no communion with the joyous spirits, to have no association with the happy scenes of earth, but leads a lengthened and unsocial life amongst the gloomy shades of the venerable forest, in the deep recesses of the pathless mountain, or on the rocky summit of the beetling crag that overlooks the ocean's blue abyss ; and when it goes forth, with its sable pinions spread like the wings of a dark angel upon the wind, its hoarse and hollow croak echoes from rock to rock, as if telling, in those dreary and appalling tones, of the fleshy feast to which it is hastening, of the death-pangs of the mountain deer, of the cry of the perishing kid, and of the bones of the shipwrecked seaman whitening in the surge.

77. *By break of bliss* : A phrase of the same kind as *break of day*, and means, when her conjugal happiness was just commencing ; *in her bridal hour* (150).

81. *Sweet Harmonist* : Or musician. The arrangement of the epithets applied to Narcissa (81—84) constitutes a beautiful *climax*, and, except in the last of these lines, well sustained. She is there compared to a bird (88)

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 ravish'd ear,  
 Still melting there, and with voluptuous pain  
 (O to forget her !) thrilling through 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 indulged, indeed deserve our shame.

transfixed by *fate* (death), and falling from the *summit of the grove* that she had enchanted with the witchery of her song.

96. *As yet unforfeit* : Before it was forfeited by the sin of Adam and Eve.

100. *Gay title, &c.* : An expression of felicity that has become indicative of the deepest misery ; his misery, now, resulted from the exquisite happiness he had derived from her varied endowments while she lived.

102. *Than gain'd, &c.* : Than good which is gained weighs in joy. The contrasted ideas are, *good lost—good gained ; in grief—in joy.*

105. *There* : In the skies (97).

109–110. *Our tears indulged, &c.* : Our tears indulged to excess, under or-

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 could 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  
Denied 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 evening dew your beauties bathe,  
And drink the sun which gives your cheeks to glow,  
And out-blush (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,

dinary bereavements, indeed deserve our shame ; but I have lost an angel, a friend above the standard of ordinary mortals.

The chief fault of this part of the poem is the extravagance of the eulogium bestowed on Narcissa ; its disproportion to the merits of every human being. For example, (111-12) as her eye was becoming dimmed in death, it caused a sensible diminution of the light of day ; when borne southward the sun, as if in envy of her lustre, *checked his beam* (120) &c.

118. *Boreas* : The north wind.

119. *Nearer to the sun* : Southward, where the sun pours down a warmer day, and consequently seems nearer.

122-3. *Bells of lilies* : Their shape resembles that of a bell.

124. *Ye painted populace, &c.* : A personification of the flowers.

125. *Ambrosial* ; pleasant.

128 *Mine* : My fair friend.

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 denied to mortal taste,  
 Whilst 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 :  
 Lean not on earth ; 'twill pierce thee to the heart ; 145  
 A broken reed at best ; but oft a spear :  
 On its sharp point peace bleeds, and hope expires.

## THE BURIAL OF NARCISSA.

Turn, hopeless thought ! turn from her ;—Thought repell'd  
 Resenting rallies, and wakes ev'ry wo.  
 Snatch'd ere thy prime ! and in thy bridal hour ! 150  
 And when kind fortune, with thy lover, smiled !  
 And when high-flavour'd thy fresh op'ning joys !  
 And when blind man pronounced 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 raved !  
 That mourn'd the dead, and this denied a grave.

134. *Sudden pass* : Sudden passage—departure.

157–8. *Inhuman tears* : So called because they were the outgush of inhumans, *marble* hearts ; were shed in the entire absence of compassion, and so were *not human*, or natural.

162. *That mourn'd, &c.* : Nature mourned Narcissa, while superstition de-

Their sighs incensed ; sighs foreign to the will !  
 Their will the tiger suck'd, outraged the storm :  
 For oh ! the cursed ungodliness of zeal ! 165  
 While sinful flesh relented, spirit nursed  
 In blind infallibility's embrace,  
 The sainted spirit petrified the breast,  
 Denied the charity of dust to spread

nied a grave. In spite of the influence of Roman Catholic prejudice against the accomplished woman, and of the superstition which repelled them from manifesting towards her remains the offices of a respectful burial, nature within them forced the tears of sorrow. She died at Lyons, in France, whither Dr. Young had taken her for the recovery of her health, and as she was a Protestant, he was obliged to bury her, very privately too, in a common field, under cover of the darkness of night, having been refused the privilege of interring her in the church-yard which was under the control of Popish superstition,

He says accordingly,

“ With pious sacrilege a grave I stole, &c.”—172-188.

163. *Incensed* : Incensed me.

164. *Their will the tiger suck'd* : Was nursed by the tiger, or, without a figure, was fierce.

165. *The cursed ungodliness of zeal* : The Roman ritual, used even at the present time, declares that schismatics and heretics are to be excluded from Christian burial. This exclusion extends to all who doubt any doctrine or precept of the Romish church ; no other form of Christian burial is permitted, and this prohibition is regarded as a mark of reprobation.

A letter from Caraccas, in Spanish South America, dated in November, 1825, mentions that a young Englishman died in the preceding month, and was buried in the church-yard with the customary Romish ceremonies, his friends having represented him to be a Roman Catholic, that they might not be obliged to witness his burial in a ditch, or some such place. But the real fact that he was a Protestant becoming known, the body was dug up, and found naked and mutilated in the church-yard ! The government, however, interfered, and having shaken off some of their Romish prejudices, the body was again interred, and a piece of ground was ordered to be allotted to the English for their use as a burial-place.—*Days of Queen Mary*, p. 215.

168. *The sainted spirit* : Spoken ironically. It was claimed to be a *sainted spirit* ; but not so regarded by our author. He says it *petrified the heart*, turned it into stone, destroyed the tender feelings—of course was not entitled to be seriously called a sainted or holy spirit. He had also referred to it (165) as the *cursed ungodliness of zeal*.

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 through 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 prayer ;  
 Kindled at man, while I his God adored : 185  
 Sore grudg'd the savage land her sacred dust ;  
 Stamp'd the cursed soil ; and with humanity  
 (Denied Narcissa) wish'd them all a grave.  
 Glows 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-assumed, majestic, robe of earth  
 He deign'd to wear, who hung the vast expanse  
 With azure bright, and clothed 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 ;

188. *Wish'd them all a grave* : That is, a decent burial, which had been denied to Narcissa. His humane wish could not have been entirely free from a mixture of malevolence, as indicated by his *stamping the cursed soil*.

194. *He deign'd to wear* : Referring to the Son of God, who became incarnate ; hence the human form is by the author called *this heaven-assumed robe of earth*. It was assumed by the Son of God, who not only had come from heaven but was heaven's king.

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.

## MAN, TO MAN THE SOREST ILL.

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.

200. *Spleen to dust* : Ill-nature and spite shown to Narcissa's body in being refused, with rage, a place in the Catholic church-yard.

201. *Lucifer* : A name by which the devil or Satan is represented. The patriarch next spoken of is Moses, and the event alluded to is recorded in the Epistle of Jude, v. 9. The inspired writer refers, as is thought, to a tradition prevalent among the Jews, and which he sanctions as containing an important truth, and one which related to the subject he was discussing. The contention was probably a contention of words, a dispute of some kind in relation to the body of Moses (from the Greek term used to express it), and did not relate to a contest of strength about the burial of Moses, as some have thought, and as our author views the matter in these lines. Jude is not responsible (as Mr. Barnes in his Notes remarks), for the opinion that the subject of dispute was about the burying of the body of Moses ; that Michael sought to bury it, and the devil endeavored to prevent it—the one in order that it might not be worshipped by the Israelites, and the other that it might be. All that Jude says is, that there was a dispute respecting the body of Moses.

206. *But from, &c.* : Except from, &c. : That is, had not streams of mutual love prevented from being most wretched. *But for, &c.*, would have been a better reading, and then would correspond with the phraseology in the next line:—*and uncreated, but for love divine*, that is, would not even have been created had not divine love achieved the work ; and, except for the interposition of the same love, would *this moment* (be) *lost*. These things are mentioned to show the gross impropriety, and indecency, and criminality of the acts of hatred and violence perpetrated by the members of this race upon each other.

209. *Resorb'd* : Swallowed up.

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 sorest, surest ill.  
 A previous blast foretells the rising storm ;  
 O'erwhelming turrets threaten ere they fall ;  
 Volcanoes bellow ere they disembogue ; 220  
 Earth trembles ere her yawning jaws devour ;  
 And smoke betrays 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 Sovereign saves all beings but himself  
That hideous sight, a naked human heart.  
 Fired is the muse ? and let the muse be fired :  
 Who not inflamed, 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,

220. *Disembogue* : Pour forth their contents.

233. *But he nor I, &c.* : But neither he nor I feel them any longer in consequence of more aggravated wrong done to Narcissa.

234. *Wound of heart* : The effect is here put for the cause or occasion. The expression means, *author, or occasion, of the recent wound of heart* ; this was inflicted by the *numerous ills that swarmed over her distinguished fate* (237), and, as the author most beautifully expresses the thought, *made death more deadly, and more dark the grave.*



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 aspic each, and all an hydra wo.  
 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 the right channel, through the vale of death.

241. *Aspics*: Asps—a small but exceedingly poisonous serpent found in Egypt, the bite of which is said to produce a speedy death without pain.

242. *All an hydra wo*: A wo that multiples itself like the heads of the fabled serpentine monster in the marsh of Lerna. It is represented as having had many heads, and as soon as one was cut off by any hostile hand it was supplied by another that started up, unless the wound was stopped by fire. By the *virtue* (that is, the valor) of the god *Hercules* (243) this monster was killed, upon the application of firebrands to the wounds as the heads were cut off. Hence the term *hydra*, by a figure of speech, has come to signify any manifold evil.

252. *Fatal Fame*: Allusion seems here to be made to the heathen goddess *Fame*, who was regarded as the author and spreader of reports, not only bad but good. The epithet *fatal* is not easily interpreted. It may have here been applied to the goddess from the melancholy subject of the report which she bore concerning the death and burial of *Narcissa*. Whoever has read the *Æneid* of *Virgil* must have admired the personification of *Fame*, or *Rumour*, which is found in Book IV. 173—190.

“Extemplo Libyæ magnas it Fama per urbes;  
 Fama malum quo non aliud velocius ullum:  
 Mobilitate viget, viresque acquirit eundo.  
 Parva metu primo; mox se attollit in auras,  
 Ingrediturque solo, et caput inter nubila condit.  
 Illam,” &c.

7\*

## 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.'

## HARVEST GATHERED FROM THE GRAVE.

This harvest reap from thy Narcissa's grave. 270

255. *Cimmerian vale* : Gloomy vale. The *Cimmerii* were a wandering people that occupied a portion of Tartary. The Greeks, it is said, obtained their first knowledge of these people from the Phœnicians, who, wishing to discourage the Grecian traders from visiting them, originated some hard stories about the *deep gloom* or perpetual darkness which rested upon the Cimmerian territory, and some other formidable circumstances.

Another version of the matter is, that the Cimmerians lived in caves under ground, and never saw the light of the sun.—*Homer's Odys.* XI. 14.

262. *Balsamic truths* : Consolatory, soothing, health-restoring truths.

265-6. *The fruits, &c.* : Survey the advantages that may accrue from dying friends. *Expose the vain of life* : uncover the vanity of life.

268. *Labour, &c.* : Labour (to secure) that first *victory* of noble minds (of which the *palm* was an honorable testimonial.) There is an allusion to the chariot-race among the Greeks, in which the victor was presented with a palm-branch, which he carried in his hand. The next line states what the victory to be achieved is.

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 paths to death; to break those bars  
 Of terror and abhorrence nature throws  
 Cross our obstructed 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 285  
 Pluck'd from the wing of human vanity,  
 Which makes us stoop 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;

271. *From Ajax' streaming blood, &c.* : Next to Achilles, Ajax was the bravest and most impetuous of the Greeks engaged in the Trojan war. He committed suicide by stabbing himself to the heart. The blood that flowed from the wound is fabled to have produced the *flower* hyacinthus, of a red color, on the petal of which lines may be traced which resemble in form the first two letters of his name in the Greek character. The flower is not the ordinary hyacinth, but the "Imperial Mastagon."

273. *My mortal wound* : The wound he had received in the loss of Narcissa.

278. *Brainless ardours* : Thoughtless, unreasonable excitements of passion. To damp these is the *first* advantage we should derive from the death of friends. The *second* advantage is, to divest of its terribleness the pathway of Death (280-84). The *third* is the abatement of human pride (285-292). The *fourth* is a change of character (294-302), *the revolution in our hearts.*

288. *Omen* : The sign, or indication,

For us they languish, and for us they die :  
 And shall they languish, shall they die, in vain ? 295  
 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 measured half his weary stage,  
 His luxuries have left him no reserve,  
 No maiden relishes, unbroach'd delights ;  
 On cold-served 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.

THE THOUGHT OF LIVING ALWAYS ON EARTH, REVOLTING.

Live here, Lorenzo !—shocking thought ! 325

302. *Destroy their deaths* : Destroy the profit, or salutary tendency, of their deaths.

324. *Orts* : Fragments, or refuse.

So shocking, they who wish disown it too ;  
 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 surfeit on the same,  
 And yawn our joys ? or thank a misery 335  
 For change, though sad ! to see what we have seen ?  
 Hear, till unheard, the same old slabber'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  
 Through loaded vessels, and a laxer tone ?  
 Crazy machines to grind earth's wasted fruits !  
 Ill ground, and worse concocted ! load, not life !  
 The rational foul 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 refined !  
 So would they have it : elegant desire !

332. *Nothing new, &c.* : That is, in the way of pleasure. The allusion here to a wheel is rather obscure, but it probably refers to a kind of wheel which Philo speaks of as used in Egypt for elevating the waters of the Nile to the high grounds which its annual inundations failed to reach. The wheel was constructed with steps, by treading upon which a man was enabled to turn the wheel and elevate water to the required level. The process must have been fatiguing, and the wheel would become worn, and it would be a heavy wheel, which draws up nothing new. The author has selected this machine and its effects, as a representation of the monotonous and laborious routine of a life of fashionable indulgences and dissipation.

335. *Yawn our joys* : Yawn over our joys.

340. *Strain a flatter year, &c.* : Force the products of a less relished year through loaded vessels of the body.

343. *Load* : Used here as a noun.

Why not invite the bellowing stalls and wilds ?  
 But such examples might their riot awe. 350  
 Through want of virtue, that is, want of thought,  
 (Tho' on bright thought they father all their flights)  
 To what are they reduced ? 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  
 Through dread of worse ; to cling to this rude rock,  
 Barren, to them, of good, and sharp with ills,  
 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 hugg'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 surprise, Lorenzo ! gives  
 To life's sick nauseous iteration, change ;  
 And straitens 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 cuckoo-seasons sing 375

349. *The bellowing stalls and wilds* : Here figuratively put for the *animals* that bellow in stalls and deserts.

355. *This painted shrew of life* : Life is here compared to an ill-natured, fretful, vexatious woman, decked in gaudy and misplaced ornaments. It is next compared to a *rude, barren rock* (357-58).

356. *To flatter bad* : To speak too favorably of what is bad in their condition.

367. *Tames the painted shrew* : The idea may have been suggested to our author by Shakspeare's play of "The Taming of the Shrew."

369. *Iteration* : Repetition of the same experiences.

375. *The cuckoo-seasons sing, &c.* : "With the cuckoo," says Mrs. Ellis,

The same dull note to such as nothing prize,  
 But what those seasons, from the teeming earth,  
 To doating 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 heavenly 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 aims,  
 Makes their fair prospect fairer ev'ry hour ;  
 Advancing virtue in a line to bliss ;

"our associations are in some respects the same as with the swallow (with which we associate the ever-cheering idea of returning summer) except that we are in the habit of regarding it simply as a voice ; and what a voice ! How calm, and clear, and rich ! How full of all that can be told of the endless profusion of summer charms !—of the hawthorn, in its scented bloom, of the blossoms of the apple, and the silvery waving of the fresh green corn, of the cowslip in the meadow, and the wild rose by the woodland path ; and last, but not least in its poetical beauty, of the springing up of the meek-eyed daisy, to welcome the foot of the traveller upon the soft and grassy turf."

By *cuckoo-seasons* the author seems to designate those brief seasons of the year during which this bird sojourned in the northerly and middle parts of Europe. It first appears in England about the middle of April, takes its leave about the first of July, and makes its way to Africa. It returns regularly with the spring, and from some dead tree or branch the male cuckoo pours forth in dull, unvarying monotony the sounds of *cuckoo—cuckoo*. This explains our author's language—*sing the same dull note*, and admirably illustrates the *languid, leaden iteration*, or dull repetition, of *the joys* that are derived from "sight, smell, taste."

379. *Fruits unripen'd by the sun* : Fruits not produced in the earth, under the influence of the sun's heat and light ; fruits not such as are intended for the palate and to please the bodily taste.

383. *Lighten'd* ; Enlightened.

Virtue which Christian motives best inspire !  
 And bliss, which Christian schemes alone ensure ! 395

LIFE VALUABLE AS A MEANS ; NOT AS AN END.

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  
Loved 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 ?

397. *For joy*: For the sake of gaining joy.—404. *Eternity's regard*: The regard due to eternity.—405. *Take, &c.*: We dream that we have reached our ultimate destination, whereas we are passing to another state of being.  
*Port*: Harbor.

409. *When held as nothing, &c.*: When regarded as nothing, it becomes a means of great happiness (410).

417-18. *The barren rock, &c.*: Referring to lines 358, 355, 364.

419. *Triple promise*: A promise to prove, (1) that virtue charms the bar-



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

## LIFE AND DEATH COMPARED.

Nor is that glory distant. O 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 traduced ;  
 Compare the rivals, and the kinder crown. 445

ren rock to bloom ; (2) tames the painted shrew ; and (3) gives an agreeable change to the dull monotony of life (366—370).

422. *Worth ambiguous* : Worth of a changeful nature.

426. *Sphere* : Sun.

429 *Pallid to that font* : That is, when compared to that font (the sun).

436. *Or* : Unless.

445. *The kinder crown* : Honor that one of the two which to us is the more kind.

'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, styled organs, dim life peeps at light; 450  
Death bursts th' involving cloud, and all is day;  
All eye, all ear, the disembodied pow'r.

Death has feign'd evils nature shall not feel;  
Life, ills substantial, wisdom cannot shun.  
Is not the mighty mind, that son of Heav'n, 455  
By tyrant Life dethroned, imprison'd, pain'd?  
By death enlarged, ennobled, deified?  
Death but entombs 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 pow'r;  
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 barb'rous 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

450. *Life*: Is here personified; so also in (456).

452. *Pow'r*: Soul.

459. *Is Death then guiltless?* Lorenzo here interposes an objection, extending to 463 inclusive.

467-68. The body triumphs in this life; the soul has its triumph at death.

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 bemired! 480

Lorenzo, blush at terror for a death  
 Which gives thee to repose in festive bow'rs,  
 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, though 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

476. *To cater, &c.* : To provide for the gratification of sense. The author is here illustrating his position in (467).

484. *More than angels* : More beings than angels; that is, where men as well as angels share, &c.

486. *Need I more* : Need I say more.

487. *Then welcome, death* : John Foster, in a letter to a friend, thus writes : " I congratulate you and myself that life is passing fast away. What a superlatively grand and consoling idea is that of Death! Without this radiant idea, this delightful morning star, indicating that the luminary of eternity is going to rise, life would to my view darken into midnight melancholy. Oh! the expectation of living *here*, and living *thus* always, would be indeed a prospect of overwhelming despair. But thanks to that decree that dooms us to die: thanks to that gospel which opens the vision to an endless life; and thanks, above all, to that Saviour-friend who has promised to conduct all the faithful through the sacred trance of death into scenes of Paradise and everlasting delight."

490. *Will toll the bell* : Not a very happy figure in its connexion, since the nerves of the poet, enfeebled by disease, are described as the strings which toll the bell. We learn from this passage that in advanced years he had but few friends who would, in his judgment, at least, lament his decease.

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 pow'r.  
 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 Gilead ! 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, compared ; life lives beyond the grave. 510

SPLENDID EULOGIUM ON DEATH.

And feel I, death, no joy from thought of thee ?  
 Death, the great counsellor, who man inspires  
 With every nobler thought and fairer deed !  
Death, the deliverer, who rescues man !  
Death, the rewarder, who the rescued crowns ! 515  
Death, that absolves my birth, a curse without it !  
 Rich death, that realizes all my cares,

498. *Dragg'd at his chariot-wheel* : An allusion to the triumphal procession in honor of a Roman general for a successful campaign, when distinguished captives were exhibited in this degraded position.

500. *Is thine* : Is to be ascribed to thee—is thy work.

502. *Pay-day* : Day of receiving pay.

508. *The gain of each a life* : The cry at birth (506) gains this life ; the groan at death gains the life immortal.

510. *Life dies, compared* : Compared with the life immortal, *this life dies*, is no longer worthy to be called life.

516. *Absolves my birth* : Accomplishes the design of my birth, which, without the event of death, would be (at least comparatively) a curse.

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 sire,  
 Though the four winds were warring for my dust.  
 Yes, and from winds and waves, and central night,  
 Though prison'd there, my dust too I reclaim,  
 (To dust when drop proud Nature's proudest spheres) 525  
 And live entire. Death is the crown of life :  
 Were death denied, poor man would live in vain :  
 Were death denied, to live would not be life :  
 Were death denied, e'en 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 ? 535  
 When shall I die ?—when shall I live for ever ?

518. *A chimera* : A fanciful, unreal, incongruous affair. The original application of this word is to a fabulous monster, composed of a dragon, a goat, and a lion united, forming respectively the hinder parts, the middle of the body, and the fore parts. It had the heads of all three, which were continually vomiting flames. The modern import of this word is very legitimately derived from the strange composition of such an animal.

519. *The period* : Termination, or terminating process.

524. *Reclaim* : Claim again as my own.

526. *Live entire* : Live with soul and body re-united.

530. *Death wounds to cure* : How admirable, says Dr. Thomas Brown, is that goodness which knows so well how to adapt to each other feelings that are opposite ; which gives to man a love of life enough to reconcile him without an effort to the earth which is to be the scene of his exertions, and which at the same time gives those purer and more glorious wishes which make him ready to part with the very life which he loved.

535. *Die to vanity, &c.* : Be released from these ; or, become indifferent to them.

536. The questions in this line are to be regarded as of the same import.

# NIGHT IV.

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## THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

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

---

Inscribed to the Honourable 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

### CURE FOR THE FEAR OF DEATH.

Why start at death? where is he? death arrived  
Is past: not come, or gone; he's never here.  
Ere hope, sensation fails; black-boding man  
Receives, not suffers, death's tremendous blow.

1. *Muse*: A classical expression derived from the fable of certain goddesses that were supposed to preside over poetry and the other liberal arts. When stripped of figure, it means here the poet himself.

7. *Not come, or gone*: Either he is not come, or he is gone.

The knell, the shroud, the mattock, and the grave ; 10  
 The deep damp vault, the darkness, and the worm ;  
 These are the bugbears of a winter's eve,  
 The terrors of the living, not the dead.  
 Imagination's fool, and error's wretch,  
 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, though bold, would sicken at the sight  
 And spend itself in sighs for future scenes.

## DISADVANTAGES OF LIVING TOO LONG.

But grant to life (and just it is to grant 35

14. *Fool* and *wretch* are in apposition with *man* (15) and relate to him.

16. *Fancy* is here figuratively represented as a sword.

20. *Shelter* : Take shelter.

22. *My younger* : A younger person than myself.

30. *Vivacious ill* : Long-lived ill. *Ill* and *good* are abstract names used here for concrete, that is, for evil and good persons, as is evident from the next line.

32. *Pain* : That is, to survivors.

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.

44. *Toss Fortune back* : Toss back to Fortune her, &c. *Fortune*, or chance, was deified by the ancient Pagans and worshipped. Hence, according to modern use, the word is figuratively used to denote a power which is supposed to distribute the various allotments of life according to her own humour, or in rather an arbitrary manner. Of course it is not, upon the page of a Christian poet, to be *strictly* interpreted, but the phrase quoted simply means ; toss back the gaudy ornaments that have been granted you.

46. *My world is dead* : The world is to me as ~~is~~ dead, my connexion with it is virtually at an end. The poet here furnishes rather a melancholy sketch of his own later days, under the idea of a theatrical scene.

55. *Master* : Probably allusion is made to the king—George II., of Great Britain. It will be seen that he had depended not a little upon court favor and preferments ; that he had studied to ingratiate himself with the great and the titled of Britain's sons (67).



When in his courtiers' ears I pour my plaint,  
 They drink it as the nectar of the great,  
 And squeeze my hand, and beg me come to-morrow!  
Refusal! canst thou wear a smother form?

60

*Y. refused  
at court*

Indulge me, nor conceive I drop my theme;  
 Who cheapens life, abates the fear of death.  
Twice told the period spent on stubborn Troy.

65

Court-favour, yet untaken, I besiege;  
 Ambition's ill-judged effort to be rich.

Alas! ambition makes my little less,  
 Imbitt'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 stall'd Theology,  
 Wishing would waste me to this shade again.

Were I as wealthy as a South-sea dream,

75

66. Allusion to the ten years' war between the city of ancient Troy, and the states of Greece. *Court favor* is here spoken of under the figure of a besieged town.

73. *Stall'd Theology*: A well-fed churchman.

75. *A South-sea dream*: Reference is here made to the South-Sea Scheme which was projected by Sir John Blount in 1719, as the result of the excessive profits which for a few years had been reaped, though not honourably, by the South-Sea Company. This scheme professed to be designed to enable Great Britain to pay off her national debt by its being assumed by the South-Sea Company, who, in consequence, were empowered by Parliament to raise the requisite funds by various means; and particularly by opening books of subscription, and granting annuities to such public creditors as should exchange the *security* of the *crown* for that of the *South-Sea Company*, with the *emoluments* which might result from their *commerce*.

This of course occasioned a prodigious rise in the value or price of the stock of that company. It soon reached four times its original price, and certain unfounded reports were originated which favoured the iniquitous speculation, so that, upon opening the subscription books, persons of all ranks, and from all parts of the kingdom, crowded to the South-Sea house to become stockholders. Many persons speculated upon the stock thus subscribed and realized about ten times what they paid for it. New manufacturing companies, and many absurd projects were started by unprincipled individuals taking advantage of the infatuation that had seized all classes, who were expecting by this South-Sea scheme to make a fortune.

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 dangerous 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 theme, 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 enclosure, leap the mounds of right,  
 Pursuing, and pursued, each other's prey ;  
 As wolves for rapine, as the fox for wiles, 95

"At length, however," says Dr. Russell, the historian, "to use the phrase of the times, the *bubble* began to *burst*. It was discovered that such as were thought to be in the secret had disposed of all their stock, while the tide was at its height. A universal alarm was spread. Every one wanted to sell, and nobody to buy, except at a very reduced price. The South-Sea stock fell as rapidly as it had risen, and to the lowest ebb; so that in a little time nothing was to be seen of this bewitching scheme but the direful effects of its violence—the wreck of private fortunes, and the bankruptcy of merchants and trading companies! nor anything to be heard but the ravings of disappointed ambition, the execrations of beggared avarice, the pathetic wailings of innocent credulity, the grief of unexpected poverty, or the frantic howlings of despair. The timely interposition and steady wisdom of Parliament only could have prevented a general bankruptcy."—*Modern Europe*, vol. ii. 397.

The above graphic picture is scarcely too high colored for an exact portraiture of a similar mania, attended with similar disastrous effects, which prevailed in the United States in 1836 and 1837, relative to speculations in land and the building of towns.

77. *Hectic*: Consumptive fever.

Till death, that mighty hunter, earths them all.

Why all this toil for triumphs of an hour?  
 What though 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, though in Britain born, with courtiers bred,  
 Who thought e'en gold might come a day too late,  
 Nor on his subtle death-bed plann'd his scheme  
 For future vacancies in the 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.

## ADDRESS TO THE AGED.

O my coevals! remnants of yourselves!  
 Poor human ruins tottering 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 unexperienced rush on numerous ills;  
 And soon as man, expert from time, has found

96. *Earths*: Brings down to the earth.

107. *Unbit by rage canine*: Not bitten by canine madness; not affected by such a rage, for dying rich, as the mad dog exhibits in the disease of hydrophobia.

109. *O my coevals*: The poet in his old age here most tenderly and eloquently addresses his companions in years.

122. *Expert from time*: Taught by time, or by the events of time, *has found the key, &c.*: As soon as he has learned to enjoy life, or, rather, to perform its duties and avoid its snares, he dies.

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 fitter 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 buried 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 show the door,  
 Call for my bier, and point me to the dust.

**RESIGNATION TO THE GREAT ARBITER OF LIFE AND DEATH.**

O thou great Arbiter of life and death !  
 Nature's immortal, immaterial sun !  
 Whose all-prolific beam late call'd me forth 140  
 From darkness, teeming 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

132. *Mead* : The author's physician.

133. *What gives life to live* : What grants to life the power to live ; what grants to life its very existence, namely, firmness of nerve, and energy of thought.

135. *Life's lee is vapid* : Life, in its advanced stages, is here compared to an old empty wine cask, the *lee*, dreg or sediment in which is shallow, &c.

150. *Weighs* Preponderates.

All weight in this—O let me live to thee.

Though Nature's terrors thus may be repress,  
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 swarm 155

Of friendly warnings which around me flew,  
And smiled 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

*of not  
minute*

#### THE REDEEMER ON THE CROSS.

With joy,—with grief, that healing hand I see :

Ah ! too conspicuous ! it is fix'd on high.

On high ?—what means my phrensy ? 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

154. *From death forgot* : Forgetfulness of death is assigned as the prolific cause of that ungodliness and vice which give to death's dart its point—its power to distress the soul.

169. *Beneath the skies* : On the cross.

175. *The falling universe* : The expression refers to mankind falling into endless ruin.

176. *The dismal wish that Creation had been smother'd in her birth* :—This dash seems to denote that the sense is left incomplete, that the idea is not

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 seized our dreadful right, the load sustain'd,  
 And heaved 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,  
 Much rather Thou who dost these spheres inspire !  
 Whilst I with seraphs share seraphic themes, 190  
 And show to men the dignity of man,  
 Lest I blaspheme my subject with my song.  
 Shall Pagan pages glow celestial flame,  
 And Christian languish ? On our hearts, not heads,  
 Falls the foul infamy. My heart, awake : 195  
 What can awake thee, unawaked by this,  
 'Expended Deity on human weal ?'  
 Feel the great truths which burst the tenfold night

fully expressed. Leaving it in this state, the author proceeds with his graphic picture of the Redeemer's humiliation and sufferings in behalf of " the falling universe." *Darkness his curtain, and his bed the dust* : not only did he bleed on the cross : he was enveloped in the darkness of the grave : he made it his bed : *when stars and suns are dust beneath his throne*, that is although stars and suns are *dust*, are no more valuable, compared with his divine majesty, supremacy, and glory. In one edition the (178) line reads thus :—

" Darkness is his curtain, and his bed the dust."

181. *A groan not his* : Not proceeding from sufferings on his own account, or due to him from any fault or crime of his own.

189. *Inspire* : Cause to move, as if they were possessed of animation.

192. *Blaspheme* : Degrade.

193. *Glow* : Glow with.

196. *By this* : By this declaration or sentiment.

197. Deity having expended its vast resources of benevolence and power in promoting the welfare of man.

Of heathen error, with a golden flood  
 Of endless day. To feel is to be fired ; 200  
 And to believe, Lorenzo, is to feel.

## THE JUSTICE AND THE LOVE OF GOD.

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 sevenfold guilt ; 205  
 How our hearts tremble at thy love immense !  
 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. 210

Bold thought ! shall I dare speak it or repress ?  
 Should man more execerate or boast the guilt  
 Which roused such vengeance ? which such love inflamed ?  
 O'er guilt (how mountainous) with outstretch'd arms  
 Stern Justice, and soft-smiling Love, embrace, 215  
 Supporting, in full majesty, thy throne,  
 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, 220  
 And rescue both ? Both rescue ! both exalt !  
 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 ! 225

200-1. The sentiment is: We cannot feel, without feeling intensely; and we cannot believe the great truths relating to the incarnation and atonement of the Divine Redeemer, and not feel thus.

218. *Or that* : Either that, &c.

220. *Labour* : Elaborate, bring forth as the result of effort.

221. *Rescue both* : Rescue from ruin both the divine throne, and man.

225. *To gods* : To the angels, in Scripture often called "the sons of God."

## A GOD ALL MERCY IS A GOD UNJUST.

Not thus our infidels th' Eternal draw,  
 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 ; 230  
 Maim heav'n's perfection, break its equal beams,  
 Bid mercy triumph over—God himself,  
 Undeified by their opprobrious praise :  
 A God all mercy is a God unjust.

Ye brainless wits ! ye baptized infidels ! 235  
 Ye worse for mending ! wash'd to fouler stains !  
 The ransom was paid down ; the fund of heav'n,  
 Heaven's inexhaustible, exhausted fund,  
 Amazing and amazed, pour'd forth the price,  
 All price beyond : though curious to compute, 240  
 Archangels fail'd to cast the mighty sum :  
 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. 245  
 The sun beheld it—No, the shocking scene  
 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 ;

235. *Ye brainless wits, &c.* : The celebrated and once abandoned Earl of Rochester, after his reformation, and just before his death, is reported to have expressed a desire for his surviving son in the following language:—"that he might never be a wit, that is, one of those wretched creatures who pride themselves in abusing God and religion, denying his being or his providence, but rather that he might become an honest and religious man, which alone could render him the support and blessing of his family."

240. *Curious* : Desirous.

242. *Create* : Created.

247. *Drove back his chariot* : An allusion to the Sun as a Pagan divinity, who was represented as riding in a chariot drawn by four horses.



A midnight new ! a dread eclipse (without  
 Opposing spheres) from her Creator's frown !  
 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 255  
 With pangs, strange pangs ! deliver'd of her dead ?  
 Hell howl'd ; and heav'n that hour let fall a tear :  
 Heav'n wept, that man might smile ! Heav'n bled, that mán  
 Might never die !——

## THE TRIUMPHANT RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION.

And is devotion virtue ? 'Tis compell'd. 260  
 What heart of stone but glows at thoughts like these ?  
 Such contemplations mount us, and should mount  
 The mind still higher, nor e'er glance on man  
 Unraptured, uninflamed. Where roll my thoughts  
 To rest from wonders ! other wonders rise, 265  
 And strike where'er they roll : my soul is caught :  
 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, 270  
 And in his great ascent the proof supreme

250. *A midnight new* : A new sort of midnight, occurring in the day time.  
*Without opposing spheres* : without the interposition of the moon between us  
 and the sun, causing an eclipse of the ordinary kind. It was a preternatural  
 darkness, as it occurred, not at new moon, but at full morn ; which, on natu-  
 ral principles, can by no possibility be accounted for

252. *Sun, &c* : A most affecting apostrophe to the sun, followed by a gra-  
 phic delineation of the marvellous events connected with the crucifixion.  
 None can fail to admire the fine antitheses in lines 258-59.

260. *'Tis compell'd* : The author had asked—*And is devotion virtue ?* is it  
 worthy of praise or reward ? He answers ; *'tis compelled* ; it is unavoidable ;  
 it *cannot fail* to arise upon contemplations like these.

262. *Mount us* : Raise us. By a poetic license the verb neuter is changed  
 to a verb transitive.

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, 275  
 And give the King of Glory to come in.  
 Who is the King of Glory? He who left  
 His throne of glory for the pangs of death.  
 Lift up your heads, ye everlasting gates,  
 And give the King of Glory to come in. 280  
 Who is the King of Glory? He who slew  
 The rav'nous foe that gorged 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 285  
 Pow'rs most illumined wilder'd in the theme.

HUMAN NATURE, THROUGH CHRIST, TRIUMPHANT.

The theme, the joy, how then shall man sustain?  
 O the burst gates! crush'd sting! demolish'd throne?  
 Last gasp! of vanquish'd death. Shout, earth and heav'n,  
 This sum of good to man! whose nature then 290  
 Took wing, and mounted with him from the tomb.  
 Then, then, I rose; then first humanity  
 Triumphant past the crystal ports of light,  
 (Stupendous guest!) and seized eternal youth,  
 Seized in our name. E'er since 'tis blasphemous 295  
 To call man mortal. Man's mortality  
 Was then transferr'd to death; and heav'n's duration

275. *Lift up, &c.*: Much of the phraseology of this beautiful passage is drawn from the 24th Psalm, but applied to a very different event from that which it there sets forth by a very strong apostrophe to the gates of the holy city. Our author transfers the apostrophe to the gates of heaven, on the grander occasion of the triumphant ascension and entrance there of the lately crucified Son of God.

292. *Then, &c.*: A most magnificent climax of thought is here presented. *Then, I rose*; when Christ rose, then *virtually* I rose; my own resurrection was thus effectually provided for and guaranteed.

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 ! 300  
 Thine all the glory, man's the boundless bliss.

Where am I rapt by this triumphant theme,  
 On Christian joy's exulting wing, above  
 Th' Aonian mount !—Alas ! small cause of joy !  
 What if to pain immortal ? if extent 305  
 Of being, to preclude a close of wo !  
 Where, then, my boast of immortality ?  
 I boast it still, though cover'd o'er with guilt ;  
 For guilt, not innocence, his life he pour'd ;  
 'Tis guilt alone can justify his death ; 310  
 Not that, unless his death can justify  
 Relenting guilt in heav'n's indulgent sight.  
 If, sick of folly, I relent, he writes

301. *Thine, &c.* : Thy property is *all the glory* : man's property or privilege is *the boundless bliss* of heaven. To Thee belongs the glory—all of it ; to man belongs the bliss.

304. *Above the Aonian Mount* : A mountain in Bœotia, more anciently called Aonia. It was distinguished in classical mythology as the residence of the Muses. Our author represents himself as a bird carried up on Christian joy's exulting wing above this mount. He only means, in plain language, to intimate that his theme has borne his contemplation to a higher eminence, and to more commanding prospects, than heathen poets had attained under the patronage of the Muses. He borrowed the idea, and the language, from Milton in the introduction of the "Paradise Lost"—

" I thenoe  
 Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,  
 That with no middle flight intends to soar  
 Above the Aonian mount."—Book I. 13-15.

310. *Can justify his death, &c.* : The word *justify* must be taken in quite different, though well-established, senses in this and the following line. The passage may be thus rendered :—Nothing but the *guilt* of man can vindicate the death of the innocent Son of God ; can furnish an adequate reason, or pretext, or occasion for it ; can make it appear a fit sacrifice on his part, or fully explain its occurrence. Nor can *guilt* accomplish this (*not that*) *unless his death can justify relenting guilt, &c.* : unless by means of his death the relenting or penitent child of guilt may be pardoned, and treated as a *just* person.

My name in heav'n with that inverted spear  
 (A spear deep dipt in blood!) which pierced his side, 315  
 And open'd there a font for all mankind,  
 Who strive, who combat crimes, to drink and live :  
 This, only this, subdues the fear of death.

## THE WONDERS OF PARDONING MERCY.

And what is this?—survey the wondrous cure,  
 And at each step let higher wonder rise ! 320  
 ' Pardon for infinite offence ! and pardon  
 Through means that speak its value infinite !  
 A pardon bought with blood ! with blood divine !  
 With blood divine of him I made my foe !  
 Persisted to provoke ! though wooed and awed, 325  
 Blest and chastised, a flagrant rebel still ;  
 A rebel 'midst the thunders of his throne !  
 Nor I alone ! a rebel universe !  
 My species up in arms ! not one exempt !  
 Yet for the foulest of the foul he dies ! 330  
 Most joy'd for the redeem'd from deepest guilt !  
 As if our race were held of highest rank,  
 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 ! 335  
 Its lowest round high planted on the skies :  
 Its tow'ring summit lost beyond the thought  
 Of man or angel ! O that I could climb  
 The wonderful ascent with equal praise !  
 Praise ! flow for ever (if astonishment 340  
 Will give thee leave) my praise ; for ever flow ;  
 Praise ardent, cordial, constant, to high heav'n

320. *Let higher wonder, &c.* : Some striking examples of the *climax* are here presented in the following lines, each successive thought rising in importance above the preceding, with a very happy effect.

339. *With equal praise* : With praise corresponding to the elevation of the ascent.

More fragrant than Arabia sacrificed,  
And all her spicy mountains in a flame.

## APOSTATE PRAISE CALLED BACK TO GOD.

So dear, so due to heav'n, shall praise descend 345  
With her soft plume (from plausive angels' wing  
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,  
Though black as hell, that grapples well for gold? 350  
O love of gold, thou meanest of amours!  
Shall praise her odours waste on virtues dead;  
Enbalm the base, perfume the stench of guilt,  
Earn dirty bread by washing Ethiops fair;  
Removing filth, or sinking it from sight, 355  
A scavenger in scenes, where vacant posts,  
Like gibbets yet untenanted, expect  
Their future ornaments? From courts and thrones  
Return, apostate Praise! thou vagabond!  
Thou prostitute! to thy first love return; 360  
Thy first, thy greatest, once unrivall'd theme.  
There flow redundant, like Meander flow,  
Back to thy fountain, to that parent pow'r

343. *Sacrificed*: A participle and not a verb. The idea is, *more fragrant than Arabia* would be, if offered in sacrifice.

345. *Praise* is here personified, and represented as descending from her proper abode, heaven, and from offering her appropriate homage to the God of heaven; and with *her soft plume*, stolen from *plausive* (applauding) *angels' wing*, proceeding to *tickle mortal ears*, the mortal ears of *the great*, thus *diving into their pockets*. The language in this connexion makes up in graphic faithfulness and power, as a delineation of human manners, what it lacks of poetic dignity and beauty.

349. *The perquisite*: The lawful due.

351. *Of amours*: Of loves, or objects of love.

354. *Ethiops*: Ethiopians.

362. *Like Meander, &c.*: This was a winding river in Phrygia, Asia Minor. The word *meander*, to wind about, was thence borrowed.

Who gives the tongue to sound, the thought to soar,  
 The soul to be. Men homage pay to men : 365  
 Thoughtless beneath whose dreadful eye they bow,  
 In mutual awe profound, of clay to clay,  
 Of guilt to guilt, and turn their backs on thee,  
 Great Sire ! whom thrones celestial ceaseless sing ;  
 To prostrate angels an amazing scene ! 370  
 O the presumption of man's awe for man !—  
 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 ? 375  
 What heav'n's meridian glory but thy smile ?  
 And shall not praise be thine, not human praise,  
 While heav'n's high host on hallelujahs live ?

## ADORATION AND PRAISE TO THE CREATOR.

O may I breathe no longer than I breathe  
 My soul in praise to HIM who gave my soul, 380  
 And all her infinite of prospect fair  
 Cut through the shades of hell, great Love ! by thee,  
 O most adorable ! most unadored !  
 Where shall that praise begin which ne'er shall end ?

369. *Thrones celestial*: The angelic orders, represented here as singing ceaselessly to the praise of their Creator. The term is a Scriptural one, and is applied to angels on account of the elevated rank and power which they possess, compared with other created beings. See Coloss. 1 : 16—"whether *thrones*, or dominions, or principalities, or powers : all things were created by him and for him" (Christ).

This term is very often applied to angels by the great Epic poets. Thus Par. Lost, Bk. V. 600.

"Hear all ye angels, progeny of light,  
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers."

370. *An amazing scene*: Namely, the homage which men pay to men, turning their backs on Him whom angels perpetually praise.

382. *Cut through, &c.* : An original and impressive thought is here beautifully expressed. In the next line how striking the contrast, *most adorable, most unadored !*

Where'er I turn, what claim on all applause! 385  
 How is Night's sable mantle labour'd o'er,  
 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; 390  
 For others this profusion. Thou, apart,  
 Above, beyond, O 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 395  
 The thunder, if in that th' Almighty dwells?  
 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: 400  
 Praise I a distant Deity! He tunes  
 My voice (if tuned:) the nerve that writes sustains:  
 Wrapp'd in his being I resound his praise:  
 But though past all diffused, without a shore  
 His essence, local is His throne (as meet) 405  
 To gather the dispers'd (as standards call  
 The listed 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: 410  
 And Nature's shield the shadow of his hand;  
 Her dissolution, his suspended smile!  
 The great First-Last! pavilion'd high he sits  
 In darkness from excessive splendour, borne,  
 By gods unseen, unless through lustre lost. 415  
 His glory, to created glory bright  
 As that to central horrors: he looks down

404. *Past all diffused*: Diffused beyond all objects in creation.

410. *Is* (the origin of) *Nature's birth*. 414-16. *In darkness borne* (born, originated) *from excessive splendour*; *unseen by gods* (angels), *unless through*

On all that soars, and spans immensity.

Though night unnumber'd worlds unfolds to view,  
Boundless Creation! what art thou? A beam, 420  
A mere effluviu[m] of his majesty.

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,  
Through beds of glitt'ring ore and glowing gems, 425  
Their beggar'd blaze wants lustre for my lay;

Goes out in darkness: if, on tow'ring wing,  
I send it through the boundless vault of stars,  
(The stars, tho' rich, what dross their gold to Thee,  
-Great, good, wise, wonderful, eternal King!) 430

If to those conscious stars thy throne around,  
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 ardour cold: 435  
Indebted still, their highest rapture burns  
Short of its mark, defective, though divine.

THE PRAISE OF REDEMPTION MORE APPROPRIATE TO MAN THAN  
TO ANGELS.

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, 440  
And downward look for heav'n's superior praise!  
First-born of Ether! high in fields of light!

(in consequence of) *lustre lost* (obscured) as by the incarnation:—"God manifest in the flesh—seen of angels." 1 Tim. iii. 15. *His glory*, compared to *created glory* is *bright*, as that is *bright*, compared to the gloomy darkness of the interior of the earth. 431. *Conscious stars*: Angelic intelligences.

438. *Is man's*: Is appropriate to man.

441. *For Heav'n's superior praise*: For the highest grounds of the praise which they pay to God in heaven.

442. *Ether*: Heaven. It literally denotes a form of matter more subtile, or thin, than the atmosphere.



View man to see the glory of your God !  
 Could angels envy, they had envied here :  
 And some did envy ; and the rest, though gods, 445  
 Yet still gods unredeem'd (there triumphs man,  
 Tempted to weigh the dust against the skies,  
 They less would feel, though more adorn my theme.  
 They sung creation (for in that they shared ;)  
 How rose in melody that child of Lowe ! 450  
 Creation's great superior, man ! is thine ;  
 Thine is Redemption ; they just gave the key,  
 'Tis thine to raise and eternize the song,  
 Though human, yet divine ; for should not this  
 Raise man o'er man, and kindle seraphs here ? 455  
 Redemption ! 'twas creation more sublime ;  
 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. 460  
 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 enlarged,

445. *Though gods* : This is an obvious instance in which our author uses the terms *gods* and *angels* as synonymous.

449. *They sung creation* : They celebrated the praise of God for his creative acts. They *shared* in creation only as spectators and admirers. Milton, in his Hymn to the Nativity, compares the music of the angels at that event with the music of the same beings when the work of creation, *that child of loye*, was finished.

“ Such music (as 'tis said)  
 Before was never made,  
 But when of old the sons of morning sung,  
 While the Creator great  
 His constellations set  
 And the well-balanced world on hinges hung.”

451. *Creation's great superior* : That is, redemption.

455. *Kindle seraphs* : Cause men to become ardent as *seraphs*. This word comes from one in the Hebrew which signifies “ to burn.”

“ As the rapt seraph that adores and burns.”—*Pope*.

Seen through this medium : How the pigmy tow'rs !  
 How counterpoised his origin from dust ! 465  
 How counterpoised to dust his sad return !  
 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, through the thickest cloud . 470  
 Of guilt and clay condensed, the Son of Heav'n ;  
 The double Son ; 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 promised all ; 475  
 The bleeding Cross has sworn eternal grace.  
 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, 480  
 Whatever winds arise, or billows roll,  
 Our int'rest in the Master of the storm !  
 Cling there, and in wreck'd Nature's ruin smile,  
 While vile apostates tremble in a calm.

## THE GRANDEUR OF HUMAN NATURE.

Man, know thyself: all wisdom centres there. 485  
 To none man seems ignoble but to man.  
 Angels that grandeur, men o'erlook, admire :  
 How long shall human nature be their book,  
 Degen'rate mortal ! and unread by thee ?

465. *Counterpoised* : Balanced by an opposing weight—redemption. This event is an offset to his humble *origin from dust*, and his *sad return to dust*. It also *voids* (465), or reduces to nothing, *his vast distance from the skies*.

473. *Double property* : Redeemed man is doubly the property of God, by creation at first, and again by regeneration.

482. *Master of the storm* : An allusion to the beautiful incident which occurred on the sea of Galilee.

487. *Men o'erlook* : Which men o'erlook.

The beam dim reason sheds shows wonders there : 490  
 What high contents ! illustrious faculties !  
 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 495  
 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 500  
 Catches strange fire, Eternity ! at thee,  
 And drops the world—or, rather, more enjoys.  
 How changed the face of Nature ! how improved !  
 What seem'd a chaos, shines a glorious world,  
 Or, what a world, an Eden ; heighten'd all ! 505  
 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  
 Unpierced by bold conjecture's keenest ray, 510  
 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 ; 515  
 Where what now charms, perhaps what'er exists,  
 Old Time, and fair Creation, are forgot ?  
 Is this extravagant ? of man we form  
 Extravagant conceptions to be just :  
 Conception unconfined wants wings to reach him ; 520  
 Beyond its reach the Godhead only more.

494. *On the Cross* : The cross, or sufferings, of Christ, publish to the universe the grandeur of human nature, as nothing else does.

521. *Godhead only more* : The Godhead only is more beyond the reach even of our unconfined and widest conception than man is, in his future being.

He, the great Father! kindled at one flame  
 The world of rationals : one spirit pour'd  
 From spirit's awful fountain ; pour'd himself  
 Through all their souls, but not an equal stream ;

525

523-531. *One spirit pour'd*, &c. . Our author is here rather obscure, or indulges in unwarrantably bold figures of speech. He means nothing more perhaps than that God diffused his own rationality, or imparted a rational nature like his own, to *the world of rationals*, to all rational beings ; but what he means (527-30) when, after a season of trial, should they continue as they were made, they shall be *resorbed into himself again*, is not so plain, or so easily assented to. It seems too much like confounding the god-head and his rational offspring. There is another objection to this passage. If the rationals are re-absorbed into, or swallowed up again by, Deity, how can *his throne* be *their centre*, and *his smile* their *crown* (531) ?

There is too much similarity in the language of our author in this entire passage to the Pagan doctrine of the *animus mundi*—the doctrine that God is the *soul of the world*—that God is all things, and all things God—that he animates the universe as the human soul the human body ; and hence he ought to be worshipped in all the parts and objects of nature. This doctrine is beautifully expressed in the lines of Pope ; although they are susceptible of an interpretation consistent with just views of the divine omnipotence and universal agency, a subject upon which it is difficult to write impressively or even intelligibly without the use of highly figurative language. The sacred writers themselves employ it.

“ All are but parts of one stupendous whole  
 Whose body Nature is, and God the soul ;  
 That changed through all, and yet in all the same,  
 Great in the earth as in the ethereal flame ;  
 Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,  
 Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees ;  
 Lives through all life, extends through all extent,  
 Spreads undivided, operâtes unspent.”

“ With the doctrine of the *animus mundi* (says Dugald Stewart) some philosophers, both ancient and modern, have connected another theory, according to which *the souls of men are portions of the Supreme Being*, with whom they are re-united at death, and *in whom they are finally absorbed and lost*. To assist the imagination in conceiving this theory, death has been compared to the breaking of a vial of water, immersed in the ocean. It is needless to say that this incomprehensible jargon has no *necessary* connexion with the doctrine which represents God as the soul of the world, and that it would have been loudly disclaimed, not only by Pope and Thomson, but by Epictetus, Antoninus, and all the wisest and soberest of the Stoical school.”

Sir William Jones (says the same author) mentions a very curious modi-

Profuse, or frugal, of th' inspiring God,  
 As his wise plan demanded ; and when past  
 Their various trials, in their various spheres,  
 If they continue rational, as made,  
 Resorbs them all into himself again, 530  
 His throne their centre, and his smile their crown.

## ANGELS AND MEN COMPARED.

Why doubt we, then, the glorious truth to sing,  
 Though yet unsung, as deem'd, perhaps, too bold ?  
Angels are men of a superior kind ;  
Angels are men in lighter habit clad. 535  
 High o'er celestial mountains wing'd in flight ;  
 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 steep.  
 Angels their failings, mortals have their praise ; 540

fiction of this theory of *absorption*, as one of the doctrines of the *Vedanta* school. "The Vedanta school represents *Elysian* happiness as a total absorption, *though not such as to destroy consciousness*, in the divine essence."—*Stewart's Works*, vol. vi. 280.

In further elucidation of this subject, we may add that Seneca, an eminent philosopher of the Stoical school, regarded human beings as parts of the Divinity—"Quid est autem, cur non existimes in eo divini aliquid existere, qui Dei pars est? Totum hoc quo continemur, et unum est et Deus; et socii ejus sumus et membra." Epictetus taught that "man is a distinct portion of the Divine essence, and contains a part of God in himself."—(Miss Carter's translation, Bk. II. ch. 8, sec. 2). Antoninus represents the soul as an efflux or emanation from the governor of the world.—Lib. II. sec. 4. And on the principle that the Deity is the soul of the world he addresses his prayer to the world.—Lib. IV. sec. 23.—*Dewar's Mor. Philos.* vol. II. 507.

Dr. Leland in his work on the Christian Revelation quotes Cicero, in his *Academics*, as giving this representation of the sentiments of the Stoics; that they held that "this world is wise, and hath a mind or soul, whereby it formed or fabricated both it and itself, and ordereth, moveth, and governeth all things: and that the sun, moon, and stars are gods, because a certain animal intelligence pervadeth and passeth through all things."—*Cic. Acad.* Lib. II. cap. 37.

540. *Angels their failings*: As Eliphaz, the friend of Job, had affirmed:—"Shall mortal man be more just than God; shall a man be more pure than

While here, of corps ethereal, such enroll'd,  
 And summon'd to the glorious standard soon,  
 Which flames eternal crimson through the skies :  
 Nor are our brothers thoughtless of their kin,  
 Yet absent ; but not absent from their love. 545  
 Michael has fought our battles ; Raphael sung  
 Our triumphs ; Gabriel on our errands flown,  
 Sent by the Sov'reign : and are these, O man,  
 Thy friends, thy warm allies ? and thou (shame burn  
 Thy cheek to cinder !) rival to the brute ? 550

## RELIGION'S ALL.

Religion's all. Descending from the skies

his Maker ? Behold he put no trust in his servants ; and his angels he charged with folly," or frailty. The meaning is, that even the angels are, in their moral perfection, altogether inferior to God their Maker.

*Mortals have their praise* : Have qualities worthy of praise. In the last of our author's published poems, "Resignation," he has a stanza which may be adduced to qualify what he may elsewhere have expressed in regard to human merit.

"Of human nature ne'er too high  
 Are our ideas wrought ;  
 Of human merit ne'er too low  
 Depress'd the daring thought."

541. *Of corps ethereal, such enroll'd* : A military allusion. Mortals while on earth have their names registered upon the roll of ethereal or heavenly soldiery.

545. *Yet absent* from them (the angels).

546 *Michael has fought, &c.* : See Rev. 12 : 7. "Michael and his angels fought against the dragon."

*Raphael sung, &c.* : This angel is not mentioned in the canonical Scriptures, but we find him in the apocryphal book of Tobit, and, together with Michael and Gabriel, he figures most largely in "Paradise Lost."

547. *Gabriel on our errands, &c.* : Daniel the prophet says : "while I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swifly, touched me, &c. : See Dan. ix. 21-2. See the Gospel of Luke i. 19, 26. "The angel said, I am Gabriel that stand in the presence of God ; and am sent to speak unto thee and to show thee, &c."

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 ; 555  
 E'en in this night of frailty, change, and death,  
 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 : 560  
 Sinks under us ; bestorms, and then devours.  
 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, 565  
 And dungeon-horrors, by kind fate discharged,  
 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 ! 570  
 So joys the soul, when from inglorious aims  
 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. 575

## DEVOUT ADDRESS TO THE REDEEMER.

Religion ! thou the soul of happiness,

554. *The sole voucher, &c.* : The sole voucher, or evidence, that man is man ; that he is a being of immortal dignity. Religion is also the sole supporter of man above himself : she lifts him higher than he would otherwise attain ; she raises him to the condition of angelic dignity and bliss. Compare (557).

561. *Bestorms* : Involves us in its storms. The sentiment in the next two lines awakens the feelings of sublimity

575. *Affects the skies* : Aspires to the enjoyments of heaven.

576. *The soul of happiness* : Religion is the vital principle of happiness, that without which it cannot exist.

And, groaning Calvary, of thee, there shine  
 The noblest truths ; there strongest motives sting ;  
 There sacred violence assaults the soul ;  
 There nothing but compulsion is forborne. 580  
 Can love allure us ? or can terror awe ?  
 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 inflamed ? His tenderness on fire ? 585  
 Like soft smooth oil, outblazing other fires ?  
 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 ? 590  
 My light in darkness ! and my life in death !  
 My boast through time ! bliss through 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 ; 595  
 My sacrifice ! my God !—what things are these !  
 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, 600  
 None half so dear as that which though unspoke,  
 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 ! 605

577. *Of thee* : The soul of thee, *groaning Calvary* ! It is the religious aspect of the Cross that constitutes its principal attraction and power. This is shown in the lines that follow.

582. *He weeps* : The reference, most obviously, is to Christ.

587. *Thou, my all* ! How exquisitely beautiful and affectionate is the expansion or illustration of this sentiment in the following lines (588–595).

594. *Profound of love* : Great depth of love.

595. *To man of men the meanest* : To the meanest man of men.



Thou who didst save him, snatch the smoking brand  
 From out the flames, and quench it in thy blood!  
 How art thou pleased by bounty to distress!  
 To make us groan beneath our gratitude,  
 Too big for birth! to favour and confound! 610  
 To challenge, and to distance all return!  
 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! 615  
 But since the naked will obtains thy smile,  
 Beneath this monument of praise unpaid,  
 And future life symphonious to my strain,  
 (That noblest hymn to heav'n!) for ever lie  
Entomb'd my fear of death! and ev'ry fear, 620  
 The dread of ev'ry evil but Thy frown.

## LUKEWARM DEVOTION, UNDEVOUT.

Whom see I yonder so demurely smile?  
 Laughter a labour, and might break their rest.  
 Ye Quietists, in homage to the skies!

606. *Him*: The *younger-born* (605), man; the angels being the elder, of whom those "who kept not their first estate" were suffered to perish in the flames of perdition.

610. *To favour, &c.*: How art thou pleased (608) to favour and confound; so to favour, as to confound by the greatness and number of the gifts bestowed.

611. His favours *challenge*, but are so great as to *distance, all return*; that is to preclude a full and sufficient return on the part of man.

614. *Thy right, too great, &c.*: Thy right being too great to be suitably praised by men, &c.

617-18. *Beneath this monument, &c.*: Beneath this monument, bearing the confession of *praise unpaid*, and beneath a *life in future symphonious* (corresponding) *to my strain*, that is, devoted to the Redeemer.

623. *And might break, &c.*: *Laughter* being a *labour, and*, that which *might break their rest*.

624. *Ye Quietists*: Reference is here made to those *cold-hearted frozen for-*

Serene! of soft address! who mildly make 625  
 An unobtrusive tender of your hearts,  
 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? 630  
 Reason alone baptized! alone ordain'd  
 To touch things sacred? Oh for warmer still!  
 Guilt chills my zeal, and age benumbs my pow'rs:  
 Oh for a humbler heart and prouder song!  
 Thou, my much-injured theme! with that soft eye 635  
 Which melted o'er doom'd Salem, deign to look  
 Compassion to the coldness of my breast,  
 And pardon to the winter in my strain.  
 O ye cold-hearted Frozen formalists!  
 On such a theme 'tis impious to be calm; 640  
Passion is reason, transport temper, here.  
 Shall Heav'n, which gave us ardour, and has shown  
 Her own for man so strongly, not disdain  
 What smooth emollients in theology,  
 Recumbent virtue's downy doctors preach, 645  
 That prose of piety, a lukewarm praise?  
 Rise odours sweet from incense uninflamed?  
 Devotion, when lukewarm, is undevout;  
 But when it glows, its heat is struck to heav'n;  
 To human hearts her golden harps are strung; 650  
 High heav'n's orchestra chants Amen to man.

*malists* (639) who esteem it a great merit to be so governed by *reason* (631) as to be entirely devoid of emotion with regard to religious interests.

627. *Who halt indeed, &c* : A sarcastic description of the defective piety of those he is addressing; the language being borrowed from the account of Jacob (Gen. 32 : 24—28). In wrestling with the angel the patriarch was disabled by the dislocation of his thigh, in consequence of which he *halted*, or limped, in his walk.

634. *Prouder song* : Loftier song.

641. *Temper* : Moderation.

## LONGING FOR DEATH.

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,  
 Through the vast spaces of the univers<sup>3</sup>, 655  
 To cheer me in this melancholy gloom?  
 Oh when will death (now stingless) 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? 660  
O death divine! that giv'st us to the skies!  
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, 665  
This dark incarcerating colony  
 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, through the guardian hand 670  
 Of elder brothers, to our Father's throne,  
 Who hears our advocate, and through his wounds  
 Beholding man, allows that tender name.  
 'Tis this makes Christian triumph a command;  
 'Tis this makes joy a duty to the wise. 675  
 'Tis impious in a good man to be sad.

## THE TOUCH OF THE CROSS.

Seest thou, Lorenzo, where hangs all our hope?  
 Touch'd by the cross we live, or more than die;

652. *Dream I hear*: Do I dream that I hear?

658. *Of their choir*: A member of their choir.

669. *Metropolis*: Heaven.

678. The cross becomes to us either an instrument of everlasting life, or the occasion of a doom that is more severe than death, or the dissolution of the body.

That touch which touch'd not angels ; more divine  
 Than that which touch'd confusion into form, 680  
 And darkness into glory : partial touch !  
 Ineffably pre-eminent regard !  
 Sacred to man, and sov'reign through the whole  
 Long golden chain of miracles, which hangs  
 From heav'n through all duration, and supports, 685  
 In one illustrious and amazing plan,  
 Thy welfare, Nature, and thy God's renown ;  
 That touch, with charm celestial, heals the soul  
 Diseased, drives pain from guilt, lights life in death,  
 Turns earth to heav'n, to heav'nly thrones transforms 690  
 The ghastly ruins of the mould'ring tomb.

## THE SECOND ADVENT.

Dost ask me when ? When He who died returns ;  
 Returns, how changed ! where then the man of wo ?  
 In glory's terrors all the Godhead burns,  
 And all his courts, exhausted by the tide 695  
 Of deities triumphant in his train,  
 Leave a stupendous solitude in heav'n ;  
 Replenish'd soon, replenish'd with increase  
 Of pomp and multitude ; a radiant band  
 Of angels new, of angels from the tomb. 700  
 Is this by fancy thrown remote ? and rise  
 Dark doubts between the promise and event ?  
 I send thee not to volumēs for thy cure ;  
 Read Nature ; Nature is a friend to truth ;  
 Nature is Christian ; preaches to mankind, 705

681. *Partial touch* : That touch (by the cross) which was confined to man (*sacred to man*, 683) and did not extend to angels.

690-1. *To heav'nly thrones, &c.* : To heavenly forms of a high order, corresponding to angels (700), changes the ghastly bodies of buried saints. Compare note on 390.

692. *Returns* : From heaven.

705. *Nature is Christian* : Is accordant with Christianity in reference to this point. The comet, in her erratic flight, and *ampler round* yet sure return,

And bids dead matter aid us in our creed.  
 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,  
 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 destined period, shall return  
 He, once on earth, who bids the comet blaze ;  
 And, with him, all our triumph o'er the tomb.

*extended  
 metaphor*

710

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

725

THE CHRISTIAN'S FAITH IS RATIONAL.

Why disbelieve, Lorenzo ?—' Reason bids ;  
 All-sacred Reason.'—Hold her sacred still ;  
 Nor shalt thou want a rival in thy flame :

730

is cited as an instance analogous to the Christian doctrine of the second advent of the Son of God.

718. *Nature is dumb*, &c. : Not in regard to the second advent, for this would contradict previous assertions and illustration, but it is dumb in relation to *our triumph o'er the tomb* (717).

729. "*Reason bids*" (me disbelieve) : This is said in reply by Lorenzo, the Sceptic.

731. *In thy flame* : In thy ardent love of reason. The author claims as

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. 735  
 Wear I the blessed cross, by Fortune stamp'd  
 On passive Nature before Thought was born ?  
 My birth's blind bigot ! fired with local zeal !  
 No ; Reason re-baptized me when adult ;  
 Weigh'd true and false in her impartial scale ; 740  
My heart became the convert of my head,  
 And made that choice which once was but my fate.  
 ' On argument alone my faith is built :'  
 Reason pursued is faith ; and unpursued,  
 Where proof invites, 'tis reason then no more ; 745  
 And such our proof, that, or our faith is right,  
 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 ; 750  
 The mother honour'd, as the daughter dear.  
 Reason the root, fair Faith is but the flow'r :

strong a love for reason (though a Christian), as Lorenzo affected to entertain.

732. *Soul of all* : Indispensable attribute, or animating principle of all, &c

735. *With life* : As long as life lasts.

736. *By Fortune stamp'd, &c.* : Do I wear the cross which happened to be stamped on my passive nature before the development of reason ? In other words, am I Christian merely because it is the prevailing belief of my country and times ? *My birth's blind bigot* : Am I a Christian merely because the circumstances of my birth rendered me so ? *Reason re-baptized me when adult*. When I reached adult age my reason approved and confirmed my Christian baptism when an infant. My religion is based on conviction resulting from the examination of sufficient evidence, and is not derived merely from outward circumstances.

743. This is Lorenzo's declaration ; but our author shows that he is not entitled to credit when he makes it.

746. *Or our faith* : Either our faith.

748. *Absolve* : Justify.

The fading flow'r shall die, but Reason lives  
Immortal, as her Father in the skies.

When faith is virtue, reason makes it so. 755

Wrong not the Christian : think not reason yours ;

'Tis reason our great Master holds so dear ;

'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. 760

Believe, and show the reason of a man ;

Believe, and taste the pleasure of a God ;

Believe, and look with triumph on the tomb.

Through reason's wounds alone thy faith can die ;

Which dying, tenfold terror gives to death, 765

And dips in venom his twice-mortal sting.

FALSE PRETENSIONS OF PHILOSOPHIC INFIDELITY.

Learn hence what honours, what loud pæans, due,

To those who push our antidote aside ;

Those boasted friends to reason and to man,

Whose fatal love stabs every joy, and leaves 770

Death's terror heighten'd gnawing at his heart.

These pompous sons of reason idolized,

And vilified at once ; of reason dead,

Then deified as monarchs were of old ;

756. *Think not reason yours* : Think not that reason belongs to you an infidel, and as such.

764. *Through reason's wounds alone* : Through the wounds which reason alone inflicts thy faith can be put to death.

770. *Fatal love* : That is, to reason and to man. The author is speaking ironically.

774. *Deified as monarchs, &c.* : It was customary among the Romans and the Greeks to deify a multitude of men who had distinguished themselves by memorable achievements. After a certain time the kings, or other rulers of a country, were raised to the honours of divinity. Thus honoured by a base adulation were the successors of Alexander and the emperors of Rome. The latter, even in their life-time, were, in some instances, thus distinguished, but more frequently after death, to secure the good-will of their descendants. The decree to deify originated in the Roman senate, or in other

- What conduct plants proud laurels on their brow ? 775  
 While love of truth thro' all their camp resounds,  
 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, 780  
 'Behold the sun !' and, Indian-like, adore.  
 Talk they of morals ? O thou bleeding Love !  
 Thou maker of new morals to mankind !  
 The grand morality is love to Thee.  
 As wise as Socrates, if such they were, 785  
 (Nor will they 'bate of that sublime renown)  
 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, 790  
 As a foul blot, from his dishonour'd brow ?  
 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 ! 795  
 (For such alone the Christian banner fly)  
 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,  
 And says he call'd another ; that arrives, 800  
 Meets the same welcome ; yet he stills calls on ;  
 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.' 805

words, Roman senators were the manufacturers of this class of gods. It is thought by some that the practice of deifying Roman emperors gave rise in the Papal church to the beatification of saints.

786. *'Bate of*: Abate, deduct anything from that sublime, &c.

797. *How wise*: An example of irony, where the opposite is meant to that which is expressed.



But grant man happy ; grant him happy long ;  
 Add to life's highest prize her latest hour ;  
 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 ! 810  
 Where is the fable of thy former years ?  
 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 ;  
 Scarce now possess'd, so suddenly 'tis gone, 815  
 And each swift moment fled, is death advanced  
 By strides as swift. Eternity is all :  
 And whose eternity ? who triumphs there ?  
 Bathing for ever in the font of bliss !  
 Forever basking in the Deity ! 820  
 Lorenzo, who ?—thy conscience shall reply.

THE VOICE OF CONSCIENCE MUST BE HEARD.

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. 825  
 By the great edict, the divine decree,  
 Truth is deposited with man's last hour ;  
 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 ; 830  
 Though silent long, and sleeping ne'er so sound,  
 Smother'd with errors, and oppress'd with toys.  
 That heav'n commission'd hour no sooner calls,  
 But from her cavern in the soul's abyss,  
 Like him they fable under Ætna whelm'd, 835

807. *Her latest hour* : Her continuance for the longest usual period.

835. *Like him they fable, &c.* : The giant Enceladus, who rebelled against Jupiter ; in fleeing from whom, Minerva threw upon him the island of Sicily. The convulsions and eruptions of Mount Etna, according to the fable,

The goddess bursts in thunder and in flame,  
 Loudly convinces, and severely pains.  
 Dark dæmons I discharge, and hydra-stings ;  
The keen vibration of bright truth—is hell ;  
Just definition ! though by schools untaught.  
 Ye deaf to truth, peruse this parson'd page,  
 And trust, for once, a prophet and a priest ;  
 ' Men may live fools, but fools they cannot die.'

840

were caused by his changing the position of his body. Thus Virgil, *Æn.* III. 578—582.

" Fama est, Enceladi semilustum fulmine corpus  
 Urgeri mole hac, ingentemque insuper *Ætnam*  
 Impositam ruptis flammam expirare caminis :  
 Et, fessum quoties mutet latus, intremere omnem  
 Murmure Trinacriam, et cælum subtexere fumo."

838. *Dark dæmons, &c.* : The truths I proclaim are formidable as demons, and painful as the stings of the fabled hydra, or serpentine monster of the Lernean marsh ; to destroy which was one of the celebrated labours of the Pagan god Hercules.

841. *Parson'd page* : So called either because it was written by a clergyman, or because it conveyed the sentiments of one.

843. *Men may live fools, &c.* : Dr. Dodd introduces the Earl of Rochester as an instance of the truth of this remark, and observes, that here were parts so exalted by nature, and improved by study, and yet so corrupted and debased by irreligion and vice, that he who was made to be one of the glories of his age, became a proverb ; and if his repentance had not happily interposed, would have been one of the greatest reproaches of it. He well knew the small strength of that weak cause, whose arguments had so poisoned his mind ; and as at first he despised, so afterwards he abhorred them ; he felt the mischief, and saw the madness of their plan ; and hence, though he lived indeed to the scandal of many, he died as much to the edification of all those who saw him ; and because they were but a smaller number, he desired that, through the mouths and pens of his reverend friends, Dr. Burnet, and Mr. Parson, even when dead he might still speak good instruction to all. Thus, though he lived in heart, in writing, and in life a heinous sinner, he died with every hopeful symptom of a sincere and most exemplary penitence.

" Men may *live* fools, but fools they cannot *die*."

# NIGHT V.

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## THE RELAPSE.

---

Subscribed to the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Litchfield.

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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 deserved, who sought 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,

*The Relapse*: This title seems to indicate a *relapse*, or falling back, *into grief*; if our conclusion is correctly drawn from the passage 274—281, Night V.

2. *Avarice of air*: A fond and greedy desire of nothing more substantial than air.

4. *No more*: No more than praise.

5. *Second charge*: The first was, that he is a vain man who writes for praise or renown: the second charge is, that the muse has often blushed at the ignoble use to which some of her gifted sons have applied their talents.

And subtilize the gross into refined ;  
 As if to magic numbers' pow'ful 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.

PLEASURE AND PRIDE, OF OPPOSITE TENDENCIES.

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. 20  
 Joys shared 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 STRIVES TO RECONCILE THEM.

Wit dares attempt this arduous enterprise. 25  
 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 ; 30  
 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 delightfully confound. 35  
 Thus that which shock'd the judgment shocks no more :

11. *Civet* : Perfume, consisting of a brown semi-fluid matter, found in a gland belonging to the civet cat. It yields an offensive odour, unless it be very much diluted ; in that state, when combined with other perfumes, it greatly augments their energy.

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, 40  
 And hand-in-hand lead on the rank debauch,  
 From rank refined 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, 45  
 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,

43-46. *Cursed Art, &c.* : A story is related, of an atheistical author, the Earl of Rochester (already referred to in a previous note), which strikingly confirms the sentiment uttered here by our author. This man, says Dr. Dodd, at a time when he lay dangerously sick, and had desired the assistance of a neighbouring curate, confessed to him with great contrition, that nothing sat more heavy at his heart, than the sense of his having seduced the age by his writings, and that their evil influence was likely to continue even after his death. The curate among other things, designed to allay his apparent agony of remorse, said to him, that he did well in being afflicted for the evil design with which he published his book, but that he ought to be very thankful that there was no danger of its doing any hurt; that his cause was so very bad, and his arguments so weak, that he did not apprehend any ill effects from it. The pride of the noble author was much offended by this and similar remarks from the faithful curate. The sick man recovered from that severe illness, and evinced the insincerity of his professed penitence at that period, by afterwards writing and publishing two or three other tracts with the same spirit, and, very luckily for mankind and his own reputation, with no better acceptance or success.

47. *All* : Everything; in the objective case depending on the verb *transcend*.

51. *Exorcise their page* : Deprive their page of its corrupting tendencies—an allusion to the base and malicious demons that possessed the bodies of men at the commencement of the Christian era, and which were exorcised, or driven out, by the power of Christ, and by that which he delegated to the apostles.

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, haply not more wise.

55. *At time* : At the boundaries of time, treating only upon the affairs of this present life.

63. *Syrens* : Fabulous female goddesses, said to possess a most dangerous power over men by their bewitching songs. We have given in a former note a more full account of them.

66. *Her younger sister* : The earliest literature of most ancient countries is in the poetic form. Dr. Blair, in his Lecture on the Origin and Progress of Poetry, has discussed this subject in a full and interesting manner. Some of his observations will here be given. It has been often said, and the concurring voice of all antiquity affirms, that Poetry is older than Prose: but in what sense this seemingly strange paradox holds true, has not always been well understood. There never certainly was any period of society in which men conversed together in poetical numbers. It was in very humble and scanty prose, as we may easily believe, that the first tribes carried on intercourse among themselves, relating to the wants and necessities of life. But from the very beginning of society, there were occasions on which they met together for feasts, sacrifices and public assemblies; and on all such occasions, it is well known that music, song, and dance made their principal entertainment. Two particulars would early distinguish this language of song from that in which they conversed on the common occurrences of life; namely, an unusual arrangement of words, and the employment of bold figures of speech.

The same impulse which prompted the enthusiastic, poetic style, prompted a certain melody, or modulation of sound, suited to the emotions expressed. Music and poetry, therefore, had the same rise; they were

## SERIOUS CHARACTER OF THE POEM.

Think'st thou, Lorenzo, to find pastimes here ?  
 No guilty passion blown into a flame,  
 No foible flatter'd, dignity disgraced,  
No fairy field of fiction, all on flower, 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 ;  
 And thy dark pencil, Midnight ! darker still  
 In melancholy dipp'd, embrowns the whole.  
 Yet this, even this, my laughter-loving friends, 80  
 Lorenzo ! and thy brothers of the smile !

prompted by the same occasions ; they were united in song, and tended to heighten and exalt each other. The first poets sung their own verses ; and hence the beginning of what we call versification, or words arranged in a more artful order than prose, so as to be suited to some tune or melody. It thus appears that the first compositions which were either recorded by writing, or transmitted by tradition, could be no other than poetical compositions. No other could draw the attention of men in their rude, uncivilized state. Indeed, they knew no other. The earliest accounts which history gives us of all nations bear testimony to these facts. In the first ages of Greece, priests, philosophers, and statesmen, all delivered their instructions in poetry.

67. *Here* : In this poem.

79. *Embrowns* : Darkens. A corresponding word is much used by the Italians to describe anything shaded. Milton uses it in his *Par. Lost*. Bk. IV. 245—46.

“ And where the unperc'd shade  
*Embrown'd* the noontide bow'rs.”

He presents the same idea in Book IX. 1085—88.

“ In some glade  
 Obscured, where highest woods impenetrable  
 To star or sun-light, spread their umbrage broad  
 And *brown* as ev'ning !”

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 wise shall taste  
 The truths I sing ; the truths I sing shall feel, 85  
 And, feeling, give assent ; and their assent  
 Is ample recompense ; is more than praise.  
 But chiefly thine, O Litchfield ! nor mistake !  
 Think not unintroduced I force my way ;  
 Narcissa, not unknown, not unallied 90  
 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 : 95  
 Thy praise she drops, by nobler still inspired.

## SOURCE OF THE POET'S INSPIRATION.

O thou, blest Spirit ! whether the supreme,  
 Great antemundane Father ! in whose breast  
 Embryo creation, unborn being, dwelt,  
 And all its various revolutions roll'd 100  
 Present, though 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 ! 105  
 Unseen thou lead'st me to delicious draughts  
 Of inspiration, from a purer stream,  
 And fuller of the God than that which burst  
 From famed Castalia ; nor is yet allay'd

98. *Antemundane* : Existing before the world.

109. *Famed Castalia* : A fountain, sacred to the Muses, on Mount Parnassus, in Greece, being supplied from the perpetual snows of the summits of that mountain. The water is clear and refreshing, and was anciently used by the Pythia, and the oracular priests at Delphi in its neighbourhood. There was another fountain of the same name in Syria, near Daphne ; the



My sacred thirst, though long my soul has ranged 110  
 Through pleasing paths of moral and divine,  
 By thee sustain'd, and lighted by the stars.

## THE ADVANTAGES OF NIGHT OVER THOSE OF DAY.

By them best lighted are the paths of thought ;  
 Nights are their days, their most illumined hours !  
 By day the soul, o'erborne by life's career, 115  
 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  
 Imposed, precarious, broken, ere mature.  
 By night, from objects free, from passion cool, 120  
 Thoughts uncontroll'd, and unimpress'd, the births  
 Of pure election, arbitrary range,  
 Not to the limits of one world confined,  
 But from ethereal travels light on earth,  
 As voyagers drop anchor for repose. 125

Let Indians, and the gay, like Indians, fond  
 Of feather'd fopperies, 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 ! 130  
 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.

waters of which were supposed to impart a knowledge of futurity to those who drank them.

138. *Rescues virtue than inspires* : While all this is true it must nevertheless be conceded, that under cover of night vicious deeds are more conveniently and securely performed than under the light of the sun.

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 resolved,  
 Is shaken ; we renounced, 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,  
 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.

166. *Or* : Either.

169-70. *Smit with sweet recess* : Fond of sweet retirement, or seclusion from company.

Few are the faults we flatter when alone.  
 Vice sinks in her allurements, is unguilt,  
 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, through ev'ry distant age,  
 Has held a lamp to Wisdom, and let fall  
 On Contemplation's eye her purging ray. 180  
 The famed Athenian, he who wooed from heaven  
 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 livelong 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

181. *The famed Athenian* : It is probable that our author here had Socrates in view. To him, at least, the description well applies. Quintilian calls him *fons philosophorum* (the fountain of philosophers). As Homer was esteemed by the ancients the father of poetry, so Socrates was regarded as the father of moral philosophy, the different sects acknowledging him as their common parent. The account of him which Milton gives, in the *Paradise Regained*, will always be read with peculiar satisfaction. Book IV. 272—280.

“To sage Philosophy next lend thine ear,  
 From heav'n descended to the low-roof'd house  
 Of Socrates ; see there his tenement  
 Whom well inspir'd the oracle pronounc'd  
 Wisest of men ; from whose mouth issued forth  
 Mellifluous streams that water'd all the schools  
 Of Academics old and new, with those  
 Surnam'd Peripateticks, and the sect  
 Epicurean, and the Stoick severe.”

191. *The main* : The sea.

Of murder'd time ! auspicious Midnight, hail ! 195  
 The world excluded, ev'ry passion hush'd,  
 And open'd a calm intercourse with heav'n.  
 Here the soul sits in council, ponders past,  
 Predestines future actions ; 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 embower'd.  
Delightful gloom ! the clust'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 deigus 210

195. *Of murder'd time* : The epithet here seems to be applied unwisely Man, considered as subject to physical necessities, does not murder that time which he passes in needful repose. It is necessary to his intellectual as well as physical vigour ; and if he may sleep at any time, he cannot be blamed for taking repose at midnight, the period of which our author speaks, as stolen by him from the black waste of murdered time.

206. *Spontaneous rise* : We learn from this passage that our author had greater freedom and even luxury of thought in the *delightful gloom* of midnight than amid the glory of sun-light.

210. *Urania*, &c. : Our author here imitates Milton, who addresses Urania as a goddess, or heavenly personage, entreats her to descend from heaven, and thus, in part, describes her :—

“ For thou  
 Nor of the Muses nine, nor on the top  
 Of old Olympus dwell'st, but heavenly born :  
 Before the hills appear'd, or fountain flow'd,  
 Thou with eternal Wisdom didst converse,  
 Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play  
 In presence of th' Almighty Father, pleas'd  
 With thy celestial song,” &c.

He then, like our author, speaks of the nightly visits with which Urania favoured him.

“ In darkness, and with dangers compass'd round,  
 And solitude ; yet not alone, while thou

Nightly to visit me, so mean ; and now,  
 Conscious how needful discipline to man,  
 From pleasing dalliance with the charms of night,  
 My wand'ring thought recalls, to what excites  
 Far other beat of heart, Narcissa's tomb !

215

## FLUCTUATIONS IN HUMAN FEELING.

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 through 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  
The blush of weakness to the bane of wo.

225

The noblest spirit, fighting her hard fate  
 In this damp, dusky region, charged with storms,  
 But feebly flutters, yet untaught to fly ;

Or, flying, short her flight, and sure her fall :  
 Our utmost strength, when down, to rise again,  
 And not to yield, though beaten, all our praise.

230

'Tis vain to seek in men for more than man.  
 Though proud in promise, big in previous thought,

Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when morn  
 Purples the east : still govern thou my song,  
 Urania."—*Par. Lost*, Bk. VII. 5—12, 27—31.

218. *Stygian vapour* : An allusion is here made to a fabulous river of the lower world. The classic poets describe it as a broad, dull, sluggish, and very shallow stream, hence sometimes called a lake, or a fen. When any of the Pagan gods became guilty of perjury, they were obliged to take a draught of the Stygian water, which, for a whole year, had the effect of taking away sensibility and power of motion. To this fable the language of our author bears a strong allusion.

224. *Lodging ill* : Ill lodging, the body.

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 fledged 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

PROFICIENCY MADE IN THE SCHOOL OF GRIEF.

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

243. *With waxen wings, &c.* : Reference is here made to Icarus, the son of Dædalus, an Athenian, famed for his skill in architecture and statuary. In consequence of a murder which he committed at Athens, Dædalus was banished, took up his residence in Crete, where he offended Minos the king and was imprisoned. He determined to flee from Crete, having escaped from his confinement ; but being unable to escape by sea he resolved to attempt flight through the air. He made, accordingly, wings of feathers united by wax, for himself and his son Icarus. They mounted into the air as the fable relates ; but Icarus, ascending too high, and approaching too near the sun, its heat melted the wax, and the youth fell into the sea and was drowned. Dædalus arrived safely in Sicily.—*Anthon's Cl. Dic.*

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 weeds prevails :  
 Her servant's wealth encumber'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 blush men less inspired.  
 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, Ardelio is undone.  
Wisdom less shudders at a fool than wit.

268. *Her servant's wealth* : The wealth of Learning, the servant of Wisdom.

265. *Too hard for right, &c.* : Too hardened to do right ; or, too obstinate to adopt what is right, can prove the right wrong for the purpose of self-justification.

267. *Sense* : Common sense or judgment.

272. *Crassus but sleeps, &c.* : In the use of this fictitious name there seems to be an allusion to the Roman Crassus, the most finished speaker that had, up to his time, adorned the Roman forum. The meaning of our author in the passage seems to be this—"Genius," so far as his talents and attainments are concerned, may be a very Crassus, yet he does not employ them wisely—"Crassus but sleeps," but in other respects, in the gratification of his appetites and passions, he even goes beyond *Ardelio*, a name used as a representative of some notorious libertine.

Or, perhaps, the author's meaning may be more accurately explained thus:—"Genius," so far as his *capacity* for a wise course of action is concerned (indicated under the name of Crassus) is asleep ; he does not exert it ; but such is the manner in which his other faculties are employed, and his propensities and inclinations are gratified, that he is undone, he is a ruined man, described under the name of *Ardelio*. Genius pleads the fact that it *could be wise* (270) an *ample claim to glory*, even while it pursues an opposite course, by yielding itself to *pleasure* (271). And our author justly remarks that wisdom is less shocked at a fool than at a wit who thus proetites his high endowments.

But wisdom smiles, when humbled mortals weep.  
 When sorrow wounds the breast, as ploughs the glebe, 275  
 And hearts obdurate feel her soft'ning shower :  
 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 pow'r  
 To chase the moral maladies of man ;  
 Thoughts which may bear transplanting to the skies, 285  
 Though natives of this coarse penurious soil ;  
 Nor wholly wither there where seraphs sing,  
 Refined, exalted, not annull'd, in heav'n :  
 Reason, the sun that gives them birth, the same  
 In either clime, though more illustrious there. 290  
 These, choicely cull'd and elegantly ranged,  
 Shall form a garland for Narcissa's tomb,  
 And, peradventure, of no fading flow'rs.  
 Say, on what themes shall puzzled choice descend ?  
 'Th' 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.'

THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR END SURVEYED.

And, first, th' 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,

274. *Wisdom smiles* : Smiles in token of approval.

275. *As ploughs* wound the glebe.

279. *My Relapse* : My falling back (into a state of grief).

288. *Annull'd* : Destroyed.



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,  
 Unpierced 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.

## DESCRIPTION OF TRUTH.

See from her tomb, as from an humble shrine,

307. *Lustres* : Stars. The simile here employed is exceedingly beautiful and expressive. Prosperity is compared to the bright sunshine of day, while there is an implied comparison of adversity to the darkness of night.

312. *Fav'rite walk* : Dr. Young preferred a walk in the church-yard to one in any other locality. See his memoir.

313. *Cypress shades* : The cypress, a dark evergreen, is well adapted in its appearance to the sombre associations of the grave-yard.

"Jubet cypressos funebres."—Hor.

319. *Her moral stone* : Her moral grave-stone or monument, by which he means probably, the moral lessons communicated by the early date upon her monument (321)

326. *Ill foreboded* : Evil anticipated or-apprehended.

Truth, radiant goddess, sallies on my soul,  
 And puts delusion's dusky train to flight ;  
 Dispers the mist our sultry passions raise 330  
 From objects low, terrestrial, and obscene,  
 And shows 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  
Driven by the whirlwind ; lighted by her beams,  
I widen my horizon, gain new pow'rs,  
 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.

HOW WORLDLY DIFFERS FROM DIVINE WISDOM.

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,

343. *His*: Adapted to him. The foregoing description of truth takes rank with the finest passages in the poem, and is deserving of close study.

347-48. *In leaves, like Sibyl*: The Sibyls were certain females supposed to be inspired to deliver predictions of future events, living at various periods and in different countries. The allusion is here made to the one at Cumæ, in Italy, who was accustomed to write her predictions on leaves, and place them at the entrance of her cave; and it became necessary for those who consulted her to lay hold of these leaves, in the order in which she had placed them, before the wind should disturb them, and thus breaking the connexion, render their meaning unintelligible.

In the Third Book of the *Æneid* the circumstance is thus described—  
443—452.

"Insanam vatem adspicies, quæ rupe sub ima  
 Fata canit, folisque notas et nomina mandat.  
 Quæcumque in foliis descripsit carmina virgo,  
 Digerit in numerum, atque antro seclusa relinquit:  
 Illa manent immota locis, neque ab ordine cedunt,  
 Verum eadem, verso tenuis quum cardine ventus

Like Sibyl, unsubstantial fleeting bliss !  
 At the first blast it vanishes in air.  
 Not so, celestial. Would'st 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 expired,  
 (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 Sibyl's leaves, 360  
 The good man's days to Sibyl's 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.

Impulsi, et teneras turbavit janua frondes,  
 Nunquam deinde cavo volitantia prendere saxo,  
 Nec revocare situs, aut jungere carmina curat.  
 Inconsulti abeunt, sedemque odere sibyllia."

So in the sixth Book, 74-6.

"Follis tantum ne carmina manda,  
 Ne turbata volent rapidis ludibria ventis :  
 Ipsa canas, oro."

361. *Sibyl's books*: Allusion is here made to an interesting Roman legend connected with one of the Sibyls, which we will give in the words of Prof. Anthon. She came to the palace of Tarquin II. with nine volumes, which she offered to sell for a very high price. The monarch declined the offer and she immediately disappeared, and burned three of the volumes. Returning soon after, she asked the same price for the remaining six books; and, when Tarquin again refused to buy them, she burned three more, and still persisted in demanding the same sum of money for the three that were left. This extraordinary behaviour astonished the monarch, and, with the advice of the augurs, he bought the books; upon which the Sibyl immediately disappeared, and was never seen after. Those books were preserved with great care, and called the *Sibylline verses*. A college of priests was appointed to have charge of them, and they were consulted with the greatest solemnity when the state seemed to be in danger.

‘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 yet  
 From a friend’s grave how soon we disengage!  
 E’en 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  
 Combined, 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,  
 Though well to ponder it is life’s chief end.

DEATH, EVER AN UNEXPECTED GUEST.

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, though invited by the loudest calls  
 Of blind imprudence, unexpected still;  
 Though 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?

367. This was the language of Balaam—“Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.”—Numb. 23 : 10.

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, unperceived the change.  
 In the same brook none ever bathed him twice ;  
 To the same life none ever twice awoke.  
 We call the brook the same ; the same we think 405  
 Our life, though still more rapid in its flow ;  
 Nor mark the much, irrevocably lapsed,  
 And mingled with the sea. Or shall we say  
 (Retaining still the brook to bear us on,) 410  
 That life is like a vessel on the stream ?  
 In life embark'd, we smoothly down the tide  
 Of time descend, but not on time intent ;  
 Amused, 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 !

401. *Like a brook* : What can be more beautiful, more striking, more perfect, than this watery image of human life ?

407. *Lapsed* : Passed away.

416. *Charon's shore* : The shore of death. The author here alludes to the Roman story of one of the deities of the lower world whose office it was to conduct the souls of deceased men in a boat across the Stygian lake to receive sentence from the judges of Pluto's gloomy dominions. He received for this service an obolus from each passenger ; and hence the ancients were careful to put this sum of money in the mouth of their deceased friends.

Charon is thus described by Virgil, in his *Æneid*, Bk. VI. 298—304.

"Portitor has horrendus aquas et flumina servat  
 Terribili squalore Charon : cui plurima mento  
 Canities inculta jacet ; stant lumina flamma ;  
 Sordidus ex humeris nodo dependet amictus.  
 Ipse ratem conto subigit, velisque ministrat,  
 Et ferruginea subvectat corpora cymba ;  
 Jam senior, sed cruda deo viridisque senectus.  
 Huc omnis turba ad ripas, &c."

Like him so strong, by Delilah 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 placed,  
 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 unawed, in life's most smiling hour,  
 The good man would repine ; would suffer joys,  
 And burn impatient for his promised 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 schemes of Providence below.

## BRITAIN INFAMOUS FOR SELF-MURDERS.

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 sullen 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.

420. *Like him, &c.* : The allusion to Samson, the Hebrew, will easily be recognized.

426. *A flaming sword* : Language copied from Gen. 3 : 24.

428. *Suffer joys* : Would endure earthly joys, but not relish them, through his impatience for those of his promised skies.

432. *Rush into the dark* : Commit self-murder.

445. *In ambient waves* : In the waves that encompass thee.

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 absolved ;  
 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,  
 Unsold, unmortgaged 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 ;  
 There take large draughts ; make her chief banquet there. 465

But some reject this sustenance divine ;  
 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 loathe the basket full,  
 Are instantly, with wild demoniac rage, 475  
 For breaking all the chains of Providence ;  
 And bursting their confinement, though fast barr'd  
 By laws divine and human ; guarded strong

449. *Abhorrence* : This word is well personified here.

451. *Absolved* : Free from blame.

470. *Reversion* : Title to future enjoyments and possessions.

471. *Prince* : Satan. See Ephes. 2 : 2. 2 Cor. 4 : 4.

With horrors double to defend the pass,  
 The blackest, nature or dire guilt can raise ; 480  
 And moated round with fathomless destruction,  
 Sure to receive, and whelm 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  
 Through sacred nature's murder on their own,  
 Because they never think of death, they die.  
'Tis equally man's duty, glory, gain,  
At once to shun and meditate his end. 495

## THE SOLEMN DEATH-SCENE.

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 raises what is writ  
 In yielding sands, and smoothes the letter'd shore. 515

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF TEARS; THEIR CAUSE.

Lorenzo? hast thou ever weigh'd a sigh?  
 Or studied the philosophy of tears?  
 (A science yet unlectured 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 fun'ral tears from diff'rent causes rise:  
 As if from separate 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, *next nature*  
 Like Moses' smitten rock, gush out amain. 530

Some weep to share the fame of the deceased,  
 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: 535  
 They weep not to relieve their grief, but show.

517. *The philosophy of tears*: A scientific method of accounting for them; of explaining their causes and effects. The author first treats of "funeral" tears, and assigns no less than nine several causes, or occasions, or motives. (1) A natural tenderness and sympathy with persons in distress (525-26); (2). Some weep under the influence of the public eye who would not if left in private (527-30); (3). A desire to share the fame of the deceased by thus seeming to manifest a near relation (531-34); (4). Some weep not to *relieve* but to *show* grief, thus indicating that there is something they can love (535-36); (5). See 537-38; (6). 539-40; (7). 547-48; (8). 549-50; (9). 551-56.

530. *Smitten rock*: Exod. 17 : 6. Psalm 105 : 41.

Some weep in perfect justice to the dead,  
 As conscious all their love is in arrear.  
 Some mischievously weep, not unapprised,  
 Tears sometimes aid the conquest of an eye. 540  
 With what address the soft Ephesians draw  
 Their sable net-work o'er entangled hearts !  
 As seen through crystal, how their roses glow,  
 While liquid pearl runs trickling down their cheek !  
 Of hers not prouder Egypt's wanton queen, 545

541. The persons here described are compared to artful and fascinating Ephesian females; who were distinguished for the elegant refinement of their manners, and for the seductive arts that encourage and stimulate vicious indulgence. Ephesus, the capital of Ionia, in Asia Minor, is situated in a mild and enervating climate. It was once a populous city, but has long since been reduced to a heap of ruins.

545. *Egypt's wanton queen*: Cleopatra, remarkable for her beauty, her powers in music and conversation, her fascinating manners, and voluptuous intrigues with Cæsar and Antony. The act of *carousing gems*, was the shameful extravagance imputed to her in one of the feasts which she gave to Antony, of dissolving in vinegar a pearl of priceless value and then drinking it. She did this to sustain her boast to Antony that, expensive and magnificent as her former entertainments had been, she could prepare one that should be worth a sum, which in our currency would equal two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. She made good her boast by drinking in the way mentioned, one of the richest pearls ever seen, and which she had used as an ear ornament.

Some idea of her address, wantonness, pomp, and magnificence, may be formed by reading the account of her sail down the river Cydnus, and of her landing at Tarsus, where Antony had prepared to meet her, the object of his most passionate love. Dryden's account of the gorgeous display is scarcely an exaggeration, as to facts, of the scene as recorded by ancient historians, and will please every reader by the surpassing beauty of its versification. Shakspeare has also described the scene in his "Antony and Cleopatra;" but not so finely as Dryden.

" Her galley down the silver Cydnus row'd  
 The tackling, silk, the streamers wav'd with gold,  
 The gentle winds were lodg'd in purple sails :  
 Her nymphs, like Nereids, round her couch were plac'd,  
 Where she, another sea-born Venus lay—  
 She lay, and leant her cheek upon her hand,  
 And cast a look so languishingly sweet,  
 As if, secure of all beholders' hearts,

Carousing gems, herself dissolved 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

Some weep in earnest, and yet weep in vain :

Neglecting she could take 'em : boys, like Cupids,  
 Stood fanning with their painted wings the winds  
 That play'd about her face : but if she smil'd,  
 A darting glory seem'd to blaze abroad ;  
 That man's desiring eyes were never wearied,  
 But hung upon the object : To soft flutes  
 The silver oars kept time : and while they play'd,  
 The hearing gave new pleasure to the sight,  
 And both to thought. 'Twas heaven, or somewhat more  
 For she so charm'd all hearts, that gazing crowds  
 Stood panting on the shore, and wanted breath  
 To give their welcome voice."

548. *Like Charles, their own decease* : Charles V. of Germany and Spain, one of the most powerful of monarchs, and of most extensive sway, astonished the world by abdicating his throne and retiring to the monastery of St. Justus, in Spain, where he passed the last two or three years of his life, in reading, in rural exercises, and religious devotions. About six months before his death his constitution was shattered by a violent attack of the gout and his mind became impaired with his body. He gave himself up to monastic severities, and even to self-flagellation, as an atonement for his crimes, according to the Roman Catholic faith which he embraced. Not satisfied with this he performed what he considered a more effectual act for securing the favour of heaven, and which Dr. Young, in the text, alludes to. He resolved to celebrate his own obsequies before his death. Says Dr. Robertson, he ordered his tomb to be erected in the chapel of the monastery. His domestics marched thither in funeral procession, with black tapers in their hands. He himself followed in his shroud. He was laid in his coffin with much solemnity. The service for the dead was chanted, and Charles joined in the prayers which were offered up for the rest of his soul, mingling his tears with those which his attendants shed, as if they had been celebrating a real funeral. The ceremony closed with sprinkling holy water on the coffin in the usual form, and all the assistants retiring, the doors of the chapel were shut. Then Charles rose out of the coffin, and withdrew to his apartment, full of those awful sentiments which such a singular solemnity was calculated to inspire. But either the fatiguing length of the ceremony, or the impression which this image of death left upon his mind, affected him so much that next day he was seized with a fever, the violence of which his feeble frame could not long resist.

As deep in indiscretion as in wo.

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 short ! the cruel grief soon tamed,

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 gain of wisdom pays them for their wo.

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,

Though from the stately cedar's arms she fell ;

With stale forsworn embraces clings anew,

553. *Impotently pours* : Without self-control pours tears.

568. *Tears pump'd up, &c.* : This figure is ingenious, but far-fetched ; yet as it strongly illustrates the idea intended to be conveyed, we are not prepared to condemn the use of it as some have done.

571. *The sick soul* : It should be observed that the *sick soul* is beautifully described, from this to the 580th line, under the figure of a vine, that has been torn from a strong and lofty tree, the cedar, and then crawls to a contemptible shrub or bramble. In lines 581-82, the figure becomes faulty, and displeasing to good taste. These lines should have been omitted. It is not the property of a vine to present a *weed*, to appear at a *ball*, or to *raffle*, that is, throw dice for a prize.

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

## FALSE AND TRUE GRIEF.

So wept Aurelia, till the destined youth  
 Stept in with his receipt for making smiles,  
 And blanching sables into bridal bloom. 585  
 So wept Lorenzo fair Clarissa's fate,  
 Who gave that angel boy on whom he doats ;  
 And died 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 :

582. The prize in this case of raffling was a *death's head on a ring*.  
 Shakspeare in his second part of Henry IV. introduces Falstaff as saying,

"Peace, good Doll ! do not speak like a *death's*  
*Head* : do not bid me remember mine end."

One of his annotators, Stevens, appends the following note which will  
 equally well illustrate the line of our own author.

It appears from the following passage in Marston's "Dutch Courtezan,"  
 1605, that it was the custom for the bawds of that age to wear a *death's*  
*head* in a ring, very probably with the common motto, *memento mori*. Co-  
 cledemoy, speaking of some of these, says : "As for their death, how can it  
 be bad, since their wickedness is always before their eyes, and a *death's*  
*head* most commonly on their middle finger."

Again, in Massinger's "Old Law,"—"Sell some of my clothes to buy  
 thee a *death's head*, and put it on thy middle finger: your least considering  
 bawds do so much."

583. *Aurelia*: A fictitious name, representing one of a particular class of  
 persons.

585. *Blanching sables, &c.*: Whitening garments of mourning into those  
 of bridal beauty and attractiveness.

586. *Clarissa*: Probably the wife, or mistress, of the profligate Lorenzo.

592. *Young, gay, and fortunate*: Those attributes, respectively, are illus-  
 trated at length in the following lines: the first, from 598 to 777: the second  
 from 778 to 901: the third, from 902 to 1032.

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 grey hairs ?  
 Narcissa, I'm become thy pupil now,—  
 Early, bright, transient, chaste, as morning dew, 600

She sparkled, was exhaled, 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 chastis'd surpassing in a fault,  
 Father of all, forgetfulness of death !  
 As if, like objects pressing on the sight,  
 Death had advanced 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 buried, and the world their grave. 615

DEATH IS PLACED AT A DISTANCE.

Tell me, some god ! my guardian angel, tell  
 What thus infatuates ? what enchantment plants  
 The phantom of an age 'twixt us and death,

600. *As morning dew* : The sparkling beauty of this comparison deserves notice and admiration.

602. *Snow'd* : Another figurative expression, representing the act of covering the head with hair of snowy whiteness.

612. *Prescription* : A right to the continued possession of life founded on past possession of it ; and thus a right to be exempted from death.

616. *Some god* : An expression to be justified in a Christian poet only by supposing that he uses it in the sense of angel, of some celestial being superior to man.

Already at the door? He knocks; we hear,  
 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 shunn'd?  
 We stand, as in a battle, throngs on throngs  
 Around us falling, wounded oft ourselves; 625  
 Though 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.  
 Though grey our heads, our thoughts and aims are green!  
 Like damaged clocks, whose hand and bell dissent;  
 Folly sings six, while nature points at twelve. 635

## ABSURD LONGEVITY.

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  
 Baubles, I mean, that strike us from without,  
 While nature is relaxing ev'ry string?  
 Ask thought for joy; grow rich, and hoard within.

630. *As strong*: As in the case of others.

632. *And soon* (expire).

633. *Are green*: A singular epithet to be applied to thoughts and aims, especially in contrast with the white hair of old age. It excites rather a ludicrous idea in the mind; and the true idea does not readily occur. The author means to say that the thoughts and aims of the aged are such as become only those of an earlier period in life, being *green* and vigorous like the leaves in spring or summer. The next comparison of the aged to *damaged clocks* is ingenious and expressive.

639. *Club for joy*: unite in order to produce joy.

Think you the soul, when this life's rattles cease,  
 Has nothing of more manly to succeed? 645  
 Contract the taste immortal : learn e'en 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-climacterical absurdities !  
 Grey-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 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

646. *Contract, &c.* : Acquire a taste for immortal things.

653. *Grand-climacterical* : Climacteric denotes a critical period in life when great changes occur : the grand climacteric is the sixty-third year. The absurdities of that period and those beyond it are here censured.

661. *Like our shadows, &c.* : The comparison is as beautiful as it is important in its meaning.

667. *Retreat* : Retirement.

671. The direction *put good works on board* is too commercial and undignified to comport with the lofty thoughts awakened by the other parts of this most beautiful passage.



That shortly blows us into worlds unknown :  
If unconsider'd, too, a dreadful scene !

## THE THOUGHT OF DEATH USEFUL.

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 prest,  
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 die for an eternity ?

Aid me, Narcissa ! aid me to keep pace  
With destiny, and ere her scissors 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

688. *Hell* : Used here in the old English sense of *grave*.

698. *Scissors* : An allusion to the classical fable of the Fates, or Destinies according to which the thread of life is cut by Atropos, one of the three sisters. The fable is explained in a note upon 381, Night I.

- A thought of observation on the foe ;  
 To sally, 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, though 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 noontide, 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,

705. *Jehu-like*: Rapidly. An allusion to 2 Kings 9 : 20, "and the driving is like the driving of Jehu, the son of Nimshi ; for he driveth furiously."

713. *Quotidian*: Daily.

716-25. The course of thought in this passage is marked by great ingenuity and power.

731. *Ye monumental sires*: Ye aged sires who, as if already dead, serve as monuments, or tomb-stones.

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.

## NEEDFUL AND NEEDLESS KNOWLEDGE.

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
Unhedg'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 indispensable, 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, <u>like the lunar beam, affords</u>	750
<u>Light, but not heat</u> ; it leaves you undevout,	
Frozen at heart, while speculation shines.	
Awake, ye curious indagators, fond	
Of knowing all, but what avails you known.	
If you would learn death's character, attend.	755
All casts of conduct, all degrees of health,	
All dies of fortune, and all dates of age,	

735-36. Notice the admirable contrast here-introduced.

738. *Need* : Needs.

753. *Indagators* : Investigators.

754. *Known* : Being known.

756. *Casts* : Kinds.

757. *Dies of fortune* : Grades of fortune, represented as depending on the throw of a die, or as lying beyond human control.

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 !  
 Though 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 ;  
 And feeble wrap th' athletic in his shroud ;  
 And weeping fathers build their children's tomb : 770  
 Me thine, Narcissa !—What though 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 GAIIETY.

Narcissa's youth has lectured me thus far :  
 And can her gaiety give counsel too ?  
 That like the Jews' famed oracle of gems, 780

779. *Urn* : It was usual for the Greeks and Latins to burn the dead and preserve their ashes in a vase of a roundish form : it was their practice also to collect the votes of their popular assemblies, usually expressed by white or black pebbles, in an urn. Our author seems to make an allusion to both of these practices.

776. An allusion to the oldest man that ever lived : Gen. 5 : 27, "and all the days of Methusaleh were nine hundred sixty and nine years, and he died." The contrasted ideas in this line are exceedingly striking ; a Methusaleh dying in *hoary youth* : a man of great age, who, judged by the standard in (775), dies in his youth, having accomplished either for himself or others no more than should have been done during the first few years of life.

780. *Jews' famed oracle of gems* : Reference seems here to be made to a part

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 ;  
 E'en 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 reduced  
 By conquest, aggrandizes more his pow'r.  
 But wherefore aggrandized ? By Heaven's decree,  
 To plant the soul on her eternal guard, 805

Jewish High Priest's dress—the breast plate, in which were inserted four rows of precious stones, upon each of which was engraven the name of one of the sons of Jacob. These stones received the names of *Urim* and *Thummim*, (Light and Truth) because by them, as instruments, God gave revelations, and declared certain truths. The precise mode in which this was done is not now well understood. The opinions on the subject may be seen in Kitto's Cyclopædia.

784. *His due* : What properly belongs to him, namely, the wretched and the old.

791. *Fate* : Used for death.

796. *Taught life to live* : Taught life to be vigorous ; or authorized life to continue without abatement of vigour.

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 feared, there conquest triumphs most.  
 This proves my bold assertion not too bold.

## THE FORMS THAT DEATH ASSUMES.

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  
 Though master of a wider empire far  
 Than that o'er which the Roman eagle flew.

815. *Tiberian arts* : Arts such as Tiberius (the successor of Augustus) used, one of the most odious, cunning, and cruel of dissemblers ; possessed of a dark, distrustful, suspicious, reserved, and most artful mind ; hesitating at no deception or cruelty that placed within his power the objects of his aversion, dread, or jealousy : and universally execrated for his bestial sensualities during the latter years of his infamous reign. He is said to have had a confused, ambiguous, and hesitating method of expressing, or rather of hinting his sentiments, and these he often designed to be understood in a contrary sense from that which they naturally bore.

"Such," says Tacitus, "was the genius of Tiberius : by nature subtle, dark, designing, and always mysterious, he had exercised his talents in the school of politics, and became, by constant practice, the great master of craft and dissimulation. What he could do by an act of power, he chose rather to accomplish by the crooked means of deceit and stratagem. And even when he was drawing near his end, and everything was failing, his dissimulation remained. Dissembling to the last, he hoped by false appearances to hide the decay of nature."

822. *Eagle* : Standard, upon which the form of the eagle was depicted.

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 full fix'd on heav'n,  
 Becomes a mortal and immortal man.

Long on his wiles a piqued 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 show Lorenzo the surprising scene ;  
 If 'twas a dream, his genius can explain. 845

823-4. *Like Nero, &c.* : Another infamous Roman emperor. "To the contempt of his subjects," says Ferguson, "he at last joined a contempt of that very dignity to which he himself was raised as sovereign of so great an empire. Having a talent for music, he became, or believed himself to be, a distinguished performer, exhibited his skill in the public theatres, and travelled through Greece in the character of an artist, to receive the applauses of a people supposed to excel in discernment and taste. Next to the fears which assailed him on the prospect of death, he was most affected, it is said, with surprise, that the world could submit to lose the hand of so great a performer." Chariot-driving was one of his favorite amusements. He also performed on the stage as a tragedian, comedian, and buffoon. Our author intimates that he drove his *phaeton*, or open carriage, in *female guise*, or apparel. The term *phaeton*, in this application, is drawn from the classical fable of Phaeton, the son of Phœbus, driving one day the chariot of the sun, an attempt in which he met with wretched success.

'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 tuck'd his filthy shroud.  
 His crooked bow he straighten'd to a cane,  
 And hid his deadly shafts in Myra's eye.

## THE PECULIAR HAUNTS OF DEATH.

The dreadful masquerader, thus equipp'd, 860  
 Out sallies 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. 865  
 When against Reason, Riot shuts the door,  
 And Gaiety supplies the place of Sense,  
 Then foremost, at the banquet and the ball,  
 Death leads the dance, or stamps the deadly die ;  
 Nor ever fails the midnight bowl to crown. 870  
 Gaily carousing to his gay compeers,  
 Inly 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

859. *Myra's eye* : This fictitious name is invented merely to designate one of the gay party before alluded to.

876. *Against him* : That is, Death.



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 !

## DEATH'S UNCERTAINTY AS TO TIME.

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 sentinel, 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, though 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.

## FORTUNE, A BRIGHT MARK FOR DEATH.

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.  
 Though 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

877. *Their progenitors* : Their ancestors, as being more advanced in life and more fit subjects for death, in their estimation.

Death's dreadful advent is the mark of man,  
 And every thought that misses it is blind.  
 Fortune with Youth and Gaiety conspired  
 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 humanity to man.  
 O how portentous is prosperity ! 915  
 How, comet-like, it threatens while it shines !  
 Few years but yield us proofs of Death's ambition,  
 To cull his victims from the fairest fold,  
 And sheathe his shafts in all the pride of life.  
 When flooded with abundance, purpled o'er 920  
 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, 925  
 How often have I seen him dropt at once,  
 Our morning's envy, and our evening's sigh !  
 As if her bounties were the signal given,  
 The flow'ry wreath, to mark the sacrifice,  
 And call death's arrows on the destined prey. 930

HAPPINESS, IN CONTENTMENT ; NOT IN FORTUNE.

High fortune seems in cruel league with fate.  
 Ask you for what ? To give his war on man

906. *The mark of man* : That which man should mark or observe.

916. *Comet-like, it threatens* : These shining and erratic bodies were long considered as preternatural indications of approaching calamities : but science has dissipated this illusion. The author, however, speaks in conformity with the then quite uniform popular opinion.

927. *Our morning's envy, &c.* : A beautiful and concise way of expressing this idea : the object of our morning's envy, &c.

- The deeper dread, and more illustrious spoil ;  
 Thus to keep daring mortals more in awe.  
 And burns Lorenzo still for the sublime 935  
 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 denied ?  
 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 full 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 adored) to snatch the golden show'r. 965

935-36. The sublime of life : the high station of life.

945. *Our flame is transport* : We are not satisfied with moderate ardour in our feelings : we crave high excitement, and hence we scorn simple contentment as a source of happiness.

## THE BASE IDOLATRY OF FORTUNE.

Gold glitters most where virtue shines no more ;  
As stars from absent suns have leave to shine.  
 O what a precious pack of votaries,  
 Unkennell'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,  
 Morsel on morsel swallow down unchew'd,  
 Untasted, through mad appetite for more ;  
 Gorged 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 mismeasured, and impetuous speed,  
 Some, darting, strike their ardent wish far off, 985  
 Through fury to possess it : some succeed,  
 But stumble and let fall the taken prize.  
 From some, by sudden blasts, 'tis whirl'd away,  
 And lodged 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.

969. *Unkennell'd* : Let loose like a pack of dogs.

978. *Court-zephyrs* : The pleasant breezes of court favour.

982. *For men* : For men, not dogs.

992. *O'er-enamour'd* : Too devoted to bags of gold ; so much so as to refuse to employ it in the purchase of needful food.

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.  
 Though 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 startle thousands with a single fall.  
 As when some stately growth of oak, or pine,  
 Which nods aloft, and proudly spreads her shade, 1015  
 The sun's defiance, and the flock's defence,  
 By the strong strokes of lab'ring hinds subdued,  
 Loud groans her last, and, rushing from her height,  
 In cumbrous ruin thunders to the ground;  
 The conscious forest trembles at the shock, 1020

994. The meaning is;—some persons *together* seize a large property in a litigious way, contend for it in the court room, and rend it into fragments, reduce it to insignificance.

996. *Raven*: This bird among the ancients was regarded as one of ill-omen.

997. *The goddess*: Fortune is here intended.

1002. *Happiness can bear*: Can bear, or endure without injury, the intoxicating influence of excessive prosperity.

1014–21. A splendid comparison is here introduced.

1017. *Hinds*: Rustics.

And hill, and stream, and distant dale resound.

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 through 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.'

LYSANDER AND ASPASIA. THE DISAPPOINTED NUPTIALS.

Lysander, happy past the common lot,  
Was warn'd of danger, but too gay to fear.  
He wooed the fair Aspasia ; she was kind : 1035  
In youth, form, fortune, fame, they both were bless'd.  
All who knew envied, yet in envy loved.  
Can fancy form more finish'd happiness ?  
Fix'd was the nuptial hour. Her stately dome  
Rose on the sounding beach. The glitt'ring spires 1040  
Float in the wave, and break against the shore :  
So break those glitt'ring shadows, human joys.  
The faithless morning smiled : he takes his leave,  
To re-embrace, in ecstacies, 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,

1025. *Archer* : The constellation *Sagittarius*.

1040. *Glitt'ring spires* : That is, the shadows of them.

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 died together ;  
 Happy in ruin ! ~~undivorced 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 wo.  
 Narcissa lives ; Philander is forgot.  
 O the soft commerce ! O the tender ties,  
 Close twisted with the fibres of the heart !  
 Which broken, break them, and drain off the soul 1065  
 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. -Relapse

1058. *Or ne'er to meet* : Either ne'er, &c.

1063. *Commerce* : Interchange of affectionate regards.

1068. *The survivor dies* : In the loss of a very dear friend, he suffers more pain than the deceased friend did in dying. *No more* : Utter no more, or, I can say no more : the subject is too painful.





P R E F A C E .  
TO  
THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

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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 behoove him to be very serious about eternal 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 well be conceived by those who have not had an experience of it; and of what numbers 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 are 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 patronise) 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 the 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 forever 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.

# NIGHT VI.

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## THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED. IN TWO PARTS.

CONTAINING THE NATURE, PROOF, AND IMPORTANCE OF IMMORTALITY.

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### PART I.

WHERE, AMONG OTHER THINGS, GLORY AND RICHES ARE PARTICULARLY CONSIDERED.

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Subscribed to the Rt. Hon. Henry Pelham.

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SHE (for I know not yet her name in heav'n)  
Not early, like Narcissa, left the scene,  
Nor sudden, like Philander. What avail?  
This seeming mitigation but inflames :  
This fancied med'cine heightens the disease. 5  
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,

1. *She*: Rather an abrupt commencement, as there is no intimation who is here intended. It is some one who was introduced in the previous Night.

From hardest hearts confession of distress. 10  
 O the long dark approach, through 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 gazed 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 increased my pair. 20  
 Like powerful armies, trenching at a town,  
 By slow and silent, but resistless sap,  
 In his pale progress gently gaining ground,  
 Death urged 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, O Moon ! bear witness ; many a night  
 He tore the pillow from beneath my head,  
 Tied down my sore 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 !  
 Less dread the day that drove me to the brink,  
 And pointed at eternity below, 35  
 When my soul shudder'd at futurity ;  
 When, on a moment's point th' important die  
 Of life and death spun doubtful, ere it fell,

15. *Fate* : The divine purpose.

17. *Prophetically sad* : Sad from foreseeing her certain and approaching death.

21. The figure here introduced is highly appropriate and well-carried through.

22. *Sap* : A trench constructed for the purpose of undermining a wall so as to effect an entrance.

34. *Less dread* : Less dreadful.

And turn'd up life, my title to more wo.

But why more wo? 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 encumber'd, gall'd,

Block'd up the pass, and barr'd from real life.

Where dwells that wish most ardent of the wise? 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, though 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,

And drop a veil eternal o'er her tomb.

Far other views our contemplation claim,

Views that o'erpay the rigours of our life ;

45. *That wish* : The object of that wish.

46. *Too dark the sun*, &c. : The sun is here personified, and from its instrumentality in enabling percipient beings to discover objects, is figuratively represented as itself having the power of perception, but still it has not the luminousness sufficiently abundant or penetrating to enable it to discover the object referred to, the future abode of the good: nor are the *highest stars* high enough to be on a level with it, but death shall carry us on the ethereal ocean beyond sun and stars, and *land us there*.

56. The image which the mind pictures of death, is but a faint representation of it, owing to the unfavourable influence of fear, fancy, and ignorance (58, 59).

Views that suspend our agonies in death.  
 Wrapt in the thought of immortality,  
 Wrapt in the single, the triumphant thought !  
 Long life might lapse, age unperceived come on,  
 And find the soul unsated with her theme.  
 Its nature, proof, importance, fire my song.  
 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.

65

70

75

*Christian's school  
 over poet's  
 fame*

## THE NATURE OF IMMORTALITY.

Thy nature, Immortality ! who knows ?  
 And yet who knows it not ? It is but life  
 In stronger thread of brighter colour spun,

75. *Let not the laurel, but the palm, inspire* : It seems difficult to assign a reason for this distinction, the branches or leaves of both these trees having been alike appropriated as emblems of honour and of superiority. The author probably regards the former as an emblem and reward only of an earthly and temporary sort—the badge of an earthly immortality awarded to his song : but the palm he employs as an emblem of the Christian's triumph over all the evils of the present life and of his imperishable honour and glory in heaven : alluding probably to a passage in the seventh chapter of the Revelation—"After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." Such an immortality as they enjoyed : such a palm branch as they waved in joyful triumph before heaven's high throne, he prized above the laurel crown, the reward of genius on earth—such a reward as tradition reports to have been conferred on Virgil and Horace. It was the custom in the middle ages, at some of the European universities, to bestow a laurel crown upon such as took degrees in grammar and rhetoric, of which poetry was one department. See Night VII. 982.

77-80. *But life, &c.* : The comparison is ingenious and highly illustrative. The *Stygian dye* spoken of is an allusion to a fable connected with the river Styx, in Arcadia, in Greece. Ceres, in her flight from Neptune, having been compelled to change herself into a mare, came to this stream, and beholding in it her sadly altered form, was seized with hatred of the stream, and made its waters black.

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  
 Through habitable space, wherever born,  
 Howe'er endow'd ! To live free citizens  
 Of universal nature ! to lay hold, 90  
 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 ! 95  
 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 100  
 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 ! 105  
 Love's element ! true joy's illustrious home !

83. *Wanting in their weight* : An allusion to what was said of the king of Babylon, *Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting*—Dan. v. 27.

85. *How great* : How dignified and noble.

95. *Initiate* : Initiated, instructed.

98. *Collate* : Compare.

103. *Aceldama* : The field purchased, as a place of burial for strangers, with the money for which Judas had betrayed Christ, and which remorsefully he had flung back to those who had paid it—Matt. 27 : 8. Acts 1 : 19.

106. *Love's element* : The region in which love thrives and luxuriates.

From earth's sad contrast (now deplored) more fair !  
 What exquisite vicissitude of fate !

Bless'd absolution of our blackest hour !

Lorenzo, these are thoughts that make man man, 110  
 The wise illumine, aggrandize the great.

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, 115

To stop, and pause ; involved in high presage

Through the long vista of a thousand years,  
 To stand contemplating our distant selves,

As in a magnifying mirror seen,  
 Enlarged, 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

#### AN HONEST PRIDE.

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 should'st be proud :

That almost universal error shun.

How just our pride, when we behold those heights !

109. *Absolution of, &c.* : Absolution, or deliverance, contered by death.

112. *How great* : How dignified and important.

120. *Elevate* : Elevated.

125. *The tale* : The subjects of the tale.

27. *An honest pride* : The source of an honourable and just self-esteem.

131. The idea is, nor of that think meanly, of which thou shouldst think highly ; namely, thine own nature.



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 sense, but gross and feculent  
 To souls celestial; souls ordained 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 fate and favours are a theme in heav'n.

## THE SCENES AND OCCUPATIONS OF IMMORTALITY.

What wretched repetition cloy us here!  
 What periodic potions for the sick!  
 Distemper'd bodies! and distemper'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 footsteps in the deep! 160

134. *Those* · Those (which).

143. *Ambrosial*: Fragrant and refreshing.

145. *Full arrears*: In the triumphs of the future state the virtuous shall enjoy a *full compensation* for all the evils of the present. There, too, the *pomp imperial* of the present shall be abjectly poor, and ask aid of the *Peace* of the virtuous above. There seems to be an allusion to the parable of the rich man and Lazarus—Luke 16 : 23—25.

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 illumined 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 unperceived ! Stupendous these ! 185

Yet what are these stupendous to the whole ?  
As particles, as atoms ill perceived :  
As circulating globules in our veins ;  
So vast the plan. Fecundity divine !

162. *Labyrinths, &c.* : See note on Night IX. 1131.

166. *Unfolds* (itself).

170. *Unbroken, then, &c.* : a magnificent description here follows of the magnitude and extent of the universe.

175. *Gods* : Our author is fond of using this term to denote men in their higher state of being.

178. *Infinite* : Infinite number.

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 pow'r ! 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 chased below.

THE CHASE OF A SHADOW—WORLDLY GOOD.

And chase we still the phantom through 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 lucre plunge we in the mire ?

Drudge, sweat, through ev'ry shame, for ev'ry gain,

For vile contaminating trash ; throw up

190. *I wrong thee still* : That is, by an inadequate view of Thy works.

193. *What this, &c.* : The wonders of redemption are pronounced superior to those of creation, already surveyed.

201. *Cheap bought* : The thought is, that it would be worth the pangs of death to purchase thereby even the ideas of our future joy as Christians.

Our hope in heav'n, our dignity with man,  
 And deify the dirt matured to gold ? 220  
 Ambition, Av'rice, the two demons these  
 Which goad through ev'ry slough our human herd,  
 Hard travell'd from the cradle to the grave.  
 How low the wretches stoop ! how steep they climb !  
 These demons 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 surprised ;  
 Thou neither know'st : their nature learn from me.

## TRUE AMBITION.

Mark well, as foreign as these subjects seem,  
 What close connection 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. 245  
 The visible and present are for brutes,  
 A slender portion ! and a narrow bound !  
 These, Reason, with an energy divine,

227. *In time* : In the power of time.

244. *If prone in thought* : If our thoughts take a downward direction.

245. *Should blush, &c.* : Should blush that his forehead looks upward, rather than downward with the brutes.

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.

## NEITHER TALENTS NOR STATION CONSTITUTE GREATNESS.

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 ! 260  
 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, 265  
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. 270  
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

257. *Parts, or place* : Talents or high station.

261. *Dedalian engin'ry* : The wings manufactured by Dædalus, alluding to a classical fable explained in a former note. They were of feathers united by wax ; by the aid of these wings he crossed a part of the Mediterranean sea, but his son, Icarus, venturing to fly too near the sun, the wax melted and he fell into the sea and was lost. The next line alludes to this part of the story.

264. *Gibbet of our name* : A gallows on which our name, or character, is disgraced.

In false ambition's hand, to finish faults 275  
Illustrious, and give infamy renown.

Great ill is an achievement of great powers :  
 Plain sense but rarely leads us far astray.  
 Reason the means, affections choose our end ;  
 Means have no merit, if our end amiss. 280  
 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. 285

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 ;

279. *Reason* (chooses) *the means*.

282. *Pelham* : Prime minister of Great Britain, to whom this *Night* is dedicated.

291. *Awful names* : Awe-inspiring names.

292. *Devoir* : Service and profound respect.

296. *All more* : All more than a merely external homage is due to merit, and not to official dignity.

303. *Silver fur* : Fur adorned with silver.

His royal robe unborrow'd, and unbought,  
 His own, descending fairly from his sires. 305  
 Shall man be proud to wear his livery,  
 And souls in ermine scorn a soul without ?  
 Can place or lessen us or aggrandize ?  
 Pigmies are pigmies still, though 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 lodged in immortality. 315  
 Hear, and assent. Thy bosom burns for power ;

306. *His livery* : The dress distinguishing the servants of such a king.

307. *Ermine* : Costly fur.

308. *Place or* : Place either.

309. *Pigmies* : Persons of diminutive size. The Pigmæan nation (whence this word), according to an ancient fable, were composed of beings of only a few inches in stature, celebrated for the war waged by them in Egypt upon cranes.

312. *Outbuilds the pyramids* : Builds a more enduring monument than the pyramids. These were monuments of massive masonry, which, from a square base, rise by regular gradations till they terminate in a point, but so that the width of the base always exceeds the perpendicular height. The pyramids commence immediately south of Cairo, but on the opposite bank of the Nile, and extend in an uninterrupted range for many miles in a southerly direction parallel with the banks of the river. One of these occupies an area of more than thirteen acres. Its perpendicular height is 480 feet, being 43 feet higher than St. Peter's at Rome, and 136 feet higher than St. Paul's in London. Herodotus says that 100,000 men were occupied twenty years in the construction of this enormous edifice. It consists of successive tiers of vast blocks of calcareous stone, rising above each other in the form of steps, the thickness of the stones, and of course the height of the steps, decreasing as the altitude of the pyramid increases : thus varying from 4½ to 1½ feet in height.

It is not clearly known for what purpose, or by whom the pyramids were built : but the most probable opinion is, that they were intimately connected with the religion of the ancient Egyptians. and that they were at once a species of tombs and temples, but chiefly of the latter character.—

*Brande.*

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 treach'rous pride betrays thy dignity ;  
 That pride defames humanity, and calls  
 The being mean, which staffs or strings can raise.  
 That pride, like hooded hawks, in darkness soars,  
 From blindness bold, 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,

320. *Betray'd* : Misled.

321. *Betrays* : Is unfaithful to thy true dignity ; does violence to it.

322. *Humanity* : Human nature.

324. *Hooded hawks* : An allusion is here made to the amusement of falconry, which prevailed over Europe in the middle ages. It was a favourite sport with princes and nobles, especially in France. It had this advantage of hunting, that ladies could engage in it, who were delighted to carry the falcon (or hawk) on their wrists. The knight had the charge of flying the bird at the right moment, of following her, of encouraging by calls, taking the prey from her, caressing her, and placing her gracefully on the wrist of her mistress. All kinds of birds and even gazelles are pursued by trained hawks, that fasten themselves upon the heads of these creatures and peck at their eyes, which checks them till the hounds can come up. Wolves were formerly hunted in the same way in Europe. The falcons intended for this sport, were taken young from the nest, and fed for months with the raw flesh of pigeons and wild birds before they were inured to sitting on the hand, to which they were accustomed by resting on posts, &c. They were afterwards made tame by being deprived, for a long time, of sleep, and inured to endure a *leathern hood*, or covering. At first they were tied with a string about thirty fathoms in length, to prevent them from flying away, from which they were not released till they were completely disciplined, so as to return at the proper signal. When taken into the field they were always capped, or hooded, so as to see no object but their game, and as soon as the dogs stopped, or sprung it, the falcon was unhooded and tossed into the air after her prey.—*Encyc. Americ.*

327. *An angel's second*, &c. : Man is now second only to the angels ; nor shall he long continue thus inferior, but shall equal or perhaps surpass the angel.



And courting glory from the tinkling string,  
 But faintly shadows an immortal soul, 330  
 With empire's self, to pride, or rapture fired.  
 If nobler motives minister no cure,  
 E'en vanity forbids thee to be vain.  
 High worth is elevated place; 'tis more;  
 It makes the post stand candidate for thee: 335

329. *String*: Nero counted it more glory to play well upon a fiddle or guitar than to perform the appropriate duties of an emperor, or occupy his throne.

331. *Fired*, to pride or rapture by the possession even of empire itself.

333. *E'en vanity forbids thee to be vain*: Dr. Thomas Brown has presented some discriminating observations upon pride and vanity, worthy of being here introduced.

When I define *pride* to be that emotion which attends the contemplation of our excellence, I must be understood as limiting the phrase to the *single emotion* that immediately follows the contemplation. The feeling of our excellence may give rise directly or indirectly to various other affections of the mind. It may lead us to impress others as much as possible with our superiority: which we may do in two ways—by presenting to them at every moment some proofs of *our* advantages, mental, bodily, or in the gifts of fortune: or by bringing to their mind directly *their* inferiority by the scorn with which we treat them. The former of these modes of conduct, in which we studiously bring forward any real or supposed advantages which we possess, is what is commonly termed *vanity*; the latter, in which we wish to make more directly felt the real or supposed comparative meanness of these, is what is commonly termed *haughtiness*: but both, though they may arise from our mere comparison of ourselves and others and our consequent feeling of superiority, are the *results* of pride, not the pride itself. We may have the internal emotion, which is all that is truly pride, together with too much sense to seek the gratification of our vanity by any childish display of excellencies substantial or frivolous: since, however desirous we may be that these advantages should be known, we may have the certainty that they could not be made known by ourselves without the risk of our appearing ridiculous. In like manner we may be internally very full of our own importance, and yet too desirous of the good opinion even of our inferiors to treat them with the scorn which we feel; or, to make a more pleasing supposition, too humanely considerate of their uneasiness, to shock them by forcing on them the painful feeling of their inferiority, however gratifying our felt superiority may be to ourselves.—*Philosophy of Mind*, vol. ii. 464–5.

335. *Makes the post, &c.*: High worth does not need to seek a post of distinction, but is sought to occupy it.

Makes more than monarchs, makes an honest man ;  
 Though no exchequer it commands, 'tis wealth ;  
 And though it wears no riband, 'tis renown ;  
 Renown, that would not quit thee, tho' disgraced,  
 Nor leave thee pendent 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  
 Unshod behind this momentary scene ; 350  
 Reduced 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

337. *Exchequer* : Treasury ; deriving the name, as is supposed, from the checkered cloth that originally covered the table used by the court, whose business it was to decide upon law cases connected with the royal revenue of Great Britain.

338. *Riband* : That is, as a badge of honour.

340. *Pendent* : Dependent.

346. *Between* (the time of the former and the latter).

349. *The curtain's fall* : There is an allusion here to the idea that the world may be regarded as a theatrical stage on which all men are acting their respective parts ; at the close the curtain falls. By the *buskin'd chief* is meant a man who has held a superior station in society.

352. *Sublimes* : Raises.

354. *Antic* : Odd, ridiculous.

354. *By worlds o'er-run*, &c. : A just estimate is here pronounced of the Alexanders and Napoleons of the earth, falsely called great. They were intellectually and physically great, but morally small.

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 sheathes;

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 levees 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 doat 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: e'en the grave man lends

358. *Christian pride*: Pride of those belonging to what are called Christian countries. Properly speaking, there is no such trait as *Christian pride*. Pride is anti-Christian.

360. *Most Christian*, &c.: A satirical reference to some monarch of a Christian country. About this time most of the nations of Europe were waging war, Great Britain included. Perhaps the author meant it to be applicable to George II. yet as a matter of policy so expresses the sentiment that it may be applied to any other of the belligerent monarchs. Austria, Russia, and Great Britain were united in opposition to France, Prussia, Bavaria, and Sweden.

371. *Levees*: Concourse of visitors on set days.

377. *Centre* (of the earth).

His solemn face to countenance the coin.  
 Wisdom for parts is madness for the whole.  
 This stamps the paradox, and gives us leave 380  
 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 source of good and ill !  
 Thy strength in man, like length of wing in birds, 400  
 When disengaged from earth, with greater ease  
 And swifter flight transports us to the skies ;  
 By toys entangled, or in guilt bemired,  
 It turns a curse : it is our chain and scourge  
 In this dark dungeon, where confined 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.

TRUE WEALTH—IN OUR CORPOREAL SENSES.

With error in ambition justly charged,  
 Find we Lorenzo wiser in his wealth ? 410  
 What if thy rental I reform, and draw  
 An inventory new to set thee right ?

384. *For parts, &c.* : That is, for certain parts only.

396. *Like an idiot, &c.* : A very striking and illustrative comparison, presenting also a strong antithesis, or contrast.

411. *Rental* : Account of rents.

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 descended, form'd, endow'd;  
Sky-born, sky-guided, sky-returning race!  
Erect, immortal, rational, divine!  
 In senses, which inherit earth and heav'n's; *heaven is*  
 Enjoy the various riches nature yields; *minute* 420  
Far nobler, give the riches they enjoy; *create*  
Give taste to fruits, and harmony to groves;  
Their radiant beams to gold, and gold's bright sire;  
Take in, at once, the landscape of the world 425  
At a small inlet, which a grain might close,  
And half create the wondrous world they see.

415. *Seek it*: Seek true treasure.

420. *In senses, &c.*: Find thy true treasure (413) in the senses, which inherit, &c., enjoy, &c., give, &c., take in, &c., and half create, &c. It would be difficult to find a more admirable account of the wealth which we enjoy in our five senses: none can read it properly without gratitude to the beneficent Creator. In vain were all the objects around us provided if these wonderful senses had not been conferred upon ourselves. Those objects are not the cause, but simply the occasion of our enjoyments (431). Our senses give taste to fruits, and harmony to groves, &c.: that is, fruits would afford us no relish; the songsters of the groves would yield no pleasures to us, if we had not the sense of taste, and the sense of hearing. And how astonishing is the fact announced so beautifully in (425-7)? That rays of light from a landscape of several miles in diameter should be so admitted through the pupil of the eye, with a diameter of about an eighth of an inch only, that the landscape, in all its manifold tints of beauty or of grandeur, shall be clearly and most delightfully depicted on the back part of the interior of the eye, and perceived by the mind.

425-7. The wonders of vision, and the wisdom of Deity displayed in the arrangements for this purpose, are admirably portrayed by Dr. Thomas Dick in his *Christian Philosopher*: we cannot refrain from transcribing some of his remarks.

The myriads of rays of light which flow from the minutest points of the surrounding scene, before they can produce the sensation of vision and form a picture of the landscape upon the retina, must be compressed into a space little more than one eighth of an inch in diameter before they can enter the

Our senses, as our reason, are divine.  
But for the magic organ's pow'ful charm  
Earth were a rude uncolour'd chaos still.  
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,  
Man makes the matchless image, man admires:  
 Say then, shall man, his thoughts all sent abroad,

*we create order  
 out of chaos -  
 We are 430  
 God!!*

*Man  
 shows  
 Nature  
 furnishes  
 the  
 material*

435

*make, give, draw, beautify - certain words for an*  
 pupil of the eye; yet they all pass through this small aperture without the least compression, and paint the images of their respective objects in exactly the same order in which these objects are arranged. Again: could a painter, after a long series of ingenious efforts, delineate the extensive landscape before me on a piece of paper not exceeding the size of a silver sixpence (dime) so that every object might be as distinctly seen, in its proper shape and colour, as it now appears when I survey the scene around me in nature, he would be incomparably superior to all the masters of his art that ever went before him. This effect, which far transcends the utmost efforts of human genius, is accomplished in a moment by the hand of nature, or, in other words by "the finger of God." All the objects I am now surveying, comprehending an extent of *a thousand square miles*, are accurately delineated in the bottom of my eye on a *space less than half an inch in diameter*. How delicate then must be the strokes of that pencil which has formed such a picture!

428. *Divine*: Not only of divine origin, but of amazing power and exquisite susceptibilities.

429. *Magic organ*: The organ of vision.

432. *Ours is the cloth, &c.*: We furnish the necessary materials for the picture which Nature draws: that is, without the apparatus of the eye and sense of vision in us, all creation, to us, would be a blank.

435. *Like Milton's Eve, &c.*: Paradise Lost, Bk. IV. 456—471.

" I thither went  
 With unexperienced thought, and laid me down  
 On the green bank, to look into the clear  
 Smooth lake, that to me seem'd another sky.  
 As I bent down to look, just opposite  
 A shape within the wat'ry gleam appear'd,  
 Bending to look on me. I started back;  
 It started back: but pleas'd I soon return'd;  
 Pleas'd it return'd as soon with answer'ing looks  
 Of sympathy and love:" &c.

(Superior wonders in himself forgot)  
 His admiration waste on objects round,  
When Heav'n makes him the soul of all he sees ? 440  
 Absurd ! not rare ! so great, so mean, is man.

## TRUE WEALTH, IN THE INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL POWERS.

What wealth in senses such as these ! What wealth  
 In fancy, fired to form a fairer scene  
 Than sense surveys ! In memory'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 refined,  
 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, 460  
 Long, long, ere chaos teem'd, plann'd human bliss.  
 What wealth in souls that soar, dive, range around,

440. *The soul* : That which gives value to all he sees : that which alone enables us to apprehend the existence, and appreciate the beauties of the external world.

441. How absurd then, yet how common for man to send his thoughts perpetually abroad, and to overlook the wonders in his own physical constitution.

445. *Should it perish* : Should the world perish.

447. *Originally bright* : Bright as at first.

452. *Those underlings* : The bodily senses, and fancy.

458. *Set aside* : (being) set aside.

*intellect builds  
 civilization  
 this is  
 imagination creating  
 a new world*

Disdaining limit or from place or time ;  
 And hear at once, in thought extensive, hear  
 Th' almighty fiat, and the trumpet's sound ! 465  
 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, 470  
 And wander wild through things impossible !  
 What wealth, in faculties of endless growth,  
In quenchless passions violent to crave,  
 In liberty to choose, in pow'r to reach,  
 And in duration, (how thy riches rise !) 475  
 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, 480  
 Improveable at will, in virtue lies ;  
 Its tenure sure : its income is divine.

## HIGH-BUILT ABUNDANCE : OF WHAT USE ?

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 tired with play,  
 Like rubbish from disploding engines thrown,

463. *Or from place*: Either from, &c.

465. The voice of God as he created the world, speaking it into being ; and the archangel's trump, at the close of this world's history, summoning to judgment and retribution all that have dwelt upon it.

466. That walk boldly on creation's outside—its farthest limits, &c. The powers of the mind (from 442 to 476) are described not only with great poetic beauty, but with equal philosophical exactness and fullness

483. *For what ?* For what purpose is such abundance piled up ?

488. *Disploding engines, &c.* : Bursting shells. filled with rubbish. No



Our magazines of hoarded trifles fly ;  
 Fly diverse ; fly to foreigners, to foes ; 490  
 New masters court, and call the former fools,  
 (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 task-master !) 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 wo :  
 To feel the stings of envy and of want,  
 Outrageous want ! both Indies cannot cure. 505  
 A competence is vital to content.  
 Much wealth is corpulence, if not disease ;  
 Sick, or encumber'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 stings us with success.  
 The rich man who denies it proudly feigns,  
 Nor knows the wise are privy to the lie.  
 Much learning shows how little mortals know ;  
 Much wealth, how little worldlings can enjoy : 520

comparison could be more fit or impressive, to represent the scattering of hoarded wealth among avaricious survivors.

504. *Want* : Mental want—desire.

511. *More* (than a competence).

At best, it babies us with endless toys,  
 And keeps us children till we drop to dust.  
 As monkeys at a mirror stand amazed,  
 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 be 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. 535

O what a patrimony this! A being  
Of such inherent strength and majesty,  
 Not worlds possess'd 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.

529. *Want*: See (504).

530-1. *To nature, &c.*: *To fancy*: Agreeably to, &c.

535-41. *O what a patrimony this? &c.* "There is but one object," says Augustine, "greater than the soul, and that one is its creator." "Nihil est potentius illa creatura quæ mens dicitur rationalis, nihil est sublimius. Quicquid supra illam est jam Creator est." When we consider the powers of his mind, even without reference to the wonders which he has produced on earth, what room does man afford for astonishment and admiration! His senses, his memory, his reason, the past, the present, the future, the whole universe, and, if the universe have any limits, even more than the whole universe comprised in a single thought; and, amid all these changes of feelings that succeed each other in rapid and endless variety, a permanent and unchangeable duration compared with which the duration of external things is but the existence of a moment.—*Brown's Phil. of Mind*, vol. i. 62.

541. *Beggar to the man*: Is poor compared with the man. The advantages of royalty are contemptible when compared with the simple endowments of humanity. The strength and majesty (536) inherent in man as man.

## IMMORTALITY DEFINED AND ILLUSTRATED.

Immortal! Ages past, yet nothing gone!  
 Morn without eve! 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 dares 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;  
 Roused 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

557. *As this the soul, &c.*: As this idea of immortality strikes the soul. To the thinking mind it seems to have a voice of thunder. The entire paragraph and the one that follows, receive illustration from what an able writer has said:—"No doctrine is more common among Christians than that of man's immortality; but it is not so generally understood, that the germs or principles of his whole future being are *now* wrapped up in his soul, as the rudiments of the future plant in the seed. As a necessary result of this constitution, the soul, possessed and moved by these mighty though infant energies, is perpetually stretching beyond what is present and visible, struggling against the bounds of its earthly prison house, and seeking relief and joy in imaginings of unseen and ideal being."

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!  
 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.  
 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;  
 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,  
 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,  
 Their present province and their future prize;  
 Divinely darting upward ev'ry wish,  
 Warm on the wing, in glorious absence lost.  
 Doubt you this truth? Why labours your belief?  
 If earth's whole orb, by some due distanced eye  
 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.

567. *Thrones*: occupants of thrones.

571. *That*: (is) that.

579. *Depending*: Hanging over.

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: 605  
 And all may do what has by man been done.

Who, beaten by these sublunary storms,  
 Boundless, interminable joys can weigh,  
 Unraptured, unexalted, uninflamed?  
 What slave unblest, who from to-morrow's dawn 610  
 Expects an empire? he forgets his chain,  
 And, throned 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 prized enough! enough revolved!  
 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, 625  
 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.

614. *Appointments*: Things appointed to her, or designed for her.

## PROOFS OF IMMORTALITY.

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 through this bosom-barrier burst their way,  
 And, with reversed ambition, strive to sink ?  
 Who labour downwards through th' opposing pow'rs  
 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 wise)  
 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 untaught, 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

659. *Which truth* (being) *untaught, &c.*

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 th' example. See the summer gay, 680

With her green chaplet, and ambrosial flow'rs,  
 Droops into pallid autumn : winter grey,  
 Horrid with frost, and turbulent with storm,  
 Blows autumn and his golden fruits away ;  
 Then melts into the spring : soft spring, with breath 685

Favonian, from warm chambers of the south,  
 Recalls the first. All, to re-flourish, fades ;  
 As in a wheel, all sinks, to re-ascend.

Emblems of man, who passes, not expires. 690

With this minute distinction, emblems just,  
 Nature revolves, but man advances ; both  
 Eternal ; that a circle, this a line ;

671. *Birth* : Product. The *first argument* for immortality here introduced, consists in the perpetuity of matter, notwithstanding all the changes it undergoes.

673. *Oracle supreme* : This is not correct. Revelation is superior ; conveys more light, incomparably, than Nature upon the question of immortality. " Our Saviour, Jesus Christ, hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."—2 Tim. 1 : 10.

675. *Delphos* : An allusion to a celebrated seat of the oracle of Apollo, in Greece.

686. *Breath Favonian* : The pleasant western breeze, sometimes called Zephyr, and which served in Italy to break up the rigors of winter.

687. *The first* : That is, summer.

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 infers Lorenzo ? Can it be ?  
 Matter immortal ? And shall spirit die ?

697. *Life born from death* : Life succeeding death (and as if proceeding from it).

702. *Matter immortal ? And shall spirit die ?* A full discussion of this point may be found in Brown's *Philosophy of the Mind*, vol. iii. Lect. 96-7-8. Among other things he says :—When the body seems to us to perish we know that it does not truly perish : that everything that existed in the decaying frame continues to exist entire as it existed before ; and that the only change which takes place is a change of *opposition* or *proximity*. From the first moment at which the earth arose there is not the slightest reason to think that a single atom has perished. All that *was* is ; and if nothing has perished in the material universe ; if even in that bodily dissolution, which alone gave occasion to the belief of our mortality as sentient beings, there is not the loss of the most inconsiderable particle of the dissolving frame, the argument from analogy, far from leading us to suppose the destruction of that spiritual being which animated the frame, would lead us to conclude that it, too, exists as it before existed, and that it has only changed its relation to the particles of our material organs as these particles still subsisting have changed the relations which they mutually bore.

The continued subsistence of everything corporeal cannot be regarded as indicative of the annihilation of the other substance ; but must, on the contrary, be regarded as a presumption in favor of the continued subsistence of the mind, when there is nothing around it which has perished, and nothing even which has perished in the whole material universe since the universe itself was called into being. The principle of thought (or the mind), whatever it may be, is not divisible into parts ; and hence, though it may be annihilated, as everything which exists may be annihilated by the will of Him who can destroy as He could create, it does not admit of that decay of which the body admits—a decay that is relative to the *frame* only, not to the elements that compose it. Mind, indeed, like matter, is capable of existing in various states, but a change of state is not destructive in one more than in the other. It is as entire in all its seeming changes as matter in all its seeming changes.



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 privileged 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, 710  
 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, *Grant Ch...*  
 To that above it join'd, to that beneath. *J. B...* 715  
 Parts, into parts reciprocally shot,  
 Abhor divorce : What love of union reigns !  
 Here, dormant matter waits a call to life ; 720  
 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 preserved  
 The chain unbroken upward, to the realms  
 Of incorporeal life ? those realms of bliss 725  
 Where death has 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 ; connection is no more : 730  
 Check'd reason halts ; her next step wants support ;  
 Striving to climb, she tumbles from her scheme ;  
 A scheme analogy pronounced so true :

710. *Period* : Termination.

711. *Death's single unredeem'd* : The only object not redeemed from death : not restored to life.

713. *In her gradation, &c.* : A *second argument* for man's immortality is here drawn from the successive grades of animated being.

Analogy, man's surest guide below.

Thus far, all nature calls on thy belief. 735  
 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 beloved, 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 dissolvè, 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 :

734. *Surest guide below* : That is: the surest guide, revelation excepted. Bishop Butler has immortalized his name by his elaborate work on the "Analogy of Natural and Revealed Religion," from which some valuable quotations might be made to illustrate and confirm the arguments of our author. As this work appeared in 1736, it is not improbable that Dr. Young had enjoyed the benefit of a perusal. The first chapter is devoted to the subject of a future life, the proofs being drawn from *analogy*, that is, from resemblance in things which are known to things which are unknown. It is a course of reasoning from the relations which things known bear to things unknown. It is "arguing from what is acknowledged to what is disputed; from things known to other things which resemble them; from that part of the divine establishment which is exposed to our view to that more important one which lies beyond it—a method by which Sir Isaac Newton unfolded the system of Nature." For the sake of those who may not have a copy of this standard work, it may be useful to communicate the outlines of the argument pursued by Bishop Butler on this single topic of a future life. This will be given at the close of Night VI.

748. *Nature's fun'ral pyre* : An allusion to the funeral pile on which among the ancients the dead body was burned. It was built of split wood that readily burns, and was graduated as to height by the rank and wealth of the deceased. The corpse, being laid upon it, was sprinkled with spices or anointed with oil. The wood is kindled with a torch by some near relative. It was usual, with the body of the deceased to consume articles of clothing or weapons of war that had been owned by him; also any offerings presented in honor of him. When all had been consumed, wine was poured

O'er devastation as a gainer smiles ;  
 His charter, his inviolable rights, 750  
 Well pleased to learn from thunder's impotence,  
 Death's pointless darts, and hell's defeated storms.'  
 But these chimeras touch thee not, Lorenzo !  
 The glories of the world thy sev'nfold shield.  
 Other ambition than of crowns in air, 755  
 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

## WONDERS OF HUMAN ART, GENIUS, AND POWER.

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

on the smoking remains to extinguish them ; the bones were collected, and, together with some of the ashes and perfumes, were placed in an urn of metal, clay, or stone. The urn was then deposited in the earth or in a tomb.

The most remarkable *funeral pyre* that occurs to us in classical literature, is the celebrated one which the Queen of Carthage directed to be made ostensibly for consuming the memorials of her faithless lover Æneas : which however she first ascended herself, and committing suicide, was consumed with all that reminded her of the now hated Trojan leader.

" At regina, *pyra* penetrali in sede sub auras  
 Erecta ingenti, tædis atque ilice secta,  
 Intenditque locum sertis, et fronde coronat  
 Funerea : super, exuvias, ensemque relictum,  
 Effigiemque toro locat, haud ignara futuri.  
 Stant aræ circum ;" &c.—*Æneid*, IV. 504, 521, 642, 668.

753-56. These lines are in the style of irony, and are to be understood in a sense contrary to what is literally expressed. The *chimera* was an oddly constructed animal of ancient classical fable, too monstrous to be conceived as ever having had a real existence ; and hence the name has come to be used to designate any mere creature of the imagination, having no existence except in thought, and too absurd to be regarded as a reality.

756 *Superlunary felicities* : Felicities above the moon, heavenly.

Look down on earth.—What seest thou? Wondrous things!  
 Terrestrial wonders, that eclipse the skies. 765  
 What lengths of labour'd lands! what loaded seas!  
 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!

774. *Some*: Namely, Venice. Says Byron—

“ I saw from out the wave a structure rise  
 As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand:  
 A thousand years their cloudy wings expand  
 Around me, and a dying glory smiles  
 O'er the far times, when many a subject land  
 Looked to the wing'd lion's marble piles,  
 Where Venice sat in state, throned on her hundred isles.”

Rogers more particularly describes the position of this city:—

“ There is a glorious city in the sea.  
 The sea is in the broad, the narrow streets,  
 Ebbing and flowing; and the salt sea-weed  
 Clings to the marble of her palaces.  
 No track of men, no footsteps to and fro,  
 Lead to her gates. The path lies o'er the sea  
 Invisible; and from the land we went,  
 As to a floating city—steering in,  
 And gliding up her streets as in a dream,  
 So smoothly, silently—by many a dome  
 Mosque-like, and many a stately portico,  
 The statues ranged along an azure sky;  
 By many a pile in more than Eastern splendour,  
 Of old the residence of merchant kings.”

777. *Ravish'd from the deep*: Holland may be taken as an illustration, where, by means of embankments, or dikes, the ocean has been shut out, and large tracts have thus been rendered habitable. The shores (says Goodrich) are remarkably low and flat, and a great part of the country would be laid under water by the tides were it not for the enormous dikes

The narrow'd deep with indignation foams.  
 Or southward turn ; to delicate and grand,  
 The finer arts there ripen in the sun.  
 How the tall temples, as to meet their gods,  
 Ascend the skies ! the proud triumphal arch  
 Shows us half heav'n beneath its ample bend.  
 High through mid air, here streams are taught to flow ;

erected along the coast. These dikes employ annually more men than all the corn of the province of Holland can maintain. They are mostly thirty feet in height and seventy broad at bottom. They are built of clay, faced on the land side with wood and stone, and toward the sea with mats of rushes and sea-weed.

781-4. *Tall temples, &c.* : Those of Italy, and of Rome more particularly. St. Peter's church is one of the architectural wonders of the world, exciting in the beholder exquisite emotions of sublimity and beauty. Of it, Byron has thus written,

" But thou, of temples old, or altars new,  
 Standest alone—with nothing like to thee—  
 Worthiest of God, the holy and the true.  
 Since Zion's desolation, when that He  
 Forsook his former city, what could be,  
 Of earthly structures in his honor piled,  
 Of a sublimer aspect ? Majesty,  
 Power, glory, strength, and beauty, all are aisled  
 In this eternal ark of worship undefiled."

For the remainder of his beautiful description see *Childe Harold*, Canto IV.

782. *Triumphal arch* : An immense structure in honor of some victory or conqueror, sometimes a single arch, decorated with a statue and military spoils ; sometimes arches were constructed with two or three passages, serving as gates. The principal arches of antiquity were those erected in honor of Augustus, Trajan, Septimius Severus, and Constantine, some of which are still to be seen and in a good state of preservation.

784. *High through mid air, &c.* : Dr. W. Fisk, in his *Travels*, says, another class of ruins in and about Rome are the aqueducts. These, among the ancient Romans, were numerous and splendid ; and I scarcely saw anything more picturesque and grand than the remaining arches of these stupendous water-courses, stretching across the Campagna from various directions, some of them, by modern repairs, still rolling their refreshing streams into the eternal city. These aqueducts are led from the distance of twenty or thirty miles, and used to convey into the ancient city five hundred thousand hogs-heads of water daily, although at present only about one fifth of that amount is brought into the city. The *Aqua Paulina* is from Trajan's aqueduct, and

Whole rivers, there, laid by in basons, sleep. 785  
 Here, plains turn oceans; there, vast oceans join .  
 Thro' kingdoms channel'd deep from shore to shore ;  
 And changed 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 ! measured 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, pow'r !  
 And now, Lorenzo, raptured at this scene,

man  
 creates  
 superfluity  
 by  
 altering  
 the  
 scene

extends thirty miles, and is divided into two branches, one of which supplies the Mount Janiculum and empties itself principally, in copious torrents, under a splendid Ionic colonnade of red granite into a vast marble basin. There is water enough poured out here to carry several mills. The other branch goes to the Vatican and expends itself in the magnificent piazza of St. Peter's, in two fountains, which throw up the water in foaming columns many feet into the air, whence it comes down in copious showers. The main body of the water falls into magnificent basins of oriental granite, fifty feet in circumference.

We read that the waters of the river Anio were conducted to Rome in two channels, one forty-three, the other sixty-three miles in length, of the latter of which more than six miles formed a continuous series of arches, many of which were upwards of one hundred feet high. And there are remains of Roman aqueducts in other parts of Europe which must have been originally more vast and magnificent than those we have already mentioned. There are also aqueducts in modern times, particularly in France, which equal those of the ancients. We have no space for other illustrations of the wonders of art, to which our author alludes.

797. *Disembowel'd* : That is, by the miner ; while the *skies are measured* by the astronomer. Young thus delights to bring together remarkable contrasts.

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 : 810

Transcend them all.—But what can these transcend ?

Dost ask me, what ?—One sigh for the distress,

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 ambitions death defeats but one ;

*these sighs  
transcend*

803. *Render heav'n superfluous* : Another example of irony.

805. An elegant argument is here drawn in favour of the soul's immortality from the previous sketch of what the human mind has originated in the department of industry, genius, and art.

These glorious footsteps (says Dr. Thomas Brown) are indeed the footsteps of immortals ! Yet it is not the mere splendour of the works themselves, on which this argument insists so much, that seems directly to indicate the immortality of their authors. Man might be mortal and yet perform all these wonders, or wonders still more illustrious. It is not by considering the relation of the mind to the monuments of its art as too excellent to be the work of a perishable being ; but by considering the relations of a mind capable of these, to the being who has endowed it with such capacities, and who is able to perpetuate or enlarge the capacities which he has given, that we discover in the excellence which we admire not a *proof* indeed but a presumption of immortality ; a presumption at least which is far from leading us to infer any peculiar intention in the Preserver of the body to annihilate the mind.

This argument is expanded in his *Philosophy of the Mind*, vol. iii. 517-8

810. *The least immortal*, &c. : The feeblest immortal souls can do this thing : namely, transcend those works of art. The question then is asked, *what can transcend those* (works) ? To which it is answered (812), sympathy for the distressed ; and (813), a deeper pity for infidels. Such emotions indicate more true greatness, discover the operations of a higher nature, than does even the powerful intelligence which shines in the grandeurs, and utilities, and beauties of art.

816. *Our ambitions* : Our objects of ambition.

And that it crowns.—Here cease we : but, ere long  
 More powerful proof shall take the field against thee,  
 Stronger than death, and smiling at the tomb.

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### BISHOP BUTLER'S ARGUMENT FROM ANALOGY FOR A FUTURE STATE.

In the note on (734) we promised an outline of the argument from *analogy* which Bishop Butler has constructed : we now give it as it is presented in Bishop Wilson's analysis.

From considering the analogy of nature it will appear that there is nothing improbable in what religion teaches, that we are to exist in another life after death. There is, indeed, a confused suspicion that in the great shock of the unknown event, death, our living powers will be destroyed. The sensible proof of our being possessed of these powers is removed. Death is terrible to us. Nature shrinks from it. Yet, when we come calmly to consider these apprehensions, we shall find them to be groundless.

1. For it is clearly a general law of nature, that the same creatures should exist here in very different degrees of life and perception. We see instances of this law in the surprising change of worms into flies, and in birds and insects bursting their shell, and entering into a new world furnished with new accommodations for them. The states also in which we ourselves existed formerly in the womb, and in the years of infancy, are widely different from the state of mature age. Nothing can be imagined more different. Therefore, that we are to exist, hereafter, in a state as different from our present, as this is from our former one, is only according to the analogy of nature.

2. There is a probability, in every case, that all things will continue as we now find them in all respects, except those in which we have some positive reason to think they will be altered. This is a general law. Nature goes on as it is. This seems our only reason for believing that the course of the world will continue to-morrow as it is to-day, and as it has done, so far as history and experience can carry us back. If then our living powers do not continue after death, there must be some positive reason for this, either *in death itself* or *in the analogy of nature*.

But there is no positive reason *in death itself*, for we know not what it is : we only know some of its effects, such as the dissolution of flesh, skin, and bones ; and these effects in no wise appear to imply the destruction of the living agent. Sleep, or a swoon, shows us that the living powers may exist



when there is no present capacity of exercising them. In fact we know not upon what the existence of our living powers depends.

Nor does *the analogy of nature* furnish any positive reason to think that death is our destruction. For we have no faculties wherewith to trace anything beyond, or through, death, to see what becomes of those powers. Men were possessed of these powers up to the period to which we have faculties for tracing them: it is probable, therefore, that they retain them afterwards.

3. For our gross bodies are not ourselves, and therefore the destruction of them may be no destruction of ourselves. We see that men may lose their limbs, their organs of sense, and even the greatest part of their bodies, and yet remain the same living agents as before. Our organized bodies are merely quantities of matter which may be alienated, and actually are in a daily course of succession and change, whilst we remain the same living, permanent beings notwithstanding. As, therefore, we have already several times over lost a great part of our body, or perhaps the whole of it, according to certain common established laws of nature; so when we shall lose as great a part, or the whole, by another common established law of nature, death, why may we not also remain the same. That the alienation has been gradual in one case, and will be more at once in the other, proves nothing to the contrary.

4. But, more particularly, our bodies are clearly only organs and instruments of perception and motion. Our use of common optical instruments shows that we see with our eyes in the same sense as we see with glasses. These glasses, which are no part of our body, convey objects towards the perceiving power, just as our bodily organs do. And if we see with our eyes only in this manner, the like may be concluded as to all our other senses. So with regard to the power of moving: upon the destruction of a limb, the active power remains; and we can walk by the help of an artificial leg, just as we can make use of a pole to reach things beyond the length of the natural arm. We may therefore have no more relation to our external bodily organs, than we have to a microscope or a staff, or any other foreign matter, which we use as instruments of perception or motion; and the dissolution of these organs by death may be no destruction of the living agent.

5. But, further, our powers of reflection do not, even now, depend on our gross body in the same manner as perception by the organs of sense does. In our present condition, the organs of sense are indeed necessary for conveying in ideas to our reflecting powers, as carriages, levers, and scaffolds are in architecture; but when these ideas are once brought in and stored up in the mind, we are capable of pleasure and pain by reflection, without any further assistance from our senses. Mortal diseases often do not at all affect our intellectual powers, nor even suspend them. We see persons under those diseases, the moment before death, discover apprehension, memory, rea-

son, all entire; the utmost force of affection, and the highest mental enjoyments and sufferings. Why then should a disease, when come to a certain degree, be thought to destroy those powers which do not depend on the bodily senses, and which were not affected by that disease quite up to that degree?

P R E F A C E  
TO  
PART II.  
OF THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

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As we are at war with the power, it were well if we were at war with the manners, of France. A land of levity is a land of guilt. A serious mind is the native soil of every virtue, and the single character that does true honour to mankind. The sou's immortality has been the favourite theme with the serious of all ages. Nor is it strange: it is a subject by far the most interesting and important that can enter the mind of man. Of highest moment this subject always was, and always will be. Yet this its highest moment seems to admit of increase, at this day: a sort of occasional importance is superadded to the natural weight of it, if that opinion which is advanced in the Preface to the preceding Night be just. It is there supposed that all our infidels, whatever scheme, for argument's sake, and to keep themselves in countenance, they patronise, are betrayed into their deplorable error, by some doubts of their immortality at the bottom. And the more I consider this point, the more I am persuaded of the truth of that opinion. Though the distrust of a futurity is a strange error, yet it is an error into which bad men may naturally be distressed. For it is impossible to bid defiance to final ruin, without some refuge in imagination, some presumption of escape. And what presumption is there? There are but two

in nature; but two, within the compass of human thought: and these are,— That either God will not, or cannot punish. Considering the divine attributes, the first is too gross to be digested by our strongest wishes. And, since omnipotence is as much a divine attribute as holiness, that God cannot punish, is as absurd a supposition as the former. God certainly can punish, as long as wicked men exist. In non-existence, therefore, is their only refuge; and, consequently, non-existence is their strongest wish. And strong wishes have a strange influence on our opinions; they bias the judgment in a manner almost incredible. And since on this member of their alternative, there are some very small appearances in their favour, and none at all on the other, they catch at this reed, they lay hold on this chimera, to save themselves from the shock and horror of an immediate and absolute despair.

On reviewing my subject, by the light which this argument, and others of like tendency, threw upon it, I was more inclined than ever to pursue it, as it appeared to me to strike directly at the main root of all our infidelity. In the following pages it is accordingly pursued at large; and some arguments for immortality, new, at least to me, are ventured on in them. There, also, the writer has made an attempt to set the gross absurdities and horrors of annihilation in a fuller and more affecting view, than is, I think, to be met with elsewhere.

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

mains ? it was resented by Socrates, as implying a dishonourable supposition, that he could be so mean as to have regard for any thing, even in himself, that was not immortal.

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

*July 7, 1744.*

# NIGHT VII.

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## BEING THE SECOND PART

### OF THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

CONTAINING THE NATURE, PROOF, AND IMPORTANCE OF IMMORTALITY

---

HEAV'N gives the needful, but neglected, call.  
What day, what hour, but knocks at human hearts  
To wake the soul to sense of future scenes ?  
Deaths stand, like Mercuries, in ev'ry way,  
And kindly point us to our journey's end.  
Pope, who couldst make immortals, art thou dead ?  
I give thee joy : nor will I take my leave ;

4. *Like Mercuries* : Statues, or rather busts, of Mercury, a Pagan god. The more ancient ones are here intended, which were simply quadrangular pillars of stone with a rudely-carved head surmounting them ; and these in great numbers, were set up in the streets of Athens in front of temples and also of dwelling houses. The Romans employed similar stones to indicate the boundaries of lands.

6. *Pope* : Alexander Pope, the distinguished English satirist, and the poetic translator of Homer into English rhyme : a contemporary and friend of Young. He died May 30, 1744, at the age of fifty-six.

So soon to follow. Man but dives in death ;  
 Dives from the sun, in fairer day to rise ;  
The grave, his subterranean road to bliss. 10  
 Yes, infinite indulgence plann'd it so :  
 Through various parts our glorious story runs ;  
 Time gives the preface, endless age unrolls  
 The volume (ne'er enroll'd !) of human fate.  
 This earth and skies already have proclaim'd, 15  
 The world's a prophecy of worlds to come :  
 And who, what God foretells (who speaks in things  
 Still louder than in words) shall dare deny ?  
 If nature's arguments appear too weak,  
 Turn a new leaf, and stronger read in man. 20  
 If man sleeps on, untaught by what he sees,  
 Can he prove infidel to what he feels ?  
 He, whose blind thought futurity denies,  
 Unconscious bears, Bellerophon ! like thee,

8. *Dives in death* : The figure here employed is not happily executed ; for in (10) the grave is described as the road to bliss. The grave, unless aqueous, would not be a good element to dive in. The figure would not answer for any but those who meet their death by falling into the water.

13. *Time gives, &c.* : The history of man is here ingeniously alluded to.

15. *Earth and skies, &c.* : Reference is made to a part of Night VI. from 167—190.

16. *A prophecy of worlds, &c.* : What we see in this world leads us to anticipate existence in other worlds.

20. *In man* : Having, in the last Night, elucidated the argument from external nature, our author passes to consider that which may be deduced from the human constitution ; from the feelings, the passions, the reason of man.

24. *Bellerophon, &c.* : The allusion here is exceedingly apt and beautiful, as will be seen from the relation of a part of the classical fable concerning this man. Being endowed with great personal vigor and beauty, the wife of Prætus, king of Argos, allowed herself to indulge an unlawful attachment to him. The virtuous youth, like Joseph in a similar case, rejected her infamous advances ; and, like Joseph, was accused of the perpetration of the crime which he had refused to commit. The king believed the lie, and sent Bellerophon to his wife's father, king of Lycia, with a sealed letter containing instructions to put the bearer to death, and assigning the cause. Bellerophon

His own indictment ; he condemns himself: 25  
 Who reads his bosom, reads immortal life ;  
 Or, Nature, there, imposing on her sons,  
 Has written fables ; man was made a lie.

ARGUMENT FOUNDED ON MAN'S DISCONTENT.

Why discontent for ever harbour'd there ?  
 Incurable consumption of our peace ! 30  
 Resolve me, why the cottager and king,  
 He whom sea-sever'd realms obey, and he  
 Who steals his whole dominion from the waste,  
 Repelling winter blasts with mud and straw,  
 Disquieted alike, draw sigh for sigh, 35  
 In fate so distant, in complaint so near ?  
 Is it, that things terrestrial can't content ?  
 Deep in rich pasture, will thy flocks complain ?  
 Not so ; but to their master is denied  
 To share their sweet serene. Man, ill at ease, 40  
 In this, not his own place, this foreign field,  
 Where Nature foddors him with other food  
 Than was ordain'd his cravings to suffice,  
 Poor in abundance, famish'd at a feast,  
 Sighs on for something more, when most enjoy'd. 45  
 Is Heav'n then kinder to thy flocks than thee ?  
 Not so ; thy pasture richer, but remote ;  
 In part, remote ; for that remoter part

was *unconscious* that he was bearing *his own indictment* ; his own condemnation.

28. *Man was made a lie* : So made as to deceive all our just expectation.

29. *Why discontent, &c.* : This feature of man argues a future state in which this feeling shall not exist ; in which the universal appetite for something higher and better than earth affords shall meet with adequate and appropriate objects for its gratification.

31. *Resolve me* : Inform me ; free me from doubt.

40. *Serene* : Serenity ; contentment.

45. *Enjoy'd* : is enjoy'd.



Man bleats from instinct, tho' perhaps, debauch'd  
 By sense, his reason sleeps, nor dreams the cause. 50  
 The cause how obvious, when his reason wakes !  
 His grief is but his grandeur in disguise ;  
 And discontent is immortality.

Shall sons of ether, shall the blood of heav'n,  
 Set up their hopes on earth, and stable here, 55  
 With brutal acquiescence in the mire ?  
 Lorenzo, no ! they shall be nobly pain'd ;  
 The glorious foreigners, distrest, shall sigh  
 On thrones ; and thou congratulate the sigh.  
 Man's misery declares him born for bliss ; 60  
 His anxious heart asserts the truth I sing,  
 And gives the sceptic in his head the lie.

**ARGUMENT FROM OUR VARIOUS SUSCEPTIBILITIES AND POWERS.**

Our heads, our hearts, our passions, and our pow'rs,  
 Speak the same language ; call us to the skies :  
 Unripen'd these in this inclement clime, 65  
 Scarce rise above conjecture, and mistake ;  
 And for this land of trifles those too strong  
 Tumultuous rise, and tempest human life :  
 What prize on earth can pay us for the storm ?  
 Meet objects for our passions heav'n ordain'd, 70  
 Objects that challenge all their fire, and leave  
 No fault but in defect : blest Heav'n ! avert  
 A bounded ardour for unbounded bliss ;  
 O for a bliss unbounded ! far beneath  
 A soul immortal, is a mortal joy. 75

53. *Is immortality* : Is an earnest, or pledge of it.

63. *Our heads, &c.* : The argument is, that our various passions and other powers have in this life no sufficient objects of gratification.

68. *Tempest human life* : Destroy the peace of human life. *Tempest* is used as a verb.

72. *No fault but in defect* : In the defect or feebleness of our desire for them ; their only fault lies in our *bounded ardour* (73).

Nor are our pow'rs to perish immature ;  
 But, after feeble effort here, beneath  
 A brighter sun, and in a nobler soil,  
 Transplanted from this sublunary bed,  
 Shall flourish fair, and put forth all their bloom. 80

ARGUMENT FROM THE GRADUAL AND IMPERFECT GROWTH OF  
 REASON.

Reason progressive, instinct is complete ;  
 Swift instinct leaps ; slow reason feebly climbs.  
 Brutes soon their zenith reach ; their little all  
 Flows in at once ; in ages they no more  
 Could know, or do, or covet, or enjoy. 85  
 Were man to live coeval with the sun,  
 The patriarch pupil would be learning still ;  
 Yet, dying, leave his lesson half unlearn'd.  
 Men perish in advance, as if the sun  
 Should set ere noon, in eastern oceans drown'd ; 90  
 If fit, with dim, illustrious to compare,  
 The sun's meridian, with the soul of man.  
 To man, why, step-dame Nature ! so severe ?  
 Why thrown aside thy master-piece, half wrought,  
 While meaner efforts thy last hand enjoy ? 95  
 Or, if abortively poor man must die,

81. *Reason progressive* : Reason in man is contrasted with the instinct of lower animals. The fact that the latter soon reaches perfection argues that this state of existence is all which the lower animals shall enjoy : while on the same principle, the ever-improving but at best imperfectly developed reason of man, leads us to infer that his existence is not completed on earth but will be resumed and continued elsewhere. Otherwise the Creator would seem to have left his best earthly production incomplete ; and to be less kind to man than to inferior creatures.

87. *Patriarch pupil* : Aged learner.

89. *In advance* : Sooner than their fit time.

91. *With dim* (things).

92. *Sun's meridian* : The sun at mid-day.

Nor reach what reach he might, why die in dread?  
 Why curst with foresight? Wise to misery?  
 Why of his proud prerogative the prey?  
 Why less pre-eminent in rank than pain? 100  
 His immortality alone can tell:  
 Full ample fund to balance all amiss,  
 And turn the scale in favour of the just!

## ARGUMENT FROM HUMAN HOPES.

His immortality alone can solve  
 That darkest of enigmas, human hope— 105  
 Of all the darkest, if at death we die.  
 Hope, eager hope, th' assassin of our joy,  
 All present blessings treading under foot,  
 Is scarce a milder tyrant than despair.  
 With no past toils content, still planning new, 110  
 Hope turns us o'er to death alone for ease.  
 Possession, why more tasteless than pursuit?  
 Why is a wish far dearer than a crown?  
 That wish accomplish'd, why the grave of bliss?  
 Because, in the great future buried deep, 115  
 Beyond our plans of empire and renown,  
 Lies all that man with ardour should pursue;  
 And HE who made him, bent him to the right.  
 Man's heart th' Almighty to the future sets,  
 By secret and inviolable springs; 120  
 And makes his hope his sublunary joy.  
 Man's heart eats all things, and is hungry still;  
 'More, more!' the glutton cries; for something new  
 So rages appetite, if man can't mount,

97. *Why die in dread*: Another argument for immortality. If man is not destined to another life, why has God implanted in his nature a dread of death, such as the lower animals are not troubled with?

105. *That darkest of enigmas*: Or things hard to be explained—*human hope*: The expectation of a future life implanted in our very nature; and why? if there be no future life. This forms the next argument.

He will descend. He starves on the possess. 125

Hence, the world's master, from ambition's spire,  
In Caprea plunged; and dived beneath the brute.

In that rank sty why wallow'd empire's son  
Supreme? Because he could no higher fly;

His riot was ambition in despair. 130

Old Rome consulted birds: Lorenzo! thou,  
With more success, the flight of hope survey:  
Of restless hope, for ever on the wing.

High perch'd o'er ev'ry thought that falcon sits,  
To fly at all that rises in her sight; 135

And, never stooping, but to mount again

Next moment, she betrays her aim's mistake,

And owns her quarry lodged beyond the grave.

#### ARGUMENT FROM THE NATURE AND REWARDS OF VIRTUE.

There should it fail us, (it must fail us there,  
If being fails) more mournful riddles rise, 140  
And virtue vies with hope in mystery.

127. *In Caprea plunged*: From the grandeur of the imperial throne plunged into the loneliness of a small and sequestered island which commands a fine view of the charming bay of Naples. The dark-minded, imperious, and profligate Tiberius chose this inviting spot as his residence during the latter part of his reign, where, unmolested and unrebuked by the public eye, he might give unbridled license to his debaucheries and cruelties—the report of which almost exceeds belief.

131. *Consulted birds*: As means of foretelling future events the ancient Romans noticed the chirping or flying of birds. From this custom, though a foolish one, our author constructs a beautiful figure. *Hope* is represented as one of these birds that give omen of the future; *the flight of hope survey*. The figure is then somewhat changed. Hope is now a *falcon* (134), a female hawk, trained to catch wild fowl that *rise in her sight*. They are called *her quarry*, the game she pursues. This was a great sport in Europe some few centuries since; and continued until the improvement of fire-arms furnished a readier method of securing the object.

According to the figure, borrowed from this sport, Hope cannot in this world find the objects she is pursuing: they are *lodged beyond the grave*.

141. *Virtue vies with hope in mystery*: If there be no future state, *Virtue* is, equally with Hope, an enigma, or riddle; the motives to virtue are re-

Why virtue? Where its praise, its being fled?  
 Virtue is true self-interest pursued:  
 What true self-interest of quite-mortal man?  
 To close with all that makes him happy here. 145  
 If vice (as sometimes) is our friend on earth,  
 Then vice is virtue; 'tis our sov'reign good.  
 In self-applause is virtue's golden prize;  
 No self-applause attends it on thy scheme:  
 Whence self-applause? From conscience of the right. 150  
 And what is right, but means of happiness?  
 No means of happiness when virtue yields;  
 That basis failing, falls the building too,  
 And lays in ruin ev'ry virtuous joy.

moved; the obligations to it are weakened, nay, destroyed. *Why virtue?* why should there be virtue? *Where its praise, &c.*: If there be no future state where is the praise of virtue fled; where is its very existence fled? *Virtue* (according to the theory of our author) is *true self-interest pursued*; it is *the pursuit of happiness*. If man then be *quite mortal*, his happiness must lie in the pursuit of earthly and *present* enjoyments. But vice often makes men happy here (145-7): hence vice is virtue. This is a mystery (141). It cannot be explained or credited. It is not to be admitted.

But there is another mystery: the chief *prize of virtue* is *self-applause*. On the infidel scheme, however, (which confines man's existence to this life) there can be no self-applause—that which proceeds *from conscience of the right* (consciousness of doing right), or from the conviction that we are pursuing the road of happiness—or using the *means of happiness*. But there are no means of happiness *when virtue yields*, or where virtue is absent, and (as the author maintains (142), and afterwards (247—250) there can be no virtue except inspired by the hope of immortality. Nay, virtue, independent of a belief of immortality, is a crime (709).

Upon this argument it may be remarked, that the author's definition of virtue is unsound, as will be shown hereafter; that the chain of reasoning wants several links to make it intelligible to the common mind; and that it is illogical, by using the term happiness in two quite different senses—in the sense of present happiness arising even from vice (145-6), and again in the sense either of future happiness growing out of virtuous conduct in this life, or of such gratifications in this life as virtue alone can produce. If this distinction be not observed, and did not exist in the author's mind, how can we reconcile the statements in 145-7 and that in 152?

The rigid guardian of a blameless heart	155
So long revered, so long reputed wise,	
Is weak ; with rank knight-errantries o'er-run.	
Why beats thy bosom with illustrious dreams	
Of self-exposure, laudable and great ?	
Of gallant enterprise, and glorious death ?	160
Die for thy country ?—thou romantic fool !	
Seize, seize the plank thyself, and let her sink :	
Thy country ! what to thee ?—The Godhead, what ?	
(I speak with awe !) tho' He should bid thee bleed ;	
If, with thy blood, thy final hope is spilt,	165
Nor can Omnipotence reward the blow ;	
Be deaf ; preserve thy being ; disobey.	
Nor is it disobedience : know, Lorenzo !	
Whate'er th' Almighty's subsequent command,	
His first command is this :—' Man, love thyself.'	170
In this alone, free agents are not free.	
Existence is the basis, bliss the prize ;	
If virtue costs existence, 'tis a crime ;	
Bold violation of our law supreme,	
Black suicide ; though nations, which consult	175
Their gain, at thy expense, resound applause.	
Since virtue's recompense is doubtful here,	

155-176. *The rigid guardian, &c.* : The argument is that if there be no future life, the conscientious guardianship of the purity of the heart—the cultivation of a blameless state of the affections—is no more to be approved as wise or important, but is to be classed for its folly with the ridiculous exploits of a Don Quixote.

Then also the patriot who sacrifices his life for his country, and the Christian martyr who dies in the cause of religion at the command of God even act an unwarrantable part. They are bound to preserve their life and not thus sacrifice it. In so sacrificing it, they are chargeable with *black suicide*, for God's prior law was "*Man, love thyself.*" So that these highest specimens of supposed virtues, must, on the scheme of *non-futurity*, be pronounced vicious.

177-188. *Since virtue's recompense, &c.* : That is, if there be no hereafter. It is an inexplicable mystery that virtue is not rewarded here ; also, that a man should be commanded by his Creator to be virtuous ; and that he

If man dies wholly, well may we demand,  
 Why is man suffered to be good in vain ?  
 Why to be good in vain, is man enjoin'd ? 180  
 Why to be good in vain, is man betray'd ?  
 Betray'd by traitors lodged in his own breast,  
 By sweet complacencies from virtue felt ?  
 Why whispers nature lies on virtue's part ?  
 Or if blind instinct (which assumes the name 185  
 Of sacred conscience) plays the fool in man,  
 Why reason made accomplice in the cheat ?  
 Why are the wisest loudest in her praise ?  
 Can man by reason's beam be lead astray ?  
 Or, at his peril, imitate his God ? 190  
 Since virtue sometimes ruins us on earth,  
 Or both are true, or man survives the grave.  
 Or man survives the grave, or own, Lorenzo,  
 Thy boast supreme, a wild absurdity.  
 Dauntless thy spirit ; cowards are thy scorn. 195  
 Grant man immortal, and thy scorn is just.  
 The man immortal, rationally brave,  
 Dares rush on death—because he cannot die.  
 But if man loses all, when life is lost,

should be so constituted as to experience self-aprobation and delight in virtuous action and hope of future reward.

189-90. *Can man, &c.* : That is, can reason, which coincides with those workings of our moral instincts, mislead and cheat us ; and further, can we imitate God only at the peril to our happiness, *since virtue sometimes ruins us on earth* (191)—and he then adds, *or both are true*, that is, either both of the propositions implied in these questions are true ; in other words, either our reason misleads us, and we peril our happiness by obeying and imitating God, or we shall live hereafter (192), and it will then appear that reason in prompting us to virtue did not err, and that in imitating God we were not periling, but making sure, our happiness.

193. *Or man, &c.* : Either man, &c.

194. *Boast supreme* : Of being above the fear of death.

196. *Scorn* (of cowards) ; scorn of those who are afraid to die.

He lives a coward, or a fool expires.	200
A daring infidel (and such there are, From pride, example, lucre, rage, revenge, Or pure heroical defect of thought, Of all earth's madmen, most deserves a chain.	
When to the grave we follow the renown'd	205
For valour, virtue, science, all we love, And all we praise; for worth, whose noon-tide beam, Enabling us to think in higher style, Mends our ideas of ethereal pow'rs ;	
Dream we, that lustre of the moral world	210
Goes out in stench, and rottenness the close ? Why was he wise to know, and warm to praise, And strenuous to transcribe, in human life, The Mind Almighty ? Could it be, that fate, Just when the lineaments began to shine,	215
And dawn, the Deity should snatch the draught, With night eternal blot it out, and give The skies alarm, lest angels too might die ?	
If human souls, why not angelic too Extinguish'd ? and a solitary God,	220
O'er ghastly ruin, frowning from his throne ? Shall we this moment gaze on God in man ? The next, lose man for ever in the dust ? From dust we disengage, or man mistakes ;	
And there, where least his judgment fears a flaw.	225
Wisdom and worth how boldly he commends !	

200. When Cæsar had reached his highest elevation at Rome, and was urged by his friends to surround his person with a guard, for the sake of safety, he refused, and justified himself by saying, "It is better to die once, than to live always in fear of death."

207. *For worth*: (when we follow the renowned) for worth. The argument on this point is strongly stated 210-218.

219. *Why not angelic, &c.*: *The argument is carried higher.* The perpetual existence of angels, which is not denied, gives ground to infer the same event of human minds, being constituted in many respects alike.

224. *Disengage* (ourselves).



Wisdom and worth are sacred names ; revered,  
Where not embraced ; applauded ! deified !  
Why not compassion'd too ? If spirits die,  
Both are calamities ; inflicted both

230

228. *Where*: (even) where.

230. *Both*: Wisdom and worth. The argument is, that these are calamities, because they fit us to discover more clearly the miseries of life, and to feel more acutely the want of a suitable recompense, in this life, of virtuous conduct. Hence, if there be no future life, weakness and vice have these advantages above wisdom and virtue, and may be regarded as *the refuge of mankind*.

But (238) *Lorenzo objects* that *virtue has joys of its own*, which should be regarded as a sufficient recompense and motive. (243) *Virtue's self-reward*. Our author replies, that there is a fierce contest between virtue and vice; and that we need a stronger motive, a higher prize of virtue, than the complacency felt in its emotions. Nothing less moving than the everlasting rewards of Christianity will be found a sufficient encouragement of virtue to preserve its existence on earth.

Lord Shaftesbury and others have objected to Christianity on account of its holding forth the doctrine of a reward to virtue in a future state, that it is a mercenary system. The objection is so well answered by Andrew Fuller, who presents such clear and important views on this whole subject that we cannot forbear to copy the following observations:

"Every man may be considered either singly or connectedly; either as a being by himself, or as a link in a certain chain of beings. Under one or other of these views every man considers himself, while pursuing his own interest. If the former, this is to make himself the ultimate end of his actions, and to love all other beings, created or uncreated, only as they subserve his interest or his pleasure: this is private self-love: this is mean and mercenary, and what we commonly understand by the term *selfishness*. But, if the latter, there is nothing mean or selfish in it. He who seeks his own well-being in connexion with the general good seeks it as he ought to do. No man is required directly to oppose his own welfare, though, in some instances, he may be required to sacrifice it for the general good. Neither is it necessary that he should be indifferent to it. Reason, as well as Scripture, requires us to love ourselves as well as our neighbor. To this may be added, every man is not only a link in the chain of intelligent beings, and so deserving of some regard from himself, as well as from others, but every man's person, family, and connexions, and still more the concerns of his soul, are, as it were, his own vineyard, over the interests of which it is his peculiar province to exercise a watchful care. Only let the care of himself and

To make us but more wretched. Wisdom's eye  
 Acute, for what? To spy more miseries ;  
 And worth, so recompensed, new-points their stings.  
 Or man surmounts the grave, or gain is loss,  
 And worth exalted, humbles us the more. 235  
 Thou wilt not patronize a scheme that makes  
 Weakness and vice the refuge of mankind.  
 'Has virtue, then, no joys?'—Yes, joys dear bought.  
 Talk ne'er so long, in this imperfect state,  
 Virtue and vice are at eternal war. 240  
 Virtue's a combat ; and who fights for nought ?  
 Or for precarious, or for small reward ?  
 Who virtue's self-reward so loud resound,  
 Would take degrees angelic here below,  
 And virtue, while they compliment, betray, 245  
 By feeble motives, and unfaithful guards.  
 The crown, th' unfading crown, her soul inspires :  
 'Tis that, and that alone, can countervail  
 The body's treach'ries, and the world's assaults :  
 On earth's poor pay our famish'd virtue dies. 250

his immediate connexions be in subserviency to the general good, and there is nothing mercenary in it."

"I need not multiply arguments to prove that the doctrine of *rewards* does not necessarily tend to encourage a mercenary spirit, or that it is consistent with the disinterested love of virtue. Lord Shaftesbury himself has acknowledged this: 'if by the hope of reward,' he says, 'be understood the love and desire of virtuous enjoyment, or of the very practice or exercise of virtue in another life, the expectation or hope of this kind is so far from being derogatory to virtue, that it is an evidence of our loving it the more sincerely, and for its own sake.' This single concession contains an answer to all that his lordship has advanced on the subject ; for the rewards promised in the gospel are all exactly of the description which he mentions. It is true they are often represented under the images of earthly things ; but this does not prove that, in themselves, they are not pure and spiritual. The sum of heavenly enjoyments consists in a holy likeness to God, and in the eternal enjoyment of his favour. No man can truly desire the favour of God as his chief good without a proportionate esteem of his character, and that for its own excellency, and this is a disinterested affection to virtue."

Truth incontestable! in spite of all  
A Bayle has preach'd, or a Voltaire believed.

252. *Bayle—Voltaire*: Two very eminent French sceptics and writers. The most celebrated work of the former is his *Critical Dictionary* in four folio volumes. Of him, Voltaire says, that "he is the first of logicians and sceptics. His greatest enemies must confess that there is not a line in his works which contains an open aspersion of Christianity: but his warmest apologists must acknowledge that there is not a page in his controversial writings, which does not lead the reader to doubt and often to scepticism." James Douglas has in substance observed farther, that the academic scepticism which the genius of Bayle revived, and made popular in modern times, is fast passing away, if not altogether extinct: nor is it likely ever to be restored, by any train of favouring circumstances. Men have discovered the radical absurdity of our seeking, for the avowed purpose of never finding; of perpetually reasoning, in order never to come to any valuable result. Doubt is but the first step of ignorance towards inquiry; and inquiry, honestly and patiently pursued, leads to truth, knowledge, certainty. Bayle died at Rotterdam in 1706.

Voltaire died in 1778, having passed the last thirty years of his long life at Ferney, near Geneva, in Switzerland. His death-bed is described as a scene of unutterable remorse and horror. He was a most lively, talented, sophistical, and voluminous writer, and wrote on almost every subject; he was also a most subtle and rancorous opponent to Christianity, and predicted, as the result of his infidel writings, that Christianity would soon fall in ruins. He made a sad mistake. The opposition has only revealed its superior strength, purity, and glory. The last fifty years of Voltaire's life were unweariedly and most ingeniously devoted to the work of "crushing the wretch," as he blasphemously denominated the Lord Jesus: and in it he enlisted many associates, among others D'Alembert, Diderot, and Frederick II. of Prussia. The publications issued by them deluged Europe with the most irreligious and demoralizing doctrines; the effects of which have not yet passed away.

"Lausanne! and Ferney! ye have been the abodes  
Of names which unto you bequeathed a name;  
Mortals, who sought and found, by dangerous roads,  
A path to perpetuity of fame:  
They were gigantic minds, and their steep aim  
Was, Titan-like, on daring doubts to pile  
Thoughts which should call down thunder and the flame  
Of Heaven, again assall'd, if Heaven the while  
On man and man's research could deign do more than smile.

The one (*Voltaire*) was fire and fickleness, a child,  
Most mutable in wishes, but in mind  
A wit as various—gay, grave, sage, or wild,—

## ARGUMENT FROM KNOWLEDGE AND LOVE.

In man, the more we dive, the more we see  
 Heav'n's signet stamping an immortal make.  
 Dive to the bottom of his soul, the base 255  
 Sustaining all, what find we? Knowledge, love :  
 As light and heat essential to the sun,  
 These to the soul. And why, if souls expire?  
 How little lovely here? How little known?  
 Small knowledge we dig up with endless toil; 260

Historian, bard, philosopher combined;  
 He multiplied himself among mankind.  
 The Proteus of their talent: but his own  
 Breathed most in ridicule,—which, as the wind,  
 Blew where it listed, laying all things prone,—  
 Now to o'erthrow a fool, and now to shake a throne.

The other, (*Gibbon*) deep and slow, exhausting thought,  
 And living wisdom with each studious year,  
 In meditation dwelt, with learning wrought,  
 And shaped his weapon with an edge severe,  
 Sapping a solemn creed with solemn spear:  
 The lord of irony, that master spell,  
 Which stung his foes," &c.—*Childe Harold*, Canto III.

As bearing upon the present subject, the doctrines of the infidel publications referred to were, that we cannot discern any difference between virtue and vice: that it is absurd to hold the soul to be a spiritual being; that the immortality of the soul, so far from its stimulating man to the practice of virtue, is nothing but a barbarous, desperate, fatal tenet, and contrary to all legislation; that all ideas of justice and injustice, of virtue and vice, of glory and infamy, are purely arbitrary, and dependent on custom.

253. *Another argument here commences.* Future life is inferred from the knowledge and love which our author regards as fundamental properties of the soul—the base sustaining all—the basis of all. But these angel capacities of man are not filled on earth, while the brutal appetites have satiety: the objects of love and of knowledge must be boundless to gratify our angel appetites; and hence we may anticipate another and wider state of being, of action, and enjoyment. For (277) it is God's plan, in all nature, to suit objects, powers, and appetites to one another—where appetites are implanted, suitable objects are provided. We have no right to suppose that man alone is an exception, with respect to this universal law of divine providence.

And love unfeign'd may purchase perfect hate.  
 Why starved, on earth, our angel appetites,  
 While brutal are indulged their fulsome fill ?  
 Were, then, capacities divine conferr'd,  
 As a mock diadem, in savage sport, 265  
 Rank insult of our pompous poverty,  
 Which reaps but pain from seeming claims so fair ?  
 In future age lies no redress ? And shuts  
 Eternity the door on our complaint ?  
 If so, for what strange ends were mortals made ! 270  
 The worst to wallow, and the best to weep :  
 The man who merits most, must most complain.  
 Can we conceive a disregard in Heav'n,  
 What the worst perpetrate, or best endure ?  
 This cannot be. To love, and know, in man 275  
 Is boundless appetite, and boundless pow'r ;  
 And these demonstrate boundless objects too.  
 Objects, pow'rs, appetites, Heav'n suits in all ;  
 Nor, nature through, e'er violates this sweet  
 Eternal concord on her tuneful string.  
 Is man the sole exception from her laws ? 280  
 Eternity struck off from human hope,  
 (I speak with truth, but veneration too)  
 Man is a monster, the reproach of Heav'n,  
 A stain, a dark impenetrable cloud  
 On nature's beauteous aspect ; and deforms, 285  
 (Amazing blot !) deforms her with her lord.  
 If such is man's allotment, what is Heav'n ?  
 Or own the soul immortal, or blaspheme.

ARGUMENT FROM THE ORDER OF CREATION.

Or own the soul immortal, or invert  
 All order. Go, mock-majesty ! go, man ! 290

274. *What* : (In respect to) what, &c.

288-9. *Or own* : Either own.

And bow to thy superiors of the stall;  
 Through ev'ry scene of sense superior far :  
 They graze the turf untill'd ; they drink the stream  
 Unbrew'd, and ever full, and unimbitter'd  
 With doubts, fears, fruitless hopes, regrets, despairs, 295  
 Mankind's peculiar ! Reason's precious dow'r !  
 No foreign clime they ransack for their robes ;  
 Nor brothers cite to the litigious bar ;  
 Their good is good entire, unmix'd, unmarr'd ;  
 They find a paradise in every field, 300  
 On boughs forbidden where no curses hang :  
 Their ill no more than strikes the sense ; unstretcht  
 By previous dread, or murmur in the rear :  
 When the worst comes, it comes unfear'd ; one stroke  
 Begins and ends their wo : they die but once ; 305  
 Blest, incommunicable privilege ! for which  
 Proud man, who rules the globe, and reads the stars,  
 Philosopher, or hero, sighs in vain.  
 Account for this prerogative in brutes.  
 No day, no glimpse of day, to solve the knot, 310  
 But what beams on it from eternity.  
 O sole, and sweet solution ! That unties  
 The difficult, and softens the severe ;  
 The cloud on nature's beauteous face dispels ;  
 Restores bright order ; casts the brute beneath ; 315  
 And re-enthrones us in supremacy  
 Of joy, e'en here : admit immortal life,

291. *Superiors of the stall* : The argument here is, that if the present is the only state of being, the brutes are our superiors in respect to freedom from pain, fear, and anxiety ; and in respect to enjoyment. This is to be regarded as an absurdity ; for it inverts all proper ideas of *order* to suppose that beings of vastly inferior powers should be intended for greater enjoyment than man. But there is no such absurdity, if we allow man to expand his powers and extend his enjoyments in a nobler state of being.

296. *Mankind's peculiar* : His exclusive inheritance.

302. *Unstretcht* : Their ill is not stretched, or increased, by previous dread, &c.

And virtue is knight-errantry no more ;  
 Each virtue brings in hand a golden dow'r,  
 Far richer in reversion : hope exults ; 320  
 And though much bitter in our cup is thrown,  
 Predominates, and gives the taste of heav'n.  
 O wherefore is the Deity so kind ?  
 Astonishing beyond astonishment !  
 Heav'n our reward—for heav'n enjoy'd below. 325

## ARGUMENT FROM AMBITION.

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

First, then, ambition summon to the bar.  
 Ambition's shame, extravagance, disgust,  
 And inextinguishable nature, speak.  
 Each much deposes ; hear them in their turn.

Thy soul, how passionately fond of fame ! 340  
 How anxious that fond passion to conceal !  
 We blush, detected in designs on praise,  
 Though for best deeds, and from the best of men.

And why ? Because immortal. Art divine  
 Has made the body tutor to the soul ; 345  
 Heav'n kindly gives our blood a moral flow ;

320. *In reversion* : In future experience.

342. *We blush, &c.* : The first point of this argument is that ambition is ashamed to solicit praise from man, as an ultimate object, being conscious of a higher tribunal where praise or blame is awarded.

346. *A moral flow* : The flow of blood to the glowing cheek is made an index of the moral feelings.

Bids it ascend the glowing cheek, and there  
 Upbraid that little heart's inglorious aim,  
 Which stoops to court a character from man ;  
 While o'er us, in tremendous judgment sit 350  
 Far more than man, with endless praise and blame.

Ambition's boundless appetite out-speaks  
 The verdict of its shame. When souls take fire  
 At high presumptions of their own desert,  
 One age is poor applause ; the mighty shout, 355  
 The thunder by the living few begun,  
 Late time must echo ; worlds unborn resound.

We wish our names eternally to live :  
 Wild dream ! which ne'er had haunted human thought,  
 Had not our natures been eternal too. 360

Instinct points out an int'rest in hereafter ;  
But our blind reason sees not where it lies ;  
Or seeing, gives the substance for the shade.

Fame is the shade of immortality,  
 And in itself a shadow. Soon as caught, 365  
 Contemn'd ; it shrinks to nothing in the grasp.

Consult th' ambitious, 'tis ambition's cure.  
 'And is this all ?' cried Cæsar, at his height,  
 Disgusted. This third proof ambition brings  
 Of immortality. The first in fame, 370

Observe him near, your envy will abate :  
 Shamed at the disproportion vast between  
 The passion and the purchase, he will sigh  
 At such success, and blush at his renown.  
 And why ? Because far richer prize invites 375  
 His heart ; far more illustrious glory calls :

352. The second point of this argument is the boundless field over which ambition instinctively desires to expatiate ; the field of immortality.

364. The next point is the disgust felt with the highest rewards of ambition on earth. Earthly fame is discovered to be a *shadow*, while it is *the shade of immortality*, that is, a shadow produced by the glorious splendour of immortality. In the absence of all luminous bodies there can be no shade. It is immortal glory that must have originated the shadowy fame of earth.



It calls in whispers, yet the deafest hear.

And can ambition a fourth proof supply ?  
It can, and stronger than the former three ;  
Yet quite o'erlook'd by some reputed wise. 380

Though disappointments in ambition pain,  
And though success disgusts, yet still, *Lorenzo*,  
In vain we strive to pluck it from our hearts ;  
By nature planted for the noblest ends.  
Absurd the famed advice to *Pyrrhus* giv'n, 385

More praised than ponder'd ; specious, but unsound :  
Sooner that hero's sword the world had quell'd,  
Than reason his ambition. Man must soar :  
An obstinate activity within,  
An unsuppressivè spring, will toss him up, 390

Inf spite of fortune's load. Not kings alone,  
Each villager has his ambition too ;  
No sultan prouder than his fetter'd slave :

383. *In vain we strive*, &c. : The inextinguishable nature of ambition is the fourth point of this argument.

385. *Advice to Pyrrhus giv'n*, &c. : Our author probably alludes to the following account which is given by Plutarch, here considerably abridged. *Pyrrhus* was preparing to invade Italy. His faithful counsellor, *Cineas*, said to him, "If it please heaven that we conquer the Romans, who have the command of many warlike nations, what use shall we make of our victory ?" *Pyrrhus* answered, "There will then be no town in any country that will dare oppose us." "But," said *Cineas*, "after we have conquered Italy what next ?" *Pyrrhus*, not perceiving his drift, replied, "We will take Sicily." *Cineas* then asked, "Shall that conclude our conquests ?" "By no means," answered the other ; "who then can forbear *Lybia*, and *Carthage*, and *Macedonia*, and *Greece*." *Cineas* rejoined, "When all this is done, what are we to do then ?" "Why, then, my friend," said *Pyrrhus*, laughing, "we will take our ease and drink and be merry." *Cineas* having brought him thus far replied, "And what hinders us from drinking and taking our ease now, when we have already these things in our hands, at which we propose to arrive through seas of blood, through infinite toils, and dangers and calamities, which we must both cause and suffer ?" This conversation gave pain to the ambitious general, but produced no reformation. He saw that he was giving up certain happiness, but was not able to forego the objects of hope that flattered his desires.

Slaves build their little Babylons of straw,  
 Echo the proud Assyrian in their hearts, 395  
 And cry, 'Behold the wonders of my might ?'  
 And why ? Because immortal as their lord :  
 And souls immortal must for ever heave  
 At something great ; the glitter, or the gold ;  
 The praise of mortals, or the praise of Heav'n. 400  
 Nor absolutely vain is human praise,  
 When human is supported by divine.  
 I'll introduce Lorenzo to himself :  
 Pleasure and pride (bad masters !) share our hearts.  
 As love of pleasure is ordain'd to guard 405  
 And feed our bodies, and extend our race ;  
 The love of praise is planted to protect  
 And propagate the glories of the mind.  
 What is it, but the love of praise, inspires,  
 Matures, refines, embellishes, exalts, 410  
 Earth's happiness ? From that the delicate,  
 The grand, the marvellous, of civil life.  
 Want and convenience, under-workers, lay  
 The basis, on which love of glory builds.  
 Nor is thy life, O virtue ! less in debt 415  
 To praise, thy secret stimulating friend.  
 Were man not proud, what merit should we miss !  
 Pride made the virtues of the Pagan world.

396. Dan. 14 : 30. "The king spake and said, Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the honour of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty ?"

401. The *uses of the love of praise* are here exhibited. On this point may be consulted with great advantage the fourth of Foster's *Essays*, Letter IX. He shows its uses : but more particularly its enormous and fatal abuses ; and gives the Christian views on this point in contrast with those too commonly introduced into polite literature. Reference may also be made to Boyd's *Eclectic Moral Philosophy*, pp. 67—69.

418. *Seasons right* : Makes right feelings and conduct pleasant. The author shows how praise may be made auxiliary to virtue. But it should be considered that he who loves the praise of man more than that of God is destitute of true virtue—that which the Bible regards as true.

Praise is the salt that seasons right to man,  
 And whets his appetite for moral good. 420  
 Thirst of applause is virtue's second guard ;  
 Reason her first ; but reason wants an aid :  
 Our private reason is a flatterer ;  
 Thirst of applause calls public judgment in  
 To poise our own, to keep an even scale, 425  
 And give endanger'd virtue fairer play.

## ARGUMENT FROM THE MORAL SENSE.

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

## ARGUMENT FROM AVARICE.

Thus far ambition. What says avarice ?  
 This her chief maxim, which has long been thine :  
 ' The wise and wealthy are the same.' I grant it. 445  
 To store up treasure, with incessant toil,  
 This is man's province, this his highest praise ;  
 To this great end keen instinct stings him on.

446. *Treasure* : Here used in its largest sense.

To guide that instinct, reason ! is thy charge ;  
 'Tis thine to tell us where true treasure lies : 450  
 But, reason failing to discharge her trust,  
 Or to the deaf discharging it in vain,  
 A blunder follows ; and blind industry,  
 Gall'd by the spur, but stranger to the course,  
 (The course where stakes of more than gold are won) 455  
 O'erloading with the cares of distant age,  
 The jaded spirits of the present hour,  
 Provides for an eternity below.

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

## ARGUMENT FROM PLEASURE.

See, the third witness laughs at bliss remote,  
 And falsely promises an Eden here :

470. *Sour grapes* : Ambition and avarice are described by this expression because their proper objects are beyond our reach at present, in allusion to the fable. Yet the connexion seems to give another meaning: the objects of ambition and avarice in the present life are unsatisfying, inadequate, disagreeable, sometimes painful.

Truth she shall speak for once, though prone to lie,  
 A common cheat, and Pleasure is her name.  
 To pleasure never was Lorenzo deaf; 480  
 Then hear her now, now first thy real friend.

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

Why should the joy most poignant sense affords 485  
 Burn us with blushes, and rebuke our pride?—  
 Those heav'n-born blushes tell us man descends,  
 E'en in the zenith of his earthly bliss:

Should reason take her infidel repose,  
 This honest instinct speaks our lineage high; 490  
 This instinct calls on darkness to conceal  
 Our rapturous relation to the stalls.

Our glory covers us with noble shame,  
 And he that's unconfounded is unmann'd.  
 The man that blushes is not quite a brute. 495

Thus far with thee, Lorenzo, will I close:  
 Pleasure is good, and man for pleasure made;  
 But pleasure full of glory, as of joy;  
 Pleasure which neither blushes nor expires.

## PRECEDING ARGUMENTS SUMMED UP.

The witnesses are heard; the cause is o'er; 500  
 Let conscience file the sentence in her court,  
 Dearer than deeds that half a realm convey.

Thus, seal'd by truth, th' authentic record runs:  
 'Know all; know, infidels,—unapt to know!  
 'Tis immortality your nature solves; 505

'Tis immortality deciphers man,  
 And opens all the myst'ries of his make.  
 Without it, half his instincts are a riddle,  
 Without it, all his virtues are a dream.

485. *Poignant sense*: Acute sensibility.

492. *Stalls*: Occupants of the stalls, cattle.

His very crimes attest his dignity ; 510  
 His sateless thirst of pleasure, gold, and fame,  
 Declares him born for blessings infinite :  
 What less than infinite makes unabsurd  
 Passions, which all on earth but more inflames ?  
 Fierce passions, so mismasured to this scene, 515  
 Stretch'd out, like eagles' wings, beyond our nest,  
 Far, far beyond the worth of all below,  
 For earth too large, presage a nobler flight,  
 And evidence our title to the skies.'

THE GRANDEUR, AND TRUE PURPOSE OF THE PASSIONS.

Ye gentle theologues, of calmer kind ! 520  
 Whose constitution dietates to your pen ;  
 Who, cold yourselves, think ardour comès from hell !  
 Think not our passions from corruption sprung,  
 Though to corruption now they lend their wings ;  
 That is their mistress, not their mother. All 525  
 (And justly) reason deem divine : I see,  
 I feel a grandeur in the passions too,  
 Which speaks their high descent, and glorious end ;  
Which speaks them rays of an eternal fire.  
 In Paradise itself they burnt as strong, 530  
 Ere Adam fell ; though wiser in their aim,  
 Like the proud Eastern, struck by Providence,  
 What though our passions are run mad, and stoop,  
 With low terrestrial appetite, to gaze  
 On trash, on toys, dethroned from high desire ? 535  
 Yet still, through their disgrace, no feeble ray  
 Of greatness shines, and tells us whence they fell :  
 But these (like that fall'n monarch when reclaim'd)

515. *Mismasured* : Ill-proportioned.

520. *Theologues* : Theologians—divines.

532. *The proud Eastern* : Nebuchadnezzar, whose history the prophet Daniel so beautifully and faithfully writes. The incidents here referred to are narrated in the book of Daniel, iv. 28-37.

When reason moderates the rein aright,  
 Shall re-ascend, remount their former sphere, 540  
 Where once they soar'd illustrious ; ere seduced  
 By wanton Eve's debauch, to stroll on earth,  
 And set the sublunary world on fire.

But grant their frenzy lasts ; their frenzy fails  
 To disappoint one providential end, 545  
 For which heav'n blew up ardour in our hearts :  
 Were reason silent, boundless passion speaks  
 A future scene of boundless objects too,  
 And brings glad tidings of eternal day.  
 Eternal day ! 'Tis that enlightens all ; 550  
 And all, by that enlighten'd, proves it sure.  
 Consider man as an immortal being,  
 Intelligible all ; and all is great ;  
 A crystalline transparency prevails,  
 And strikes full lustre through the human sphere ; 555  
 Consider man as mortal, all is dark  
 And wretched ; reason weeps at the survey.

THE STOIC'S DISBELIEF OF IMMORTALITY CONSIDERED.

The learn'd Lorenzo cries, ' And let her weep,  
 Weak, modern reason : ancient times were wise.  
 Authority, that venerable guide, 560  
 Stands on my part ; the famed Athenian porch  
 (And who for wisdom so renown'd as they ?)  
 Denied this immortality to man.'  
 I grant it ; but affirm, they proved it too.  
 A riddle, this ?—Have patience ; I'll explain. 565  
 What noble vanities, what moral flights,  
 Glitt'ring through their romantic wisdom's page,

561. *Famed Athenian porch* : The place of philosophical instruction is here put for the instructors who made use of it. It bore the specific name of *Pæcile Stoa*, or *painted porch*, because it was adorned with some fine paintings. It was the most famous porch in Athens, and therefore called by way of eminence *the porch*. Hence the followers of Zeno, who selected this place for his school, are called *Stoics*, or *the men of the porch*.

Make us, at once, despise them, and admire!

Fable is flat to these high-season'd sires; *wavy*

They leave th' extravagance of song below.

. 570

'Flesh shall not feel; or, feeling, shall enjoy

The dagger or the rack; to them, alike

A bed of roses, or the burning bull.'

570. *They leave, &c.* : They are more extravagant in their opinions than songs are in their exaggerations. Among their opinions these may be cited:—"Since those things only are truly good which are becoming and virtuous, and virtue, which is seated in the mind, is alone sufficient for happiness, external things contribute nothing towards happiness, and, therefore, are not in themselves good. The wise man will only value riches, honour, beauty, and other external enjoyments, as means and instruments of virtue; for, in every condition, he is happy in the possession of a mind accommodated to nature. *Pain*, which does not belong to the mind, *is no evil*. *The wise man will be happy in the midst of torture*. *All external things are indifferent*, since they cannot affect the happiness of man." All the extravagant notions which are to be found in their writings on this subject may be referred to their general principle of the entire sufficiency of virtue to happiness, and the consequent indifference of all external circumstances. They held that in proportion as we approach a state of apathy we advance towards perfection.

573. *Burning bull*: A brazen bull constructed for an instrument of torture, by Perillus, an ingenious artist, and presented to Phalaris, tyrant of Agrigentum. The brazen image which he fabricated was hollow, and had an opening, or door, in the upper part of the back, through which the victim of the tyrant's cruelty was introduced into the body of the bull; and a hot fire being kindled beneath it, he was slowly roasted alive, while the cry of the sufferer, as it came forth from the mouth of the bull, resembled the roaring of a living animal. Phalaris is said to have tried the experiment first upon the artist himself. He lost his own life, too, according to Ovid, in this same manner, having himself been burned in the bull, and having had his tongue previously cut out.—*Antho.*

Dr. Thomas Brown has written excellent strictures upon the Stoical philosophy, some of which will now be quoted.

Though all which is inconsistent with virtue is to be avoided, the pleasure which is consistent with virtue is to be valued not merely as being that which attends virtue but as being *happiness*, or at least an element of happiness. Between mere pleasure and mere virtue there is a competition in short of the less with the greater; but though virtue be the greater, and the greater in every case in which it can be opposed to mere pleasure, pleasure is still good in itself and would be covetable by the virtuous in every



In men exploding all beyond the grave,  
 Strange doctrine, this!—As doctrine, it was strange;      575  
 But not, as prophecy; for such it proved,  
 And, to their own amazement, was fulfill'd :  
 They feign'd a firmness Christians need not feign.

case in which the greater good of virtue is not inconsistent with it. Pain is, in like manner, an evil in itself, though to bear pain without a murmur, or without even any inward murmurs be a good, a good dependent on ourselves, which it is in our power to add at any moment to the mere physical ill that does not depend on us, and a good *more valuable* than the *pain* in itself is *evil*.

It is indeed because pleasure and pain are not in themselves absolutely indifferent that man is virtuous in resisting the solicitations of the one and the threats of the other; and there is thus a self-confutation in the principles of Stoicism. We may praise indeed the magnanimity of him who dares to suffer every external evil which man can suffer rather than give his conscience one guilty remembrance; but it is because there is *evil to be endured* that we praise him for his magnanimity in bearing the evil, and if there be no ill to be endured there is no magnanimity that can be called forth to endure it. The bed of roses differs from the burning bull not merely as a square differs from a circle, or as flint differs from clay, but as that which is physically good differs from that which is physically evil; and if they did not so differ, as good and evil, there could be as little merit in consenting, when virtue required the sacrifice, to suffer all the bodily pain which the instrument of torture could inflict rather than to rest in guilty indolence on that luxurious couch of flowers, as there could be in the mere preference for any physical purpose of a circular to an angular form, or of the softness of clay to the hardness of flint. Moral excellence is indeed in every case preferable to mere physical enjoyment; and there is no enjoyment worthy of the choice of man when virtue forbids the desire. But virtue is the superior only, not the sole power. She has imperial sway; but her sway is imperial only because there are forms of inferior good over which it is her glory to preside.

With all the admiration which it is impossible for us not to feel of the sublime parts of the Stoical system it is still founded on a false view of our nature. Man is to be considered not in one light only but in many lights, in all of which he may be a subject of agreeable feelings and consequently of happiness as a series of agreeable feelings. He is a sensitive being—an intellectual being—a moral being—a religious being—and there are species of happiness that correspond with these varieties.—*Philosophy of the Mind*, III. 548-9.

The Christian truly triumph'd in the flame ;  
 The Stoic saw, in double wonder lost, 580  
 Wonder at them, and wonder at himself,  
 To find the bold adventures of his thought  
 Not bold, and that he strove to lie in vain.

Whence, then, those thoughts ? those tow'ring thoughts,  
 that flew

Such monstrous heights ? From instinct and from pride. 585

The glorious instinct of a deathless soul,  
 Confusedly conscious of her dignity,  
 Suggested truths they could not understand.

In lust's dominion, and in passion's storm,  
 Truth's system broken, scatter'd fragments lay, 590

As light in chaos, glimm'ring through the gloom :  
 Smit with the pomp of lofty sentiments,  
 Pleased pride proclaim'd, what reason disbelieved.

Pride, like the Delphic priestess, with a swell,  
 Raved nonsense, destined to be future sense, 595

When life immortal in full day should shine ;  
 And death's dark shadows fly the Gospel sun.

They spoke, what nothing but immortal souls  
 Could speak ; and thus the truth they question'd, prov'd.

ENDLESS QUESTIONS UNRESOLVABLE IF MAN IS NOT IMMORTAL.

Can then absurdities, as well as crimes, 600  
 Speak man immortal ? All things speak him so.

Much has been urged ; and dost thou call for more ?  
 Call ; and with endless questions be distress,  
 All unresolvable, if earth is all.

' Why life, a moment ? infinite, desire ? 605

579. *Truly triumph'd, &c.* : The history of Christian martyrdom abundantly justifies this statement. The martyrs, under the influence of faith in the scenes of a future heaven, *realized*, exemplified the *theory* of the Stoic, which on the infidel hypothesis, discarding a future life, was impracticable and false.

584. *Whence, then, &c.* : The author's mode of accounting for the extravagant opinions before referred to, is exceedingly ingenious.

Our wish, eternity ? Our home, the grave ?  
 Heav'n's promise dormant lies in human hope ;  
 Who wishes life immortal, proves it too.  
 Why happiness pursued, though never found ?  
 Man's thirst of happiness declares it is, 610  
 (For nature never gravitates to nought ;)  
 That thirst, unquench'd, declares it is not here.  
 My Lucia, thy Clarissa, call to thought ;  
 Why cordial friendship riveted so deep,  
 As hearts to pierce at first, at parting, rend, 615  
 If friend, and friendship, vanish in an hour ?  
 Is not this torment in the mask of joy ?  
 Why by reflection marr'd the joys of sense ?  
 Why past, and future, preying on our hearts,  
 And putting all our present joys to death ? 620  
 Why labours reason ? Instinct were as well ;  
 Instinct, far better ; what can choose, can err :  
 O how infallible the thoughtless brute !  
 'Twere well his Holiness were half as sure.  
 Reason with inclination, why at war ? 625  
 Why sense of guilt ? Why conscience up in arms ?  
 Conscience of guilt, is prophecy of pain,  
 And bosom-counsel to decline the blow.  
 Reason with inclination ne'er had jarr'd,  
 If nothing future paid forbearance here. 630  
 Thus on—these, and a thousand pleas uncall'd,  
 All promise, some ensure, a second scene ;  
 Which, were it doubtful, would be dearer far  
 Than all things else most certain ; were it false,  
 What truth on earth so precious as the lie ? 635

613. *My Lucia* : Probably the author's deceased wife. *Thy Clarissa* ; a deceased friend or relation of Lorenzo.

624. *His Holiness* : The arrogant title of the Pope of Rome, who *claims* infallibility.

628. *Bosom-counsel* : Private, confidential admonition.

630. *Paid forbearance* : Rewarded forbearance to indulge our inclinations.

635. The doctrine of a future state, even though it were *a lie*, or were un-

This world it gives us, let what will ensue  
 This world it gives, in that high cordial, hope.  
 The future of the present is the soul.  
 How this life groans, when sever'd from the next !  
 Poor, mutilated wretch, that disbelieves !  
 By dark distrust his being cut in two,  
 In both parts perishes ; life void of joy,  
 Sad prelude of eternity in pain !

640

THE ANGUISH AND PATHETIC COMPLAINTS OF A GOOD MAN IN  
 VIEW OF ANNIHILATION.

Couldst thou persuade me, the next life could fail  
 Our ardent wishes, how should I pour out  
 My bleeding heart in anguish, new, as deep !  
 Oh ! with what thoughts, thy hope, and my despair,  
 Abhorr'd Annihilation blasts the soul,  
 And wide extends the bounds of human wo !  
 Could I believe Lorenzo's system true,  
 In this black channel would my ravings run.

645

650

'Grief from the future borrow'd peace, erewhile.  
 The future vanish'd ! and the present pain'd !  
 Strange import of unprecedented ill !  
 Fall, how profound ! like Lucifer's, the fall !

655

founded, is more valuable to the present interests of society than any other truth. *This world it gives us* : That is, it makes it entirely a different thing to us from what it otherwise would be.

638. *The soul* : That which animates, controls the present scene, and gives it, chiefly, its value.

647. *Thy hope, and my despair* : Abhorr'd annihilation, the object of thy hope and of my distrust and disbelief : or, that which could realize thy hope, but involve me in despair, blotting out all my hope of everlasting life.

655. *Like Lucifer's, the fall* : Language borrowed from Isaiah 14 : 12.

" How art thou fallen from heaven,  
 Lucifer, son of the morning :  
 How art thou fell'd to the ground,  
 That didst weaken the nations !"

Our author, by a poetic license, or by conformity to an erroneous inter-

Unequal fate ! his fall, without his guilt !  
 From where fond hope built her pavilion high,  
 The gods among, hurl'd headlong, hurl'd at once  
 To night ! to nothing ! darker still than night !  
 If 'twas a dream, why wake me, my worst foe, 660  
 Lorenzo, boastful of the name of friend !  
 O for delusion ! O for error still !  
 Could vengeance strike much stronger than to plant  
 A thinking being in a world like this,  
 Not over-rich before, now beggar'd quite ; 665  
 More curst than at the fall ?—The sun goes out !  
 The thorns shoot up ! What thorns in ev'ry thought !  
 Why sense of better ? It imbitters worse.  
 Why sense ? Why life ? If but to sigh, then sink  
 To what I was ! Twice nothing ! and much wo ! 670  
 Wo from Heav'n's bounties ! Wo from what was wont  
 To flatter most, high intellectual pow'rs !

THE ABSURDITIES OF THE SCHEME OF ANNIHILATION.

'Thought, virtue, knowledge ! blessings, by thy scheme  
 All poison'd into pains. First, knowledge, once  
 My soul's ambition, now her greatest dread. 675  
 To know myself, true wisdom ? No, to shun  
 That shocking science, parent of despair !

pretation applies this language to Satan. Tertullian and Gregory the Great understood this passage in reference to the fall of Satan ; in consequence of which the name Lucifer has since been applied to Satan : and this is now the usual signification of the word. But Dr. Henderson renders this word "Illustrious son of the morning" The scope and connexion show that none but the king of Babylon is meant. The monarch here referred to, having surpassed all other kings in splendour, is compared to the harbinger of day whose brilliancy surpasses that of the surrounding stars. Falling from heaven denotes a sudden political overthrow—a removal from the position of high and conspicuous dignity formerly occupied (Compare Rev. vi. 13, viii. 10).—*Kitto's Cyclopædia*.

660. *If 'twas a dream* : If my belief in future existence was a dream, &c.  
 666. *At the fall* : In Eden.

Avert thy mirror : if I see, I die.

' Know my Creator ? Climb his blest abode  
By painful speculation, pierce the veil, 680

Dive in his nature, read his attributes,  
And gaze in admiration—on a foe,  
Obtruding life, withholding happiness !  
From the full rivers that surround his throne,  
Not letting fall one drop of joy on man ; 685

Man gasping for one drop, that he might cease  
To curse his birth, nor envy reptiles more !  
Ye sable clouds ! Ye darkest shades of night !  
Hide him, for ever hide him, from my thought,  
Once all my comfort ; source, and soul of joy ! 690

Now leagued with furies, and with thee 'gainst me.

' Know his achievements ! Study his renown !  
Contemplate this amazing universe,  
Dropt from his hand, with miracles replete !  
For what ? 'Mid miracles of nobler name, 695

To find one miracle of misery ?  
To find the being, which alone can know  
And praise his works, a blemish on his praise ?  
Through nature's ample range, in thought to stroll,  
And start at man, the single mourner there, 700

Breathing high hope, chain'd down to pangs and death ?

' Knowing is suff'ring : and shall virtue share  
The sigh of knowledge ?—Virtue shares the sigh,  
By straining up the steep of excellent,  
By battles fought, and from temptation won, 705

What gains she, but the pang of seeing worth,

Angelic worth, soon shuffled in the dark

With ev'ry vice, and swept to brutal dust ?

678. *Avert thy mirror* : Turn away the mirror you hold to me : the scheme of annihilation. Lorenzo seems to be addressed, as he is in (691).

703. *Virtue shares the sigh* : Virtue, like knowledge, causes us to sigh, if we should be persuaded that annihilation is the true doctrine.

704. *Excellent* : Excellence.

Merit is madness ; virtue is a crime ;  
 A crime to reason, if it costs us pain 710  
 Unpaid. What pain, amidst a thousand more,  
 To think the most abandon'd, after days  
 Of triumph o'er their betters, find in death  
 As soft a pillow, nor made fouler clay !  
 'Duty ! Religion !—These, our duty done, 715  
 Imply reward. Religion is mistake.  
 Duty !—There's none, but to repel the cheat.  
 Ye cheats, away ! ye daughters of my pride !  
 Who feign yourselves the fav'rites of the skies :  
 Ye tow'ring hopes ! abortive energies ! 720  
 That toss and struggle in my lying breast, *all wrong*  
 To scale the skies, and build presumptions there,  
 As I were heir of an eternity.  
 Vain, vain ambitions ! trouble me no more.  
 Why travel far in quest of sure defeat ? 725  
 As bounded as my being, be my wish.  
 All is inverted, wisdom is a fool.  
Sense ! take the rein ; blind passion ! drive us on ;  
And ignorance ! befriend us on our way ;  
 Ye new, but truest patrons of our peace ! 730  
 Yes ; give the pulse full empire ; live the brute,  
 Since as the brute we die. The sum of man,  
 Of godlike man ! to revel, and to rot.  
 ' But not on equal terms with other brutes.  
 Their revels a more poignant relish yield, 735  
 And safer too ; they never poisons choose.  
 Instinct, than reason, makes more wholesome meals,  
 And sends all-marring murmur far away.  
 For sensual life they best philosophize ;  
 Theirs, that serene, the sages sought in vain : 740  
 'Tis man alone expostulates with Heav'n ;  
 His, all the pow'r, and all the cause, to mourn.

709 *Virtue is a crime* : It is wrong to be at the pains of virtue, for the reason afterwards stated (710–11).

Shall human eyes alone dissolve in tears ?  
 And bleed, in anguish, none but human hearts ?  
 The wide-stretch'd realm of intellectual wo, 745  
 Surpassing sensual far, is all our own.  
 In life so fatally distinguish'd, why  
 Cast in one lot, confounded,-lump'd, in death ?  
 'Ere yet in being, was mankind in guilt ?  
 Why thunder'd this peculiar clause against us, 750  
 All-mortal, and all wretched ?—Have the skies  
 Reasons of state their subjects may not scan,  
 Nor humbly reason, when they sorely sigh ?  
 All-mortal, and all-wretched !—'Tis too much ;  
 Unparallel'd in nature : 'tis too much, 755  
 On being unrequested at thy hands,  
 Omnipotent ! for I see nought but pow'r.  
 'And why see that ? Why thought ? To toil and eat,  
 Then make our bed in darkness, needs no thought.  
 What superfluities are reas'ning souls ! 760  
 Oh, give eternity ! or thought destroy !  
 But without thought our curse were half unfelt ;  
 Its blunted edge would spare the throbbing heart ;  
 And, therefore, 'tis bestow'd. I thank thee, Reason,  
 For aiding life's too small calamities, 765  
 And giving being to the dread of death.  
 Such are thy bounties !—Was it then too much  
 For me to trespass on the brutal rights ?  
 Too much for Heav'n to make one emmet more ?  
 Too much for chaos to permit my mass 770  
 A longer stay with essences unwrought,  
 Unfashion'd, untormented into man ?  
 Wretched preferment to this round of pains !  
Wretched capacity of frenzy, thought !  
 Wretched capacity of dying, life ! 775  
 Life, thought, worth, wisdom, all (O foul revolt !)  
 Once friends to peace, gone over to the foe.



## THE HORRORS OF ANNIHILATION.

'Death then has changed its nature too : O death !  
 Come to my bosom, thou best gift of Heav'n !  
 Best friend of man ! since man is man no more. 780  
 Why in this thorny wilderness so long,  
 Since there's no promised land's ambrosial bow'r,  
 To pay me with its honey for my stings ?  
 If needful to the selfish schemes of Heav'n  
 To sting us sore, why mock'd our misery ? 785  
 Why this so sumptuous insult o'er our heads ?  
 Why this illustrious canopy display'd ?  
 Why so magnificently lodged despair ?  
 At stated periods, sure-returning, roll  
 These glorious orbs, that mortals may compute 790  
 Their length of labours, and of pains ; nor lose  
 Their misery's full measure ?—Smiles with flow'rs,  
 And fruits, promiscuous, ever-teeming earth,  
 That man may languish in luxurious scenes,  
 And in an Eden mourns his wither'd joys ? 795  
 Claim earth and skies man's admiration, due  
 For such delights ? Blest animals ! too wise  
 To wonder ; and too happy to complain !  
 ' Our doom decreed demands a mournful scene :  
 Why not a dungeon dark, for the condemn'd ? 800  
 Why not the dragon's subterranean den,  
 For man to howl in ? Why not his abode  
 Of the same dismal colour with his fate ?  
 A Thebes, a Babylon, at vast expense

804. *Thebes—Babylon* : Once splendid cities in Egypt and Assyria, containing magnificent displays of human art ; but now for ages lying in ruins, the abode of "owls and adders."

It may here be remarked that among the stronger or more obvious proofs of the divine inspiration of the Hebrew prophets, may be named exact fulfilment of the predictions which they uttered concerning the fall of Babylon and other cities, which, at the time, seemed destined to permanence and to increasing glory. Thus Isaiah wrote (ch. 13 : 19–22), "and Babylon, the

Of time, toil, treasure, art, for owls and adders, 805  
 As congruous, as for man this lofty dome,  
 Which prompts proud thought, and kindles high desire;  
 If, from her humble chamber in the dust,  
 While proud thought swells, and high desire inflames,  
 The poor worm calls us for her inmates there; 810  
 And, round us, death's inexorable hand  
 Draws the dark curtain close; undrawn no more.  
 'Undrawn no more!—Behind the cloud of death,  
 Once I beheld a sun; a sun which gilt  
 That sable cloud, and turn'd it all to gold. 815  
 How the grave's alter'd! Fathomless as hell!  
 A real hell to those who dreamt of heav'n.  
 Annihilation! how it yawns before me!  
 Next moment I may drop from thought, from sense,  
 The privilege of angels, and of worms, 820  
 An outcast from existence! and this spirit,  
 This all-pervading, this all-conscious soul,  
 This particle of energy divine,  
 Which travels nature, flies from star to star,  
 And visits gods, and emulates their pow'rs, 825  
 For ever is extinguish'd. Horror! death!  
 Death of that death I fearless once survey'd!—  
 When horror universal shall descend,

glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrha. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation, &c. : but wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and *owls* shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there, &c., and dragons (serpents) in their pleasant palaces, &c."

As to *Thebes*, Ezekiel and Jeremiah speak of it under the name *No*, Ezek. xxx. 14—16 : xxix. 14, 15. Jer. xlvi. 25. Speaking of the ruins of this Egyptian city, Dr. Robinson says, "It is impossible to wander among these scenes, and behold these hoary yet magnificent ruins without emotions of astonishment and deep solemnity. Everything around testifies of vastness and of utter desolation."—*Bib. Researches*, i. 29.

825. *Gods*: Angelic beings.

And heav'n's dark concave urn all human race,  
 On that enormous, unrefunding tomb, 830  
 How just this verse ! this monumental sigh !

*Beneath the lumber of demolish'd worlds,  
 Deep in the rubbish of the general wreck,  
 Swept ignominious to the common mass  
 Of matter, never dignified with life, 835  
 Here lie proud rationals ; the sons of Heav'n !  
 The lords of earth ! the property of worms :  
 Beings of yesterday, and no to-morrow !  
 Who liv'd in terror, and in pangs expired !  
 All gone to rot in chaos ; or, to make 845  
 Their happy transit into blocks or brutes,  
 Nor longer sully their Creator's name.*

Lorenzo ! hear, pause, wonder, and pronounce.  
 Just is this history ? If such is man,  
 Mankind's historian, though divine, might weep. 845  
 And dares Lorenzo smile ?—I know thee proud ;  
 For once let pride befriend thee : pride looks pale  
 At such a scene, and sighs for something more.  
 Amid thy boasts, presumptions, and displays,  
 And art thou then a shadow ? less than shade ? 850  
 And nothing ? less than nothing ? To have been,  
 And not to be, is lower than unborn.  
 Art thou ambitious ? Why then make the worm  
 Thine equal ? Runs thy taste of pleasure high ?  
 Why patronize sure death of ev'ry joy ? 855  
 Charm riches ? Why choose begg'ry in the grave,  
 Of ev'ry hope a bankrupt ! and for ever ?  
 Ambition, pleasure, avarice, persuade thee

829 *Urn, &c.* : Enclose in an urn the dead remains of all the human race.

830. *Unrefunding tomb* : Not giving back its dead.

850 *A shadow ? less than shade* : *Shadow* and *shade* are here used as synonymous, this being evident from the next line.

To make that world of glory, rapture, wealth,  
They lately proved thy soul's supreme desire. 860

What art thou made of? Rather how unmade?  
Great Nature's master-appetite destroy'd!  
Is endless life, and happiness, despised?  
Or both wish'd, here, where neither can be found?  
Such man's perverse eternal war with Heav'n! 865

Darest thou persist? And is there nought on earth,  
But a long train of transitory forms,  
Rising, and breaking, millions in an hour?  
Bubbles of a fantastic deity, blown up  
In sport, and then in cruelty destroy'd? 870

Oh! for what crime, unmerciful Lorenzo!  
Destroys thy scheme the whole of human race?  
Kind is fell Lucifer, compared to thee:  
Oh! spare this waste of being half divine;  
And vindicate th' economy of Heav'n. 875

Heav'n is all love; all joy in giving joy;  
It never had created, but to bless:  
And shall it, then, strike off the list of life,  
A being blest, or worthy so to be?  
Heav'n starts at an annihilating God. 880

#### THE SCHEME OF ANNIHILATION, A WICKED INVENTION.

Is that, all nature starts at, thy desire?  
Art such a clod to wish thyself all clay?  
What is that dreadful wish?—The dying groan  
Of nature, murder'd by the blackest guilt.  
What deadly poison has thy nature drank? 885

860. *Lately proved*: The discussions in Night VI. are referred to. In some editions, this line runs thus: "They lately proved the soul's supreme desire." The former reading is preferable. *Ambition, &c.* (858), *persuade thee to make that world of glory, &c.*, the existence of which *they proved*, the object of *thy supreme desire*.

862. *Master-appetite*: The appetite for immortality.

882. *Art thou such, &c.*

To nature undebauch'd no shock so great ;  
 Nature's first wish is endless happiness ;  
 Annihilation is an after-thought,  
 A monstrous wish, unborn till virtue dies.  
 And, oh ! what depth of horror lies enclosed ! 890  
 For non-existence no man ever wish'd,  
 But, first, he wish'd the Deity destroy'd.

If so, what words are dark enough to draw  
 Thy picture true ? The darkest are too fair.  
 Beneath what baneful planet, in what hour 895  
 Of desperation, by what fury's aid,  
 In what infernal posture of the soul,  
 All hell invited, and all hell in joy  
 At such a birth, a birth so near of kin,  
 Did thy foul fancy whelp so foul a scheme 900  
 Of hopes abortive, faculties half blown,  
 And deities begun, reduc'd to dust ?

There's nought, (thou say'st,) but one eternal flux  
 Of feeble essences, tumultuous driven  
 Through time's rough billows into night's abyss. 905  
 Say, in this rapid tide of human ruin,  
 Is there no rock, on which man's tossing thought  
 Can rest from terror, dare his fate survey,  
 And boldly think it something to be born ?  
 Amid such hourly wrecks of being fair, 910  
 Is there no central all-sustaining base,  
 All-realizing, all-connecting pow'r,  
 Which, as it call'd forth all things, can recall,  
 And force destruction to refund her spoil ?  
 Command the grave restore her taken prey ? 915  
 Bid death's dark vale its human harvest yield,  
 And earth, and ocean, pay their debt of man,  
 True to the grand deposit trusted there ?  
 Is there no potentate, whose outstretch'd arm,  
 When rip'ning time calls forth th' appointed hour, 920  
 Pluck'd from foul devastation's famish'd maw,  
 Binds present, past, and future, to his throne ?

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

AN ALL-PRESERVING CONTRASTED WITH AN ANNIHILATING GOD.

An all-prolific, all-preserving God! 930  
 This were a God indeed.—And such is man,  
 As here presumed: he rises from his fall.  
 Think'st thou Omnipotence a naked root,  
 Each blossom fair of Deity destroy'd?  
 Nothing is dead; nay, nothing sleeps: each soul, 935  
 That ever animated human clay,  
 Now wakes; is on the wing; and where, O where,  
 Will the swarm settle?—When the trumpet's call,  
 As sounding brass, collects us round Heav'n's throne  
 Conglobed, we bask in everlasting day, 940  
 (Paternal splendour!) and adhere forever.  
 Had not the soul this outlet to the skies,  
 In this vast vessel of the universe,  
 How should we gasp, as in an empty void!

927. *Pharos*: A small island in the Bay of Alexandria, upon which was built, in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus, a celebrated tower, to serve as a light-house. This tower, built of white marble, was visible at a great distance, and was regarded as one of the seven wonders of the world by the ancients. It had several stories, raised one above another, adorned with columns, balustrades, and galleries, of the finest marble and workmanship. On the top, fires were lighted in the night season, to direct sailors in the Bay, which was dangerous and difficult of access. The term *Pharos* is traced to a Greek word signifying *to shine* or *be bright*.—*Anthon's Class. D.*

938. *Swarm*: An allusion to a swarm of bees, to indicate a vast multitude. The allusion is continued in the next line, where the mode of collecting bees is referred to.

940. *Conglobed*: Brought into a round mass or multitude. This is a favourite term of Milton.

How in the pangs of famish'd hope expire! 945

How bright my prospect shines! how gloomy, thine!

A trembling world! and a devouring God!

Earth, but the shambles of Omnipotence!

Heav'n's face all stain'd with causeless massacres

Of countless millions, born to feel the pang 950

Of being lost. Lorenzo! can it be?

This bids us shudder at the thoughts of life.

Who would be born to such a phantom world,

Where nought substantial, but our misery?

Where joy (if joy) but heightens our distress, 955

So soon to perish, and revive no more?

The greater such a joy, the more it pains.

A world, so far from great (and yet how great

It shines to thee!) there's nothing real in it;

Being, a shadow! consciousness, a dream! 960

A dream, how dreadful! Universal blank

Before it, and behind! Poor man, a spark

From non-existence struck by wrath divine;

Glitt'ring a moment, nor that moment sure;

'Midst upper, nether, and surrounding night, 965

His sad, sure, sudden, and eternal tomb!

Lorenzo, dost thou feel these arguments?

Or is there nought but vengeance can be felt?

How hast thou dared the Deity dethrone?

How dared indict him of a world like this? 970

If such the world, creation was a crime;

For what is crime, but cause of misery?

Retract, blasphemers! and unriddle this,

948. *Shambles*: Butcher's stall or shop.

953-4. *Where nought, &c.*: These lines have been quoted by Dr. Aikin, as an example of Young's gloomy misrepresentation of this world. But he overlooked the connection in which they stand. They describe this world as it would be, if the scheme of annihilation, adopted by Lorenzo, were true.

970. *Indict him of a world, &c.*: Charge him with the crime of creating a world like this.

Of endless arguments, above, below,  
 Without us, and within, the short result— 975  
 'If man's immortal, there's a God in heav'n.'

But wherefore such redundancy? such waste  
 Of argument? One sets my soul at rest!  
 One obvious, and at hand, and, oh!—at heart.  
 So just the skies, Philander's life so pain'd, 980  
 His heart so pure; that, or succeeding scenes  
 Have palms to give, or ne'er had he been born.

'What an old tale is this!' Lorenzo cries.  
 I grant this argument is old; but truth  
 No years impair: and had not this been true, 985  
 Thou never hadst despised it for its age.  
 Truth is immortal as thy soul; and fable  
 As fleeting as thy joys. Be wise, nor make  
 Heav'n's highest blessing, vengeance; O be wise?  
 Nor make a curse of immortality. 990

THE IMPORTANCE OF A SOUL IMMORTAL

Say, know'st thou what it is, or what thou art?  
 Know'st thou th' importance of a soul immortal?  
 Behold this midnight glory; worlds on worlds!  
 Amazing pomp! Redouble this amaze;  
 Ten thousand add; and twice ten thousand more; 995  
 Then weigh the whole: one soul outweighs them all;  
 And calls th' astonishing magnificence  
 Of unintelligent creation poor.

For this, believe not me; no man believe:  
 Trust not in words, but deeds; and deeds no less 1000  
 Than those of the Supreme; nor his, a few;  
 Consult them all; consulted, all proclaim  
 Thy soul's importance. Tremble at thyself;  
 For whom Omnipotence has waked so long:  
 Has waked, and work'd for ages; from the birth 1005

978. *One*: One argument. The justice of God in awarding to Philander, who passed a life of purity, yet of extreme suffering, here, some future existence of a different character.



Of nature to this unbelieving hour.

In this small-province of His vast domain,  
 (All nature bow, while I pronounce His name !)  
 What has God done, and not for this sole end,  
 To rescue souls from death ? the soul's high price 1010  
 Is writ in all the conduct of the skies.  
 The soul's high price is the creation's key,  
 Unlocks its mysteries, and naked lays  
 The genuine cause of ev'ry deed divine :  
 That is the chain of ages, which maintains 1015  
 Their obvious correspondence, and unites  
 Most distant periods in one blest design :  
 That is the mighty hinge, on which have turn'd  
 All revolutions, whether we regard  
 The nat'ral, civil, or religious world ; 1020  
 The former two but servants to the third :  
 To that their duty done, they both expire ;  
 Their mass new-cast, forgot their deeds renown'd ;  
 And angels ask, ' Where once they shone so fair ?'  
 To lift us from this abject, to sublime ; 1025  
 This flux, to permanent ; this dark, to day ;  
 This foul, to pure ; this turbid, to serene ;  
 This mean, to mighty !—for this glorious end  
 Th' Almighty, rising, his long sabbath broke !  
 The world was made ; was ruined ; was restored ; 1030  
 Laws from the skies were publish'd ; were repeal'd ;

1020-1. A truth of great consequence, and too little regarded by secular historians. Edwards' "History of Redemption" may be read as an admirable commentary on these two lines.

1025-28. In these lines adjectives are used frequently without an appropriate substantive: an idiom common to poets, and not to be found fault with, because it is suited to make a deeper impression, and yet is not difficult to understand.

1029. *Sabbath*: Rest.

1030. *Was ruin'd*: By the Deluge.

1031. *Laws were publish'd*: On Mount Sinai. *Were repeal'd*: At the period of the death and resurrection of Christ, when the Jewish economy had ful-

On earth, kings, kingdoms, rose ; kings, kingdoms, fell ;  
 Famed sages lighted up the pagan world ;  
 Prophets from Sion darted a keen glance  
 Thro' distant age ; saints travell'd ; martyrs bled ; 1035  
 By wonders sacred nature stood controll'd ;  
 The living were translated ; dead were raised ;  
 Angels, and more than angels, came from heav'n ;  
 And, oh ! for this, descended lower still ?  
 Gilt was hell's gloom ; astonish'd at his guest 1040  
 For one short moment Lucifer adored :  
 Lorenzo ! and wilt thou do less ?—For this,  
 That hallow'd page, fools scoff at, was inspired,  
 Of all these truths thrice-venerable code !  
 Deists ! perform your quarantine ; and then 1045  
 Fall prostrate ere you touch it, lest you die.  
 Not less intensely bent infernal pow'rs  
 To mar, than those of light, this end to gain.  
 O what a scene is here !—Lorenzo, wake !  
 Rise to the thought ; exert, expand thy soul 1050

filled its temporary purpose, and Christianity, suited to universal adoption, was established.

1037. *Translated* : As Enoch and Elijah.

1038. *More than angels* : The Son of God.

1040. *Gilt was hell's gloom* : Gilded was the gloom of the grave. The word hell is sometimes used in this sense ; as where it is said, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."

1041. *Lucifer adored* : An allusion to a highly poetic passage in the prophecy of Isaiah, chap. xiv. *Ador'd*, wondered, was awed. Consult especially verses 9, 10. Isaiah applies the language of that prophecy to Lucifer, the king of Babylon ; but here our author, by a bold conception, represents even Lucifer as paying the homage of astonishment at the entrance of so distinguished a being as Jesus Christ, God incarnate, into the state of the dead, and of the entombed.

1045. *Perform your quarantine* : Purify yourselves from the infection of your corrupt principles. *Touch it* : An allusion to the ark of God which Uzza touched, and for the offence was instantly slain by Jehovah, 1 Chron. xiii. 9, 10. He had transgressed the solemn command in Numb. iv. 15 : "They shall not touch any holy thing lest they die."

To take the vast idea ! it denies  
 All else the name of great. Two warring worlds !  
 Not Europe against Afric ; warring worlds,  
 Of more than mortal ! mounted on the wing !  
 On ardent wings of energy and zeal, 1055  
 High-hov'ring o'er this little brand of strife !  
 This sublunary ball—But strife, for what ?  
 In their own cause conflicting ? No ; in thine,  
 In man's. His single int'rest blows the flame ;  
 His the sole stake ; his fate the trumpet sounds, 1060  
 Which kindles war immortal. How it burns !  
 Tumultuous swarms of deities in arms !  
 Force, force opposing, till the waves run high,  
 And tempest nature's universal sphere.  
 Such opposites eternal, steadfast, stern, 1065  
 Such foes implacable, are Good and Ill ;  
 Yet man, vain man, would mediate peace between them.  
 Think not this fiction : ' There was war in heav'n.'  
 From heav'n's high crystal mountain, where it hung,  
 Th' Almighty's outstretch'd arm took down his bow, 1070  
 And shot his indignation at the deep :  
 Re-thunder'd hell, and darted all her fires.—  
 And seems the stake of little moment still ?  
 And slumbers man, who singly caused the storm ?  
 He sleeps.—And art thou shock'd at mysteries ? 1075  
 The greatest, thou. How dreadful to reflect,  
 What ardour, care, and counsel, mortals cause

1068. *War in heav'n*: Quoted from Rev. xii. 7. The great historian of that war is Milton, in his *Paradise Lost*. As a sample of the style of his highly poetic narrative, take this from the First Book :

And with ambitious aim  
 Against the throne and monarchy of God,  
 Raised impious war in heav'n and battle proud  
 With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power  
 Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky,  
 With hideous ruin and combustion, down  
 To bottomless perdition ; there to dwell  
 In adamantyne chains and penal fire,  
 Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.

In breasts divine ! How little in their own !  
 Where'er I turn, how new proofs pour upon me ?  
 How happily this wondrous view supports 1080  
 My former argument ! How strongly strikes  
 Immortal life's full demonstration here !  
 Why this exertion ? Why this strange regard  
 From heav'n's Omnipotent indulged to man ?—  
 Because, in man, the glorious, dreadful pow'r, 1085  
 Extremely to be pain'd, or blest, for ever.  
 Duration gives importance ; swells the price.  
 An angel, if a creature of a day,  
 What would he be ? A trifle of no weight ;  
 Or stand, or fall ; no matter which ; he's gone. 1090  
 Because immortal, therefore is indulg'd  
 This strange regard of deities to dust.  
 Hence, heav'n looks down on earth with all her eyes :  
 Hence, the soul's mighty moment in her sight :  
 Hence ev'ry soul has partisans above, 1095  
 And ev'ry thought a critic in the skies :  
 Hence, clay, vile clay ! has angels for its guard,  
 And ev'ry guard a passion for his charge :  
 Hence, from all age, the cabinet divine  
 Has held high counsel o'er the fate of man. 1100

Nor have the clouds those gracious counsels hid.  
 Angels undrew the curtain of the throne,  
 And Providence came forth to meet mankind :  
 In various modes of emphasis and awe,  
 He spoke his will, and trembling nature heard : 1105  
 He spoke it loud, in thunder and in storm.  
 Witness, thou Sinai ! whose cloud-cover'd height,  
 And shaken basis, own'd the present God :  
 Witness, ye billows ! whose returning tide,

1090. *Or stand, or fall* : Whether he stand or fall.

1092. *Deities* : The three Persons of the Deity, Father, Son, and Spirit.

1107. *Sinai* : Exod. xix. 16, 18.

1109. *Billows* : Exod. xiv. 7.

Breaking the chain that fasten'd it in air, 1110  
 Swept Egypt, and her menaces, to hell :  
 Witness, ye flames ! th' Assyrian tyrant blew  
 To sevenfold rage, as impotent, as strong :  
 And thou, earth ! witness, whose expanding jaws  
 Closed o'er presumption's sacrilegious sons. 1115  
 Has not each element in turn subscribed  
 The soul's high price, and sworn it to the wise ?  
 Has not flame, ocean, ether, earthquake, strove  
 To strike this truth through adamantine man ?  
 If not all-adamant, Lorenzo ! hear : 1120  
 All is delusion ; nature is wrapt up,  
 In tenfold night, from reason's keenest eye ;  
 There's no consistence, meaning, plan, or end,  
 In all beneath the sun, in all above,  
 (As far as man can penetrate) or heav'n 1125  
 Is an immense, inestimable prize ;  
 Or all is nothing, or that prize is all.—  
 And shall each toy be still a match for heav'n,  
 And full equivalent for groans below ?  
 Who would not give a trifle to prevent, 1130  
 What he would give a thousand worlds to cure ?

## DIFFICULTIES OF INFIDELITY.

Lorenzo, thou hast seen (if thine to see)  
 All nature, and her God (by nature's course,  
 And nature's course control'd) declare for me :  
 The skies above proclaim, 'Immortal man !' 1135  
 And, 'Man immortal !' all below resounds.  
 The world's a system of theology,  
 Read by the greatest strangers to the schools :  
 If honest, learn'd ; and sages o'er a plough.

1112. *Assyrian tyrant* : See Dan. iii. 19.

1115. *Sacrilegious sons* : Numb. xvi. 32.

1127. *Or all, &c.* : Either all, &c.

1129. *Below* : In hell.

Is not, Lorenzo, then, imposed on thee 1140  
 This hard alternative ; or, to renounce  
 Thy reason, and thy sense ; or, to believe ?  
 What then is unbelief ? 'Tis an exploit ;  
 A strenuous enterprise : to gain it, man  
 Must burst through ev'ry bar of common sense, 1145  
 Of common shame, magnanimously wrong.  
 And what rewards the sturdy combatant ?  
 His prize, repentance ; infamy, his crown.

INFAMY OF INFIDELITY AS TO A FUTURE LIFE.

But wherefore infamy ?—For want of faith,  
 Down the steep precipice of wrong he slides ; 1150  
 There's nothing to support him in the right.  
 Faith in the future wanting, is, at least  
 In embryo, ev'ry weakness, ev'ry guilt ;  
 And strong temptation ripens it to birth.~  
 If this life's gain invites him to the deed, 1155  
 Why not his country sold, his father slain ?  
 'Tis virtue to pursue our good supreme ;

1141. *Or to renounce* : Either to renounce.

1157. *'Tis virtue, &c.* : The observations made in this connection upon virtue, may be compared with those offered in the early part of this Night, 139—192, 238—250. His theory of virtue is not to our taste, though plausible. It partakes too much of the character of an exalted, far-seeing, prudent, intellectual, and enlightened selfishness. While the pursuit of our *supreme good is consistent with virtue*, and inseparable from it, that is not the whole of virtue, nor its just definition. The sentiment offered (1174—5) is one of very questionable correctness. While virtue credits, and pays all due deference and regard to the rewards and punishments of the Divine government, the author seems to teach that these rewards and punishments form the only basis of the adoration which a virtuous man pays to the Deity. A most extraordinary statement ! It has usually been inculcated by sound divines, that the perfections of the Deity are the primary grounds of adoration, love, and obedience, while the rewards and punishments have an altogether subordinate, yet very important influence.

Neither is it true that "hopes and fears give conscience all her power." The man who is affected by these considerations exclusively, or even

And his supreme, his only good, is here.  
 Ambition, av'rice, by the wise disdain'd,  
 Is perfect wisdom, while mankind are fools, 1160  
 And think a turf, or tomb-stone, covers all :  
 These find employment, and provide for sense  
 A richer pasture, and a larger range ;  
 And sense by right divine ascends the throne,  
 When virtue's prize and prospect are no more ; 1165  
 Virtue no more we think the will of Heav'n.  
 Would Heav'n quite beggar virtue, if belov'd ?  
 ' Has virtue charms ?—I grant her heav'nly fair ;  
 But if unportion'd, all will int'rest wed ;  
 Though that our admiration, this our choice. 1170  
 The virtues grow on immortality ;  
 That root destroy'd, they wither and expire.  
 A Deity believ'd, will nought avail ;  
 Rewards and punishments make God ador'd,  
 And hopes and fears give conscience all her pow'r. 1175  
 As in the dying parent dies the child,

chiefly, in his moral conduct, if he can lay claim to virtue at all, must be content with the credit of a very mean and mercenary sort of virtue. He places his own private interest above *right*—above what is fit, and proper, and becoming in itself, and in the relations he sustains to other beings. His respect for God is simply equivalent to respect for himself, adoring God only, or chiefly, because he can make us happy or miserable, and following the impulse of hope and fear as the most excellent powers of his immortal nature.

Neither does it seem perfectly clear to us that virtue cannot, and especially ought not to exist, as the author teaches, if immortality were not the future portion of man. Virtue is due from man to his Creator, and from man to his fellow, on the ground of the mutual relations which they sustain, and not on the ground of the precise duration of man's existence. If a man should exist but a hundred years, or for a shorter period, as soon as his powers are sufficiently developed to make him an accountable creature, he is bound to love God with all his heart, and his neighbour as himself—and this is virtue—irrespective of the duration of his being.

There is no doubt, however, that the sanctions of immortality serve greatly to assist and invigorate all moral feelings and purposes of a right character, and to discourage the reverse, and hence they occupy a prominent place on the pages of Divine Revelation.

Virtue, with immortality, expires.  
 Who tells me he denies his soul immortal,  
 Whate'er his boast, has told me, he's a knave.  
 His duty 'tis, to love himself alone ; 1180  
 Nor care, though mankind perish, if he smiles.  
 Who thinks ere long the man shall wholly die,  
 Is dead already ; nought but brute survives.

## THE CAUSE OF INFIDELITY.

And are there such ?—Such candidates there are  
 For more than death : for utter loss of being ; 1185  
 Being, the basis of the Deity !  
 Ask you the cause ?—The cause they will not tell ;  
 Nor need they : Oh, the sorceries of sense !  
 They work this transformation on the soul,  
 Dismount her, like the serpent at the fall, 1190  
 Dismount her from her native wing (which soar'd  
 Erewhile ethereal heights) and throw her down,  
 To lick the dust, and crawl in such a thought.

## THE CHARACTER OF AN INFIDEL STATE.

Is it in words to paint you ? O ye fall'n !  
 Fall'n from the wings of reason, and of hope ! 1195  
 Erect in stature, prone in appetite !

1188. *Oh, the sorceries of sense*: An allusion to the transformation said to be made by Circe upon those who put themselves in her power, and which has been explained in a former note. In plain language it may be rendered: Oh the degrading deception practised, and change performed, by a too exclusive indulgence in the gratifications of sense !

1190. *Dismount her*: Degrade the soul. In the next line the meaning of the verb is somewhat varied: Cause her to descend *from* the elevation of *her native wing*.

1196. *Prone in appetite*: It is mentioned of a friend of Charles I., in the civil war of the Parliament, that he had made up his mind to take horse and join the royal party, but for one circumstance—that he could not reconcile himself to the thought of being an hour or two less in bed than he had been accustomed in his quiet home; and he therefore, after duly reflecting



Patrons of pleasure, posting into pain!  
Lovers of argument, averse to sense!  
Boasters of liberty, fast bound in chains!  
Lords of the wide creation, and the shame! 1200  
 More senseless than th' irrationals you scorn!  
 More base than those you rule! than those you pity,  
 Far more undone! O ye most infamous  
 Of beings, from superior dignity!  
 Deepest in wo from means of boundless bliss! 1205  
 Ye curst by blessings infinite! because  
Most highly favoured, most profoundly lost!  
 Ye motley mass of contradiction strong!  
 And are you, too, convinced, your souls fly off  
 In exhalation soft, and die in air, 1210  
 From the full flood of evidence against you?  
 In the coarse drudgeries and sinks of sense,  
 Your souls have quite worn out the make of heav'n,  
 By vice new-cast, and creatures of your own:  
 But though you can deform, you can't destroy; 1215  
 To curse, not uncreate, is all your power.

## TRUE FREE-THINKING DEFINED.

Lorenzo, this black brotherhood renounce;  
 Renounce St. Evremont and read St. Paul.

on the impossibility of being both a good *subject* and a good *sleep*, contented himself with remaining to enjoy his repose. Absurd as such an anecdote may seem, it states only what passes innumerable times through the silent heart of every voluptuary, in similar comparisons of the most important duties with the most petty, base, habitual pleasures. How many more virtuous actions would have been performed on earth, if the performance of them had not been inconsistent with enjoyments as insignificant in themselves as an hour of unnecessary, and perhaps hurtful slumber!—*Brown's Phil. of the Mind*, III. 557.

1198. *Sense*: Sound sense, reason.

1204. *From superior dignity*: In consequence of it. *From*, in the next line, has the same meaning.

1218. *St. Evremont*: An infidel writer.

Ere wrapt by miracle, by reason wing'd,  
 His mounting mind made long abode in heav'n. 1220  
 This is free thinking, unconfin'd to parts,  
 To send the soul on curious travel bent,  
 Through all the provinces of human thought ;  
 To dart her flight through the whole sphere of man ;  
 Of this vast universe to make the tour ; 1225  
 In each recess of space, and time, at home ;  
 Familiar with their wonders ; diving deep ;  
 And, like a prince of boundless int'rests there,  
 Still most ambitious of the most remote ;  
 To look on truth unbroken, and entire ; 1230  
 Truth in the system, the full orb ; where truths  
 By truths enlighten'd, and sustain'd, afford  
 An arch-like strong foundation, to support  
 Th' incumbent weight of absolute complete  
 Conviction : here the more we press, we stand 1235  
 More firm ; who most examine, most believe.  
 Parts, like half-sentences, confound ; the whole  
 Conveys the sense, and God is understood ;  
 Who not in fragments writes to human race :  
 Read his whole volume, sceptic ! then reply. 1240  
 This, this, is thinking free, a thought that grasps  
 Beyond a grain, and looks beyond an hour.  
 Turn up thine eye, survey this midnight scene :  
 What are earth's kingdoms, to yon boundless orbs,  
 Of human souls, one day, the destin'd range ? 1245

1219. *Ere wrapt by miracle*: Allusion seems to be made to the singular visions granted to the Apostle, and recorded in 2 Cor. xii.

1245. *The destin'd range*: What a transcendently transporting thought is this ! Dr. Thomas Dick amplifies and corroborates it in his "Philosophy of a Future State," though the sacred writers are very sparing of any clear information on the subject. His general course of argument is thus summed up: Since the universe is replenished with innumerable systems, and is vast and unlimited in its extent ; since God endued the mind of man with those faculties by which he has explored a portion of its distant regions ; since the soul feels an ardent desire to obtain a more full disclosure of its grandeur and magnificence ; since it is endued with faculties capable of receiving

And what yon boundless orbs to godlike man?  
 Those num'rous worlds that throng the firmament,  
 And ask more space in heav'n, can roll at large  
 In man's capacious thought, and still leave room  
 For ampler orbs, for new creations, there.

1250

an indefinite increase of knowledge on this subject; since all the knowledge it can acquire in the present state respecting the operations and the government of God, is as nothing when compared with the prospects which eternity may unfold; since the universe and its material glories are chiefly intended for the gratification of intelligent minds; and since it is obviously inconsistent with the moral character of the Deity to cherish desires and expectations which he will finally frustrate and disappoint, the conclusion appears to be unavoidable, that man is destined to an immortal existence. During the progress of that existence, his faculties will arrive at their full expansion, and there will be ample scope for their exercise on myriads of objects and events which are just now veiled in darkness and mystery. He will be enabled to penetrate more fully into the plans and operations of the Divinity; to perceive new aspects of the Eternal Mind—new evolutions of Infinite Wisdom and Design—new displays of Omnipotence, Goodness, and Intelligence; and to acquire a more minute and comprehensive view of all the attributes of the Deity, and of the connections, relations, and dependencies of that vast physical and moral system on which his government extends.

The same author, in his "Christian Philosophy," when speaking of the wonders of vision, has made some observations that have a bearing upon the subject before us. He says:

There are animals whose range of vision is circumscribed within the limits of a few feet or inches; and had we never perceived objects through an organ in the same state of perfection as that with which we are furnished, we could have formed as little conception of the sublimity and extent of our present range of sight, as we can now do of those powers of vision which would enable us to descry the inhabitants of distant worlds. The invention of the telescope shows that the penetrating power of the eye may be indefinitely increased; and since the art of man can extend the limits of natural vision, it is easy to conceive that in the hand of Omnipotence, a slight modification of the human eye might enable it, with the utmost distinctness, to penetrate into regions to which the eye can set no bounds; and, therefore, it is not unreasonable to believe, that in the future world, this will be one property, among others, of the resurrection-body, that it will be furnished with organs of vision far superior to the present, in order to gratify its intelligent inhabitant for taking an ample survey of the "riches and glory" of the empire of God.

Can such a soul contract itself, to gripe  
 A point of no dimension, of no weight ?  
 It can ; it does : the world is such a point ;  
 And, of that point, how small a part enslaves !  
     How small a part—of nothing, shall I say ?                   1255  
 Why not !—Friends, our chief treasure, how they drop !  
Lucia, Narcissa fair, Philander, gone !  
 The grave, like fabled Cerberus, has op'd  
 A triple mouth ; and, in an awful voice,  
 Loud calls my soul, and utters all I sing.                   1260  
 How the world falls to pieces round about us,  
 And leaves us in a ruin of our joy !  
 What says this transportation of my friends ?  
 It bids me love the place where now they dwell,  
 And scorn this wretched spot they leave so poor.           1265  
 Eternity's vast ocean lies before thee ;  
 There, there, Lorenzo ! thy Clarissa sails.  
 Give thy mind sea-room ; keep it wide of earth,  
 That rock of souls immortal ; cut thy cord ;  
 Weigh anchor ; spread thy sails ; call ev'ry wind ;       1270  
 Eye thy great Pole-star ; make the land of life.

## TWO KINDS OF LIFE AND OF DEATH.

Two kinds of life has double-natur'd man,  
 And two of death ; the last far more severe.  
 Life animal is nurtur'd by the sun ;

1258. *Cerberus*: The fabled God of Hades, stationed at the gates of the lower invisible world to prevent the living from entering those regions, and the dead from returning to the upper world. He was usually described as three-headed.

1264. *It bids me love, &c* : It would serve to enhance our love of heaven, and to wean us from an immoderate regard to earth, if we oftener meditated upon the former as the present dwelling-place of our deceased Christian relatives and friends.

1268. *Sea-room*: A phrase employed by mariners to denote an extensive space for a ship to move in, free from shoals or rocks.

1271. *Life*: Life eternal.

Thrives on his bounties, triumphs in his beams. 1275  
 Life rational subsists on higher food,  
 Triumphant in His beams who made the day.  
 When we leave that sun, and are left by this,  
 (The fate of all who die in stubborn guilt)  
 'Tis utter darkness, strictly double death. 1280  
 We sink by no judicial stroke of Heav'n,  
 But nature's course, as sure as plummets fall.  
 Since God, or man, must alter, ere they meet,  
 (For light and darkness blend not in one sphere)  
 'Tis manifest, Lorenzo, who must change. 1285  
 If, then, that double death should prove thy lot,  
 Blame not the bowels of the Deity :  
 Man shall be blest, as far as man permits.  
 Not man alone, all rationals, heav'n arms  
 With an illustrious, but tremendous pow'r 1290  
 To counteract its own most gracious ends ;  
 And this, of strict necessity, not choice :  
 That pow'r denied, men, angels, were no more  
 But passive engines, void of praise or blame.  
 A nature rational implies the pow'r 1295  
 Of being blest, or wretched, as we please ;  
 Else idle reason would have nought to do :  
 And he that would be barr'd capacity  
 Of pain, courts incapacity of bliss.  
 Heav'n wills our happiness, allows our doom ; 1300  
 Invites us ardently, but not compels.

1287. *Bowels* : Compassion. A Scripture expression.

1288. *Man shall, &c.* : The doctrine here most impressively inculcated is, that man's ruin is from himself, which accords with the doctrine of the Prophet, "Oh Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself."

1292. *Of strict necessity* : This power conferred on man, is conferred as a matter of necessity, for if denied he would be no better than a *passive engine* (1294); he would not be man. The clause does not mean that man, in the exercise of it, acts from necessity or compulsion in any given way.

1298. *Barr'd* : Deprived of.

1300. *Allows our doom* : Permits our ruin ; does not irresistibly prevent it.

Heav'n but persuades, almighty man decrees ;  
 Man is the maker of immortal fates,  
 Man falls by man, if finally he falls ;  
 And fall he must, who learns from death alone, 1305  
 The dreadful secret—that he lives for ever.

## INFIDELITY BETRAYS GUILT AND HYPOCRISY.

Why this to thee ?—thee yet, perhaps, in doubt  
 Of second life ? But wherefore doubtful still ?  
 Eternal life is Nature's ardent wish :  
 What ardently we wish, we soon believe ; 1310  
 Thy tardy faith declares that wish destroy'd :  
 What has destroy'd it ?—Shall I tell thee what ?  
 When fear'd the future, 'tis no longer wish'd ;  
 And when unwish'd, we strive to disbelieve.  
 ' Thus infidelity our guilt betrays.' 1315  
 Nor that the sole detection ? Blush, Lorenzo,  
 Blush for hypocrisy, if not for guilt.

The future fear'd ! An infidel, and fear ?  
 Fear what ? a dream ? a fable ?—How thy dread,  
 Unwilling evidence, and therefore strong, 1320  
 Affords my cause an undesign'd support !  
 How disbelief affirms what it denies !  
 ' It, unawares, asserts immortal life.'—  
 Surprising ! Infidelity turns out  
A creed, and a confession of our sins : 1325  
Apostates, thus, are orthodox divines.

Lorenzo, with Lorenzo clash no more ;  
 Nor longer a transparent vizer wear.  
 Think'st thou, religion only has her mask ?  
 Our infidels are Satan's hypocrites ; 1330

1305. *Who learns, &c.* : Who has not before death believed that he is destined to immortal existence, and used his opportunities of preparing for everlasting blessedness.

1326. *Apostates* : Infidels are, in these particulars, orthodox.

1328. *Vizer* : Mask.

Pretend the worst, and, at the bottom, fail.  
 When visited by thought (thought will intrude)  
 Like him they serve, they tremble, and believe.  
 Is there hypocrisy so foul as this ?  
 So fatal to the welfare of the world ? 1335  
 What detestation, what contempt, their due !  
 And if unpaid, be thank'd for their escape  
 That Christian candour they strive hard to scorn.  
 If not for that asylum, they might find  
 A hell on earth ; nor 'scape a worse below. 1340

## A REFORMED LIFE RENDERS FAITH EASY.

With insolence, and impotence of thought,  
 Instead of racking fancy, to refute,  
 Reform thy manners, and the truth enjoy.—  
 But shall I dare confess the dire result ?  
 Can thy proud reason brook so black a brand ? 1345  
 From purer manners, to sublimer faith,  
 Is nature's unavoidable ascent ;  
 An honest deist, where the Gospel shines,  
 Matur'd to nobler, in the Christian ends.  
 When that blest change arrives, e'en cast aside 1350  
 This song superfluous ; life immortal strikes  
 Conviction, in a flood of light divine.  
 A Christian dwells, like Uriel, in the sun.

1337. *And if unpaid, &c.*: The obligation of infidels to the kindness of Christians, is here declared.

1341. The meaning will be obvious on restoring the words to the natural order: Instead of racking fancy to refute (the truth) with insolence and impotence (weakness) of thought, reform thy manners, and (thus) enjoy the truth.

1349. *Matur'd, &c.*: Matured to nobler (state) ends his upward progress by becoming a Christian.

1353. *Like Uriel, &c.*: A very happy comparison, drawn from the Paradise Lost, Book III. 622:

———— He soon  
 Saw within ken a glorious Angel stand,

Meridian evidence puts doubt to flight ;  
 And ardent hope anticipates the skies. 1355  
 Of that bright sun, Lorenzo ! scale the sphere ;  
 'Tis easy ; it invites thee ; it descends  
 From heav'n to woo, and waft thee whence it came.  
 Read and revere the sacred page ; a page  
 Where triumphs immortality ; a page 1360  
 Which not the whole creation could produce ;  
 Which not the conflagration shall destroy ;  
 In nature's ruins not one letter lost :  
 'Tis printed in the mind of gods for ever.

## VICE ALONE RECOMMENDS THE SCHEME OF ANNIHILATION.

In proud disdain of what e'en gods adore, 1365  
 Dost smile ?—Poor wretch ! thy guardian angel weeps.

The same whom John saw also in the Sun.  
 His back was turn'd, but not his brightness hid :  
 Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar  
 Circled his head, &c.

In the same connection the poet had already ingeniously described the luminousness of the sun, the orb assigned to this angel as the best post of observation, 590—620. We quote a few of these lines as illustrating the text of Dr. Young :

The place he found beyond expression bright,  
 Compar'd with aught on earth, metal or stone ;  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade,  
 But all sunshine, as when his beams at noon  
 Culminate from th' equator, as they now  
 Shot upward still direct, whence no way round  
 Shadow from body opaque can fall ; and th' air,  
 No where so clear, sharpen'd his visual ray  
 To objects distant far.

1364. *Gods*: Glorified saints.

1366. *Thy guardian angel*: It was a favourite opinion of the Christian fathers, that every individual is under the care of a particular angel who is assigned to him as a guardian. They spoke also of two angels—the one good, the other evil—whom they conceived to be attendant on each individual: the good angel prompting to all good, and averting ill, and the evil angel prompting to all ill, and averting good (*Hermas* ii. 6). The Jews



Angels, and men, assent to what I sing ;  
Wits smile, and thank me for my midnight dream.

How vicious hearts fume frenzy to the brain !  
 Parts push us on to pride, and pride to shame , 1370  
 Pert infidelity is Wit's cockade,  
 To grace the brazen brow that braves the skies,  
 By loss of being, dreadfully secure.

Lorenzo ! if thy doctrine wins the day,  
 And drives my dreams, defeated, from the field, 1375  
 If this is all, if earth a final scene,

Take heed ; stand fast ; be sure to be a knave ;  
 A knave in grain ! ne'er deviate to the right :  
 Shouldst thou be good—how infinite thy loss !  
 Guilt only makes annihilation gain. 1380

Blest scheme ! which life deprives of comfort, death  
 Of hope ; and which vice only recommends.  
 If so, where, infidels, your bait thrown out  
 To catch weak converts ? Where your lofty boast  
 Of zeal for virtue, and of love to man ? 1385  
 Annihilation, I confess, in these.

What can reclaim you ? Dare I hope profound  
 Philosophers the converts of a song ?  
 Yet know, its title flatters you, not me :  
 Yours be the praise to make my title good ; 1390  
 Mine, to bless Heav'n, and triumph in your praise.

But since so pestilential your disease,  
 Though sov'reign is the med'cine I prescribe,  
 As yet, I'll neither triumph, nor despair :  
 But hope, ere long, my midnight dream will wake 1395  
 Your hearts, and teach your wisdom—to be wise :

(excepting the Sadducees) entertained this belief, as do the Moslems. The heathen held it in a modified form, the Greeks having their tutelary *dæmon*, and the Romans their *genius*. There is, however, nothing to support this notion in the Bible.—*Kitto's Cycl.*

1370. *Parts* : High intellectual powers.

1389. *Its title flatters you* : "The Infidel Reclaimed."

For why should souls immortal, made for bliss,  
 E'er wish (and wish in vain!) that souls could die?  
 What ne'er can die, Oh! grant to live; and crown  
 The wish, and aim, and labour, of the skies; 1400  
 Increase, and enter on the joys of heav'n:  
 Thus shall my title pass a sacred seal,  
 Receive an *imprimatur* from above,  
 While angels shout—An infidel reclaim'd!

**IMMORTALITY MARVELLOUS, BUT NOT THEREFORE INCREDIBLE.**

To close, Lorenzo. Spite of all my pains, 1405  
 Still seems it strange, that thou shouldst live for ever?  
 Is it less strange, that thou shouldst live at all?  
 This is a miracle; and that no more.  
 Who gave beginning, can exclude an end.  
 Deny thou art; then, doubt if thou shalt be. 1410  
 A miracle with miracles enclosed,  
 Is man: and starts his faith at what is strange?  
 What less than wonders, from the Wonderful;  
 What less than miracles, from God, can flow?  
 Admit a God—that mystery supreme! 1415  
 That cause uncaused! all other wonders cease;  
 Nothing is marvellous for him to do:  
 Deny Him—all is mystery besides;  
 Millions of mysteries! each darker far  
 Than that thy wisdom would, unwisely, shun. 1420  
 If weak thy faith, why choose the harder side?  
 We nothing know, but what is marvellous;  
 Yet what is marvellous, we can't believe.  
 So weak our reason, and so great our God.  
 What most surprises in the sacred page, 1425  
 Or full as strange, or stranger, must be true.  
 Faith is not reason's labour, but repose.

1403. *Imprimatur*: A Latin word signifying "Let it be printed;" applied to any production for which permission to print is thus given. Here it is equivalent to *confirmation*; receive a confirmation, &c.

## COMPARATIVE INFLUENCE OF THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE.

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

## THE POWER OF HOPE, AND ITS VALUE.

'For what? (thou say'st :) To damp the joys of life ?  
 No ; to give heart and substance to thy joys.  
 That tyrant, Hope, mark how she domineers :  
 She bids us quit realities for dreams ; 1445  
 Safety and peace, for hazard and alarm :  
 That tyrant o'er the tyrants of the soul,  
 She bids Ambition quit its taken prize,  
 Spurn the luxuriant branch on which it sits,  
 Though bearing crowns, to spring at distant game ; 1450  
 And plunge in toils and dangers—for repose.  
 If hope precarious, and of things, when gained,  
 Of little moment, and as little stay,  
 Can sweeten toils and dangers into joys ;  
 What then, that hope, which nothing can defeat, 1455  
 Our leave unask'd ? Rich hope of boundless bliss !  
 Bliss, past man's power to paint it ; time's, to close !

1432. *Man's peculiar* : Man's exclusive property.

This hope is earth's most estimable prize :  
 This is man's portion, while no more than man :  
 Hope, of all passions, most befriends us here ; 1460  
 Passions of prouder name befriend us less.  
 Joy has her tears, and transport has her death :  
 Hope, like a cordial, innocent, though strong,  
 Man's heart, at once, inspirits and serenes ;  
 Nor makes him pay his wisdom for his joys : 1465  
 'Tis all our present state can safely bear,  
 Health to the frame ! and vigour to the mind ?  
 A joy attemper'd ! a chastis'd delight !  
 Like the fair summer evening, mild and sweet !  
 'Tis man's full cup ; his paradise below ! 1470  
 A blest hereafter, then, or hoped, or gain'd,  
 Is all ;—our whole of happiness : full proof,  
 I chose no trivial or inglorious theme.  
 And know, ye foes to song ! (well meaning men,  
 Though quite forgotten half your Bible's praise !) 1475  
 Important truths, in spite of verse, may please.  
 Grave minds you praise ; nor can you praise too much :  
 If there is weight in an eternity,  
 Let the grave listen ;—and be graver still.

1464. *Serenes* : Makes calm and tranquil.

1471. *Or hoped* : Either hoped.

1475. *Half your Bible's praise* : The poetical parts of it.

1479. *The grave* : Those who are grave.

# NIGHT VIII.

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## VIRTUE'S APOLOGY;

OR,

## THE MAN OF THE WORLD ANSWERED.

IN WHICH ARE CONSIDERED, THE LOVE OF THIS LIFE ; THE AMBITION AND PLEASURE, WITH THE WIT AND WISDOM OF THE WORLD.

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AND has all nature, then, espoused my part ?  
Have I bribed heav'n, and earth to plead against thee ?  
And is thy soul immortal ?—What remains ?  
All, all, Lorenzo !—Make immortal, blest.  
Unblest immortals ! What can shock us more ? 5  
And yet Lorenzo still affects the world ;  
There, stows his treasure ; thence, his title draws,  
*Man of the world !* (for such wouldst thou be call'd)  
And art thou proud of that inglorious style ?  
Proud of reproach ? For a reproach it was, 10  
In ancient days ; and Christian,—in an age,  
When men were men, and not ashamed of heav'n,  
Fired their ambition, as it crown'd their joy.  
Sprinkled with dews from the Castalian font,

6. *Affects* : Desires. 11–13. *Christian* : To be a Christian fired, &c.

14. *Castalian font* : A fountain sacred to the Muses on Mount Parnassus,

Fain would I re-baptize thee, and confer A purer spirit, and a nobler name.	15
Thy fond attachments, fatal and inflamed, Point out my path, and dictate to my song: To thee, the world how fair! how strongly strikes Ambition! and gay pleasure stronger still!	20
Thy triple bane! the triple bolt, that lays Thy virtue dead! Be these my triple theme; Nor shall thy wit, or wisdom, be forgot. Common the theme; not so the song; if she My song invokes, Urania, deigns to smile.	25
The charm that chains us to the world, her foe, If she dissolves, the man of earth, at once, Starts from his trance, and sighs for other scenes; Scenes, where these sparks of night, these stars shall shine Unnumber'd suns, (for all things, as they are, The blest behold;) and, in one glory, pour Their blended blaze on man's astonish'd sight; A blaze,—the least illustrious object there.	30
Lorenzo! since eternal is at hand, To swallow time's ambitions; as the vast Leviathan, the bubbles vain, that ride High on the foaming billow; what avail High titles, high descent, attainments high, If unattain'd our highest? O Lorenzo! What lofty thoughts, these elements above,	35 40

in Greece. Lorenzo had been sprinkled with the dews of Pagan wisdom and poesy. Our author would pour upon him the water of Christian Baptism, and secure to him the Christian character corresponding to that baptism.

25. *Urania* was, in the Pagan Mythology, the goddess of astronomy, and by a poetic license, though entirely an imaginary being, is here invoked as presiding over all worlds, by a reference to which, in part, the effort is made to eradicate an undue love for this earth.

34. *Eternal*: Put for eternity.

35. *Ambitions*: Objects of ambition.

35, 36. *As the vast Leviathan, or whale, swallows the bubbles vain, &c.*

What tow'ring hopes, what sallies from the sun,  
 What grand surveys of destiny divine,  
 And pompous presage of unfathom'd fate,  
 Should roll in bosoms, where a spirit burns,  
 Bound for eternity! In bosoms read 45  
 By Him, who foibles in archangels sees!  
 On human hearts He bends a jealous eye,  
 And marks, and in heav'n's register enrolls  
 The rise and progress of each option there;  
 Sacred to doomsday! That the page unfolds, 50  
 And spreads us to the gaze of gods and men.

## THIS WORLD COMPARED WITH THE NEXT.

And what an option, O Lorenzo, thine?  
 This world! and this, unrival'd by the skies!  
 A world, where lust of pleasure, grandeur, gold,  
 Three demons that divide its realms between them, 55  
 With strokes alternate buffet to and fro  
 Man's restless heart, their sport, their flying ball;  
 Till, with the giddy circle, sick and tired,  
 It pants for peace, and drops into despair.  
 Such is the world Lorenzo sets above 60  
 That glorious promise, angels were esteemed  
 Too mean to bring; a promise, their Adored  
 Descended to communicate, and press,  
 By counsel, miracle, life, death, on man.  
 Such is the world Lorenzo's wisdom woos, 65  
 And on its thorny pillow seeks repose;  
 A pillow, which, like opiates ill prepared,  
 Intoxicates, but not composes; fills

46. *Foibles, &c.*: Job iv. 18, "His angels he charged with folly."

50. *Sacred to doomsday*: Reserved for disclosure at the day of final sentence or judgment.

53. *Unrival'd*: That is, in Lorenzo's opinion.

54. *Where lust, &c.*: Called by the Apostle John (1 Ep. ii. 16), "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life."

The visionary mind with gay chimeras,  
 All the wild trash of sleep, without the rest ; 70  
 What unfeign'd travel, and what dreams of joy !

## THE GAY AND THE BUSY DESCRIBED.

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

## THE PROUD, THE SENSUAL, AND THE GRAVE.

What wondrous prize has kindled this career,  
 Stuns with the din, and chokes us with the dust,  
 On life's gay stage, one inch above the grave ?  
 The proud run up and down in quest of eyes ;  
 The sensual in pursuit of something worse ; 90  
 The grave, of gold ; the politic, of pow'r ;  
 And all, of other butterflies, as vain !  
 As eddies draw things frivolous and light,  
 How is man's heart by vanity drawn in ;

69. *Chimeras* : Incongruities, improbable imaginings. The allusion is explained in a former note.

89. *In quest of eyes* : In search of observers, of persons to look at, and admire them.

92. *Of other* : In quest of other.



On the swift circle of returning toys, 95  
Whirl'd, straw-like, round and round, and then ingulf'd,  
Where gay delusion darkens to despair!

## THE WORLD'S HISTORY.

'This is a beaten track.'—Is this a track  
Should not be beaten? Never beat enough,  
Till enough learnt the truths it would inspire. 100  
Shall truth be silent because folly frowns?  
Turn the world's history; what find we there,  
But fortune's sports, or nature's cruel claims,  
Or woman's artifice, or man's revenge,  
And endless inhumanities on man? 105  
Fame's trumpet seldom sounds, but, like the knell,  
It brings bad tidings: how it hourly blows  
Man's misadventures round the list'ning world!  
Man is the tale of narrative old Time;  
Sad tale! which high as paradise begins; 110  
As if the toil of travel to delude,  
From stage to stage, in his eternal round,  
The days, his daughters, as they spin our hours  
On fortune's wheel, where accident unthought  
Oft, in a moment, snaps life's strongest thread, 115  
Each, in her turn, some tragic story tells,  
With, now and then, a wretched farce between;  
And fills his chronicle with human woes.  
Time's daughters, true as those of men, deceive us;  
Not one, but puts some cheat on all mankind: 120  
While in their father's bosom, not yet ours,  
They flatter our fond hopes; and promise much

98. "*This is a beaten track:*" An objection supposed to be made by Lorenzo in disgust.

113. *The Days, &c.*: These are beautifully personified as the Daughters of Time, who spin the hours (like a thread) on Fortune's wheel, or the wheel of Providence, &c.

119. *True*: Truly, really.

Of amiable ; but hold him not o'erwise,  
 Who dares to trust them ; and laugh round the year,  
 At still-confiding, still-confounded, man ; 125  
 Confiding, though confounded ; hoping on,  
 Untaught by trial, unconvinced by proof,  
 And ever looking for the never seen.  
 Life to the last, like hardened felons, lies ;  
 Nor owns itself a cheat, till it expires. 130  
 Its little joys go out by one and one,  
 And leave poor man, at length, in perfect night ;  
 Night darker than what now involves the pole.

## A JUST ESTIMATE OF THIS WORLD.

O Thou, who dost permit these ills to fall,  
 For gracious ends, and wouldst that man should mourn ! 135  
 O Thou, whose hands this goodly fabric framed,  
 Who know'st it best, and wouldst that man should know !  
 What is this sublunary world ? A vapour !  
 A vapour all it holds ; itself a vapour,  
 From the damp bed of chaos, by thy beam 140  
 Exhaled, ordained to swim its destined hour  
 In ambient air, then melt, and disappear.  
 Earth's days are numbered, nor remote her doom,  
 As mortal, though less transient, than her sons ;  
 Yet they doat on her, as the world and they 145  
 Were both eternal, solid ; Thou, a dream.

## THE VOYAGE OF LIFE.

They doat, on what ! Immortal views apart,  
 A region of outsides ! a land of shadows !  
 A fruitful field of flow'ry promises !  
 A wilderness of joys ! perplex'd with doubts, 150  
 And sharp with thorns ! a troubled ocean, spread  
 With bold adventurers, their all on board ;

145. *As* : As if.

No second hope, if here their fortune frowns !  
 Frown soon it must. Of various rates they sail,  
 Of ensigns various ; all alike in this, 155  
 All restless, anxious ; toss'd with hopes and fears,  
 In calmest skies ; obnoxious all to storm ;  
 And stormy the most general blast of life :  
 All bound for happiness ; yet few provide  
 The chart of knowledge, pointing where it lies ; 160  
 Or virtue's helm, to shape the course design'd :  
 All, more or less, capricious fate lament,  
 Now lifted by the tide, and now resorbed,  
 And farther from their wishes than before :  
 All, more or less, against each other dash, 165  
 To mutual hurt, by gusts of passion driven,  
 And suff'ring more from folly than from fate.  
 Ocean ! thou dreadful and tumultuous home  
 Of dangers, at eternal war with man !  
 Death's capital, where most he domineers, 170  
 With all his chosen terrors frowning round,

163. *Resorbed* : Drawn down again, swallowed up.

168. This paragraph contains a beautiful *apostrophe to the Ocean*, reminding us of the finest strains of Lord Byron :

Roll on, thou deep and dark-blue ocean—roll !  
 Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain.  
 Man marks the earth with ruin—his control  
 Stops with the shore ; upon the watery plain  
 The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain  
 A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,  
 When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,  
 He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,  
 Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form  
 Glasses itself in tempests ; in all time,  
 Calm or convulsed—in breeze, or gale, or storm,  
 Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime  
 Dark-heaving ; boundless, endless, and sublime—  
 The image of eternity—the throne  
 Of the Invisible ; even from out thy slime  
 The monsters of the deep are made ; each zone  
 Obeys thee ; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone !

- (Though lately feasted high at Albion's cost)  
 Wide op'ning, and loud roaring still for more!  
 Too faithful mirror! how dost thou reflect  
 The melancholy face of human life! 175  
 The strong resemblance tempts me farther still:  
 And haply, Britain may be deeper struck  
 By moral truth, in such a mirror seen,  
 Which nature holds for ever at her eye.  
 Self-flatter'd, unexperienced, high in hope, 180  
 When young, with sanguine cheer, and streamers gay,  
 We cut our cable, launch into the world,  
 And fondly dream each wind and star our friend;  
 All, in some darling enterprise embark'd:  
 But where is he can fathom its event? 185  
 Amid a multitude of artless hands,  
 Ruin's sure perquisite! her lawful prize!  
 Some steer aright; but the black blast blows hard,  
 And puffs them wide of hope: with hearts of proof,  
 Full against wind and tide, some win their way; 190  
 And when strong effort has deserved the port,  
 And tugg'd it into view, 'tis won! 'tis lost!  
 Though strong their oar, still stronger is their fate:  
 They strike; and, while they triumph, they expire.  
 In stress of weather, most; some sink outright; 195

172. *Albion's cost*: The shipwreck of Admiral Balchen is referred to. England takes this name from the *white* chalky cliffs on her southeastern coast, near the Straits of Dover.

182. *Launch into the world*: The scenes and employments of the world are here represented under the figure of the *waters of the ocean*.

189. *Wide of hope*: Far from the ports they hoped to reach.

195—201. *Some sink, &c.*: If to extinguish a passion nothing more were necessary than to shew its absolute futility, the love of posthumous glory (says Dr. Thomas Brown) must long have ceased to be a passion, since almost every moralist has proved, with most accurate demonstration, the absurdity of seeking that which must by its nature be beyond the reach of our enjoyment, and almost every poet has made the madness of such a desire a subject of his ridicule, though, at the same time, it cannot be doubted that if the passion could have been extinguished either by demonstration or

O'er them, and o'er their names, the billows close ;  
 To-morrow knows not they were ever born.  
 Others a short memorial leave behind,  
 Like a flag floating, when the bark's ingulf'd ;  
 It floats a moment, and is seen no more : 200  
 One Cæsar lives ; a thousand are forgot.  
 How few beneath auspicious planets born,  
 (Darlings of Providence ! fond Fate's elect !)  
 With swelling sails make good the promis'd port,  
 With all their wishes freighted ! yet, e'en these, 205  
 Freight with all their wishes, soon complain :  
 Free from misfortune, not from nature free,  
 They still are men ; and when is man secure ?  
 As fatal time, as storm ! the rush of years  
 Beats down their strength ; their numberless escapes 210  
 In ruin end ; and, now, their proud success  
 But plants new terrors on the victor's brow :  
 What pain to quit the world, just made their own ;  
 Their nest so deeply down'd, and built so high !  
 Too low they build, who build beneath the stars. 215  
 Wo then apart (if wo apart can be  
 From mortal man) and fortune at our nod,  
 The gay ! rich ! great ! triumphant ! and august !  
 What are they ?—The most happy (strange to say !)  
 Convince me most of human misery : 220  
 What are they ? Smiling wretches of to-morrow !

ridicule, we should have had fewer demonstrations, and still less wit on the subject. "Can glory be anything," says Seneca, "when he who is said to be the very possessor of it, himself is nothing!" "Nulla est omnino gloria, cum is, cujus ea esse dicitur, non extat omnino."—*Brown's Philos.* vol. iii. 93-4.

Pope, in his *Essay on Man*, Ep. iv. 237—246, presents us with some fine lines on this subject.

202. *Beneath auspicious planets, &c.* : An allusion to the exploded science of astrology.

209. *As fatal time, &c.* : Time is as fatal, as destructive, as a storm.

221. *Wretches of to-morrow* : Smiling now and happy, but liable to be wretched to-morrow, or a short time hence.

More wretched, then, than e'er their slave can be :  
 Their treach'rous blessings, at the day of need,  
 Like other faithless friends, unmask, and sting.  
 Then, what provoking indigence in wealth! 225  
 What aggravated impotence in power!  
 High titles, then, what insult of their pain!  
 If that sole anchor, equal to the waves,  
 Immortal hope! defies not the rude storm,  
 Take comfort from the foaming billow's rage, 230  
 And makes a welcome harbour of the tomb.

THE SEVERAL STAGES OF LIFE, IN THE HISTORY OF FLORELLO.

Is this a sketch of what thy soul admires?  
 'But here (thou say'st) the miseries of life  
 Are huddled in a group. A more distinct  
 Survey, perhaps, might bring thee better news.' 235  
 Look on life's stages: they speak plainer still;  
 The plainer they, the deeper wilt thou sigh.  
 Look on thy lovely boy; in him behold  
 The best that can befall the best on earth;  
 The boy has virtue by his mother's side: 240  
 Yes, on Florello look: a father's heart  
 Is tender, though the man's is made of stone;  
 The truth, through such a medium seen, may make  
 Impression deep, and fondness prove thy friend.  
 Florello, lately cast on this rude coast, 245  
 A helpless infant; now a heedless child:  
 To poor Clarissa's throes, thy care succeeds;  
 Care full of love, and yet severe as hate!  
 O'er thy soul's joy how oft thy fondness frowns!  
 Needful austerities his will restrain; 250  
 As thorns fence in the tender plant from harm.

233-5. *But, &c.*: Another objection is, in these lines, supposed to be advanced by Lorenzo.

244. Prove (to be) thy friend.

247. *Clarissa*: Wife of Lorenzo.

As yet, his reason cannot go alone ;  
 But asks a sterner nurse to lead it on.  
 His little heart is often terrified ;  
 The blush of morning, in his cheek, turns pale ; 255  
 Its pearly dew-drop trembles in his eye ;  
 His harmless eye ! and drowns an angel there.  
 Ah ! what avails his innocence ? The task  
 Enjoin'd must discipline his early powers ;  
 He learns to sigh, ere he is known to sin ; 260  
 Guiltless, and sad ! a wretch before the fall !  
 How cruel this ! more cruel to forbear.  
 Our nature such, with necessary pains  
 We purchase prospects of precarious peace :  
 Though not a father, this might steal a sigh. 265  
 Suppose him disciplined aright, (if not,  
 'Twill sink our poor account to poorer still ;)

Ripe from the tutor, proud of liberty,  
 He leaps enclosures, bounds into the world !  
 The world is taken, after ten years' toil, 270  
 Like ancient Troy ; and all its joys his own.  
 Alas ! the world's a tutor more severe ;  
 Its lessons hard, and ill deserve his pains ;  
 Unteaching all his virtuous nature taught,  
 Or books (fair virtue's advocates !) inspired. 275

For who receives him into public life ?  
 Men of the world, the terræ-filial breed,  
 Welcome the modest stranger to their sphere,  
 (Which glitter'd long, at distance, in his sight)  
 And in their hospitable arms enclose : 280  
 Men, who think nought so strong of the romance,

255-7. These are lines of surpassing beauty, describing the unsophisticated innocence of childhood, using the word "innocence" in a comparative sense ; for even in childhood we are all corrupt beings, prone to moral evil. Our author's language in this connection gives too bright a picture of childhood's innocence, to accord fully with the doctrines of Scripture.

277. *Terræ-filial breed* ; Breed of the sons of earth.

So rank knight-errant, as a real friend :  
 Men, that act up to reason's golden rule,  
 All weakness of affection quite subdued :  
 Men, that would blush at being thought sincere, 285  
 And feign, for glory, the few faults they want ;  
 That love a lie, where truth would pay as well ;  
 As if, to them, vice shone her own reward.

Lorenzo! canst thou bear a shocking sight ?  
 Such, for Florello's sake, 'twill now appear : 290  
 See, the steel'd files of season'd veterans,  
 Train'd to the world, in burnish'd falsehood bright ;  
 Deep in the fatal stratagems of peace ;  
 All soft sensation, in the throng, rubb'd off ;  
 All their keen purpose in politeness sheath'd ; 295  
 His friends eternal—during interest ;  
 His foes implacable—when worth their while ;  
 At war with every welfare but their own ;  
 As wise as Lucifer ; and half as good ;  
 And by whom none but Lucifer can gain— 300  
 Naked, through these (so common fate ordains)  
 Naked of heart, his cruel course he runs,  
 Stung out of all, most amiable in life,  
 Prompt truth, and open thought, and smiles unfeign'd ;  
 Affection, as his species, wide diffused ; 305  
 Noble presumptions to mankind's renown ;  
 Ingenuous trust, and confidence of love.

These claims to joy (if mortals joy might claim)  
 Will cost him many a sigh ; till time, and pains,  
 From the slow mistress of this school, Experience, 310  
 And her assistant, pausing pale Distrust,  
 Purchase a dear-bought clue, to lead his youth  
 Through serpentine obliquities of life,

282. *So rank knight-errant* : So much like the fanciful and irrational conduct of a wandering knight, who was accustomed to pass his time travelling in search of whimsical adventures, like those of Don Quixote.

306. *Presumptions* : aspirations.



And the dark labyrinth of human hearts.  
 And happy ! if the clue shall come so cheap : 315  
 For, while we learn to fence with public guilt,  
 Full oft we feel its foul contagion too,  
 If less than heav'nly virtue is our guard.  
 Thus, a strange kind of curst necessity  
 Brings down the sterling temper of his soul, 320  
 By base alloy, to bear the current stamp  
 Below call'd wisdom ; sinks him into safety ;  
 And brands him into credit with the world ;  
 Where specious titles dignify disgrace,  
 And nature's injuries are arts of life ; 325  
 Where brighter reason prompts to bolder crimes ;  
 And heav'nly talents make infernal hearts ;  
 That unsurmountable extreme of guilt !

## THE MACHIAVELLIAN SYSTEM.

Poor Machiavel ! who laboured hard his plan,

316. *Fence* : Contend.

329. *His plan* : Those who wish to read a full and ingenious account of this remarkable man, should consult Macaulay's *Miscellanies*. The doctrine of his "Prince" was, that he may do anything to attain his object, in utter disregard of the peace or welfare of his subjects, the dictates of honesty and honour, or the precepts of religion. There has been a great dispute concerning the real purport of that publication—whether it was designed to recommend tyrannical maxims and conduct, or whether it described them more luminously than any previous writer had done, for the purpose of exciting in the popular mind an abhorrence of tyranny.

Macaulay says: We doubt whether any name in literary history be so generally odious as that of the man whose character and writings we now propose to consider. The terms in which he is commonly described would seem to import that he is the Tempter, the Evil Principle, the Discoverer of Ambition and Revenge, the Original Inventor of Perjury ; that before the publication of his fatal *Prince*, there had never been a hypocrite, a tyrant, or a traitor, a simulated virtue or a convenient crime. One writer gravely assures us that Maurice of Saxony learned all his fraudulent policy from that execrable volume. Another remarks, that since it was translated into Turkish, the Sultans have been more addicted than formerly to the custom of strangling their brothers. The Church of Rome has pro-

Forgot, that genius needs not go to school ; 330  
 Forgot, that man, without a tutor wise,  
 His plan had practised, long before 'twas writ.  
 The world's all title-page, there's no contents :  
 The world's all face ; the man who shows his heart  
 Is hooted for his nudities, and scorned. 335  
 A man I knew, who lived upon a smile ;  
 And well it fed him ; he look'd plump and fair,  
 While rankest venom foam'd through ev'ry vein.  
 Lorenzo ! what I tell thee, take not ill ;  
 Living, he fawn'd on every fool alive ; 340  
 And, dying, cursed the friend on whom he lived.  
 To such proficients thou art half a saint.  
 In foreign realms (for thou hast travelled far)  
 How curious to contemplate two state rooks,

nounced his works accursed things. It is indeed scarcely possible for any person not well acquainted with the history and literature of Italy, to read without horror and amazement the celebrated treatise which has brought so much obloquy on the name of Machiavelli. Such a display of wickedness, naked yet not ashamed ; such cool, judicious, scientific atrocity, seem rather to belong to a fiend than to the most depraved of men. Principles which the most hardened ruffian would scarcely hint to his most trusted accomplice, or avow without the disguise of some palliating sophism, even to his own mind, are professed without the slightest circumlocution, and assumed as the fundamental axioms of all political science. And yet, there is no reason whatever to think that those amongst whom he lived saw anything shocking or incongruous in his writings. Abundant proofs remain of the high estimation in which both his works and his person were held by the most respectable among his contemporaries. Clement the Seventh patronized the publication of those very books which the Council of Trent, in the following generation, pronounced unfit for the perusal of Christians. The cry against them was first raised beyond the Alps, and seems to have been heard with amazement in Italy.

It is, therefore, in the state of moral feeling among the Italians of those times that we must seek for the real explanation of what seems most mysterious in the life and writings of this remarkable man.

335. *His nudities* : His exposure of himself.

342. *To such, &c.* : Compared to such, &c.

344. *Rooks* : Birds of the crow species ; here used as a term to denote trickish, rapacious politicians.

Studious their nests to feather in a trice ; 345  
 With all the necromantics of their art,  
 Playing the game of faces on each other ;  
 Making court sweet-meats of their latent gall,  
 In foolish hope to steal each other's trust ;  
 Both cheating, both exulting, both deceived ; 350  
 And, sometimes, both (let earth rejoice) undone !  
 Their parts we doubt not ; but be that their shame.  
 Shall men of talents, fit to rule mankind,  
 Stoop to mean wiles, that would disgrace a fool ;  
 And lose the thanks of those few friends they serve ? 355  
 For who can thank the man, he cannot see ?  
 Why so much cover ? It defeats itself.  
 Ye that know all things ! know ye not, men's hearts  
 Are therefore known, because they are conceal'd ?  
 For why conceal'd ?—The cause they need not tell. 360  
 I give him joy, that's awkward at a lie ;  
 Whose feeble nature truth keeps still in awe :  
 His incapacity is his renown.  
 'Tis great, 'tis manly, to disdain disguise ;  
 It shows our spirit, or it proves our strength. 365  
 Thou say'st 'tis needful. Is it therefore right ?  
 Howe'er, I grant it some small sign of grace,  
 To strain at an excuse. And wouldst thou then  
 Escape that cruel need ? Thou mayst with ease ;  
 Think no post needful that demands a knave. 370

346. *Necromantics* : Deceptions, tricks ; a term descriptive of the pretended art of foretelling future events by holding communication with departed spirits.

347. *Game of faces* : Game of assuming an appearance of friendship when hatred rankles in the heart. The same idea is conveyed under another figure, and a very original one, in the next line.

352. *Parts* : Talents.

356. This question is based upon the foregoing description of men who are not what they seem to be.

363. *His incapacity* : That is, to lie without awkwardness.

When late our civil helm was shifting hands,  
 So P—— thought: think better if you can.  
 But this, how rare! the public path of life  
 Is dirty.—Yet, allow that dirt its due,  
 It makes the noble mind more noble still: 375  
 The world's no neuter; it will wound, or save;  
 Our virtue quench, or indignation fire.  
 You say, the world, well known, will make a man.  
 The world, well known, will give our hearts to heav'n,  
 Or make us demons, long before we die. 380

VIRTUE HAS HER DIFFICULTIES AND SUFFERINGS.

To show how fair the world, thy mistress, shines,  
 Take either part, sure ills attend the choice;  
 Sure, though not equal, detriment ensues.  
 Not virtue's self is deified on earth;  
 Virtue has her relapses, conflicts, foes; 385  
 Foes that ne'er fail to make her feel their hate.  
 Virtue has her peculiar set of pains.  
 True; friends to virtue, last, and least, complain;  
 But if they sigh, can others hope to smile?  
 If wisdom has her miseries to mourn, 390  
 How can poor folly lead a happy life?  
 And if both suffer, what has earth to boast,  
 Where he most happy, who the least laments?  
 Where much, much patience, the most envy'd state,  
 And some forgiveness, needs the best of friends? 395  
 For friend, or happy life, who looks not higher,  
 Of neither shall he find the shadow here.  
 The world's sworn advocate, without a fee,  
 Lorenzo smartly, with a smile replies:  
 'Thus far thy song is right; and all must own, 400  
 Virtue has her peculiar set of pains.—  
 And joys peculiar who to vice denies?

371-2. Dr. Young's familiarity with political affairs and court intrigues, is manifested in these lines and the preceding. Pulteney.

If vice it is, with nature to comply :  
 If pride and sense are so predominant,  
 To check, not overcome them, makes a saint : 405  
 Can nature in a plainer voice proclaim  
 Pleasure, and glory, the chief good of man ?

. PLEASURE AND GLORY NOT THE CHIEF GOOD OF MAN.

Can pride and sensuality rejoice ?  
 From purity of thought, all pleasure springs ;  
 And from an humble spirit all our peace. 410  
 Ambition, pleasure ! Let us talk of these :  
 Of these, the Porch, and Academy talk'd :  
 Of these, each following age had much to say :  
 Yet unexhausted, still, the needful theme.  
 Who talks of these, to mankind all at once 415  
 He talks ; for where the saint from either free ?  
 Are these thy refuge ?—No : these rush upon thee ;  
 Thy vitals seize, and, vulture-like, devour.  
 I'll try, if I can pluck thee from thy rock,  
 Prometheus ! from this barren ball of earth. 420  
 If reason can unchain thee, thou art free.

409. *All pleasure, &c.* : This remark of our author is not supported by experience, but contradicted, unless some qualifying epithet be applied to pleasure, such as *true, unmingled*, or, by *all* he means, the greatest amount of pleasurable emotion. See on 639—678.

412. *The Porch and Academy* : The instructors in those places in Athens. The former, occupied by the *Stoics*, has been explained in a former note. The latter word is to be pronounced with an accent on the third syllable.

The academy of Athens was a public garden or grove in the suburbs of that city, named from Academus, who presented it to the citizens as a place for gymnastic exercises. Within its limits Plato afterwards owned a small garden, in which he opened a school. Hence arose the Academic sect, of which he was the founder. Plato was born, B. C. 429.—*Anthon's Classical Dict.*

420. *Prometheus* : The classical legend is, that Prometheus, one of the Titans, offended Jupiter by teaching mankind the arts, especially the use of fire. As a punishment, he was chained to a rock on Mount *Caucasus*, where a vulture was appointed to prey upon his liver, which grew again at

## IN WHAT TRUE GREATNESS DOES NOT CONSIST.

And first, thy Caucasus, ambition, calls :  
 Mountain of torments ! eminence of woes !  
 Of courted woes ! and courted through mistake ?  
 'Tis not ambition charms thee ; 'tis a cheat 425  
 Will make thee start, as H—— at his Moor.  
 Dost grasp at greatness ? First, know what it is :  
 Think'st thou thy greatness in distinction lies ?  
 Not in the feather, wave it e'er so high,  
 By fortune stuck, to mark us from the throng, 430  
 Is glory lodged : 'tis lodged in the reverse ;  
 In that which joins, in that which equals all,  
 The monarch and his slave : ' a deathless soul,  
 Unbounded prospect, and immortal kin,  
 A Father God, and brothers in the skies :' 435  
 Elder, indeed, in time ; but less remote  
 In excellence, perhaps, than thought by man :  
 Why greater what can fall, than what can rise ?  
 If still delirious, now, Lorenzo, go ;  
 And with thy full-blown brothers of the world, 440  
 Throw scorn around thee : cast it on thy slaves ;  
 Thy slaves, and equals : how scorn cast on them  
 Rebounds on thee ! If man is mean, as man,  
 Art thou a god ? If fortune makes him so,  
 Beware the consequence : a maxim that, 445

night so as to be ready for the vulture's operations by day. From this terrible condition he was finally delivered by Hercules.

The legend is a most expressive illustration of the idea which our author conveys of Lorenzo, under the influence of ambition and appetite for sensual pleasure.

422. *Thy Caucasus, ambition* : This is not a happy application of the above legend, for we had just been led by our author to consider the *vulture* on Mount Caucasus as a representative of ambition, and Caucasus as a symbol of the *earth*, on which the tortures of ambition are felt by Lorenzo.

432. *Equals all* : Makes all equal.

438. *What can fall* : The angels. *What can rise* : Man.

Which draws a monstrous picture of mankind,  
 Where, in the drapery, the man is lost ;  
 Externals flutt'ring, and the soul forgot.  
 Thy greatest glory when disposed to boast,  
 Boast that aloud, in which thy servants share. 450

We wisely strip the steed we mean to buy ?  
 Judge we, in their caparisons, of men ?  
 It nought avails thee, where, but what, thou art ;  
 All the distinctions of this little life  
 Are quite cutaneous, foreign to the man, 455  
 When, through death's streights, earth's subtle serpents creep,  
 Which wriggle into wealth, or climb renown,  
 As crooked Satan the forbidden tree.

455. *Cutaneous* : Rather a singular epithet, and wholly unsuitable in anything like its common acceptation. It must here mean *superficial*, that which is *not essential*, that which *merely covers the man*.

456. *Streights* : Narrow passages. The punctuation at the close of the 458th line we have taken the liberty to alter, from a comma to a period, considering the change necessary to the elucidation of the passage.

Aspirants to office are here represented as worms or serpents, creeping or climbing upward to distinction, as Satan, in the form of a serpent, climbed the tree in Paradise.

458. *Crooked Satan* : Satan having assumed the form of a serpent. The author, doubtless, had in his mind the description which Milton furnishes of the incident ; it will, perhaps, be gratifying to make here a short extract :

So spake the enemy of mankind, inclosed  
 In serpent, inmate bad, and toward Eve  
 Address'd his way, not with indented wave,  
 Prone on the ground, as since, but on his rear,  
 Circular base of rising folds, that tower'd  
 Fold above fold a surging maze, his head  
 Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes ;  
 With burnish'd neck of verdant gold, erect  
 Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass  
 Floated redundant. Pleasing was his shape,  
 And lovely, &c.

Satan, in the form of the serpent, afterwards thus describes to Eve his ascent of the forbidden tree :

About the mossy trunk I wound me soon,  
 For high from ground the branches would require  
 Thy utmost reach or Adam's : Round the tree  
 All other beasts that saw, with like desire

They leave their parti-colour'd robe behind,  
 All that now glitters, while they rear aloft 460  
 Their brazen crests, and hiss at us below.  
 Of fortune's fucus strip them, yet alive ;  
 Strip them of body, too ; nay, closer still,  
 Away with all, but moral, in their minds ;  
 And let, what then remains, impose their name, 465  
 Pronounce them weak, or worthy ; great, or mean.  
 How mean that snuff of glory fortune lights,  
 And death puts out ! Dost thou demand a test  
 (A test, at once, infallible, and short)  
 Of real greatness ? That man greatly lives, 470  
 Whate'er his fate or fame, who greatly dies ;  
 High-flushed with hope, where heroes shall despair.  
 If this a true criterion, many courts,  
 Illustrious, might afford but few grandees.

## IN WHAT TRUE GREATNESS DOES CONSIST.

Th' Almighty, from his throne, on earth surveys 475  
 Nought greater than an honest humble heart ;  
 An humble heart, his residence ! pronounced  
 His second seat ; and rival to the skies.  
 The private path, the secret acts of men,  
 If noble, far the noblest of our lives ! 480

Longing and envying stood, but could not reach.

Amid the tree now got, where plenty hung

Tempting so nigh, &c.—*Paradise Lost*, Bk. IX. 494—504, 589—595.

462. *Fucus* : Paint, false show.

467. *Snuff of glory* : Allusion is made to the glimmering light of the wick of a candle when about to burn out ; or to the burning wick which is easily put out. The figure is designed to show, not only that human glory is easily destroyed by death, but that it is a paltry and contemptible affair.

470. *Greatly lives* : Lives in a dignified and honourable manner.

477. *His residence* : The idea is derived from Isaiah lvii. 15 : " Thus saith the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy ; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit."



How far above Lorenzo's glory sits  
 Th' illustrious master of a name unknown ;  
 Whose worth unrivalled, and unwitnessed, loves  
 Life's sacred shades, where gods converse with men ;  
 And peace, beyond the world's conception, smiles ! 485  
 As thou, (now dark,) before we part, shalt see.

But thy great soul this sculking glory scorns.  
 Lorenzo's sick, but when Lorenzo's seen ;  
 And, when he shrugs at public bus'ness, lies.  
 Denied the public eye, the public voice, 490  
 As if he lived on others' breath, he dies.  
 Fain would he make the world his pedestal ;  
 Mankind, the gazers ; the sole figure, he.  
 Knows he, that mankind praise against their will,  
 And mix as much detraction as they can ? 495  
 Knows he, that faithless fame her whisper has,  
 As well as trumpet ? that his vanity  
 Is so much tickled from not hearing all ?

481-84. *How far above, &c.* : Dr. Thomas Brown, in quoting these lines observes that if there are many who regret that they are doomed to the shade, there are many too who repent that they have ever quitted it ; or, at least, there are many who *might* so repent, if the loss of this very power of repentance were not itself an evil, and one of the worst evils of guilty distinction. " Bene qui latuit, bene vixit."

484. *Gods* : Angels.

498. *From not hearing all* : This, and the other considerations here adduced, are adapted to diminish greatly a love for public applause. Dr. Brown has well observed : If all were indeed heard—the detracting whispers of fame as well as her clamorous applause—what lessons of humility would be taught to the vain and credulous, whose ears the whispers cannot reach, and who, therefore, listening only to the louder flatteries that are intended to reach them, consider the praise which is addressed to them as but a small part of that universal praise which is everywhere, as they believe, proclaiming their merits ; and in their reputation of a few months, which is to fade perhaps before the close of a single year, regard themselves as already possessing immortality ! In our estimates of glory, however, as a source of distinction, the whispers which are not heard are to be taken into account with the praises which are heard ; and then, if the heartfelt virtues of both be the same, how near to equilibrium will be the happiness of the obscure and the illustrious !

Knows this all-knower, that from itch of praise,  
 Or, from an itch more sordid, when he shines, 500  
 Taking his country by five hundred ears,  
 Senates at once admire him and despise,  
 With modest laughter lining loud applause,  
 Which makes the smile more mortal to his fame ?  
 His fame, which (like the mighty Cæsar) crowned 505  
 With laurels, in full senate greatly falls,  
 By seeming friends, that honour and destroy.  
 We rise in glory, as we sink in pride :  
 Where boasting ends, there dignity begins :  
 And yet, mistaken beyond all mistake, 510  
 The blind Lorenzo's proud—of being proud ;  
 And dreams himself ascending in his fall.  
 An eminence, though fancied, turns the brain :  
 All vice wants hellebore ; but, of all vice,  
 Pride loudest calls, and for the largest bowl ; 515  
 Because, all other vice unlike, it flies,  
 In fact, the point, in fancy most pursued.  
 Who court applause, oblige the world in this ;  
 They gratify man's passion to refuse.  
 Superior honour, when assumed, is lost ; 520  
 E'en good men turn banditti, and rejoice,  
 Like Kouli Kan, in plunder of the proud.

506. *Greatly falls* : Conspicuously or fatally falls, by the agency of *seem-  
 ing* friends. Brutus, Casca, and others, who poignarded Cæsar in the senate-  
 house, were ostensibly, up to this time, his friends. Hence, says Shakspeare,  
 in reference to Brutus :

This was the most unkindest cut of all :  
 For when the noble Cæsar saw him stab,  
 Ingratitude, more strong than traitors' arms,  
 Quite vanquish'd him : then burst his mighty heart ;  
 And, in his mantle muffling up his face,  
 Even at the base of Pompey's statue,  
 Which all the while ran blood, great Cæsar fell.  
 Oh what a fall was there, my countrymen !

514. *Hellebore* : A poisonous drug, used as an evacuant.

522. *Kouli Kan*, or Khan. This was the famous Nadir Schah, or Thomas  
 Kouli Khan, a Persian king, a conqueror and usurper, born in 1686.  
 Placed at the head of an army, he gained a signal victory over the Usbeck

## CHARMS OF PLEASURE, FOR ALL CLASSES

Though somewhat disconcerted, steady still  
 To the world's cause, with half a face of joy,  
 Lorenzo cries,—' Be, then, ambition cast ; 525  
 Ambition's dearer far stands unimpeach'd,  
 Gay pleasure! Proud ambition is her slave ;  
 For her, he soars at great, and hazards ill ;  
 For her, he fights, and bleeds, or overcomes ;  
 And paves his way with crowns, to reach her smile : 530  
 Who can resist her charms?—Or, should ? Lorenzo.  
 What mortal shall resist, where angels yield ?  
 Pleasure's the mistress of ethereal powers ;  
 For her contend the rival gods above :  
 Pleasure's the mistress of the world below ; 535  
 And well it is for man that pleasure charms :  
 How would all stagnate, but for pleasure's ray !  
 How would the frozen stream of action cease !  
 What is the pulse of this so busy world ?  
 The love of pleasure : that, through every vein, 540  
 Throws motion, warmth ; and shuts out death from life.

**Tartars.** This excited the jealousy of his superior, and the command was given to another person. Nadir remonstrated, and for that was bastinadoed. Stung with the disgrace of such unjust treatment, he joined a band of robbers, and with them ravaged the country of his birth, and put to death his uncle, who had treated him ill some years before. Schah Thamas, king of Persia, being at this time hard pressed by the Turks and Affghans, took Nadir into his service. These enemies being vanquished by the bravery of this man, he was honoured with the title of *Thamas Kouli Khan*. Afterwards he seized his patron, deposed him, and ascended the throne of Persia himself. His next enterprise was an attack upon the Great Mogul. He marched to India with an immense army, and reached Delhi in 1738. Some tumult of the inhabitants arising, he massacred one hundred thousand of them. He then concluded a treaty of peace with the Mogul, whose daughter he married, receiving with her as a dowry some of the richest provinces of the empire contiguous to Persia. In this expedition he carried away, and distributed among his officers, it is estimated, in valuables not less than \$500,000,000. These statements explain and justify the allusions to his conduct which our author makes.

Though various are the tempers of mankind,  
 Pleasure's gay family holds all in chains :  
 Some most affect the black ; and some the fair ;  
 Some honest pleasure court ; and some obscene. 545  
 Pleasures obscene are various, as the throng  
 Of passions, that can err in human hearts ;  
 Mistake their objects, or transgress their bounds.  
 Think you there's but one whoredom ? Whoredom all,  
 But when our reason licenses delight. 550  
 Dost doubt, Lorenzo ? Thou shalt doubt no more.  
 Thy father chides thy gallantries ; yet hugs  
 An ugly common harlot in the dark ;  
 A rank adulterer with others' gold !  
 And that hag, vengeance, in a corner, charms. 555  
 Hatred her brothel has, as well as love,  
 Where horrid epicures debauch in blood.  
 Whate'er the motive, pleasure is the mark :

558—567. *Whate'er the motive, &c.* : This, indeed (says Dr. Thomas Brown), though in verse, is as sound philosophy as much duller philosophy of the same kind ; but powerful as it may be in poetic antithesis, it is as verse only that it is powerful, not as a statement of philosophical truths. We desire, indeed, all these objects, and, however ill-fitted some of them may appear to be productive of delight, we may, perhaps, feel pleasure in all these objects, as we certainly should feel pain if we were not to obtain what we desire, whatever the object of desire may have been. But it is not the pleasure which was the circumstance that prompted our desire when it arose : it was the desire previously awakened which was accompanied with pleasure, or was productive of pleasure, the pleasure being in all these cases the effect of the previous desire, and necessarily presupposing it. I am aware, indeed, that according to the system of many philosophers, who consider our own selfish enjoyment as the sole object of our wishes, to speak of other desires after mentioning the desire of pleasure as *one* of our emotions, must be absolutely superfluous, since the desire of pleasure, according to them, must, in some one of its forms, be the desire of *everything* which man can immediately desire. But, though everything which we desire must have seemed to us desirable, as the very fact of the desire denotes, and though the attainment of every such desire must be attended with pleasure, it does not therefore follow that the pleasure which truly attends the fulfilment of desire was the primary circumstance which excited the desire itself.—*Philo. of the Human Mind*, vol. iii., pp. 16—20.

For her the black assassin draws his sword ;  
 For her, dark statesmen trim their midnight lamp,                   560  
 To which no single sacrifice may fall ;  
 For her, the saint abstains ; the miser starves ;  
 The stoic proud, for pleasure, pleasure scorn'd ;  
 For her, affliction's daughters grief indulge,  
 And find, or hope, a luxury in tears ;                                   565  
 For her, guilt, shame, toil, danger, we defy ;  
 And, with an aim voluptuous, rush on death.  
 Thus universal her despotic power !  
 And as her empire wide, her praise is just.

563. *The stoic proud, &c.* : The error of the ancient inquirers into happiness, consisted in excessive simplification—in the assertion of one particular form of good, as if it were all that deserved the name, and the consequent exclusion of other forms, if good, that could not be reduced to the favourite species. He who had confined all happiness to the pleasure of the senses (as Epicurus), was, of course, under the necessity of denying that there was any moral pleasure whatever which had not a direct relation to some mere sensual delight ; while the asserter of a different system—that of the Stoics, who had affirmed virtue only to be good—was, of course, under an equal necessity of denying that any pleasure of the senses, however intense or pure, could be even the slightest element of happiness. Both were right in what they admitted, wrong in what they excluded, and the paradoxes into which they were led were necessary consequences of the excessive simplification.

A wider and more judicious view of our nature would have shown that human happiness is as various as the functions of man—that the Deity who has united us by so many relations to the whole living and inanimate world, has, in these relations, surrounded us with means of varied enjoyment, which it is as truly impossible for us not to partake with satisfaction, as to behold the very scene itself which is forever in all its beauty before our eyes—that happiness is the name of a series of agreeable feelings, and of such a series only ; and that, whatever is capable of exciting agreeable feelings, is, therefore, or may be, to that extent, a source of happiness.

Man is a sensitive, an intellectual, a moral, and a religious being. There are agreeable feelings which belong to him in each of these capacities—a happiness, in short, sensitive, intellectual, moral, and religious. Though we may affect, in verbal accordance with some system, to deny any of these various forms of good, it is only in words that we can so deny them.—*Brown's Phil. of the Mind*, iii., 560.

567. *Aim voluptuous* : Aim at pleasure.

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

But this sounds harsh, and gives the wise offence:

If o'erstrain'd wisdom still retains the name.  
 How knits austerity her cloudy brow,  
 And blames, as bold and hazardous, the praise 580  
 Of pleasure to mankind, unpraised, too dear!  
 Ye modern stoics! hear my soft reply:—  
 Their senses men will trust; we can't impose;  
 Or, if we could, is imposition right?  
 Own honey sweet; but, owning, add this sting; 585  
 'When mix'd with poison, it is deadly too.'  
 Truth never was indebted to a lie.  
 Is nought but virtue to be praised, as good?  
 Why then is health preferred before disease?

576. *Honest Epicurus' foes*: The Stoics. Epicurus was born 341 B. C. soon after the death of Plato, and in 306 B. C., became, at Athens, the founder of the Epicurean school of philosophers. It is not a settled point what his ethical doctrines were, and hence they have been represented in a widely different manner. Some consider them as favourable to virtue, and others exactly the reverse. Anthon says that, setting out from the two facts that man is susceptible of pleasure and pain, and that he seeks the one and avoids the other, Epicurus propounded that it is a man's duty to endeavour to increase to the utmost his pleasures, and diminish to the utmost his pains, choosing that which tends to pleasure rather than that which tends to pain, and that which tends to a greater pleasure or to a lesser pain, rather than that which tends respectively to a lesser pleasure or a greater pain. He used the terms pleasure and pain in the most comprehensive way, as including pleasure and pain of both mind and body; and he esteemed the pleasures and pains of the mind as incomparably greater than those of the body. Making, then, good and evil, or virtue and vice, depend on a tendency to increase pleasure and diminish pain, or the opposite, he arrived, as he easily might do, at the several virtues to be inculcated and vices to be denounced. He lived in the most frugal and virtuous manner, though it was the delight of the enemies of Epicurus to represent it differently.

What nature loves is good, without our leave ; 590  
 And where no future drawback cries, 'Beware ;'  
 Pleasure, though not from virtue, should prevail.  
 'Tis balm to life, and gratitude to Heav'n ;  
 How cold our thanks for bounties unenjoy'd !  
 The love of pleasure is man's eldest born, 595  
 Born in his cradle, living to his tomb ;  
 Wisdom, her youngest sister, though more grave,  
 Was meant to minister, and not to mar,  
 Imperial pleasure, queen of human hearts.

## THE NATURE, PURPOSE, AND PARENTAGE OF PLEASURE.

Lorenzo ! thou, her majesty's renown'd, 600  
 Though uncoift, counsel, learned in the world !  
 Who think'st thyself a Murray, with disdain  
 Mayst look on me. Yet, my Demosthenes !  
 Canst thou plead pleasure's cause as well as I ?  
 Know'st thou her nature, purpose, parentage ? 605  
 Attend my song, and thou shalt know them all ;  
 And know thyself ; and know thyself to be  
 (Strange truth !) the most abstemious man alive.  
 Tell not Calista : she will laugh thee dead ;  
 Or send thee to her hermitage with L——. 610  
 Absurd presumption ! Thou who never knew'st  
 A serious thought ! shalt thou dare dream of joy ?  
 No man e'er found a happy life by chance,  
 Or yawn'd it into being with a wish ;  
 Or, with the snout of grov'ling appetite, 615

597-9. In these lines Wisdom and Pleasure are beautifully personified.

601. *Uncoift* : Not wearing the official cap.

602. *Murray* : A distinguished lawyer.

603. *My Demosthenes* : An allusion to the most distinguished orator of ancient Greece.

609. *Calista* : Some attractive friend of Lorenzo.

615-17. The imagery here employed is, perhaps, more expressive than any other that could be used, but it is hardly dignified enough to find a place in the "Night Thoughts."

E'er smelt it out; and grubbed it from the dirt.  
 An art it is, and must be learnt; and learnt  
 With unremitting effort, or be lost;  
 And leave us perfect blockheads in our bliss.  
 The clouds may drop down titles and estates; 620  
 Wealth may seek us; but wisdom must be sought;  
 Sought beyond all; but (how unlike all else  
 We seek on earth!) 'tis never sought in vain.  
 First, pleasure's birth, rise, strength, and grandeur  
 Brought forth by wisdom, nursed by discipline, 625  
 By patience taught, by perseverance crown'd,  
 She rears her head majestic; round her throne,  
 Erected in the bosom of the just,  
 Each virtue, listed, forms her manly guard.  
 For what are virtues? (formidable name!) 630  
 What, but the fountain, or defence, of joy?  
 Why, then, commanded? Need mankind commands,  
 At once to merit, and to make, their bliss?—  
 Great Legislator! scarce so great, as kind!  
 If men are rational, and love delight, 635  
 Thy gracious law but flatters human choice:  
 In the transgression lies the penalty;  
 And they the most indulge who most obey.  
 Of pleasure, next, the final cause explore;  
 Its mighty purpose, its important end. 640  
 Not to turn human brutal, but to build  
 Divine on human, pleasure came from heav'n.  
 In aid to reason was the goddess sent;  
 To call up all its strength by such a charm.  
 Pleasure first succours virtue; in return, 645  
 Virtue gives pleasure an eternal reign.  
 What but the pleasure of food, friendship, faith,  
 Supports life nat'ral, civil, and divine?  
 'Tis from the pleasure of repast, we live;  
 'Tis from the pleasure of applause, we please; 650  
 'Tis from the pleasure of belief, we pray,  
 (All pray'r would cease, if unbeliev'd the prize :)

650-2. The statements in these lines need some qualification to accord



It serves ourselves, our species, and our God ;  
 And to serve more, is past the sphere of man.  
 Glide, then, for ever, pleasure's sacred stream ! 655  
 Through Eden, as Euphrates ran, it runs,  
 And fosters ev'ry growth of happy life ;  
 Makes a new Eden where it flows ;—but such  
 As must be lost, Lorenzo, by thy fall.  
 'What mean I by thy fall ?'—Thou'lt shortly see, 660  
 While pleasure's nature is at large displayed ;  
 Already sung her origin and ends.  
 Those glorious ends, by kind, or by degree,  
 When pleasure violates, 'tis then a vice,  
 A vengeance too ; it hastens into pain : 665  
 From due refreshment, life, health, reason, joy ;  
 From wild excess, pain, grief, distraction, death ;  
 Heav'n's justice this proclaims and that her love.  
 What greater evil can I wish my foe,  
 Than his full draught of pleasure, from a cask 670  
 Unbroach'd by just authority, ungauged  
 By temperance, by reason unrefined ?  
 A thousand dæmons lurk within the lee.

with truth. They imply that no attempt is even made to *please* others, except from a regard to the *praise* we thence anticipate, and that all prayer to God is prompted by the pleasure expected. It is but charity to suppose, that Dr. Young here strains and narrows down the truth, for the sake of making out an argument on the point under discussion. We cannot think that he would deny the existence of the operation of much higher, purer, and more disinterested motives to prompt to these actions. Why may not benevolence excite us to please others ? or, why may not a regard to the Divine command to do so be a sufficient motive ? So in regard to prayer. Love to God, desire of holiness, and a benevolent regard to the happiness of mankind, are, in the pious mind, far more potent motives to prayer than the selfish one made so unduly prominent by our author.

659. *By thy fall* : Allusion is made to the fall of our first parents in Paradise.

664. *When pleasure violates, &c.* : The results of improper and excessive indulgence are set forth.

673. *Lee* : Dregs.

Heav'n, others, and ourselves ! uninjured these,  
 Drink deep ; the deeper, then, the more divine : 675  
 Angels are angels from indulgence there ;  
 'Tis unrepenting pleasure makes a god.  
 Dost think thyself a god from other joys ?  
 A victim rather ! shortly sure to bleed.  
 The wrong must mourn : can Heav'n's appointments fail ? 680  
 Can man outwit Omnipotence ? strike out  
 A self-wrought happiness unmeant by Him  
 Who made us, and the world we would enjoy ?  
 Who forms an instrument, ordains from whence  
 Its dissonance, or harmony, shall rise. 685  
 Heav'n bid the soul this mortal frame inspire ;  
 Bid virtue's ray divine inspire the soul  
 With unprecarious flows of vital joy ;  
 And, without breathing, man as well might hope  
 For life, as, without piety, for peace. 690

PIETY AND VIRTUE COMPARED—THEIR PLEASURES.

' Is virtue, then, and piety the same ?  
 No ; piety is more : 'tis virtue's source ;  
 Mother of ev'ry worth, as that of joy.  
 Men of the world this doctrine ill digest :  
 They smile at piety ; yet boast aloud 695  
 Good will to men ; nor know they strive to part  
 What nature joins ; and thus confute themselves.  
 With piety begins all good on earth ;  
 'Tis the first-born of rationality.  
 Conscience, her first law broken, wounded lies ; 700  
 Enfeebled, lifeless, impotent to good ;  
 A feign'd affection bounds her utmost pow'r.  
 Some we can't love, but for the Almighty's sake :

674. *Uninjured these*: The preceding words of this line are an exclamatory phrase. What follows may be thus paraphrased:—*These* (that is, Heav'n, others, and ourselves) being *uninjured*, *drink deep* of pleasure. *The deeper then* (that is, while there is no violation of what is due to God, to others, and ourselves) *the more*, &c. 676. *There*—in the manner just explained.

A foe to God was ne'er true friend to man ;  
 Some sinister intent taints all he does ; 705  
 And in his kindest actions he's unkind.

On piety, humanity is built ;  
 And, on humanity, much happiness ;  
 And yet still more on piety itself.  
 A soul in commerce with her God, is heav'n ; 710  
 Feels not the tumults and the shocks of life,  
 The whirls of passion, and the strokes of heart.

A Deity believed, is joy begun ;  
 A Deity adored, is joy advanced ;  
 A Deity beloved, is joy matured. 715

Each branch of piety delight inspires ;  
Faith builds a bridge from this world to the next  
O'er death's dark gulf, and all its horror hides ;  
 Praise, the sweet exhalation of our joy,  
 That joy exalts, and makes it sweeter still ; 720

Pray'r ardent opens heav'n, lets down a stream  
 Of glory on the consecrated hour  
 Of man, in audience with the Deity.  
 Who worships the great God, that instant joins 725  
 The first in heav'n, and sets his foot on hell.

Lorenzo ! when wast thou at church before ?  
 Thou think'st the service long ; but is it just ?  
 Though just, unwelcome ; thou hadst rather tread  
 Unhallow'd ground ; the muse, to win thine ear,  
 Must take an air less solemn. She complies. 730  
 Good conscience ! at the sound the world retires ;

710. *Commerce* : Communion, friendship.

713-15. An elegant climax is here exhibited. Some critics have announced, to the disparagement of Dr. Young, that he deals only in theoretical views of religion, and presents none of the experimental kind ; but this, and many other passages which might be selected, may serve to show the unfairness of such a criticism. Yet it is matter of regret that he does not more frequently occupy his pages with practical illustrations of true religion.

731. *Good conscience* (at the *sound* of which word men of the world

Verse disaffects it, and Lorenzo smiles :  
 Yet has she her seraglio full of charms ;  
 And such as age shall heighten, not impair.  
 Art thou dejected ? Is thy mind o'ercast ? 735  
 Amid her fair ones, thou the fairest choose,  
 To chase thy gloom—' Go, fix some weighty truth ;  
 Chain down some passion ; do some gen'rous good ;  
 Teach ignorance to see, or grief to smile ;  
 Correct thy friend ; befriend thy greatest foe ; 740  
 Or with warp heart, and confidence divine,  
 Spring up, and lay strong hold on Him who made thee.'  
 Thy gloom is scattered, sprightly spirits flow ;  
 Though wither'd is thy vine, and harp unstrung.

## MIRTH AND LAUGHTER.

Dost call the bowl, the viol, and the dance, 745  
 Loud mirth, mad laughter ? Wretched comforters !  
 Physicians ! more than half of thy disease.  
 Laughter, though never censured yet as sin,  
 (Pardon a thought that only seems severe)  
 Is half immoral : is it much indulged ? 750  
 By venting spleen, or dissipating thought,  
 It shews a scorner, or it makes a fool ;  
 And sins, as hurting others, or ourselves.  
 'Tis pride, or emptiness, applies the straw,  
 That tickles little minds to mirth effuse ; 755  
 Of grief approaching, the portentous sign !

withdraw) is in this passage personified—is described as having a *seraglio*, and *fair ones*, in allusion to the palace of the Sultan of Turkey, containing apartments for beautiful females, to minister to his pleasure. These *fair ones* are described in 737—742. They are certain *actions* which "good conscience" approves and enjoins.

755. *Effuse* : Profuse, excessive.

756. "I said of laughter, it is mad; and of mirth, what doeth it? The heart of fools is in the house of mirth. Sorrow is better than laughter. As the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool."—*Ecclesiastes*.

The house of laughter makes a house of wo.  
 A man triumphant is a monstrous sight :  
 A man dejected is a sight as mean.  
 What cause for triumph, where such ills abound ? 760  
 What for dejection, where presides a Pow'r,  
 Who call'd us into being to be blest ?  
 So grieve, as conscious, grief may rise to joy :  
 So joy, as conscious, joy to grief may fall.  
 Most true, a wise man never will be sad ; 765  
 But neither will sonorous, bubbling mirth,  
 A shallow stream of happiness betray :  
 Too happy to be sportive, he's serene.  
 Yet wouldst thou laugh (but at thy own expense)  
 This counsel strange should I presume to give— 770  
 'Retire, and read thy Bible, to be gay.'  
 There truths abound of sov'reign aid to peace ;  
 Ah ! do not prize them less, because inspired,  
 As thou, and thine, are apt and proud to do.  
 If not inspired, that pregnant page had stood, 775  
 Time's treasure, and the wonder of the wise !  
 Thou think'st, perhaps, thy soul alone at stake :  
 Alas !—Should men mistake thee for a fool ;  
 What man of taste for genius, wisdom, truth,  
 Though tender of thy fame, could interpose ? 780  
 Believe me, sense, here, acts a double part,  
 And the true critic is a Christian too.  
 But these, thou think'st, are gloomy paths to joy.—  
 True joy in sunshine ne'er was found at first :  
 They, first, themselves offend, who greatly please ; 785  
 And travail only gives us sound repose.  
 Heav'n sells all pleasure ; effort is the price :  
 The joys of conquest are the joys of man ;  
 And glory the victorious laurel spreads

777. *Thy soul*: The welfare of thy soul in eternity. Our author adds to this, that Lorenzo's reputation as a man of sense and an able critic, was also in peril, through neglect or contempt of the inspired volume.

785. *Please*: That is, themselves.

O'er pleasure's pure, perpetual, placid stream.

790

**SUBSTANTIAL JOYS, THE PRODUCT OF EXERTION AND VIGILANCE.**

There is a time, when toil must be preferr'd,  
 Or joy, by mistimed fondness, is undone.  
 A man of pleasure is a man of pains.  
 Thou wilt not take the trouble to be blest.  
 False joys, indeed, are born from want of thought ; 795  
 From thought's full bent, and energy, the true ;  
 And that demands a mind in equal poise,  
 Remote from gloomy grief and glaring joy.  
 Much joy not only speaks small happiness,  
 But happiness that shortly must expire. 800  
 Can joy, unbottom'd in reflection, stand ?  
 And, in a tempest, can reflection live ?  
 Can joy, like thine, secure itself an hour !  
 Can joy, like thine, meet accident unshock'd ?  
 Or ope the door to honest poverty ? 805  
 Or talk with threat'ning death, and not turn pale ?  
 In such a world, and such a nature, these  
 Are needful fundamentals of delight :  
 These fundamentals give delight indeed ;  
 Delight, pure, delicate, and durable ; 810  
 Delight, unshaken, masculine, divine ;  
 A constant, and a sound, but serious joy.  
 Is joy the daughter of severity ?

790. The reader should notice the *alliteration* in this line, every word but two beginning with the same letter.

793. This line presents an *alliterated* contrast, which is the more striking because it seems to convey contradictory ideas, owing to the ambiguity in the meaning of the word *pains*. Pleasure, pain, begin with the *same letter*, and at first seem to denote opposite states of feeling ; but the connection shows that the latter word here denotes careful and strenuous *exertion*.

797. *And that* : True joy demands a mind *in equal poise*, equally balanced.

807. *These* : Joys which are founded on *reflection*, are *not shocked by accident*, nor banished by a descent to *honest poverty*, nor by the prospect of conflict with *death*.

It is :—Yet far my doctrine from severe.  
 ‘Rejoice for ever.’ It becomes a man ; 815  
 Exalts, and sets him nearer to the gods.  
 ‘Rejoice for ever,’ nature cries, ‘rejoice ;’  
 And drinks to man, in her nectareous cup,  
 Mix’d up of delicates for ev’ry sense ;  
 To the great Founder of the bounteous feast, 820  
 Drinks glory, gratitude, eternal praise ;  
 And he that will not pledge her, is a churl.  
 Ill firmly to support, good fully taste,  
 Is the whole science of felicity.  
 Yet sparing pledge : her bowl is not the best 825  
 Mankind can boast.—‘A rational repast ;  
 Exertion, vigilance, a mind in arms ;  
 A military discipline of thought,  
 To foil temptation in the doubtful field ;  
 And ever-waking ardour for the right ;’ 830  
 ’Tis these first give, then guard, a cheerful heart.  
 Nought that is right think little ; well aware,  
 What reason bids, God bids ; by his command  
 How aggrandized the smallest thing we do !  
 Thus, nothing is insipid to the wise : 835  
 To thee, insipid all, but what is mad ;

816. *The gods* : Angels. Compare 676–7.

818. *Nectareous cup* : Nectar, in the mythology of the Greeks and Romans, was the supposed drink of the immortal gods (ambrosia being their food), and was fabled to contribute largely to their immortality. If we believe the accounts of the poets, the qualities of this liquor must have been of a most delicious character. It imparted youth, bloom, and vigour to the body, and possessed the power of repairing all the defects and injuries of the mental constitution —*Brande*.

823. *Ill, &c.* : *Firmly to support evil* (or adversity), *fully to taste good* (the advantages and prosperities of life), is *the whole science of happiness*, that is, according to the dictates of *nature* (817).

825. *Yet sparing pledge* : Yet drink sparingly of the *bowl* which *nature* furnishes : *her bowl is not the best, &c.* The description of a better bowl immediately follows (826–830).

832. *Think little* : Think of little consequence to your happiness.

Joys season'd high, and tasting strong of guilt.

WHAT IT IS TO FOLLOW NATURE.

‘Mad! (thou reply’st, with indignation fired)  
 Of ancient sages proud to tread the steps,  
 I follow nature.’—Follow nature still, 840  
 But look it be thine own: Is conscience, then,  
 No part of nature? Is she not supreme?  
 Thou regicide! O raise her from the dead!  
 Then, follow nature; and resemble God.  
 When, spite of conscience, pleasure is pursued, 845  
 Man’s nature is unnaturally pleased:  
 And what’s unnatural, is painful too

842. *No part of nature*: In the controversy with the man of the world personated by Lorenzo, this question is a fundamental one. *Conscience is the highest faculty in the human soul*, the *commanding*, the authoritative portion of our nature—that which we are constituted to feel it our obligation as well as interest to obey. When we disobey its monitions, we feel blameworthy, and are ‘so. Since conscience prompts to virtue, it is a just inference that man was made for virtuous action; and he does not act according to the dictates of his nature as a whole, when he gratifies his other faculties and propensities in a manner or degree disapproved by the supreme faculty—that which the Creator evidently designed to control our actions.

The conclusion is, says Dr. Beattie, that to allow no more to this part than to other parts of our nature—to let it guide and govern only occasionally, in common with the rest, as its turn happens to come, this is not to act conformably to the constitution of man; and though conscience may lose its power when borne down by evil habits or tumultuous passion, as the strongest man, by being kept in fetters, may lose the use of his limbs, yet conscience still retains its authority, that is, *its right to govern*. It prescribes measures to every appetite, affection, and passion; and says to every other principle of action, *so far thou mayest go, but no farther*.

Hence, adds the same author, it may be seen how foolishly those men argue who give way to all their passions without reserve, and excuse themselves by saying, that every passion is *natural*, and that they cannot be blamed for doing what nature prompts them to do. It is only a part, and that confessedly an inferior part of their nature, that prompts them to such indulgence. Their nature, *as a whole*, remonstrates against such indulgence. It is, therefore, *unnatural*, in the proper sense of that word, and, therefore, to be condemned and abandoned.



At intervals, and must disgust e'en thee !  
 The fact thou know'st ; but not, perhaps, the cause.  
 Virtue's foundations with the world's were laid ; 850  
 Heav'n mix'd her with our make, and twisted close  
 Her sacred int'rests with the strings of life.  
 Who breaks her awful mandate, shocks himself,  
 His better self : And is it greater pain,  
 Our soul should murmur, or our dust repine ? 855  
 And one, in their eternal war, must bleed.  
 If one must suffer, which should least be spared ?  
 The pains of mind surpass the pains of sense :  
 Ask, then, the gout, what torment is in guilt.  
 The joys of sense, to mental joys are mean : 860  
 Sense on the present only feeds ; the soul  
 On past, and future, forages for joy.  
 'Tis hers by retrospect, through time to range ;  
 And forward time's great sequel to survey.  
 Could human courts take vengeance on the mind, 865  
 Axes might rust, and racks, and gibbets, fall :  
 Guard, then, thy mind, and leave the rest to fate.

## KNOW THYSELF.

Lorenzo ! wilt thou never be a man ?

850. *Virtue's foundations, &c.* : This important subject is fully presented in Boyd's *Eclectic Moral Philosophy*, pp. 89—95 ; also in Chalmers's *Institutes of Theology*, vol. i., pp. 24—5, who therein thus writes : In the Divinity alone it is that virtue has its fountain-head and its being ; not, however, in the fountain-head of the Divine will, but higher than this, and anterior to this—in the fountain-head of the Divine Nature. It is not the will of God which determines his nature, but the nature of God which determines his will. That is a code of pure and perfect righteousness which is graven on the tablet of the Divine jurisprudence : but it did not originate there ; for there it is but a transcript from the prior tablet of the Divine character. Virtue is not right because God wills it, but God wills it because it is right. The moral has antecedency to the judicial, having had its stable and everlasting residence in the constitution of the Deity, before that he willed it into a law for the government of his creatures.

860. *To* : Compared to.

The man is dead, who for the body lives,  
 Lured, by the beating of his pulse, to list 870  
 With ev'ry lust that wars against his peace,  
 And sets him quite at variance with himself.  
 Thyself, first, know ; then love : A self there is  
 Of virtue fond, that kindles at her charms.  
 A self there is as fond of ev'ry vice, 875  
 While ev'ry virtúe wounds it to the heart :  
 Humility degrades it, justice robs,  
 Blest bounty beggars it, fair truth betrays,  
 And godlike magnanimity destroys.  
 This self, when rival to the former, scorn ; 880  
 When not in competition, kindly treat,  
 Defend it, feed it :—But when virtue bids,  
 Toss it, or to the fowls, or to the flames.  
 And why ? 'Tis love of pleasure bids thee bleed ;

873. *Thyself*: This term, as the author shows, embraces a *self that is fond of virtue*, and a *self as fond of every vice*—a higher and lower self; the former consisting of reason and conscience, the latter of the propensities and desires. This twofold self is strongly delineated by the Apostle Paul in his Letter to the Romans, chap. vii.

877-9. *Humility degrades, &c.*: That is, our depraved self, consisting of perverted appetites and desires, looks upon humility as degrading, justice to others as defrauding ourselves, liberality to the poor as reducing ourselves to want, &c.

883. *Or to the fowls*: Either to the, &c.

884. *The love of pleasure, &c.*: The love of a higher pleasure bids thee sacrifice a lower enjoyment even at great pain of self-denial. This point is exceedingly well illustrated by Dr. Beattie in his *Moral Science*, thus: If we could at once gratify all the propensities of our nature, that would be our highest possible happiness, and what we might call our *summum bonum*, or chief good. But that cannot be; for our propensities are often inconsistent, so that if we comply with one we must contradict another. He who is enslaved to sensuality, cannot, at the same time, enjoy the more sublime pleasures of science and virtue; and he who devotes himself to science, or adheres to virtue, must often act in opposition to his inferior appetites. The ambitious man cannot labor for the acquisition of power, and taste the sweets of indolence at the same time; and the miser, while he indulges himself in the contemplation of his wealth, must be a stranger to the pleasures of beneficence. The gratification of all our appetites at

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

VICE A MISTAKEN, VIRTUE A WISE, SELF-LOVE.

For what is vice? Self-love in a mistake :  
 A poor blind merchant buying joys too dear.  
 And virtue, what? 'Tis self-love in her wits,  
 Quite skilful in the market of delight.  
 Self-love's good sense is love of that dread Pow'r, 890  
 From whom she springs, and all she can enjoy.  
 Other self-love is but disguised self-hate ;  
 More mortal than the malice of our foes ;  
 A self-hate, now, scarce felt ; then felt full sore,  
 When being curst ; extinction, loud implored ; 895  
 And ev'ry thing preferr'd to what we are.  
 Yet this self-love Lorenzo makes his choice ;  
 And, in this choice triumphant, boasts of joy.  
 How is his want of happiness betray'd,  
 By disaffection to the present hour ! 900  
 Imagination wanders far a-field.  
 The future pleases : Why! The present pains.—  
 'But that's a secret.' Yes, which all men know ;  
 And know from thee, discover'd unawares.  
 Thy ceaseless agitation, restless roll 905

once, is, therefore, impossible. Consequently, some degree of self-denial must be practised by every man, whether good or bad—by the ruffian as well as the saint, the sensualist as well as the hermit ; and man's greatest possible happiness must be, at least in the present state, not a complete gratification of all our propensities, but the most comprehensive gratification of which we are capable. Now, some pleasures conduce more to happiness than others, and are, therefore, more important than others ; and if we sacrifice a less important to a more important one, we add to our sum of happiness ; and we take away from that sum, when we sacrifice a more important pleasure to one of less importance.

891. *She springs* : In some editions this line reads : From whom herself, and all she can enjoy.

895. *When being (is) curst, (and) extinction (is) loud implored.*

901. *A-field* : Across the fields.

905. *Roll* : A noun.

From cheat to cheat, impatient of a pause ;  
 What is it ?—'Tis the cradle of the soul,  
 From instinct sent, to rock her in disease,  
 Which her physician, reason, will not cure.  
 A poor expedient ! yet thy best ; and while . 910  
 It mitigates thy pain, it owns it too.

Such are Lorenzo's wretched remedies !  
 The weak have remedies ; the wise have joys.  
 Superior wisdom is superior bliss.  
 And what sure mark distinguishes the wise ? 915

Consistent wisdom ever wills the same ;  
 Thy fickle wish is ever on the wing.  
 Sick of herself, is folly's character ;  
 As wisdom's is, a modest self-applause.  
 A change of evils is thy good supreme ; 920

Nor, but in motion, canst thou find thy rest.  
 Man's greatest strength is shewn in standing still.  
 The first sure symptom of a mind in health,  
 Is rest of heart, and pleasure felt at home.  
 False pleasure from abroad her joys imports ; 925

Rich from within, and self-sustain'd, the true.  
 The true is fix'd, and solid as a rock ;  
 Slipp'ry the false, and tossing as the wave.  
 This, a wild wanderer on earth, like Cain ;  
 That, like the fabled, self-enamour'd boy, 930  
 Home-contemplation her supreme delight :  
 She dreads an interruption from without,  
 Smit with her own condition ; and the more  
 Intense she gazes, still it charms the more.

921. A fine example of unexpected contrast in the words *motion* and *rest*.

929. *Like Cain* : Gen. iv. 12 : " A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth." This was Cain's sentence.

930. *Self-enamour'd boy* : The fabled *Narcissus*, the beautiful son of the river-god Cephissus and the nymph Lyriope. Seeing his image reflected in a fountain, he fell so exceedingly in love with it, that he pined away till he died. Subsequently he was changed into the flower that bears his name.

## THE HAPPY MAN.

No man is happy till he thinks, on earth 935  
 There breathes not a more happy than himself:  
 Then envy dies, and love o'erflows on all;  
 And love o'erflowing makes an angel here.  
 Such angels all, entitled to repose  
 On Him who governs fate. Though tempest frowns, 940  
 Though nature shakes, how soft to lean on Heav'n!  
 To lean on Him, on whom archangels lean!  
 With inward eyes, and silent as the grave,  
 They stand collecting ev'ry beam of thought,  
 Till their hearts kindle with divine delight: 945  
 For all their thoughts, like angels, seen of old  
 In Israel's dream, come from, and go to, heav'n:  
 Hence, are they studious of sequester'd scenes;  
 While noise, and dissipation, comfort thee.  
 Were all men happy, revelling would cease, 950  
 That opiate for inquietude within.  
 Lorenzo! never man was truly blest,  
 But it composed, and gave him such a cast,  
 As folly might mistake for want of joy.  
 A cast, unlike the triumph of the proud; 955  
 A modest aspect, and a smile at heart.  
 O for a joy from thy Philander's spring!  
 A spring perennial, rising in the breast,  
 And permanent, as pure! No turbid stream  
 Of rapt'rous exultation, swelling high; 960  
 Which, like land-floods, impetuous pour a while,

940. *Fate*: The destiny of men.

941. *Soft*: Pleasant.

943. *With inward eyes*: With the mental eye directed inward, or, with thoughts directed inward to the operations of the soul.

947. *Israel's dream*: Gen. xxviii. 12: "And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven, and behold the angels of God ascending and descending upon it."

Then sink at once, and leave us in the mire.  
 What does the man, who transient joy prefers ?  
 What, but prefer the bubbles to the stream ?  
 Vain are all sudden sallies of delight ; 965  
 Convulsions of a weak distemper'd joy.  
 Joy's a fix'd state ; a tenure, not a start.  
 Bliss there is none, but unprecarious bliss :  
 That is the gem : sell all and purchase that.  
 Why go a begging to contingencies, 970  
 Not gain'd with ease, nor safely loved, if gain'd ?  
 At good fortuitous, draw back, and pause ;  
 Suspect it : what thou canst ensure, enjoy ;  
 And nought but what thou giv'st thyself, is sure.  
 Reason perpetuates joy that reason gives, 975  
 And makes it as immortal as herself :  
 To mortals, nought immortal, but their worth.  
 Worth, conscious worth ! should absolutely reign ;

968. *Unprecarious* : Not uncertain, but enduring.

972. *Fortuitous* : Subject to accident, not reliable.

978. *Worth should absolutely reign* : We may illustrate this topic in the language of Dr. Beattie's Moral Science :

Every gratification of which human nature is capable, may be comprehended under one or other of these three classes : the pleasures of outward sense, the pleasures of imagination and intellect (that is, of taste and science), and the pleasures that result from the right exercise of our moral powers.

The delights that arise from the latter source, and from the approbation of conscience, are, of all gratifications, the most dignified. The more a man attaches himself to them, the more respectable he becomes ; and it is not possible for him to carry such attachment to excess. With disgust, or with pain, they are never attended : they give a relish for other pleasures, by preserving the mind cheerful, and the body in health ; they are not inconsistent with any innocent gratification—that is, they are consistent with all pleasures except those which bring pain and misery—they please intensely on reflection—are a perpetual source of comfort in adversity—become more exquisite the more we are accustomed to them—they are within the reach of every man, high and low, learned and ignorant—are suited to all times and places, and, so long as we retain our rationality, it is not in the power of malice or of fortune to deprive us of them. To *virtue*, therefore, which is *the right exercise of our moral powers*, the character of

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

## THE GUILT AND FOLLIES OF IMAGINATION.

Imagination is the Paphian shop,  
 Where feeble happiness, like Vulcan, lame, 995  
 Bids foul ideas, in their dark recess,  
 And hot as hell (which kindled the black fires)

chief good does belong, which will appear still more evident when we consider that the hope of future felicity is the chief consolation of the present life, and that the virtuous alone can reasonably entertain that hope. As, on the other hand, vice, in the most prosperous condition, is subject to the pangs of a guilty conscience, and to the dreadful anticipation of future punishment, which are sufficient to destroy all earthly happiness.

994. *Paphian shop*: *Paphos* is an ancient name of the island of Cyprus, where *Venus* was worshipped in a peculiar degree. *Vulcan* was the god of blacksmiths, skilled in arts connected with metals and fire. His *lame-ness* was owing to his being tumbled out of heaven by *Jupiter* for venturing to help his mother *Juno*, whom *Jupiter* had suspended in the air. To these circumstances our author alludes.

The *senses* being tired by excessive indulgence (993), *feeble*, or enfeebled *happiness*, or pleasure, goes to the *shop of imagination*, on ground devoted to *Venus*, the goddess of guilty pleasures. Pleasure is *lame*, like *Vulcan*, and proceeds to employ the *black fires of foul ideas to form those fatal arrows which muraered Lorenzo's time, &c.*

With wanton art, those fatal arrows form,  
 Which murder all thy time, health, wealth, and fame.  
 Wouldst thou receive them, other thoughts there are, 1000  
 On angel wing, descending from above,  
 Which these, with art divine, would counterwork,  
 And form celestial armour for thy peace.

In this is seen imagination's guilt :  
 But who can count her follies? She betrays thee, 1005  
 To think in grandeur there is something great,  
 For works of curious art, and ancient fame,  
 Thy genius hungers, elegantly pain'd ;  
 And foreign climes must cater for thy taste.  
 Hence what disaster !—Though the price was paid, 1010  
 That persecuting priest, the Turk of Rome, *Pope*  
 Whose foot (ye gods !) though cloven, must be kiss'd,  
 Detain'd thy dinner on the Latian shore ;  
 (Such is the fate of honest protestants !)  
 And poor magnificence is starved to death. 1015

Hence just resentment, indignation, ire !—  
 Be pacified ; if outward things are great,  
 'Tis magnanimity great things to scorn ;  
 Pompous expenses, and parades august,  
 And courts, that insalubrious soil to peace, 1020  
True happiness ne'er enter'd at an eye :  
True happiness resides in things unseen. ✓

1011. *The Turk of Rome*: The Pope of Rome, cruel as a Turk in the persecution of Protestant Christians, and arrogantly demanding of his subordinate clergy and others, even crowned princes, the degrading homage of kissing his foot, even *though*, as our author adds, *cloven* or split—that is (in allusion to some ridiculous poetic and pictorial illustrations), the foot of the devil. Tasso describes Satan in his Fourth Canto as possessing horns, and a tail, and cloven feet. Raphael and Michael Angelo, in their pictures, give a similar representation. The Pope is here represented as haughtily occasioning Lorenzo some inconvenience and privations, when examining the *works of curious art* on the Latin (or Roman) shore.

1012. *Ye gods*: An exclamation less unbecoming to a Pagan than a Christian author. Dr. Young here unworthily copied the fashion of other poets of his day.



No smiles of fortune ever bless'd the bad,  
 Nor can her frowns rob innocence of joys ;  
 That jewel wanting, triple crowns are poor : 1025  
 So tell his holiness, and be revenged.

## WHAT DESERVES THE NAME OF PLEASURE.

Pleasure, we both agree, is man's chief good :  
 Our only contest, what deserves the name.  
 Give pleasure's name to nought, but what has pass'd  
 Th' authentic seal of reason (which, like Yorke, 1030  
 Demurs on what it passes) and defies  
 The tooth of time ; when past, a pleasure still ;  
 Dearer on trial, lovelier for its age,  
 And doubly to be prized, as it promotes  
 Our future, while it forms our present joy. 1035  
 Some joys the future overcast ; and some  
 Throw all their beams that way, and gild the tomb.  
 Some joys endear eternity ; some give  
 Abhorr'd annihilation dreadful charms.  
 Are rival joys contending for thy choice ? 1040  
 Consult thy whole existence, and be safe :  
 That oracle will put all doubt to flight.  
 Short is the lesson, though my lecture long :  
 Be good—and let Heav'n answer for the rest.  
 Yet, with a sigh o'er all mankind, I grant, 1045  
 In this our day of proof, our land of hope,  
 The good man has his clouds that intervene ;  
 Clouds, that obscure his sublunary day,  
 But never conquer : Ev'n the best must own,  
 Patience and resignation are the pillars 1050  
 Of human peace on earth. The pillars, these :  
 But those of Seth not more remote from thee,

1026. *His holiness* : A title by which the Pope chooses to be described.

1046. *Proof* : Trial or probation.

1052. *The pillars of Seth* : We find mention made of these in Josephus' Antiquities. According to him, Seth (the son of Adam) and his posterity

Till this heroic lesson thou hast learnt ;  
 To frown at pleasure, and to smile in pain.  
 Fired at the prospect of unclouded bliss, 1055  
 Heav'n in reversion, like the sun, as yet  
 Beneath th' horizon, cheers us in this world :  
 It sheds, on souls susceptible of light,  
 The glorious dawn of our eternal day.

'This (says Lorenzo) is a fair harangue : 1060  
 But can harangues blow back strong nature's stream ?  
 Or stem the tide Heav'n pushes through our veins,  
 Which sweeps away man's impotent resolves,  
 And lays his labour level with the world ?'

Themselves men make their comments on mankind ; 1065  
 And think nought is, but what they find at home :  
 Thus weakness to chimera turns the truth.  
 Nothing romantic has the muse prescribed.

Above, Lorenzo saw the man of earth,  
 The mortal man ; and wretched was the sight. 1070  
 To balance that, to comfort and exalt,  
 Now see the man immortal : him I mean,  
 Who lives as such ; whose heart, full bent on heav'n,

were inventors of the art of astronomy, and made important observations, which they sought to preserve by inscribing them upon two pillars, which they erected for the purpose in the land of Siriad—the one of brick, and the other of stone, as Adam had given them to understand that the earth should be destroyed at one time by the force of fire, and, at another, by the violence and quantity of water. It was supposed that, in case the pillar of brick should be destroyed by the flood, the pillar of stone would survive it. Josephus says it was standing in his own day.

But the translator of Josephus, in a note, declares the opinion that a mistake was made by Josephus, attributing to Seth, the son of Adam, what should have been ascribed to Seth, or Sesostris, king of Egypt, stating that such pillars could not have resisted the Deluge, while there is evidence that the like pillars of the Egyptian Seth, or Sesostris, were extant after the flood in the land of Siriad, and, perhaps, in the time of Josephus too.

1056. *In reversion* : In prospective possession. The figure that follows cannot be too much admired for its appropriateness.

1067. *To chimera, &c.* : To that which is paradoxical and incredible.

1069. *Above* : In a former "Night."

Leans all that way, his bias to the stars.  
 The world's dark shades, in contrast set, shall raise 1075  
 His lustre more; though bright, without a foil:  
 Observe his awful portrait, and admire;  
 Nor stop at wonder: imitate, and live.

THE MAN WHO LIVES AS AN IMMORTAL, CONTRASTED WITH THE  
 WORLDLING.

Some angel guide my pencil, while I draw,  
 What nothing less than angel can exceed, 1080  
A man on earth devoted to the skies;  
Like ships in sea, while in, above the world.  
 With aspect mild and elevated eye,  
 Behold him seated on a mount serene,  
 Above the fogs of sense, and passion's storm; 1085  
 All the black cares, and tumults, of this life  
 (Like harmless thunders, breaking at his feet)  
 Excite his pity, not impair his peace.  
 Earth's genuine sons, the scepter'd, and the slave,  
 A mingled mob! a wand'ring herd! he sees, 1090  
 Bewilder'd in the vale; in all unlike!  
 His full reverse in all! What higher praise?  
 What stronger demonstration of the right?  
 The present all their care; the future, his.  
 When public welfare calls, or private want, 1095  
 They give to fame; his bounty he conceals.  
 Their virtues varnish nature; his exalt.  
 Mankind's esteem they court; and he, his own.

1076. *Without a foil*: Without anything placed in contrast or opposition.

1082. An ingenious comparison. It is almost immediately followed by another, which is finely illustrative of the subject, and carried cut with great correctness and delicacy of taste.

1091. *In all unlike* (himself).

1098. *His own*: The author might more properly have assumed higher ground, and said that he courted the esteem of God.

Theirs, the wild chase of false felicities ;  
 His, the composed possession of the true. 1100  
 Alike throughout is his consistent piece,  
 All of one colour, and an even thread ;  
 While party-coloured shreds of happiness,  
 With hideous gaps between, patch up for them  
 A madman's robe ; each puff of fortune blows 1105  
 The tatters by, and shews their nakedness.  
He sees with other eyes than theirs ; where they  
Behold a sun, he spies a Deity :  
 What makes them only smile, makes him adore.  
 Where they see mountains, he but atoms sees : 1110  
 An empire, in his balance, weighs a grain.  
 They things terrestrial worship, as divine ;  
 His hopes immortal blow them by, as dust,  
 That dims his sight, and shortens his survey,  
 Which longs, in infinite, to lose all bound. 1115  
 Titles and honours (if they prove his fate)  
 He lays aside to find his dignity :  
 No dignity they find in aught besides.  
 They triumph in externals (which conceal  
 Man's real glory) proud of an eclipse. 1120  
 Himself too much he prizes to be proud,  
 And nothing thinks so great in man, as man.  
 Too dear he holds his int'rest, to neglect  
 Another's welfare, or his right invade ;  
 Their int'rest, like a lion, lives on prey. 1125  
 They kindle at the shadow of a wrong :

1108. *He spies a Deity*: He spies the work, the evidence, the glory of its Divine Author.

1113-15. The sublimity of the thought should here be noticed.

1116. *If they prove his fate*: If they should be allotted to him.

1123. *His int'rest*: His interest is contrasted with *their* interest (1125). In the first instance, the word is taken in a large, absolute, and comprehensive sense ; in the other, it is used in a limited sense, to mean that *it is supposed by them* to be their interest, or for their advantage, to invade the rights of others.

self  
creating  
visions

Wrong he sustains with temper, looks on heav'n,  
 Nor stoops to think his injurer his foe ;  
 Nought, but what wounds his virtue, wounds his peace.  
 A cover'd heart their character defends ; 1130  
 A cover'd heart denies him half his praise.  
 With nakedness his innocence agrees ;  
 While their broad foliage testifies their fall.  
 Their no-joys end, where his full feast begins ;  
 His joys create, theirs murder, future bliss. 1135  
 To triumph in existence, his alone ;  
 And his alone, triumphantly to think  
 His true existence is not yet begun.  
 His glorious course was, yesterday, complete :  
 Death, then, was welcome ; yet life still is sweet. 1140

## THE UNDAUNTED BREAST.

But nothing charms Lorenzo, like the firm  
 Undaunted breast—And whose is that high praise ?  
 They yield to pleasure, though they danger brave,

1130–31. The meaning is, that *their* character appears best when their hearts are most covered so as not to be observed or known ; while *his* character does not receive half the admiration it is entitled to, if his heart, his springs of action, his dispositions, are concealed from our view, or do not come to our knowledge. Then follows a happy allusion (1132–33) to our first parents in their primitive and fallen state.

1143–44. *They yield to pleasure* : The duty that is exercised in resisting the solicitation of evils that can scarcely be said to be yet vices, though they are soon to become vices, and are, as yet, to our unreflecting thought, only forms of gaiety and social kindness, is truly one of the most important duties of self-command. It is not the endurance of pain that is the hardest trial to which fortitude can be exposed : it is the calm *endurance*, if I may so term it, of the very smiles of pleasure herself—an endurance that is easy only to the noble love of future as well as present virtue—that can resist what it is delightful to crowds to do, as it resists the less terrible forms of evil from which every individual of the crowd would shrink. The courage of those who have strength only to resist what is commonly termed fear, is a courage that is scarcely worthy of the name—as little worthy of it as the partial courage of the soldier on his own element, if on a different element he were to tremble when exposed to a shipwreck ; or of the

And shew no fortitude, but in the field :  
 If there they shew it, 'tis for glory shewn ; 1145  
 Nor will that cordial always man their hearts,  
 A cordial his sustains, that cannot fail :  
 By pleasure unsubdued, unbroke by pain,  
 He shares in that Omnipotence he trusts ;  
 All-bearing, all-attempting, till he falls ; 1150  
 And when he falls, writes VICI on his shield :  
 From magnanimity, all fear above :  
 From noble recompense, above applause ;  
 Which owes to man's short out-look all its charms.  
 Backward to credit what he never felt, 1155  
 Lorenzo cries—' Where shines this miracle ?  
 From what root rises this immortal man ?'  
 A root that grows not in Lorenzo's ground ;  
 The root dissect, nor wonder at the flow'r.

## THE CHRISTIAN FOLLOWS NATURE.

He follows nature (not like thee !) and shews us 1160  
 An uninverted system of a man.  
 His appetite wears reason's golden chain,  
 And finds, in due restraint, its luxury.  
 His passion, like an eagle well reclaim'd,

seaman if he were, in like manner, to tremble at any of the common perils to which life can be exposed on land. The most strenuous combatants in the tumult of warfares, may be cowards, or worse than cowards, in the calm, moral fight. His is the only genuine strength of heart who resists, not the force of a few fears only to which even in the eyes of the world it is *ignominious* for man to yield, but the force of *every* temptation to which it would be *unworthy* of man to yield, even though the world, in its capricious allotments of honour and shame, might not have chosen to regard with ignominy that peculiar species of cowardice "by pleasure unsubdued," &c. 1148-51.—*Brown's Phil. Mind*, iii. 540.

1151. *Vici*: I have conquered. An allusion to Cæsar's despatch to the Roman senate, *Veni, Vidi, Vici*.

1160. *Not like thee*: Compare 838-9.

1164. *Reclaim'd*: Tamed and trained.

Is taught to fly at nought, but infinite. 1165  
 Patient his hope, unanxious is his care,  
 His caution fearless, and his grief (if grief  
 The gods ordain) a stranger to despair.  
 And why?—Because affection, more than meet,  
 His wisdom leaves not disengaged from heav'n. 1170  
 Those secondary goods that smile on earth,  
 He, loving in proportion, loves in peace.  
 They most the world enjoy, who least admire.  
 His understanding 'scapes the common cloud  
 Of fumes, arising from a boiling breast. 1175  
 His head is clear, because his heart is cool,  
 By worldly competitions uninflamed.  
 The mod'rate movements of his soul admit  
 Distinct ideas, and matured debate,  
 An eye impartial, and an even scale; 1180  
 Whence judgment sound, and unrepenting choice.  
 Thus, in a double sense, the good are wise;  
 On its own dunghill, wiser than the world.  
 What then, the world? It must be doubly weak:  
 Strange truth! as soon would they believe their creed. 1185  
 Yet thus it is; nor otherwise can be:  
 So far from aught romantic what I sing. — *Christian*  
 Bliss has no being, virtue has no strength, *avoids believing*  
 But from the prospect of immortal life. *poems!*  
 Who thinks earth all, or (what weighs just the same) 1190  
 Who cares no farther, must prize what it yields;  
 Fond of its fancies, proud of its parades.  
 Who thinks earth nothing, can't its charms admire;

1168. *The gods ordain*: A Pagan mode of expression, used in accommodation, perhaps, to Lorenzo's mode of talking, but unworthy of a Christian poem, the *gods* of the heathen being no gods.

1184. Rather a low comparison from the barnyard, and only to be vindicated by considering the author's design, which was to place the men of the world in a degraded position, as compared with the aspirant for the Christian's immortality.

1185. *As soon would they* (the men of the world) *believe their creed* (the creed of Christians).

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

THE MAN OF THE WORLD DISDAINS THE CHRISTIAN.

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

1194-97. *He* can't hate a *foe*, &c. 'Tis hard for *them*, &c., to love their dearest *friend*.

1200-1. *Them* and *he* are emphatic.

1209. *A god* : Superhuman. Raises him to a more exalted condition than he occupies on earth.

1211. *Caught by heav'n* : Attracted by its glories.

1215-18. The comparison of the *worldly worth* of Lorenzo to *mist*, and of the solid *merit* of the heavenly-minded man to a mountain, which swells on our approach, and rises nearer to the skies, deserves the highest admiration.



By promise, now, and, by possession soon  
(Too soon, too much, it cannot be) his own. 1220

From this thy just annihilation rise,  
Lorenzo ! rise to something by reply.  
The world, thy client, listens, and expects ;  
And longs to crown thee with immortal praise.

Canst thou be silent ? No ; for wit is thine ; 1225  
And wit talks most, when least she has to say,  
And reason interrupts not her career.

She'll say——That mists above the mountains rise  
And, with a thousand pleasantries, amuse :  
She'll sparkle, puzzle, flutter, raise a dust, 1230  
And fly conviction, in the dust she raised.

## WISDOM AND WIT DISTINGUISHED.

Wit, how delicious to man's dainty taste !  
'Tis precious, as the vehicle of sense ;  
But, as its substitute, a dire disease.  
~~Pernicious talent !~~ flatter'd by the world, 1235  
By the blind world, which thinks the talent rare.

Wisdom is rare, Lorenzo ! wit abounds :  
Passion can give it ; sometimes wine inspires *source of*  
The lucky flash ; and madness rarely fails. *wit*  
Whatever cause the spirit strongly stirs, 1240  
Confers the bays, and rivals thy renown.

For thy renown, 'twere well, was this the worst ;  
Chance often hits it ; and, to pique thee more,  
See dulness, blund'ring on vivacities,  
Shakes her sage head at the calamity, 1245  
Which has exposed, and let her down to thee.

But wisdom, awful wisdom ! which inspects,  
Discerns, compares, weighs, separates, infers,  
Seizes the right, and holds it to the last ;

1241. *Confers the bays* : Confers distinction ; the branches of the laurel-tree, wrought into a garland, having been presented by the ancients as an honorary reward of success in their games.

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

A WARNING AGAINST THE SIRENS' SONG.

How ruinous the rock I warn thee shun,

1254. *An enterpriser* : A bold and reckless adventurer, ready to undertake a hazardous enterprise.

1257. *In religion, death* : And yet who more witty than Dr. Young, and even on religious subjects ? But he evidently refers to infidel wit—to wit uncontrolled by religious principle, and opposed to it. It may here be observed, however, that the religious impression of our author's "Night Thoughts" would have been deeper if his wit had been more sparingly employed. It would, however, have had in that case, perhaps, fewer readers among men of the world.

1259. Who does not admire the fine metaphor of the *helmet* and *plume*, also of the *diamond* in 1261, but we think the effect of these is injured by appending so soon the metaphor of a vessel (1265).

1266. *A half-Chesterfield* : One who has his wit, but only half his sense

1269. *Sirens* : Anthon describes them as two maidens, celebrated in fable, who occupied an island of Ocean, where they sat in a mead close to the sea-shore, and with their melodious voices so charmed those that were

Where Sirens sit to sing thee to thy fate!  
 A joy, in which our reason bears no part, 1270  
 Is but a sorrow, tickling, ere it stings.  
 Let not the cooings of the world allure thee;  
 Which of her lovers ever found her true?  
 Happy! of this bad world who little know!—  
 And yet, we much must know her, to be safe. 1275  
 To know the world, not love her, is thy point:  
 She gives but little, nor that little, long.  
 There is, I grant, a triumph of the pulse;  
 A dance of spirits, a mere froth of joy,  
 Our thoughtless agitation's idle child, 1280  
 That mantles high, that sparkles, and expires,  
 Leaving the soul more vapid than before;  
 An animal ovation! such as holds  
 No commerce with our reason, but subsists  
 On juices, thro' the well-toned tubes, well strain'd; 1285  
 A nice machine! scarce ever tuned aright:  
 And when it jars—thy Sirens sing no more,  
 Thy dance is done; the demi-god is thrown  
 (Short apotheosis!) beneath the man,  
 In coward gloom immersed, or fell despair. 1290

## THE PYRAMID OF HAPPINESS.

Art thou yet dull enough despair to dread,  
 And startle at destruction? If thou art,  
 Accept a buckler, take it to the field;

sailing by, that they forgot home and everything relating to it, and abode with these maidens till they perished from the impossibility of taking nourishment, and their bones lay whitening on the strand.

1281. *Mantles high*: Rises high on the surface.

1283. *Ovation*: Rejoicing. The term strictly refers to a lesser triumph, in which a Roman commander, after an easy victory over foreign enemies, or over slaves, made a public and joyful entrance into the city of Rome, not in a chariot, as in the greater triumph, but on horseback, or on foot.

1289. *Apotheosis*: Deification. Alluding to the Roman practice of raising distinguished men, at death, to the rank of gods or demi-gods.

(A field of battle is this mortal life !)  
 When danger threatens, lay it on thy heart ; 1295  
 A single sentence proof against the world :  
 ' Soul, body, fortune ! ev'ry good pertains  
 To one of these : but prize not all alike :  
 The goods of fortune to thy body's health,  
 Body to soul, and soul submit to God.' 1300  
 Wouldst thou build lasting happiness ? Do this :  
 Th' inverted pyramid can never stand.  
 Is this truth doubtful ? It outshines the sun ;  
 Nay, the sun shines not, but to shew us this,  
 The single lesson of mankind on earth. 1305  
 And yet—Yet, what ? No news ! Mankind is mad !  
 Such mighty numbers list against the right,  
 (And what can't numbers when bewitch'd achieve !)  
 They talk themselves to something like belief,  
 That all earth's joys are theirs : as Athens' fool 1310  
 Grinn'd from the port, on ev'ry sail his own.

## THE WORLD'S MIRTH.

They grin ; but wherefore ? and how long the laugh ?  
 Half ignorance, their mirth ; and half a lie ;  
 To cheat the world, and cheat themselves, they smile.  
 Hard either task ! The most abandon'd own, 1315  
 That others, if abandon'd, are undone :  
 Then, for themselves, the moment reason wakes,  
 (And Providence denies it long repose)  
 O how laborious is their gaiety !  
 They scarce can swallow their ebullient spleen, 1320

1299. *The goods of fortune submit to thy body's health* : That is, prize the former less than the latter.

1310. *Athens' fool* : Thrasyllus, who, being seized with a strange infatuation, left his abode in the city, and took up his residence in the Piræus, and there regarded as his own all the vessels that entered and passed out of the harbour, rejoicing greatly in their safe arrival.

1320. *Ebullient* : Gushing or boiling up.

Scarce muster patience to support the farce,  
 And pump sad laughter, till the curtain falls.  
 Scarce, did I say? Some cannot sit it out;  
 Oft their own daring hands the curtain draw,  
 And shew us what their joy, by their despair. 1325

The clotted hair! gored breast! blaspheming eye!  
 Its impious fury still alive in death!—  
 Shut, shut the shocking scene—But Heav'n denies  
 A cover to such guilt; and so should man.  
 Look round, Lorenzo! see the reeking blade. 1330  
 Th' envenom'd phial, and the fatal ball;  
 The strangling cord, and suffocating stream;  
 The loathsome rottenness, and foul decays  
 From raging riot (slower suicides!)  
 And pride in these more execrable still! 1335  
 How horrid all to thought!—But horrors, these,  
 That vouch the truth; and aid my feeble song.

## THE CHRISTIAN'S JOY.

From vice, sense, fancy, no man can be blest:  
 Bliss is too great to lodge within an hour.  
 When an immortal being aims at bliss, 1340  
 Duration is essential to the name.  
 O for a joy from reason! joy from that,  
 Which makes man, man; and exercised aright,  
 Will make him more: a bounteous joy! that gives  
 And promises; that weaves, with art divine, 1345  
 The richest prospect into present peace:  
 A joy ambitious! joy in common held  
 With thrones ethereal, and their greater far:

1322. *Pump sad laughter*: A striking form of expression to indicate the hypocrisy of their mirth, and the difficulty of appearing happy.

1324. *The curtain draw* that separates them from the invisible world. The phrase is derived from the practice of drawing a curtain, or letting it fall before the stage in a theatre, when the play is concluded. The act of suicide is here indicated, and more fully described in the next paragraph.

A joy high privileged from chance, time, death !  
 A joy, which death shall double, judgment crown ! 1350  
 Crown'd higher, and still higher, at each stage,  
 Through blest eternity's long day ; yet still,  
 Not more remote from sorrow, than from Him,  
 Whose lavish hand, whose love stupendous, pours  
 So much of Deity on guilty dust. 1355  
 There, O my Lucia ! may I meet thee there,  
 Where not thy presence can improve my bliss !

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A WISE MAN AND A FOOL.

Affects not this the sages of the world ?  
 Can nought affect them, but what fools them too ?  
 Eternity depending on an hour, 1360  
 Makes serious thought man's wisdom, joy, and praise.  
 Nor need you blush (though sometimes your designs  
 May shun the light) at your designs on heav'n :  
 Sole point ! where over-bashful is your blame.  
 Are you not wise ? You know you are : yet hear 1365  
 One truth, amid your num'rous schemes, mislaid,  
 Or overlook'd, or thrown aside, if seen :  
 'Our schemes to plan by this world, or the next,  
 Is the sole difference between wise and fool.'  
 All worthy men will weigh you in the scale ; 1370  
 What wonder, then, if they pronounce you light ?  
 Is their esteem alone not worth your care ?  
 Accept my simple scheme of common sense :  
 Thus, save your fame, and make two worlds your own.  
 The world replies not ;—but the world persists ; 1375  
 And puts the cause off to the longest day,  
 Planning evasions for the day of doom.  
 So far, at that re-hearing, from redress,  
 They then turn witnesses against themselves.

1356. *My Lucia* : The author's deceased wife.

1368. To plan our schemes by this world or the next, &c.

- Hear that, Lorenzo! nor be wise to-morrow : 1380  
 Haste, haste! a man, by nature, is in haste ;  
 For who shall answer for another hour ?  
 'Tis highly prudent, to make one sure friend ;  
 And that thou canst not do this side the skies.  
 Ye sons of earth! (nor willing to be more!) 1385  
 Since verse you think from priestcraft somewhat free,  
 Thus, in an age so gay, the muse plain truths  
 (Truths, which at church you might have heard in prose)  
 Has ventured into light; well pleased the verse  
 Should be forgot, if you the truths retain ; 1390  
 And crown her with your welfare, not your praise.  
 But praise she need not fear : I see my fate ;  
 And headlong leap, like Curtius, down the gulf.  
 Since many an ample volume, mighty tome,  
 Must die! and die unwept ; O thou minute, 1395  
 Devoted page! go forth among thy foes ;  
 Go, nobly proud of martyrdom for truth,  
 And die a double death. Mankind incensed,  
 Denies thee long to live : nor shalt thou rest,  
 When thou art dead : in Stygian shades arraign'd 1400

1389. *Ventured to bring into light.*

1393. *Like Curtius* : The story drawn from Livy (Bk. vii. 6) is thus related in an abbreviated form by Anthon: The ground near the middle of the Forum (at Rome), in consequence either of an earthquake, or of some other violent cause, sank down to an immense depth, forming a vast aperture; nor could the gulf be filled up by all the earth which they could throw into it. At last the soothsayers declared that if they wished the commonwealth to be everlasting, they must devote to this chasm what constituted the principal strength of the Roman people. Curtius, on hearing the answer, demanded of his countrymen whether they possessed anything so valuable as their arms and their courage. They yielded a silent assent to the question put them by the heroic youth, whereupon, having arrayed himself in full armour, and mounted his horse, he plunged into the chasm, and the people threw after him their offerings, and quantities of the fruits of the earth. Valerius Maximus states that the earth closed immediately over him. Livy, however, speaks of a lake occupying the spot, called *Lacus Curtius*.

1400. *Stygian shades arraign'd* : An allusion to the gloomy world of the

By Lucifer, as traitor to his throne ;  
 And bold blasphemer of his friend,—the World :  
 The world, whose legions cost him slender pay,  
 And volunteers around his banner swarm :  
 Prudent as Prussia, in her zeal for Gaul. 1405  
 ‘Are all, then, fools?’ Lorenzo cries.—Yes, all,  
 But such as hold this doctrine (new to thee ;)  
 ‘The mother of true wisdom, is the will :’  
 The noblest intellect, a fool without it.  
 World-wisdom much has done, and more may do, 1410  
 In arts and sciences, in wars and peace ;  
 But art and science, like thy wealth, will leave thee,  
 And make thee twice a beggar at thy death.  
 This is the most indulgence can afford ;—  
 ‘Thy wisdom all can do, but—make thee wise.’ 1415  
 Nor think this censure is severe on thee ;  
 Satan, thy master, I dare call a dunce.

dead, the region over which Pluto presided, and where, according to the classical fable, Minos, Æacus, and Rhadamanthus allotted to each of the dead brought before their tribunal, the bliss or pain of their future existence. *Lucifer* (a name applied to Satan) is represented as bringing a charge against the “Night Thoughts,” as *traitor to his throne*. Compare 1417.

1408. The idea here conveyed seems to be this : We cannot be truly wise without an exercise of the will in the right direction, or unless it choose right objects of pursuit.

1416. *On thee* (alone).



# THE CONSOLATION.



# NIGHT IX.

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## THE CONSOLATION.

CONTAINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS,

1. A MORAL SURVEY OF THE NOCTURNAL HEAVENS.
2. A NIGHT-ADDRESS TO THE DEITY.

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Subscribed to the Duke of Newcastle.

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*Fatis contraria Fata rependens.*—VIRGIL:

---

AS when a traveller, a long day past  
In painful search of what he cannot find,  
At night's approach, content with the next cot,  
There ruminates, a while, his labour lost;  
Then cheers his heart with what his fate affords, 5  
And chants his sonnet to deceive the time,  
Till the due season calls him to repose:  
Thus I, long travell'd in the ways of men,  
And dancing, with the rest, the giddy maze,

1. By this impressive simile, Dr. Young forcibly describes his advancing years, and a portion of his sad experience in the affairs of human life. He was about sixty years of age when he began to write the "Night Thoughts," and occupied in their composition some three or four years.

Where disappointment smiles at hope's caréer ; 10  
 Warn'd by the languor of life's ev'ning ray,  
 At length have housed me in an humble shed ;  
 Where, future wand'ring banish'd from my thought,  
 And waiting, patient, the sweet hour of rest,  
 I chase the moments with a serious song. 15  
Song soothes our pains ; and age has pains to sooth.  
 When age, care, crime, and friends embraced at heart,  
 Torn from my bleeding breast, and death's dark shade  
 Which hovers o'er me, quench th' ethereal fire ;  
 Canst thou, O Night ! indulge one labour more ? 20  
 One labour more indulge ! then sleep, my strain !  
 Till, haply, waked by Raphael's golden lyre,  
 Where night, death, age, care, crime, and sorrow, cease ;  
 To bear a part in everlasting lays ;  
 Though far, far higher set, in aim, I trust, 25  
 Symphonious to this humble prelude here.

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

13. It is supposed that the expression of this, and of similar sentiments in his writings, was made use of by the British ministry as a pretext for withdrawing from our author such preferment as he was not unfrequently aspiring after subsequent to this period.

26. *Symphonious* : Of similar sound, agreeing to.

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

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

## THE UNIVERSAL MORTALITY OF MAN.

Where the prime actors of the last year's scene ;  
 Their port so proud, their buskin, and their plume ?  
 How many sleep, who kept the world awake  
 With lustre, and with noise ! Has death proclaim'd  
 A truce, and hung his sated lance on high ? 60  
 'Tis brandish'd still ; nor shall the present year

51. *Sables* : Funeral robes. *Wove by destiny* : An allusion to the *Parcæ*, Night I. 380.

53. *Furies* : An allusion is here made to certain female deities among the ancient Greeks and Romans, whose office it was to arraign or punish both gods and men for transgressions against those they were bound to esteem and reverence. It was the office of one of them to produce fatal epidemics and contagion ; of another, to excite to the cruelties and devastations of war : of another, to originate insanity and provoke murders. They were represented with vipers twining among their hair, with a terrific countenance, with a torch of discord or vengeance in one hand, and a scourge of snakes in the other, and clothed in dark and blood-stained robes.

57. *Buskin* : A very high shoe, or low boot, worn by tragedians on the stage. Among the ancients it was sometimes made with a very thick sole, to raise the actors to the stature of persons whom they represented. *The plume*, or large feather ; often that of the ostrich was also worn by them as an ornament. It is often put for pride.

Be more tenacious of her human leaf,  
Or spread of feeble life a thinner fall.

But needless monuments to wake the thought;  
Life's gayest scenes speak man's mortality; 65  
Though in a style more florid, full as plain,  
As mausoleums, pyramids, and tombs.  
What are our noblest ornaments, but deaths  
Turn'd flatterers of life, in paint, or marble,  
The well-stain'd canvass, or the featured stone ? 70  
Our fathers grace, or rather haunt, the scene :  
Joy peoples her pavilion from the dead.  
'Profest diversions ! cannot these escape ?'—  
Far from it : These present us with a shroud ;  
And talk of death, like garlands o'er a grave. 75  
As some bold plunderers, for buried wealth,  
We ransack tombs for pastime ; from the dust  
Call up the sleeping hero ; bid him tread  
The scene for our amusement : how like gods  
We sit ; and, wrapt in immortality. ' 80  
Shed gen'rous tears on wretches born to die ;  
Their fate deploring, to forget our own !  
What, all the pomps and triumphs of our lives,  
But legacies in blossom ? Our lean soil,  
Luxuriant grown, and rank in vanities, 85  
From friends interr'd beneath ; a rich manure !  
Like other worms, we banquet on the dead :  
Like other worms shall we crawl on, nor know  
Our present frailties, or approaching fate ?

THE WORLD, A GRAVE.

Lorenzo ! such the glories of the world ! 90  
What is the world itself ? thy world ?—A grave !  
Where is the dust that has not been alive ?

62. *Of human leaf* : Human beings are here represented under the figure of a leaf, falling in the autumn.

68. *Noblest ornaments* : Paintings and sculpture.

The spade, the plough, disturb our ancestors ;  
 From human mould we reap our daily bread.  
 The globe around earth's hollow surface shakes, 95  
 And is the ceiling of her sleeping sons.  
 O'er devastation we blind revels keep ;  
 While buried towns support the dancer's heel.  
 The moist of human frame the sun exhales ;  
 Winds scatter through the mighty void, the dry ; 100  
 Earth repossesses part of what she gave,  
 And the freed spirit mounts on wings of fire ;  
 Each element partakes our scatter'd spoils ;  
 As nature, wide, our ruins spread : man's death  
 Inhabits all things, but the thought of man. 105

## EMPIRES DIE.

Nor man alone ; his breathing bust expires,  
 His tomb is mortal ; empires die. Where now,  
 The Roman ? Greek ? They stalk, an empty name !  
 Yet few regard them in this useful light ;  
 Though half our learning is their epitaph. 110  
 When down thy vale, unlock'd by midnight thought,  
 That loves to wander in thy sunless realms,  
 O death ! I stretch my view ; what visions rise !  
 What triumphs ! toils imperial ! arts divine !  
 In wither'd laurels glide before my sight ! 115  
 What lengths of far-famed ages, billow'd high  
 With human agitation, roll along  
 In unsubstantial images of air !  
 The melancholy ghosts of dead renown,  
 Whisp'ring faint echoes of the world's applause, 120  
 With penitential aspect, as they pass,  
 All point at earth, and hiss at human pride,  
 The wisdom of the wise, and prancings of the great.

99. *The moist* (parts).

110. *Half our learning is their epitaph*: Consists of the memorials of what they formerly were and did.

## THE MORTALITY OF THE DELUGE.

But, O Lorenzo! far the rest above,  
 Of ghastly nature, and enormous size, 125  
 One form assaults my sight, and chills my blood,  
 And shakes my frame. Of one departed world  
 I see the mighty shadow: oozy wreath  
 And dismal sea-weed crown her; o'er her urn  
 Reclined, she weeps her desolated realms, 130  
 And bloated sons; and, weeping, prophesies  
 Another's dissolution, soon, into flames.  
 But, like Cassandra, prophesies in vain;  
 In vain, to many; not, I trust, to thee.  
 For, know'st thou not, or art thou loath to know, 135  
 The great decree, the counsel of the skies?  
 Deluge and conflagration, dreadful pow'rs!  
 Prime ministers of vengeance! Chain'd in caves  
 Distinct, apart, the giant furies roar;  
 Apart; or, such their horrid rage for ruin, 140  
 In mutual conflict would they rise, and wage  
 Eternal war, till one was quite devour'd.  
 But not for this ordain'd their boundless rage:  
 When Heav'n's inferior instruments of wrath,  
 War, famine, pestilence, are found too weak 145  
 To scourge a world for her enormous crimes,  
 These are let loose, alternate: down they rush,  
 Swift and tempestuous, from th' eternal throne,  
 With irresistible commission arm'd,  
 The world, in vain corrected, to destroy, 150  
 And ease creation of the shocking scene.

133. *Like Cassandra*: She was the daughter of Priam, king of Troy, and Hecuba. Beloved by Apollo, she promised to listen to his addresses, provided he would grant her the knowledge of futurity. Having obtained this knowledge, she was regardless of her promise, and Apollo, in revenge, determined that no credit should be given to her predictions. Accordingly he caused that her warnings respecting the downfall of Troy, and the ensuing sufferings of her race, should be disregarded by her countrymen.—*Antho.*



## THE LAST SCENE OF NATURE.

Seest thou, Lorenzo! what depends on man?  
 The fate of nature; as for man her birth.  
 Earth's actors change earth's transitory scenes,  
 And make creation groan with human guilt. 155  
 How must it groan in a new deluge whelm'd,  
 But not of waters! At the destined hour,  
 By the loud trumpet summon'd to the charge,  
 See, all the formidable sons of fire,  
 Eruptions, earthquakes, comets, lightnings, play  
 Their various engines; all at once disgorge 161  
 Their blazing magazines; and take, by storm,  
 This poor terrestrial citadel of man.  
 Amazing period! when each mountain-height  
 Out-burns Vesuvius; rocks eternal pour 165  
 Their melted mass, as rivers once they pour'd;  
 Stars rush; and final ruin fiercely drives  
 Her ploughshare o'er creation!—While aloft,  
 More than astonishment! if more can be!  
 Far other firmament than e'er was seen, 170  
 Than e'er was thought by man! Far other stars!  
 Stars animate, that govern these of fire;  
 Far other sun!—A Sun, O how unlike  
 The Babe of Bethle'm! How unlike the man  
 That groan'd on Calvary!—Yet He it is; 175  
 That man of sorrows! O how changed! What pomp!  
 In grandeur terrible, all heav'n descends!  
 And gods, ambitious, triumph in his train.

159. *Sons of fire*: A lively personification of things inanimate. The following description awakens sublime and thrilling emotions. The figure of *ruin fiercely driving her ploughshare o'er creation*, is exceedingly graphic. It seems to be an allusion to the Roman ploughshare that was urged through the ruins of the temple and city of Jerusalem by Titus.

178. *Gods: Angels*.

A swift archangel with his golden wing,  
 As blots and clouds, that darken and disgrace 180  
 The scene divine, sweep stars and suns aside.  
 And now, all dross removed, heav'n's own pure day,  
 Full on the confines of our ether, flames :  
 While (dreadful contrast!) far, how far beneath!  
 Hell bursting, belches forth her blazing seas, 185  
 And storms sulphureous; her voracious jaws  
 Expanding wide, and roaring for her prey.  
 Lorenzo! welcome to this scene; the last  
 In nature's course; the first in wisdom's thought.  
 This strikes, if aught can strike thee; this awakes 190  
 The most supine; this snatches man from death.  
 Rouse, rouse, Lorenzo, then, and follow me,  
 Where truth, the most momentous man can hear,  
 Loud calls my soul, and ardour wings her flight.  
 I find my inspiration in my theme : 195  
 The grandeur of my subject is my muse.  
 At midnight (when mankind is wrapt in peace,  
 And worldly fancy feeds on golden dreams;)

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

179-81. What a splendid imagination is here exhibited.

184. *The dreadful contrast* that follows, is powerfully drawn.

196. *Is my muse*: Is that which inspires and elevates my mind. The passage which here commences, gives evidence of the workings of a mind uncommonly elevated, and inspired by the subject it was contemplating and describing. Few passages awake as sublime emotions in the serious mind.

Her strong convulsions, and her final groan ? 210  
 Where are we now ? Ah me ! the ground is gone  
 On which we stood : Lorenzo ! While thou mayst,  
 Provide more firm support, or sink for ever !  
 Where ? how ? from whence ? Vain hope ! It is too late !  
 Where, where, for shelter, shall the guilty fly, 215  
 When consternation turns the good man pale ?  
 Great day ! for which all other days were made ;  
 For which earth rose from chaos, man from earth ;  
 And an eternity, the date of gods,  
 Descended on poor earth-created man ! 220  
 Great day of dread, decision, and despair !  
 At thought of thee each sublunary wish  
 Lets go its eager grasp, and drops the world ;  
 And catches at each reed of hope in heav'n.  
 At thought of thee !—And art thou absent, then ? 225  
 Lorenzo ! no ; 'tis here ; it is begun ;—  
 Already is begun the grand assize.  
 In thee, in all. Deputed conscience scales  
 The dread tribunal, and forestalls our doom :  
 Forestalls ; and by forestalling proves it sure. 230  
 Why on himself should man void judgment pass ?  
 Is idle nature laughing at her sons ?  
 Who conscience sent, her sentence will support ;  
 And GOD above assert that God in man.  
 Thrice happy they ! that enter now the court 235  
 Heav'n opens in their bosoms. But, how rare,  
 Ah me ! that magnanimity, how rare !  
 What hero, like the man who stands himself ;  
 Who dares to meet his naked heart alone ;  
 Who hears, intrepid, the full charge it brings, 240  
 Resolved to silence future murmurs there ?  
 The coward flies ; and, flying, is undone.  
 (Art thou a coward ? No.) The coward flies ;

233. *Who*: He who.

235. *The court*: The court of conscience.

Thinks, but thinks slightly ; asks, but fears to know ;  
 Asks, 'What is truth ?' with Pilate ; and retires ; 245  
 Dissolves the court and mingles with the throng :  
 Asylum sad ! from reason, hope, and heav'n !

THE LAST DAY SHOULD BE PONDERED BY MAN.

Shall all, but man, look out with ardent eye,  
 For that great day, which was ordain'd for man ?  
 O day of consummation ! Mark supreme 250  
 (If men are wise) of human thought ! nor least,  
 Or in the sight of angels, or their King !

Angels, whose radiant circles, height o'er height,  
 Order o'er order, rising, blaze o'er blaze,  
 As in a theatre, surround this scene, 255  
 Intent on man, and anxious for his fate.

Angels look out for thee ; for thee, their Lord,  
 To vindicate his glory ; and for thee,  
 Creation universal calls aloud,  
 To disinvolve the moral world, and give 260  
 To nature's renovation brighter charms.

Shall man alone, whose fate, whose final fate,  
 Hangs on that hour, exclude it from his thought ?  
 I think of nothing else ; I see ! I feel it !

All nature, like an earthquake, trembling round ! 265  
 All deities, like summer swarms, on wing !  
 All basking in the full meridian blaze !

I see the Judge enthroned ! the flaming guard !  
 The volume open'd ! open'd ev'ry heart :  
 A sun-beam pointing out each secrét thought ! 270  
 No patron ! intercessor none ! now past

The sweet, the clement, mediatorial hour !  
 For guilt, no plea ! to pain, no pause ! no bound !  
 Inexorable, all ! and all, extreme !

Nor man alone ; the foe of God and man, 275

252. *Or in the* : Either in the, &c.

266. *Deities* : Angels.

From his dark den, blaspheming, drags his chain,  
And rears his brazen front, with thunder scarr'd;  
Receives his sentence, and begins his hell.

All vengeance past, now, seems abundant grace :  
Like meteors in a stormy sky, how roll 280  
His baleful eyes! He curses whom he dreads ;  
And deems it the first moment of his fall.

'Tis present to my thought!—and yet, where is it?  
Angels can't tell me; angels cannot guess  
The period; from created beings lock'd 285  
In darkness. But the process, and the place,  
Are less obscure; for these may man inquire.

Say, thou great close of human hopes and fears!  
Great key of hearts! Great finisher of fates!  
Great end! and great beginning! Say, where art thou? 290  
Art thou in time, or in eternity? TIME + ETERNITY

Nor in eternity, nor time, I find thee.  
These, as two monarchs, on their borders meet,  
(Monarchs of all elapsed, or unarrived!)  
As in debate, how best their pow'rs allied 295  
May swell the grandeur, or discharge the wrath  
Of Him whom both their monarchies obey.

THE REIGN OF TIME ENDED.

Time, this vast fabric for him built (and doom'd

277. *With thunder scarr'd*: Our author derived this idea from Milton:

Darken'd so, yet shone  
Above them all th' Arch-angel: but *his face*  
*Deep scars of thunder had intrench'd, and care*  
Sat on his faded cheek; but under brows  
Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride  
Waiting revenge; cruel his eye, but cast  
Signs of remorse and passion to behold  
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather  
(Far other once beheld in bliss), condemned  
For ever now to have their lot in pain.

*Paradise Lost, Book I., 599—608.*

278. *Begins his hell*: His previous sufferings being, for severity, not worth consideration, in comparison with those now and henceforth, in pursuance of the sentence of the last day, to be endured.

With him to fall) now bursting o'er his head ;  
 His lamp, the sun, extinguish'd ; from beneath 300  
 The frown of hideous darkness, calls his sons  
 From their long slumber ; from earth's heaving womb  
 To second birth ; contemporary throng !  
 Roused at one call, upstarting from one bed,  
 Prest in one crowd, appall'd with one amaze, 305  
 He turns them o'er, Eternity ! to thee.  
 Then (as a king deposed disdains to live)  
 He falls on his own sithe ; nor falls alone ;  
 His greatest foe falls with him : Time, and he  
Who murder'd all time's offspring, Death, expire. 310

THE REIGN OF ETERNITY BEGUN. THE FINAL SENTENCE.

Time was ! Eternity now reigns alone :  
Awful eternity ! offended queen !  
 And her resentment to mankind, how just !  
 With kind intent, soliciting access,  
 How often has she knock'd at human hearts ! 315  
 Rich to repay their hospitality ;  
 How often call'd ! and with the voice of God !  
 Yet bore repulse, excluded as a cheat !  
 A dream ! while foulest foes found welcome there !  
 A dream, a cheat, now, all things, but her smile. 320  
 For, lo ! her twice ten thousand gates thrown wide,  
 As thrice from Indus to the frozen pole,  
 With banners, streaming as the comet's blaze,  
 And clarions, louder than the deep in storms.  
 Sonorous as immortal breath can blow, 325  
 Pour forth their myriads, potentates, and pow'rs,  
 Of light, of darkness ; in a middle field,  
 Wide as creation ! populous, as wide !

321-35. A truly sublime and noble passage, affording us an altogether worthy view of one of the grandest scenes in the history of the universe, and one in which all mankind are deeply concerned, though generally, alas, too unwilling to anticipate and prepare for it.

A neutral region! there to mark th' event  
 Of that great drama, whose preceding scenes 330  
 Detain'd them close spectators, through a length  
 Of ages, rip'ning to this grand result;  
 Ages, as yet unnumber'd, but by God;  
 Who, now, pronouncing sentence, vindicates  
 The rights of virtue, and his own renown. 335

THE GRAND AND AWFUL EVENTS WHICH FOLLOW THE LAST  
 SENTENCE.

Eternity, the various sentence past,  
Assigns the sever'd thron'g distinct abodes,  
Sulphureous, or ambrosial. What ensues?  
 The deed predominant! the deed of deeds!  
 Which makes a hell of hell, a heav'n of heav'n. 340  
 (The goddess, with determin'd aspect, turns  
 Her adamantine key's enormous size

342. *Her adamantine key's, &c.*: The passage connected with this line reminds us of some of the most impressive lines of the "Paradise Lost." It bears, indeed, some little similarity to the quotation we are about to make. Our author makes eternity a *goddess*, who holds the keys of hell and of heaven, which she opens, and then shuts to be unlocked no more. This accomplished, the circumstance of hurling the keys into the deep, profound, and fathomless darkness there to rust, and to be used no more, impresses most deeply the idea of the impossibility of future change in the condition of the wicked and the good. It may have been suggested to the author by that thrilling passage in the history of Queen Mary's escape from her prison in Lochleven castle, when her loyal Douglass, at the peril of his life, possessed himself of the keys of the castle, and having unlocked the doors in the way of her escape, and having locked them again upon the pursuers, bore the keys to the lake, and when the boat had reached the deepest part, cast them into its depths, to be used no more against his beloved queen.

Milton makes sin the portress of hell, and thus writes:

The key of this infernal pit by due,  
 And by command of Heav'n's all-powerful King,  
 I keep, by him forbidden to unlock  
 Those adamantine gates, &c.

Afterwards Satan persuades her to open them, and,

From her side the fatal key,  
 Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;

Through destiny's inextricable wards,  
 Deep driving ev'ry bolt, on both their fates :  
 Then, from the crystal battlements of heav'n, 345  
 Down, down she hurls it through the dark profound,  
 Ten thousand thousand fathom ; there to rust,  
 And ne'er unlock her resolution more.

The deep resounds ; and hell, through all her glooms,  
 Returns, in groans, the melancholy roar. 350

O how unlike the chorus of the skies !

O how unlike those shouts of joy, that shake  
 The whole ethereal ! how the concave rings !  
 Nor strange ! when deities their voice exalt ;  
 And louder far, than when creation rose, 355

To see creation's godlike aim, and end,  
 So well accomplish'd ! so divinely closed !  
 To see the mighty Dramatist's last act  
 (As meet) in glory rising o'er the rest.  
 No fancied god, a God indeed descends, 360  
 To solve all knots ; to strike the moral home ;  
 To throw full day on darkest scenes of time ;  
 To clear, commend, exalt, and crown the whole.

And tow'rs the gate rolling her bestial train,  
 Forthwith the huge portcullis high up-drew,  
 Which but herself, not all the Stygian pow'rs  
 Could once have moved ; then in the key-hole turns  
 The intricate wards, and ev'ry bolt and bar  
 Of massy iron or solid rock with ease  
 Unfastens. On a sudden open fly  
 With impetuous recoil and jarring sound  
 Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate  
 Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook  
 Of Erebus. She open'd ; but to shut  
 Excell'd her power.

*Paradise Lost, Book II., 871—884.*

358. *Mighty Dramatist's last act* : The Almighty is here designated. The title, when closely scanned, seems not dignified or exalted enough ; but in the connection it raises no ideas inconsistent with proper reverence, and may, therefore, pass without censure.

361. *To strike the moral home* : To impress on the heart the moral lessons of Providence.



Hence in one peal of loud eternal praise,  
 The charm'd spectators thunder their applause; 365  
 And the vast void beyond, applause resounds.

## PHYSICAL EVILS DESIGNED FOR OUR MORAL GOOD.

What then am I?—

Amidst applauding worlds,  
 And worlds celestial, is there found on earth,  
 A peevish, dissonant, rebellious string, 370  
 Which jars in the grand chorus, and complains?

Censure on thee, Lorenzo! I suspend,  
 And turn it on myself; how greatly due!  
All, all is right, by God ordained or done;  
 And who, but God, resumed the friends he gave? 375

And have I been complaining, then, so long?  
 Complaining of his favours, pain, and death?  
 Who, without pain's advice, would e'er be good?  
 Who, without death, but would be good in vain? 380

Pain is to save from pain; all punishment,  
 To make for peace; and death, to save from death;  
 And second death, to guard immortal life;  
 To rouse the careless, the presumptuous awe,  
 And turn the tide of souls another way:  
 By the same tenderness divine ordain'd, 385  
 That planted Eden, and high-bloom'd for man,  
 A fairer Eden, endless in the skies.

Heav'n gives us friends to bless the present scene;  
 Resumes them, to prepare us for the next.  
 All evils natural are moral goods; 390  
 All discipline, indulgence, on the whole.

None are unhappy: all have cause to smile,  
 But such as to themselves that cause deny.  
Our faults are at the bottom of our pains;  
Error, in act, or judgment, is the source 395  
 Of endless sighs. We sin, or we mistake;  
 And nature tax, when false opinion stings.

Let impious grief be banish'd, joy indulg'd ;  
 But chiefly then, when grief puts in her claim. 400  
 Joy from the joyous, frequently betrays ;  
 Oft lives in vanity, and dies in wo.  
 Joy amidst ills, corroborates, exalts ;  
 'Tis joy, and conquest ; joy, and virtue too.  
 A noble fortitude in ills, delights  
 Heav'n, earth, ourselves ; 'tis duty, glory, peace. 405  
 Affliction is the good man's shining scene :  
 Prosperity conceals his brightest ray :  
 As night to stars, wo lustre gives to man.  
 Heroes in battle, pilots in the storm,  
 And virtue in calamities, admire. 410  
 The crown of manhood is a winter-joy ;  
 An evergreen, that stands the northern blast,  
 And blossoms in the rigour of our fate.  
 'Tis a prime part of happiness to know  
 How much unhappiness must prove our lot ; 415  
 A part which few possess ! I'll pay life's tax,  
 Without one rebel murmur, from this hour,  
 Nor think it misery to be a man :  
 Who thinks it is, shall never be a god.  
 Some ills we wish for, when we wish to live. 420

EXISTENCE AN INESTIMABLE BLESSING.

What spoke proud passion ?—' Wish my being lost ?'  
 Presumptuous ! blasphemous ! absurd ! and false !  
 The triumph of my soul is,—That I am ;  
 And therefore that I may be—What ?—Lorenzo ?  
 Look inward, and look deep ; and deeper still : 425  
 Unfathomably deep our treasure runs  
 In golden veins, through all eternity !  
 Ages, and ages, and succeeding still

415. *Must prove* (to be) *our lot*.

421. *Wish, &c.* : Referring to Night I.

New ages, where this phantom of an hour,  
 Which courts, each night, dull slumber, for repair, 430  
 Shall wake, and wonder, and exult, and praise,  
 And fly through infinite, and all unlock ;  
 And (if deserved) by Heav'n's redundant love,  
 Made half adorable itself, adore ;  
 And find, in adoration, endless joy ! 435  
 Where thou, not master of a moment here,  
 Frail as the flow'r, and fleeting as the gale,  
 Mayst boast a whole eternity, enrich'd  
 With all a kind Omnipotence can pour.  
 Since Adam fell, no mortal, uninspired, 440  
 Has ever yet conceived, or ever shall,  
 How kind is God, how great (if good) is man.  
 No man too largely from Heav'n's love can hope,  
 If what is hoped he labours to secure.

THE SEVERITIES OF GOD'S GOVERNMENT VINDICATED.

Ills?—there are none : All-gracious : none from Thee ; 445  
From man full many ! Num'rous is the race  
 Of blackest ill, and those immortal too,  
 Begot by madness on fair liberty ;  
 Heav'n's daughter, hell-debauch'd ! her hand alone  
 Unlocks destruction to the sons of men, 450  
 First barr'd by Time ; high wall'd with adamant,  
 Guarded with terrors reaching to this world,  
 And cover'd with the thunders of Thy law ;  
 Whose threats are mercies ; whose injunctions, guides,  
 Assisting, not restraining, reason's choice ; 455  
 Whose sanctions, unavoidable results  
 From nature's course, indulgently reveal'd ;

429. *This phantom of an hour* : The soul in its present fugitive or transient abode.

448. *Fair liberty* : The faculty by which we choose good or evil is here personified. This was *hell-debauch'd*, corrupted by Satan in Paradise, and ever since unduly influenced by him to the choice of evil.

If unreveal'd, more dang'rous, nor less sure.  
 Thus, an indulgent father warns his sons,  
 'Do this; fly that'—nor always tells the cause; 460  
 Pleased to reward, as duty to his will,  
 A conduct needful to their own repose.

Great God of wonders! (if, thy love survey'd,  
 Aught else the name of wonderful retains)  
 What rocks are these, on which to build our trust! 465  
 Thy ways admit no blemish; none I find;  
 Or this alone—'That none is to be found.'  
 Not one, to soften censure's hardy crime;  
 Not one, to palliate peevish grief's complaint,  
 Who, like a demon murm'ring, from the dust, 470  
 Dares into judgment call her Judge.—Supreme!  
 For all I bless thee; most, for the severe:

Her death—my own at hand—the fiery gulf,  
 That flaming bound of wrath omnipotent!  
 It thunders; but it thunders to preserve; 475  
 It strengthens what it strikes; its wholesome dread  
 Averts the dreaded pain; its hideous groans  
 Join heav'n's sweet hallelujahs in thy praise,  
 Great Source of good alone! How kind in all!  
 In vengeance kind! pain, death, Gehenna save. 480

Thus, in thy world material, mighty Mind!  
 Not that alone which solaces, and shines,  
 The rough and gloomy, challenges our praise.  
 The winter is as needful as the spring;  
 The thunder as the sun; a stagnate mass 485  
 Of vapours breeds a pestilential air:  
 Nor more propitious the Favonian breeze  
 To nature's health, than purifying storms.

468. *To soften, &c.*: To soften the hardy crime of censuring the ways of God.

473. *Her death*: Lucia's.

487. *Favonian*: The gentle western breeze, which prevailed at the commencement of spring, and promoted vegetation. *Zephyr* is another name for it.

The dread volcano ministers to good :  
 Its smother'd flames might undermine the world. 490  
Loud Ætnas fulminate in love to man ;  
 Comets good omens are, when duly scann'd ;  
 And, in their use, eclipses learn to shine.  
 Man is responsible for ills received ;  
 Those we call wretched are a chosen band, 495  
 Compell'd to refuge in the right, for peace.  
 Amid my list of blessings infinite,  
 Stand this the foremost, ' That my heart has bled.'  
 'Tis Heav'n's last effort of good will to man :  
 When pain can't bless, Heav'n quits us in despair. 500  
 Who fails to grieve, when just occasion calls,  
 Or grieves too much, deserves not to be blest ;  
 Inhuman, or effeminate, his heart :  
 Reason absolves the grief, which reason ends.  
 May Heav'n ne'er trust my friend with happiness, 505  
 Till it has taught him how to bear it well,  
 By previous pain ; and made it safe to smile !  
Such smiles are mine, and such may they remain ;  
Nor hazard their extinction, from excess.  
My change of heart, a change of style demands ; 510  
The Consolation cancels the Complaint,  
And makes a convert of my guilty song. CONSOLEATION

## REVIEW OF THE POEM.

( As when o'erlabour'd, and inclined to breathe,  
 A panting traveller, some rising ground,  
 Some small ascent, has gain'd, he turns him round, 515  
 And measures with his eye the various vales,

504. *Reason absolves, &c.* : Reason approves the grief which ends when reason dictates, and is not carried to excess.

511. *Consolation* : The title of the present part ; *Complaint*, that of all the preceding parts of the poem. The idea conveyed is, that the evils complained of in the preceding parts, should not be regarded as such, and that the title of those parts should be changed to Consolation.

S The fields, woods, meads, and rivers, he has pass'd ;  
 And, satiate of his journey, thinks of home,  
 U Endear'd by distance, nor affects more toil ;  
 M Thus I, though small, indeed, is that ascent 520  
 M The muse has gain'd, review the paths she trod ;  
 A Various, extensive, beaten but by few ;  
 R And, conscious of her prudence in repose,  
 Pause ; and with pleasure meditate an end,  
 Though still remote ; so fruitful is my theme. 525  
 Through many a field of moral and divine,  
 The muse has stray'd ; and much of sorrow seen  
 In human ways ; and much of false and vain ;  
 Which none, who travel this bad road, can miss.  
 O'er friends deceased full heartily she wept ; 530  
 Of love divine the wonders she display'd ;  
 Proved man immortal ; show'd the source of joy ;  
 The grand tribunal raised ; assign'd the bounds  
 Of human grief : in few, to close the whole,  
 The moral muse has shadow'd out a sketch, 535  
 Though not in form, nor with a Raphael-stroke,  
 Of most our weakness needs believe or do,  
 In this our land of travel, and of hope,  
 For peace on earth, or prospect of the skies.  
 What then remains ?—Much ! much ! a mighty debt 540  
 To be discharged ; these thoughts ! O Night ! are thine ;  
 From thee they came, like lovers' secret sighs,  
 While others slept. So Cynthia, (poets feign,)  
 In shadows veil'd, soft sliding from her sphere,  
 Her shepherd cheer'd ; of her enamour'd less, 545  
 Than I of thee.—And art thou still unsung,

534. *In few words.*

536. *Raphael-stroke* : Such a stroke of the pencil or brush as Raphael, the great Italian painter, might have executed.

543. *Cynthia* : A name for Diana, who had three different offices. In the heavens she is called Luna (the moon) ; on the earth, Diana ; and in hell, Proserpine, or Hecate. In the first of these offices our author alludes to her in the text. Compare notes on Night III., near the beginning.

Beneath whose brow, and by whose aid, I sing ?  
 Immoral silence !—Where shall I begin ?  
 Where end ? Or how steal music from the spheres,  
 To soothe their goddess ? 550

## AN ADDRESS TO NIGHT.

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

## THE STUDY OF CREATION IMPORTANT.

And what, O man ! so worthy to be sung ? 565  
 What more prepares us for the songs of heav'n ?  
 Creation, of archangels is the theme !  
 What, to be sung, so needful ? What so well  
 Celestial joys prepares us to sustain ?  
 The soul of man, His face design'd to see 570  
 Who gave these wonders to be seen by man,  
 Has here a previous scene of objects great,  
 On which to dwell ; to stretch to that expanse

549. *Music from the spheres*: An allusion to the ancient notion of the heavenly bodies in their harmonious and beautiful revolutions yielding delightful music, appreciable only by the gods.

552. *Day's elder born*: Night preceded day—was more ancient. See Gen. i. 3—5. The paragraph exhibits a brilliant personification of night.

Of thought, to rise to that exalted height  
 Of admiration, to contract that awe, 575  
 And give her whole capacities that strength,  
 Which best may qualify for final joy.  
 The more our spirits are enlarged on earth,  
 The deeper draught shall they receive of heav'n.  
 Heav'n's King! whose face unveil'd consummates bliss; 580  
 Redundant bliss! which fills that mighty void,  
 The whole creation leaves in human hearts!  
 Thou who didst touch the lip of Jesse's son,  
 Rapt in sweet contemplation of these fires,  
 And set his harp in concert with the spheres! 585  
 While of thy works material the supreme  
 I dare attempt, assist my daring song:  
 Loose me from earth's enclosure, from the sun's  
 Contracted circle set my heart at large;  
 Eliminate my spirit, give it range 590  
 Through provinces of thought yet unexplored;  
 Teach me, by this stupendous scaffolding,  
 Creation's golden steps, to climb to Thee.  
 Teach me with art great nature to control,  
 And spread a lustre o'er the shades of night. 595  
 Feel I thy kind assent? and shall the sun  
 Be seen at midnight, rising in my song?

## THE VASTNESS OF CREATION.

Lorenzo! come, and warm thee: thou whose heart,  
 Whose little heart is moor'd within a nook  
 Of this obscure terrestrial, anchor weigh. 600

575. *Contract*: Acquire.

577-8. The sentiment here advanced furnishes a grand and powerful motive to self-improvement and cultivation while on earth.

582. *Leaves in human hearts*: Leaves unfilled, &c. Not even the vast creation is capable of satisfying the enlarged desires of the human heart. *Heaven's king* alone can satisfy them, and leave no void.

583. *Jesse's son*: David. Compare 1 Sam. xvi. 18, 24.



Another ocean calls, a nobler port ;  
 I am thy pilot, I thy prosp'rous gale.  
 Gainful thy voyage through yon azure main ;  
 Main, without tempest, pirate, rock, or shore ;  
 And whence thou mayst import eternal wealth ; 605  
 And leave to beggar'd minds the pearl and gold.  
 Thy travels dost thou boast o'er foreign realms ?  
 Thou stranger to the world ! thy tour begin ;  
 Thy tour through nature's universal orb.  
 Nature delineates her whole chart at large, 610  
 On soaring souls, that sail among the spheres ;  
 And man, how purblind, if unknown the whole !  
 Who circles spacious earth, then travels here,  
 Shall own he never was from home before !  
 Come, my Prometheus, from thy pointed rock 615  
 Of false ambition, if unchain'd, we'll mount ;  
 We'll innocently steal celestial fire,  
 And kindle our devotion at the stars ;  
 A theft, that shall not chain, but set thee free.  
 Above our atmosphere's intestine wars, 620  
 Rain's fountain-head, the magazine of hail ;  
 Above the northern nest of feather'd snows,  
 The brew of thunders, and the flaming forge  
 That forms the crooked lightning ; 'bove the caves  
 Where infant tempests wait their growing wings, 625  
 And tune their tender voices to that roar,  
 Which soon, perhaps, shall shake a guilty world ;  
 Above misconstrued omens of the sky,  
 Far-travell'd comets' calculated blaze ;  
 Elance thy thought, and think of more than man. 630  
 Thy soul, till now, contracted, wither'd, shrunk,  
 Blighted by blasts of earth's unwholesome air,  
 Will blossom here ; spread all her faculties

615. *My Prometheus* : See notes on Night VIII., 420.

623. *The brew of thunders* : The region where thunders are prepared.

630. *Elance thy thought* : Dart, or hurl, thy thought.

To these bright ardours ; ev'ry pow'r unfold,  
 And rise into sublimities of thought. 635  
 Stars teach, as well as shine. At nature's birth,  
 Thus their commission ran—' Be kind to man.'  
 Where art thou, poor benighted traveller !  
 The stars will light thee, tho' the moon should fail.  
 Where art thou, more benighted ! more astray ! 640  
 In ways immoral ? The stars call thee back ;  
 And, if obey'd their counsel, set thee right.

## LESSONS OF THE STARS.

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

What read we here ?—Th' existence of a God !  
 Yes ; and of other beings, man above ;  
 Natives of ether ! sons of higher climes !  
 And, what may move Lorenzo's wonder more, 660  
 Eternity is written in the skies.  
 And whose eternity ? Lorenzo, thine ;  
 Mankind's eternity. Nor faith alone ;

634. *Ardours* : Luminaries.

648. *Radius* : Wand, or rod.

654. *We feign* : The author refers to the constellations marked out under these various figures, on the artificial globe.

Virtue grows here : here springs the sov'reign cure  
Of almost ev'ry vice ; but chiefly thine ; 665  
Wrath, pride, ambition, and impure desire.

Lorenzo ! thou canst wake at midnight too,  
Though not on morals bent : ambition, pleasure !  
Those tyrants I for thee so lately fought,  
Afford their harass'd slaves but slender rest. 670

Thou, to whom midnight is immoral noon,  
And the sun's noon-tide blaze, prime dawn of day ;  
Not by thy climate, but capricious crime,  
Commencing one of our antipodes !

In thy nocturnal rove, one moment halt, 675

'Twixt stage and stage, of riot and cabal ;

And lift thine eye (if bold an eye to lift,  
If bold to meet the face of injured Heav'n)

To yonder stars : for other ends they shine,  
Than to light travellers from shame to shame, 680  
And thus, be made accomplices in guilt.

Why from yon arch, that infinite of space,  
With infinite of lucid orbs replete,  
Which set the living firmament on fire,  
At the first glance, in such an overwhelm 685

Of wonderful, on man's astonish'd sight,  
Rushes Omnipotence ?—To curb our pride ;

Our reason rouse, and lead it to that Pow'r,  
Whose love lets down these silver chains of light,  
To draw up man's ambition to Himself, 690

And bind our chaste affections to his throne.

Thus the three virtues, least alive on earth,  
And welcomed on heav'n's coast with most applause  
An humble, pure, and heav'n'ly-minded heart,  
Are here inspired.—And canst thou gaze too long ? 695

669. *So lately fought* : In Night VIII.

671-4. Lorenzo passed his nights in dissipation, and his days in bed, thus conforming his periods of action and repose not to the habits of his neighbours, but of his *antipodes*, or people living on the opposite side of the globe.

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

*thus reflect  
 order &  
 harmony 705  
 of the creator*

And know, of all our supercilious race, 710  
 Thou most inflammable ! thou wasp of men !  
 Man's angry heart, inspected, would be found  
 As rightly set, as are the starry spheres ;  
 'Tis nature's structure, broke by stubborn will,  
 Breeds all that uncelestial discord there. 715  
 Wilt thou not feel the bias nature gave ?  
 Canst thou descend from converse with the skies,  
 And seize thy brother's throat ?—For what ?—a clod !  
 An inch of earth ? The planets cry, " Forbear :"  
 They chase our double darkness, nature's gloom ; 720  
 And (kinder still !) our intellectual night.

And see, Day's amiable sister sends  
 Her invitation, in the softest rays  
 Of mitigated lustre ; courts thy sight,  
 Which suffers from her tyrant-brother's blaze. 725  
 Night grants thee the full freedom of the skies,

698–705. A most beautiful, ingenious, and useful thought is conveyed in these lines.

722. *Sister* : The moon.

725. *Tyrant-brother* : The sun. Consult the notes at the commencement of Night III.

Nor rudely reprimands thy lifted eye;  
 With gain, and joy, she bribes thee to be wise.  
 Night opes the noblest scenes, and sheds an awe,  
 Which gives those venerable scenes full weight, 730  
 And deep reception, in th' entender'd heart :  
 While light peeps through the darkness, like a spy ;  
 And darkness shows its grandeur by the light.  
 Nor is the profit greater than the joy,  
 If human hearts at glorious objects glow, 735  
 And admiration can inspire delight.

FEELINGS ARISING UPON A VIEW OF THE NOCTURNAL HEAVENS.

What speak I more, than I, this moment feel ?  
 With pleasing stupor first the soul is struck,  
 (Stupor ordain'd to make her truly wise !)  
 Then into transport starting from her trance, 740  
 With love, and admiration, how she glows !  
 This gorgeous apparatus ! this display !  
 This ostentation of creative pow'r !  
 This theatre !—what eye can take it in ?  
 By what divine enchantment was it rais'd, 745  
 For minds of the first magnitude to launch  
 In endless speculation, and adore ?  
 One sun by day, by night ten thousand shine,  
 And light us deep into the Deity :  
 How boundless in magnificence and might ! 750  
 O what a confluence of ethereal fires,  
 From urns unnumber'd, down the steep of heav'n,  
 Streams to a point, and centres in my sight !  
 Nor tarries there ; I feel it at my heart.  
 My heart, at once, it humbles and exalts ; 755  
 Lays it in dust, and calls it to the skies.  
 Who sees it unexalted, or unawed ?  
 Who sees it, and can stop at what is seen ?  
 Material offspring of Omnipotence !  
 Inanimate, all-animating birth ! 760

Work worthy Him who made it! worthy praise!  
 All praise! praise more than human! nor denied  
 Thy praise divine!—But tho' man, drown'd in sleep,  
 Withholds his homage, not alone I wake:  
 Bright legions swarm unseen, and sing, unheard 765  
 By mortal ear, the glorious Architect,  
 In this his universal temple, hung  
 With lustres, with innumerable lights,  
 That shed religion on the soul; at once  
 The temple and the preacher! O how loud 770  
 It calls devotion! genuine growth of night!

## DEVOTION, THE DAUGHTER OF ASTRONOMY.

Devotion! daughter of astronomy!  
 An undevout astronomer is mad.  
 True; all things speak a God: but in the small,  
 Men trace out Him; in great, He seizes man; 775  
 Seizes, and elevates, and wraps, and fills  
 With new inquiries, 'mid associates new.  
 Tell me, ye stars! ye planets! tell me, all  
 Ye starr'd, and planeted, inhabitants? What is it?  
 What are these sons of wonder? Say, proud arch! 780  
 (Within whose azure palaces they dwell)  
 Built with divine ambition! in disdain  
 Of limit built! built in the taste of heav'n!  
 Vast concave! ample dome! wast thou design'd  
 A meet apartment for the Deity?— 785  
 Not so; that thought alone thy state impairs,  
 Thy lofty sinks, and shallows thy profound,  
 And straitens thy diffusive; dwarfs the whole,  
 And makes an universe an orrery.

787. *Shallows*: Renders shallow.

788. *Straitens*: Makes narrow.

789. *Orrery*: A mechanical contrivance for representing, on a small scale, the relative magnitudes, distances, and velocities of the solar system. It

But when I drop mine eye, and look on man, 790  
 Thy right regain'd, thy grandeur is restored,  
 O nature ! wide flies off th' expanding round.  
 As when whole magazines, at once, are fired,  
 The smitten air is hollow'd by the blow ;  
 The vast displosion dissipates the clouds ; 795  
 Shock'd ether's billows dash the distant skies ;  
 Thus, (but far more) th' expanding round flies off,  
 And leaves a mighty void, a spacious womb,  
 Might teem with new creation ; re-inflamed,  
 Thy luminaries triumph, and assume 800  
 Divinity themselves. Nor was it strange,  
 Matter high-wrought to such surprising pomp,  
 Such godlike glory, stole the style of gods,  
 From ages dark, obtuse, and steep'd in sense ;  
 For, sure, to sense, they truly are divine, 805  
 And half absolved idolatry from guilt ;  
 Nay, turned it into virtue. Such it was  
 In those, who put forth all they had of man  
 Unlost, to lift their thought, nor mounted higher ;  
 But, weak of wing, on planets perch'd ; and thought 810  
 What was their highest, must be their adored.

THE EXISTENCE AND GRANDEUR OF THE DEITY.

But they how weak, who could no higher mount !  
 And are there then, Lorenzo, those, to whom  
 Unseen and unexistent are the same ?  
 And if incomprehensible is join'd, 815  
 Who dare pronounce it madness to believe ?

received this name from the Earl of Orrery, who was the first individual for whom one was manufactured.

803. *The style* : The rank.

807. *Turned it into virtue* : This is an unscriptural statement, as will be seen by referring to the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans ; yet the author gives a plausible reason for it.

810-11. *And thought that what was their highest object of contemplation must be their adored object*, or the object of their adoration.

- Why has the mighty Builder thrown aside  
 All measure in his work ; stretch'd out his line  
 So far, and spread amazement o'er the whole ?  
 Then (as he took delight in wide extremes,) 820  
 Deep in the bosom of his universe,  
 Dropt down that reas'ning mite, that insect, man,  
 To crawl, and gaze, and wonder at the scene ?—  
 That ~~man might ne'er~~ presume to plead amazement  
 For disbelief of wonders in Himself. 825  
 Shall God be less miraculous than what  
 His hand has form'd ? Shall mysteries descend  
 From unmysterious ? things more elevate,  
 Be more familiar ? uncreated lie  
 More obvious than created, to the grasp 830  
 Of human thought ? The more of wonderful  
 Is heard in Him, the more we should assent.  
 Could we conceive him, God he could not be ;  
 Or he not God, or we could not be men.  
 A God alone can comprehend a God : 835  
 Man's distance how immense ! On such a theme,  
 Know this, Lorenzo ! (seem it ne'er so strange,)  
 Nothing can satisfy, but what confounds ;  
 Nothing, but what astonishes, is true.  
 The scene thou seest, attests the truth I sing : 840  
 And ev'ry star sheds light upon thy creed.  
 These stars, this furniture, this cost of heav'n,  
 If but reported, thou hadst ne'er believed ;  
 But thine eye tells thee, the romance is true.  
 The grand of nature is th' Almighty's oath, 845  
 In reason's court, to silence unbelief.  
 How my mind, op'ning at this scene, imbibes  
 The moral emanations of the skies,  
 While nought, perhaps, Lorenzo less admires !  
 ( Has the Great Sov'reign sent ten thousand worlds 850  
 To tell us, he resides above them all,

834. Or he: Either he.



In glory's unapproachable recess ?  
 And dare earth's bold inhabitants deny  
 The sumptuous, the magnific embassy  
 A moment's audience ? Turn we, nor will hear 855  
 From whom they come, or what they would impart  
 For man's emolument ; sole cause that stoops  
 Their grandeur to man's eye ? Lorenzo ! rouse ;  
 Let thought, awaken'd, take the lightning's wing,  
 And glance from east to west, from pole to pole. 860  
 Who sees, but is confounded, or convinced ?  
 Renounces reason, or a God adores ?  
 Mankind was sent into the world to see :  
 Sight gives the science needful to their peace ;  
 That obvious science asks small learning's aid. 865  
 Wouldst thou on metaphysic pinions soar ?  
 Or wound thy patience amid logic thorns ?  
 Or travel history's enormous round ?  
 Nature no such hard task enjoins : she gave  
 A make to man directive of his thought ; 870  
 A make set upright, pointing to the stars,  
 As who should say, ' Read thy chief lesson there.'  
 Too late to read this manuscript of heav'n,  
 When, like a parchment scroll, shrunk up by flames,  
 It folds Lorenzo's lesson from his sight. 875

## THE STARS TELL OF ANGELIC BEINGS.

Lessons how various ! Not the God alone ;  
 I see his ministers ; I see, diffused  
 In radiant orders, essences sublime,  
 Of various offices, of various plume,  
 In heav'nly liveries, distinctly clad, 880  
 Azure, green, purple, pearl, or downy gold,

870-1. *A make to man*, &c. : Ovid has beautifully expressed the same thought :

Pronaque cum spectent animalia cætera terram ;  
 Os homini sublime dedit : cælumque tueri  
 Jussit, et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus.—*Met. I.*, 84, 86.

Or all commix'd ; they stand, with wings outspread,  
 List'ning to catch the Master's least command,  
 And fly through nature, ere the moment ends ;  
 Numbers innumerable !—Well conceived 885  
 By Pagan, and by Christian ! o'er each sphere  
 Presides an angel, to direct its course,  
 And feed, or fan, its flames ; or to discharge  
 Other high trusts unknown. For who can see 890  
 Such pomp of matter, and imagine, mind,  
 For which alone inanimate was made,  
 More sparingly dispensed ? That nobler son,  
 Far liker the great Sire ! 'Tis thus the skies  
 Inform us of superiors numberless,  
 As much, in excell'ence, above mankind, 895  
 As above earth, in magnitude, the spheres.  
 These, as a cloud of witnesses, hang o'er us ;  
 In a throng'd theatre are all our deeds :  
 Perhaps a thousand demigods descend  
 On ev'ry beam we see, to walk with men. 900  
 Awful reflection ! strong restraint from ill !

## NATURE CONTRASTED WITH ART.

Yet, here, our virtue finds still stronger aid  
 From these ethereal glories sense surveys.  
 Something like magic strikes from this blue vault.  
 With just attention is it view'd ? We feel 905  
 A sudden succour, unimplored, unthought ;  
 Nature herself does half the work of man.  
 Seas, rivers, mountains, forests, deserts, rocks,

892. *That nobler son* : Mind, nobler than matter. *Far liker the Great Sire* : Far more like God than matter is, in respect to its wide dispersion, or extensive diffusion.

899-901. A singular fancy is here introduced, but if considered true it would be adapted, as the author intimates, powerfully to restrain from evil.

The promontory's height, the depth profound  
 Of subterranean, excavated grots, 910  
 Black-brow'd, and vaulted high, and yawning wide  
 From nature's structure, or the scoop of time ;  
 If ample of dimension, vast of size,  
 E'en these an aggrandizing impulse give ;  
 Of solemn thought enthusiastic heights 915  
 E'en these infuse.—But what of vast in these ?  
 Nothing ;—or we must own the skies forgot.  
 Much less in art.—Vain Art! thou pigmy pow'r!  
 How dost thou swell and strut, with human pride,  
 To show thy littleness! What childish toys, 920  
 Thy wat'ry columns squirted to the clouds !  
 Thy basin'd rivers, and imprison'd seas !  
 Thy mountains moulded into forms of men !  
 Thy hundred-gated capitals! or those  
 Where three days' travel left us much to ride ; 925  
 Gazing on miracles by mortals wrought,

923. *Moulded into forms of men*: Such as Colossus at Rhodes. It was of hollow brass, however, and its larger cavities filled with stone. It was one hundred and five feet high, and its fingers were larger than entire statues commonly are. Our author refers, however, to marble statues of distinguished men.

924. *Hundred-gated capitals*: Such as Thebes, in Egypt, according to the description of it given by Homer, which is probably much exaggerated; or he speaks in round numbers, and intends merely to convey the idea that it was an uncommonly large city, and possessed of many gates. Its architectural remains, both as to number and magnitude, furnish evidence, however, of an almost inconceivable magnificence and grandeur at some former periods.

The city of Babylon was laid out in the form of a square, having twenty-five gates on each side, made of solid brass, which would make this a *hundred-gated capital*. From all these gates proceeded streets fifteen miles in length, and crossing each other at right angles.

925. The walls of Babylon are computed at sixty miles in circumference, which covered an area of about eight times that of London; yet, perhaps two thirds of this immense space was occupied with gardens, reservoirs of water, and large vacant places between them, as is usual in oriental cities.

Arches triumphal, theatres immense,  
Or nodding gardens pendent in mid-air !

927. In a former note *triumphal arches* are described (Night VI., 782). As an example of *theatres immense*, may be adduced the Colisæum at Rome, begun by Vespasian, and completed by his son Titus. It covers five acres and a quarter of ground ; its walls are one hundred and sixty-six feet high ; its seats would accommodate eighty thousand spectators, and twenty thousand more had room to stand. It enclosed a vast arena, where thousands of gladiators and wild beasts contended at once,

Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday.

This magnificent ruin has suffered much from earthquakes, and the destroying influence of time ; and to the disgrace of the Papal government (says Brande), it was allowed to be used, in comparatively recent times, as a convenient quarry, whence the materials of many modern edifices have been derived. Byron has immortalized these ruins in his *Childe Harold* :

But here, where murder breath'd her bloody steam :  
And here, where buzzing nations chok'd the ways,  
And roar'd or murmur'd like a mountain stream  
Dashing or winding as its torrent strays ;  
Here, where the Roman millions' blame or praise  
Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd,  
My voice sounds much, and fall the stars faint rays  
On the arena void ; seats crush'd, walls bow'd ;  
And galleries, where my steps seem echoes strangely loud.

A ruin, yet what a ruin ! from its mass  
Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been rear'd ;  
Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass  
And marvel where the spoil could have appear'd.

928. *Nodding gardens, &c.* : The most celebrated are those of ancient Babylon. The new palace built by Nebuchadnezzar was splendidly decorated with statues of men and animals, with vessels of gold and silver, and furnished with luxuries of all kinds brought thither from conquests in Egypt, Palestine, and Tyre. Its greatest boast were the hanging gardens, which acquired, even from Grecian writers, the appellation of one of the wonders of the world. They are attributed to the gallantry of Nebuchadnezzar, who constructed them in compliance with a wish of his queen Amytis to possess elevated groves, such as she had enjoyed on the hills around her native Ecbatana. Babylon was all flat, and to accomplish so extravagant a desire, an artificial mountain was reared, four hundred feet on each side, while terraces, resting on ranges of piers one above another, rose to a height that overtopped the walls of the city—that is, above three hundred feet in elevation. The ascent from terrace to terrace was made by corresponding flights of steps. To admit the roots of large trees, prodigious hollow piers were built, and filled with mould. From the Euphrates, which

Or temples proud to meet their gods half-way!  
 Yet these affect us in no common kind, 930  
 What then the force of such superior scenes?  
 Enter a temple; it will strike an awe:  
 What awe from this the Deity has built!  
 A good man seen, though silent, counsel gives;  
 The touch'd spectator wishes to be wise: 935  
 In a bright mirror his own hands have made, *self*  
 Here we see something like the face of God. *country*  
 Seems it not then enough, to say, Lorenzo,  
 To man abandon'd, 'Hast thou seen the skies?'

## THE ABUSE OF THE STARRY SKY.

And yet, so thwarted nature's kind design 940  
 By daring man, he makes her sacred awe  
 (That guard from ill) his shelter, his temptation  
 To more than common guilt, and quite inverts  
 Celestial art's intent. The trembling stars  
 See crimes gigantic, stalking through the gloom, 945  
 With front erect, that hide their head by day,  
 And making night still darker by their deeds.

flowed close to the foundation, water was raised by machinery. To those who looked upon these terraces from a distance, they had the appearance of woods overhanging mountains. Such was the completion of Nebuchadnezzar's work, when he found himself at rest in his house, and when he said: "Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the honour of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and the honour of my majesty" (Dan. iv). No where could the king have taken so comprehensive a view of the city he had so magnificently constructed and adorned, as when walking on the highest terrace of the gardens of his palace.—*Kitto's Cyc.*

929. *Or temples, &c.*: As an illustration of this line, we may refer to the Pantheon at Rome, built about the commencement of the Christian era. It was the largest structure of ancient times, being of a round form, one hundred and eighty-eight feet in diameter, and one hundred and forty-eight feet high. It contained colossal statues of several of the Pagan gods.

St. Peter's church, at Rome, has an altitude of four hundred and thirty-six feet, and St. Paul's of London, an altitude of three hundred and forty-four feet.

Slumb'ring in covert, till the shades descend,  
 Rapine and murder, link'd, now prowls for prey. 950  
 The miser earths his treasures; and the thief,  
 Watching the mole, half beggars him ere morn.  
 Now plots, and foul conspiracies, awake;  
 And, muffling up their horrors from the moon,  
 Havock and devastation they prepare,  
 And kingdoms tott'ring in the field of blood. 955  
 Now sons of riot in mid revel rage.  
 What shall I do? suppress it? or proclaim?—  
 Why sleeps the thunder? Now, Lorenzo! now,  
 His best friend's couch the rank adulterer  
 Ascends secure; and laughs at gods and men. 960  
 Prepost'rous madmen, void of fear or shame,  
 Lay their crimes bare to these chaste eyes of heav'n;  
 Yet shrink and shudder at a mortal's sight.  
 Were moon and stars for villains only made;  
 To guide, yet screen them, with tenebrious light? 965  
 No; they were made to fashion the sublime  
 Of human hearts, and wiser make the wise.

## THE ANCIENT SAGES.

Those ends were answer'd once; when mortals lived  
 Of stronger wing, of aquiline ascent 970  
 In theory sublime. O how unlike  
 Those vermin of the night, this moment sung,  
 Who crawl on earth, and on her venom feed!  
 Those ancient sages, human stars! They met  
 Their brothers of the skies, at midnight hour;  
 Their counsel ask'd; and, what they ask'd, obey'd. 975

950. *Earths his treasures*: Hides them under ground.

951. *The mole*: The miser, compared figuratively to the mole—an animal which bores holes in the earth.

965. *Tenebrious*: Dusky.

969. *Of aquiline ascent*: Of ascent like an eagle.

The Stagirite, and Plato, he who drank  
 The poison'd bowl, and he of Tusculum,  
 With him of Corduba (immortal names!)  
 In these unbounded and Elysian walks,  
 An area fit for gods, and godlike men, 980  
 They took their nightly round, thro' radiant paths

976. *The Stagirite*: Aristotle, so called from Stagyra, where he was born, B. C. 384. He was the founder of the *Peripatetic sect* of philosophers, so named, either from his walking about when he instructed his disciples, or from the public walk in the Lyceum, which he and his disciples were in the habit of frequenting. He was the teacher of Alexander, usually sur-named the Great.

*Plato*, an Athenian philosopher, was born at Ægina, B. C. 429. He was for a few years a pupil of Socrates, *who drank the poison'd bowl*, to which he was sentenced on insufficient grounds, in his seventieth year, having been born near Athens, B. C. 469.

Plato was the head of the *Academic sect*, so called from the academy, or public grove, in the suburbs of Athens, where he taught for many years. The *method of instruction* originated, or, at least, *pursued*, by Socrates, deserves mention. His custom was, to propose a series of questions to those with whom he conversed, in order to lead them to some unforeseen conclusion. He first gained assent to some obvious truths, and then obliged the admission of others related to them, or like them. Not employing direct argument or persuasion, he led the person he was instructing to deduce the truths of which he desired to convince him, as a necessary consequence from his own concessions. He commonly concealed his design until the instructed had advanced too far to recede.

977. *He of Tusculum*: Cicero, the great Roman orator, whose favourite residence was at this place, about twelve miles from Rome, remarkable for the beauty of its situation, and much resorted to in the summer season by the wealthy citizens of Rome. The scene of the "Tusculan Disputations" was laid here. Cicero embraced and defended, in the form of dialogue, the doctrines of the Platonic philosophy. His birth occurred B. C. 107.

978. *Him of Corduba*: Corduba, in Spain, was the birthplace of both the Senecas, and of Lucan the poet. The younger Seneca, a Roman orator, and at one time the tutor of the emperor Nero, is probably here referred to. He put himself to death at the command of his imperial and cruel master. He was more severe, ascetic, and self-denying in his pithy and pointed writings as a philosopher, than in his practice. He was theoretically, but not practically, a high stoic, and has delivered many valuable sentiments, that have been much admired.

By seraphs trod ; instructed, chiefly, thus,  
 To tread in their bright footsteps here below ;  
 To walk in worth still brighter than the skies.  
 There they contracted their contempt of earth ; 985  
 Of hopes eternal kindled, there, the fire ;  
 There, as in near approach, they glow'd, and grew  
 (Great visitants !) more intimate with God,  
 More worth to men, more joyous to themselves.  
 Through various virtues, they, with ardour, ran 990  
 The zodiac of their learn'd, illustrious lives.  
 In Christian hearts, O for a pagan zeal !  
 A needful, but opprobrious pray'r ! As much  
 Our ardour less, as greater is our light.  
 How monstrous this in morals ! Scarce more strange 995  
 Would this phenomenon in our nature strike,  
 A sun that froze us, or a star that warm'd.

THE DOCTRINES OF THE ANCIENT PHILOSOPHERS.

What taught these heroes of the moral world ?  
 To these thou giv'st thy praise, give credit too.  
 These doctors ne'er were pension'd to deceive thee ; 1000  
 And Pagan tutors are thy taste.—They taught,  
 That, narrow views betray to misery :  
 That, wise it is to comprehend the whole :  
 That, virtue rose from nature ; ponder'd well,  
 The single base of virtue built to heav'n : 1005  
 That, God and nature our attention claim :  
 That, nature is the glass reflecting God,  
 As, by the sea, reflected is the sun,  
 Too glorious to be gazed on in his sphere :

989. *More worth to men* : More valuable, or useful, to men.

991. *The zodiac* : That belt of the heavens in which the sun and the planets, the brightest orbs of the sky, make their revolutions, to which answer the illustrious sages just alluded to.

993. *Opprobrious pray'r* : One that involves reproach to Christians, or implies that they are greatly deficient.



That, mind immortal loves immortal aims : 1010  
 That, boundless mind affects a boundless space :  
 That, vast surveys, and the sublime of things,  
 The soul assimilate, and make her great :  
 That, therefore, heav'n her glories, as a fund  
 Of inspiration, thus spreads out to man. 1015  
 Such are their doctrines ; such the night inspired.

## THE SOUL, MADE TO WALK THE SKIES.

And what more true ? What truth of greater weight ?  
 The soul of man was made to walk the skies ;  
 Delightful outlet of her prison here !  
 There, disincumber'd from her chains, the ties 1020  
 Of toys terrestrial, she can rove at large ;  
 There, freely can respire, dilate, extend,  
 In full proportion let loose all her pow'rs ;  
 And, undeluded, grasp at something great.  
 Nor, as a stranger, does she wander there ; 1025  
 But, wonderful herself, through wonder strays ;  
 Contemplating their grandeur, finds her own ;  
 Dives deep in their economy divine,  
 Sits high in judgment on their various laws,  
 And, like a master, judges not amiss. 1030  
 Hence greatly pleased, and justly proud, the soul  
 Grows conscious of her birth celestial ; breathes  
 More life, more vigour, in her native air ;  
 And feels herself at home among the stars ;  
 And, feeling, emulates her country's praise. 1035  
 What call we, then, the firmament, Lorenzo ?—  
 As earth the body, since the skies sustain  
 The soul with food that gives immortal life,  
 Call it, The noble pasture of the mind,  
 Which there expatiates, strengthens, and exults, 1040

1011. *Affects* : Desires and seeks.

1035. *Emulates* : Ambitiously desires.

1037. *As earth* (sustains) *the body*.

And riots through the luxuries of thought.  
 Call it, The garden of the Deity,  
 Blossom'd with stars, redundant in the growth  
 Of fruit ambrosial; moral fruit to man.  
 Call it, The breast-plate of the true High-priest, 1045  
 Ardent with gems oracular, that give,  
 In points of highest moment, right response;  
 And ill neglected, if we prize our peace.

## A TRUE ASTROLOGY.

Thus, have we found a true astrology;  
 Thus, have we found a new and noble sense 1050  
 In which alone stars govern human fates.  
 O that the stars (as some have feign'd) let fall  
 Bloodshed, and havock, on embattled realms,  
 And rescued monarchs from so black a guilt!  
 Bourbon! this wish how gen'rous in a foe! 1055  
 Wouldst thou be great, wouldst thou become a god,  
 And stick thy deathless name among the stars,  
 For mighty conquests on a needle's point?  
 Instead of forging chains for foreigners,  
 Bastile thy tutor. Grandeur all thy aim? 1060  
 As yet thou know'st not what it is: how great,  
 How glorious, then, appears the mind of man,  
 When in it all the stars and planets roll!

1046. *Ardent with gems oracular*: Brilliant with gems which were employed in giving responses from God to the Hebrew people in matters of duty, or in circumstances of difficulty

1055. *Bourbon*: The king of France, Louis XV.

1060. *Bastile thy tutor*: Confine thy tutor to the *Bastile*. This was an old prison in Paris, erected in 1369, for a state prison, and employed at times in a most unprincipled manner by the French monarchs, as a place of perpetual confinement for the objects of their fear, suspicion, or hatred. The people of France, in their rage against the long-standing abuses of monarchy, rose in their might in 1789, and demolished this place of cruelty, oppression, and horror.

1063. The meaning is, when in its conceptions, and among its cherished objects of consideration and thought, are found the stars and the planets.

And what it seems, it is : great objects make  
Great minds, enlarging as their views enlarge ; 1065  
Those still more godlike, as these more divine.

And more divine than these, thou canst not see.  
Dazzled, o'erpower'd, with the delicious draught  
Of miscellaneous splendours, how I reel  
From thought to thought, inebriate, without end ! 1070  
An Eden, this ! a Paradise unlost !

I meet the Deity in ev'ry view,  
And tremble at my nakedness before him !  
O that I could but reach the tree of life !  
For here it grows, unguarded from our taste ; 1075  
No flaming sword denies our entrance here :  
Would man but gather, he might live for ever.

THE MATHEMATICAL GLORIES OF THE SKIES.

Lorenzo, much of moral hast thou seen.  
Of curious arts art thou more fond ? Then mark  
The mathematic glories of the skies, 1080

In number, weight, and measure, all ordain'd.  
Lorenzo's boasted builders, chance, and fate,  
Are left to finish his aerial tow'rs :  
Wisdom and choice, their well-known characters  
Here deep impress, and claim it for their own. 1085

Though splendid all, no splendour void of use :  
Use rivals beauty ; art contends with pow'r ;  
No wanton waste, amid effuse expense ;  
The great Economist adjusting all  
To prudent pomp, magnificently wise. 1090  
How rich the prospect ! and for ever new !

1064-5. There is great practical value in this suggestion. Our minds take their character of greatness or littleness, of purity or baseness, from the nature of the objects which we are most in the habit of contemplating. We have the power to direct our attention to such as we choose ; and hence our responsibility to acquire an elevated, virtuous, and religious character.

1088. *Effuse* : Profuse, large.

And newest to the man that views it most ;  
 For newer still in infinite succeeds.  
 Then, these aerial racers, O how swift !  
 How the shaft loiters from the strongest string ! 1095  
 Spirit alone can distance the career.  
 Orb above orb ascending without end !  
 Circle in circle, without end, enclosed !  
 Wheel within wheel ; Ezekiel, like to thine !  
 Like thine, it seems a vision or a dream ; 1100  
 Though seen, we labour to believe it true !  
 What involution ! What extent ! What swarms  
 Of worlds, that laugh at earth ! Immensely great !  
 Immensely distant from each other's spheres !  
 What, then, the wondrous space through which they roll ?  
 At once it quite ingulfs all human thought ; 1106  
 'Tis comprehension's absolute defeat.

WONDERFUL ORDER OF THE HEAVENLY BODIES.

Nor think thou seest a wild disorder here :  
 Through this illustrious chaos to the sight,  
 Arrangement neat, and chastest order, reign. 1110  
 The path prescribed, inviolably kept,  
 Upbraids the lawless sallies of mankind.  
 Worlds, ever thwarting, never interfere :  
 What knots are tied ! How soon are they dissolved,

1094. *Aerial racers*: The stars and planets, in their real or apparent motions, greatly excelling in velocity the arrow projected from the strongest bow.

1096. *Can distance the career*: Can leave them behind in the race.

1109. *Like to thine*: Ezek. x. 9, 10.

1111-12. The moral reflection here suggested is impressive and valuable.

1113. *Thwarting*: Crossing each other's path.

1114-15. The author's wit is discernible in these lines. Because the orbital paths of the heavenly bodies are apparently intricate and perplexed, he speaks of them under the term *knot*; and as the marriage union, on

And set the seeming married planets free ! 1115  
 They rove for ever, without error rove ;  
 Confusion unconfused ! nor less admire  
 This tumult untumultuous ; all on wing !  
 In motion, all ! yet what profound repose !  
 What fervid action, yet no noise ! as awed 1120  
 To silence by the presence of their Lord ;  
 Or hush'd, by His command, in love to man,  
 And bid let fall soft beams on human rest,  
 Restless themselves. On yon cerulean plain,  
 In exultation to their God, and thine, 1125  
 They dance, they sing eternal jubilee,  
 Eternal celebration of His praise.  
 But, since their song arrives not at our ear,  
 Their dance perplex'd exhibits to the sight  
 Fair hieroglyphic of His peerless pow'r. 1130  
 Mark how the labyrinthian turns they take,  
 The circles intricate, and mystic maze,

account of its firmness and indissolubleness, is sometimes denoted by the same term, he speaks of the planets as *seemingly married*.

1116. *Error*: Mistake, or taking a wrong direction.

1117-24. A pleasing series of *contrasts* is found in these lines.

1120. *No noise*: Ps. xix., "No speech or language: their voice is not heard."

1124. *Cerulean*: Azure, bluish.

1130. *Hieroglyphic*: Sacred symbol.

1131. *Labyrinthian turns*: The word labyrinth denotes a place which, on account of its inextricable windings, is difficult to pass through without losing one's self. Ancient history (says Brande) gives an account of four celebrated labyrinths—the Cretan, Egyptian, Lemnian, and Italian. Of these, the Cretan is most celebrated in historical and mythological writings; but the Egyptian was by far the most important both in extent and magnificence, being an edifice composed of twelve palaces, all contained within the compass of one wall, and communicating with each other. It had only one entrance; but the innumerable turnings and windings of the terraces and rooms of which it consisted, rendered it impossible for those who had once entered within its walls to get out without a guide. It is said to have been designed either as a burial-place for the Egyptian kings, or for the preservation of sacred crocodiles, the chief objects of Egyptian idolatry.

- Weave the grand cipher of Omnipotence ;  
 To gods, how great ! how legible to man !  
 Leaves so much wonder greater wonder still ? 1135  
 Where are the pillars that support the skies ?  
 What more than Atlantean shoulder props  
 Th' incumbent load ? What magic, what strange art,  
 In fluid air these pond'rous orbs sustains ?  
 Who would not think them hung in golden chains ?— 1140  
 And so they are ; in the high will of Heav'n,  
 Which fixes all ; makes adamant of air,  
 Or air of adamant ; makes all of nought,  
 Or nought of all ; if such the dread decree.  
 Imagine from their deep foundations torn 1145  
 The most gigantic sons of earth, the broad  
 And tow'ring Alps, all tost into the sea ;  
 And, light as down, or volatile as air,  
 Their bulks enormous, dancing on the waves,  
 In time and measure exquisite ; while all 1150  
 The winds, in emulation of the spheres,  
 Tune their sonorous instruments aloft,  
 The concert swell, and animate the ball.—  
 Would this appear amazing ? What, then, worlds,  
 In a far thinner element sustain'd, 1155  
 And acting the same part, with greater skill,  
 More rapid movement, and for noblest ends ?  
 More obvious ends to pass,—are not these stars

1133. *Cipher* : A secret or disguised manner of writing, not intelligible to the uninstructed.

1137. *Atlantean shoulder* : Atlas is alluded to. He was a king of Mauritania, in the northwestern part of Africa. The fable is, that he was changed by Perseus into a high mountain. Either from this circumstance, or from the previous astronomical discoveries of the king, he is said to support the heavens.

1142. *Adamant* : A name denoting a substance of extreme hardness, hence applied to the diamond.

1151. *Of the spheres* : (Of the music) of the spheres. Compare note on 549

The seats majestic, proud imperial thrones,  
 On which angelic delegates of heav'n, 1160  
 At certain periods, as the Sov'reign nods,  
 Discharge high trusts of vengeance, or of love;  
 To clothe, in outward grandeur, grand design,  
 And acts most solemn still more solemnize ?

## THE STARS PROCLAIM MAN'S IMMORTALITY.

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

1165. *Ye citizens of air* : Stars and planets.1171. *Period* : Limit.

## LESSONS FROM THE MOON.

Here, then, Lorenzo, on these glories dwell ;  
 Nor want the gilt, illuminated roof, 1190  
 That calls the wretched gay to dark delights.  
 Assemblies !—this is one divinely bright ;  
 Here, unendangered in health, wealth, or fame,  
 Range, through the fairest, and the Sultan scorn.  
 He, wise as thou, no crescent holds so fair, 1195  
 As that, which on his turban awes a world ;  
 And thinks the moon is proud to copy him.  
 Look on her, and gain more than worlds can give,  
 A mind superior to the charms of pow'r.  
 Thou muffled in delusions of this life ! 1200  
 Can yonder moon turn ocean in his bed,  
 From side to side, in constant ebb and flow,  
 And purify from stench his wat'ry realms ?  
 And fails her moral influence ? Wants she pow'r  
 To turn Lorenzo's stubborn tide of thought 1205  
 From stagnating on earth's infected shore,  
 And purge from nuisance his corrupted heart ?  
 Fails her attraction, when it draws to heav'n ?  
 Nay, and to what thou valu'st more, earth's joys ?  
 Minds elevate, and panting for unseen, 1210  
 And defecate from sense, alone obtain  
 Full relish of existence undeflower'd,  
 The life of life, the zest of worldly bliss.  
 All else on earth amounts—to what ? To this :

1190. *Want* : Desire.

1194. *Sultan* : The emperor of Turkey.

1195. *No crescent holds* : No increasing or new moon regards so fair or beautiful as the figure of it inscribed on his turban. It is the distinguishing figure also on the Turkish standard.

1210-11. *Elevate*, elevated. *Defecate* : Defecated or purified.



'Bad to be suffer'd; blessings to be left :'  
Earth's richest inventory boasts no more. 1215

THE FIELD OF CELESTIAL CONTEMPLATION, BOUNDLESS.

Of higher scenes be then the call obey'd.  
O let me gaze!—Of gazing there's no end.  
O let me think!—Thought too is wilder'd here;  
In mid-way flight imagination tires; 1220  
Yet soon reprunes her wing to soar anew,  
Her point unable to forbear, or gain;  
So great the pleasure! so profound the plan!  
A banquet, this, where men and angels meet,  
Eat the same manna, mingle earth and heav'n. 1225  
How distant some of these nocturnal suns!  
So distant, (says the sage,) 'twere not absurd  
To doubt, if beams, set out at nature's birth,  
Are yet arrived at this so foreign world;  
Though nothing half so rapid as their flight. 1230  
An eye of awe and wonder let me roll,  
And roll for ever: who can satiate sight  
In such a scene? in such an ocean wide  
Of deep astonishment? where depth, height, breadth,  
Are lost in their extremes; and where, to count 1235  
The thick-sown glories in this field of fire,

1215. Bad things are to be endured, good things are to be left behind.

There are some exquisitely beautiful things said about the moon in Mrs. Ellis' "Poetry of Life." Among other things she says: We cannot look upon the stars without being struck with a sense of their distance, their unattainable height, the immeasurable extent of space that lies between the celestial fields which they traverse with a perpetual harmony of motion, and the low world of petty cares where we lie grovelling. But the moon, the placid moon, is just high enough for sublimity—just near enough for love. So benign, and bland, and softly beautiful is her ever-beaming countenance, that when personifying, as we always do, the moon, she seems to us rather as purified than as having been always pure.

1221. *Reprunes*: 'Trims again.

1227. *The sage*: Huygens.

Perhaps a seraph's computation fails.  
 Now, go, ambition ! boast thy boundless might  
 In conquest, o'er the tenth part of a grain.

## MIRACLES COMPARED.

And yet Lorenzo calls for miracles, 1240  
 To give his tott'ring faith a solid base.  
 Why call for less than is already thine ?  
 Thou art no novice in theology ;  
 What is a miracle ?—'Tis a reproach,  
 'Tis an implicit satire, on mankind ; 1245  
 And while it satisfies, it censures too.  
 To common sense, great nature's course proclaims  
 A Deity : when mankind falls asleep,  
 A miracle is sent, as an alarm ;  
 To wake the world, and prove Him o'er again, 1250  
 By recent argument, but not more strong.  
 Say, which imports more plenitude of pow'r,  
 Or nature's laws to fix, or to repeal !  
 To make a sun, or stop his mid career ?  
 To countermand his orders, and send back 1255  
 The flaming courier to the frightened east,  
 Warm'd, and astonish'd, at his evening ray ?  
 Or bid the moon, as with her journey tired,  
 In Ajalon's soft flow'ry vale repose ?  
 Great things are these ; still greater, to create. 1260  
 From Adam's bow'r look down through the whole train  
 Of miracles ;—resistless is their pow'r ?  
 They do not, cannot, more amaze the mind,  
 Than this, call'd unmiraculous survey,  
 If duly weigh'd, if rationally seen, 1265  
 If seen with human eyes. The brute, indeed,

1248. *Falls asleep* : That is, in idolatry, vice, and ungodliness.

1253. *Or nature's laws to fix* : Whether to fix, &c.

1259. *In Ajalon's soft vale* : The miracle here spoken of is recorded in the book of Joshua, x. 12—14.

Sees nought but spangles here ; the fool, no more.  
 Say'st thou, 'The course of nature governs all?'  
 The course of nature is the art of God.  
 The miracles thou call'st for, this attest ; 1270  
 For say, could nature nature's course control ?

## ASTRONOMICAL INQUIRIES.

But, miracles apart, who sees Him not,  
 Nature's controller, author, guide, and end ?  
 Who turns his eye on nature's midnight face,  
 But must inquire—'What hand behind the scene, 1275  
 What arm almighty, put these wheeling globes  
 In motion, and wound up the vast machine ?  
 Who rounded in his palm these spacious orbs ?  
 Who bowl'd them flaming thro' the dark profound,  
 Num'rous as glitt'ring gems of morning dew, 1280  
 Or sparks from populous cities in a blaze,  
 And set the bosom of old night on fire ?  
 Peopled her desert, and made horror smile ?  
 Or, if the military style delights thee,  
 (For stars have fought their battles, leagued with man) 1285  
 'Who marshals this bright host ? enrolls their names ?  
 Appoints their post, their marches, and returns,  
 Punctual, at stated periods ? who disbands  
 These vet'ran troops, their final duty done,  
 If e'er disbanded ?—He, whose potent word, 1290

1272-83. *Who sees Him not, &c.* : Dr. Cheever remarks: What grand lines are these! The sublimity of Young rises sometimes higher than that of Dante, as his devotion is more direct and scriptural. The grandeur of that image or conception of the *spacious orbs bowl'd flaming through the dark profound, numerous as glittering gems of morning dew*, could scarcely be exceeded. It is like the image of the same great poet, of Olden Time, sternly driving his ploughshare over creation. The poem of the Night Thoughts is full of great and rich materials for the mind and heart: it is one of the best demonstrations in our language of the absurdity of that strange idea of Dr. Johnson, that devotion is not a fit subject for poetry!

1279. *Profound*; Depths of space.

Like the loud trumpet, levied first their pow'rs  
 In night's inglorious empire, where they slept  
 In beds of darkness ; arm'd them with fierce flames,  
 Arranged, and disciplined, and clothed in gold ;  
 And call'd them out of chaos to the field, 1295  
 Where now they war with vice and unbelief.  
 O let us join this army ! Joining these,  
 Will give us hearts intrepid, at that hour,  
 When brighter flames shall cut a darker night ;  
 When these strong demonstrations of a God 1300  
 Shall hide their heads, or tumble from their spheres,  
 And one eternal curtain cover all !

▲ PRAYER TO THE STARS, AND TO THEIR GREAT AUTHOR.

Struck at that thought, as new awaked, I lift  
 A more enlighten'd eye, and read the stars,  
 To man still more propitious ; and their aid 1305  
 (Though guiltless of idolatry) implore,  
 Nor longer rob them of their noblest name.  
 O ye dividers of my time ! Ye bright  
 Accountants of my days, and months, and years,  
 In your fair calendar distinctly mark'd ! 1310  
 Since that authentic, radiant register,  
 Tho' man inspects it not, stands good against him ;  
 Since you, and years, roll on, tho' man stands still ;  
 Teach me my days to number, and apply  
 My trembling heart to wisdom ; now beyond 1315  
 All shadow of excuse for fooling on,  
 Age smooths our path to prudence ; sweeps aside  
 The snares, keen appetites, and passion, spread  
 To catch stray souls : and wo to that grey head,  
 Whose folly would undo what age has done ! 1320  
 Aid then, aid, all ye stars !—Much rather, Thou,  
 Great Artist ! Thou, whose finger set aright  
 This exquisite machine, with all its wheels,  
 Though intervolved, exact ; and pointing out

- Life's rapid and irrevocable flight, 1325  
 With such an index fair, as none can miss,  
 Who lifts an eye, nor sleeps till it is closed.  
 Open mine eye, dread Deity ! to read  
 The tacit doctrine of thy works ; to see  
 Things as they are, unalter'd, through the glass 1330  
 Of worldly wishes. Time ! Eternity !  
 ('Tis these mismeasured, ruin all mankind)  
 Set them before me ; let me lay them both  
 In equal scale, and learn their various weight.  
 Let time appear a moment, as it is ; 1335  
 And let eternity's full orb, at once,  
 Turn on my soul, and strike it into heav'n.  
 When shall I see far more than charms me now ?  
 Gaze on creation's model in Thy breast  
 Unveil'd, nor wonder at the transcript more ? 1340  
 When, this vile, foreign dust, which smothers all  
 That travel earth's deep vale, shall I shake off ?  
 When shall my soul her incarnation quit,  
 And, re-adopted to thy blest embrace,  
 Obtain her apotheosis in Thee ? 1345

## THE UNIVERSE, A TEMPLE OF DEVOTION.

- Dost think, Lorenzo, this is wand'ring wide ?  
 No, 'tis directly striking at the mark :  
 To wake thy dead devotion, was my point ;  
 And how I bless night's consecrating shades,  
 Which to a temple turn an universe ; 1350  
 Fill us with great ideas, full of heav'n,  
 And antidote the pestilential earth !  
 In ev'ry storm, that either frowns, or falls,  
 What an asylum has the soul in pray'r !  
 And what a fane is this, in which to pray ! 1355  
 And what a God must dwell in such a fane !

1345. *Apotheosis* : Deification, in a modified and subordinate sense.

O what a genius must inform the skies !  
 And is Lorenzo's salamander heart  
 Cold, and untouch'd, amid these sacred fires ?  
 O ye nocturnal sparks ! Ye glowing embers, 1360  
 On heav'n's broad hearth ! who burn, or burn no more,  
 Who blaze, or die, as great Jehovah's breath  
 Or blows you, or forbears ; assist my song ;  
 Pour your whole influence ; exorcise his heart,  
 So long possess'd ; and bring him back to man. 1365

## EXTENDED VIEWS ENLARGE THE MIND.

And is Lorenzo a demurrer still ?  
 Pride in thy parts provokes thee to contest  
 Truths, which, contested, put thy parts to shame.  
 Nor shame they more Lorenzo's head than heart ;  
 A faithless heart, how despicably small ! 1370  
 Too strait, aught great or gen'rous to receive !  
 Fill'd with an atom ! fill'd, and foul'd, with self !  
 And self mistaken ; self, that lasts an hour !  
 Instincts, and passions, of the nobler kind,  
 Lie suffocated there ; or they alone, 1375  
 Reason apart, would wake high hope ; and open,  
 To ravish'd thought, that intellectual sphere,  
 Where order, wisdom, goodness, providence,  
 Their endless miracles of love display,  
 And promise all the truly great desire. 1380  
 The mind that would be happy, must be great ;  
 Great, in its wishes ; great, in its surveys.

1357. *Inform the skies* : Give to the skies their form.

1358. *Salamander heart* : The salamander is a species of lizard, and according to the vulgar, but mistaken notion, was supposed to be able to endure the intensest fire without pain or change.

1363. *Or blows* : Either blows.

1364. *Exorcise his heart* : Drive out the demon from his heart.

1366. *Demurrer* : Doubter.

1367. *Pride in thy parts* : Pride of intellect.

Extended views a narrow mind extend ;  
 Push out its corrugate, expansive make,  
 Which, ere long, more than planets shall embrace. 1385  
 A man of compass makes a man of worth :  
 Divine contemplate, and become divine.

## AN APPEAL TO THE SCEPTIC.

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

1384. *Corrugate, expansive make* : Folded, wrinkled, not expanded, yet *expansible* structure.

1396. *Man's heart* is immersed in a filthy pit, *and loves the mire*.

## GOD VISIBLE IN CREATION.

Laborious ? 'tis impracticable quite :  
 To sink beyond a doubt, in this debate, 1415  
 With all his weight of wisdom, and of will,  
 And crime flagitious, I defy a fool.  
 Some wish they did ; but no man disbelieves.  
 God is a spirit ; spirit cannot strike  
 These gross, material organs : God by man 1420  
 As much is seen, as man a God can see,  
 In these astonishing exploits of power.  
 What order, beauty, motion, distance, size !  
 Conception of design, how exquisite !  
 How complicate, in their divine police ! 1425  
 Apt means ! great ends ! consent to general good !—  
 Each attribute of these material gods,  
 So long (and that with specious pleas) adored,  
 A separate conquest gains o'er rebel thought ;  
 And leads in triumph the whole mind of man. 1430  
 Lorenzo, this may seem harangue to thee ;  
 Such all is apt to seem, that thwarts our will.  
 And dost thou, then, demand a simple-proof  
 Of this great master-moral of the skies,  
 Unskill'd, or disinclin'd, to read it there ? 1435  
 Since 'tis the basis, and all drops without it,  
 Take it, in one compact, unbroken chain.  
 Such proof insists on an attentive ear ;  
 'Twill not make one amid a mob of thoughts,  
 And, for thy notice, struggle with the world. 1440  
 Retire ;—the world shut out ;—thy thoughts call home ;—

1425. *Police* : Regulation.

1426. *Consent* : Adaptation.

1434. *Master-moral* : Chief doctrine or lesson.

1438. *Insists on, &c.* : Stands on an attentive ear : cannot otherwise be appreciated.



Imagination's airy wing repress :—  
 Lock up thy senses ;—let thy passion stir ;—  
 Wake all to reason ;—let her reign alone ;—  
 Then, in thy soul's deep silence, and the depth 1445  
 Of nature's silence, midnight, thus inquire,  
 As I have done ; and shall inquire no more.  
 In nature's channel, thus the questions run :

## ARGUMENTS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

' What am I ? and from whence ?—I nothing know,  
 But that I am ; and, since I am, conclude 1450  
 Something eternal ! had there e'er been nought,  
 Nought still had been : eternal there must be.—  
 But what eternal ?—why not human race ?  
 And Adam's ancestors without an end ?—  
 That's hard to be conceived ; since every link 1455  
 Of that long chain'd succession is so frail :  
 Can every part depend, and not the whole ?  
 Yet grant it true ; new difficulties rise ;  
 I'm still quite out at sea ; nor see the shore.  
 Whence earth, and these bright orbs ?—eternal too ? 1460  
 Grant matter was eternal ; still these orbs  
 Would want some other father ?—much design  
 Is seen in all their motions, all their makes :  
 Design implies intelligence, and art :  
 That can't be from themselves—or man ; that art 1465  
 Man scarce can comprehend, could man bestow ?  
 And nothing greater, yet allow'd, than man.—  
 Who, motion, foreign to the smallest grain,  
 Shot through vast masses of enormous weight ?

1451. *Had there, &c.* : Had there ever been a time when no thing or being whatever existed.

1452. *Eternal there must be* : Dr. Thomas Brown has an argument on this topic well worth reading, in his *Philosophy of the Human Mind*, vol. iii., 434–6.

Who bid brute matter's restive lump assume 1470  
 Such various forms, and gave it wings to fly?  
 Has matter innate motion? Then each atom,  
 Asserting its indisputable right  
 To dance, would form an universe of dust.  
 Has matter none? Then whence these glorious forms 1475  
 And boundless flights, from shapeless, and reposed?  
 Has matter more than motion? Has it thought,  
 Judgment, and genius? Is it deeply learn'd  
 In mathematics? Has it framed such laws,  
 Which, but to guess, a Newton made immortal?— 1480  
 If so, how each sage atom laughs at me,  
 Who think a clod inferior to a man!  
 If art, to form; and counsel, to conduct;  
 And that with greater far, than humble skill,  
 Resides not in each block;—a Godhead reigns.— 1485  
 Grant, then, invisible, eternal, Mind;  
 That granted, all is solved.—But, granting that,  
 Draw I not o'er me a still darker cloud?  
 Grant I not that which I can ne'er conceive?  
 A being without origin, or end! 1490  
 Hail, human liberty! There is no God—  
 Yet, why? On either scheme that knot subsists;  
 Subsist it must, in God, or human race;  
 If in the last, how many knots beside,  
 Indissoluble all?—Why choose it there, 1495  
 Where, chosen, still subsist ten thousand more?  
 Reject it, where, that chosen, all the rest  
 Dispersed, leave reason's whole horizon clear?  
 This is not reason's dictate: reason says,  
 Close with the side where one grain turns the scale. 1500  
 What vast preponderance is here! Can reason  
 With louder voice exclaim—Believe a God?  
 And reason heard, is the sole mark of man.

1475. *None*: No innate motion.

What things impossible must man think true,  
 On any other system ! and, how strange 1505  
 To disbelieve, through mere credulity !

If, in this chain, Lorenzo finds no flaw,  
 Let it for ever bind him to belief.

And where the link, in which a flaw he finds ?  
 And, if a God there is, that God how great ! 1510

How great that Power, whose providential care  
 Through these bright orbs' dark centres darts a ray !  
 Of nature universal threads the whole !

And hangs creation, like a precious gem,  
 Though little, on the footstool of his throne ! 1515

That little gem, how large ! A weight let fall  
 From a fix'd star, in ages can it reach  
 This distant earth ? Say, then, Lorenzo ! where,  
 Where ends this mighty building ? Where begin 1520  
 The suburbs of creation ? Where the wall,

Whose battlements look o'er into the vale  
 Of nonexistence ? Nothing's strange abode !  
 Say, at what point of space Jehovah dropp'd  
 His slacken'd line, and laid his balance by ;  
 Weigh'd worlds, and measured infinite, no more ? 1525

Where rears his terminating pillar high  
 Its extramundane head ? and says, to gods,  
 In characters illustrious as the sun.

*I stand, the plan's proud period ; I pronounce  
 The work accomplish'd ; the creation closed : 1530  
 Shout, all ye gods ! nor shout, ye gods alone ;  
 Of all that lives, or, if devoid of life,  
 That rests, or rolls, ye heights, and depths, resound !  
 Resound ! resound ! ye depths, and heights, resound !*

1527. *Extramundane head*: Its top without or beyond the limits of created worlds.

1529. *Period*: Limit.

## GRAND CONCEPTIONS OF THE POWER OF THE CREATOR.

Hard are those questions?—Answer harder still. 1535  
 Is this the sole exploit, the single birth,  
 The solitary son, of Power Divine?  
 Or has th' Almighty Father, with a breath,  
 Impregnated the womb of distant space?  
 Has He not bid, in various provinces, 1540  
 Brother-creations the dark bowels burst  
 Of night primeval; barren, now, no more?  
 And He the central sun transpiercing all  
 Those giant-generations, which disport,  
 And dance, as motes, in his meridian ray; 1545  
 That ray withdrawn, benighted, or absorb'd,  
 In that abyss of horror, whence they sprung;  
 While Chaos triumphs, repossess'd of all  
 Rival creation ravish'd from his throne?  
 Chaos! of nature both the womb, and grave! 1550

1545. *As Notes*: The sublimity of thought excited by this comparison, is worthy of admiration. In this entire connection the author's lofty and devout genius luxuriates, soars, and triumphs, carrying us along with a pleasing ecstasy.

1550. *Chaos! of nature, &c.*: For a history of chaos we are indebted to the lively fancy of the author of *Paradise Lost*. This line is a literal quotation, as will be seen from the extract subjoined from Book II. 891—916:

The secrets of the hoary deep, a dark  
 Illimitable ocean, without bound,  
 Without dimension, where length, breadth, and height,  
 And time, and place, are lost; where eldest Night  
 And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold  
 Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise  
 Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.  
 For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four champions fierce  
 Strive here for mast'ry, and to battle bring  
 Their embryon atoms, &c.

\* \* \* \* \*  
 Into this wild abyss,  
 The womb of Nature, and perhaps her grave,  
 Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,  
 But all these in their pregnant causes mix'd  
 Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,  
 Unless th' Almighty Maker them ordain  
 His dark materials to create more worlds.

Think'st thou my scheme, Lorenzo, spreads too wide?  
 Is this extravagant?—No; this is just;  
 Just, in conjecture, though 'twere false in fact.  
 If 'tis an error, 'tis an error sprung  
 From noble root, high thought of the Most High. 1555  
 But wherefore error? Who can prove it such?—  
 He that can set Omnipotence a bound.  
 Can man conceive beyond what God can do?  
 Nothing, but quite impossible, is hard.  
 He summons into being, with like ease, 1560  
 A whole creation, and a single grain.  
 Speaks he the word? a thousand worlds are born!—  
 A thousand worlds? there's space for millions more;  
 And in what space can his great *fiat* fail?  
 Condemn me not, cold critic! but indulge 1565  
 The warm imagination: why condemn?  
 Why not indulge such thoughts, as swell our hearts  
 With fuller admiration of that Power,  
 Who gives our hearts with such high thoughts to swell?  
 Why not indulge in His augmented praise? 1570  
 Darts not His glory a still brighter ray,  
 The less is left to Chaos, and the realms  
 Of hideous Night, where fancy strays aghast;  
 And, though most talkative, makes no report?  
 Still seems my thought enormous? Think again;— 1575  
 Experience 'self shall aid thy lame belief.  
 Glasses (that revelation to the sight!)  
 Have they not led us deep in the disclose  
 Of fine-spun nature, exquisitely small;  
 And, though demonstrated, still ill conceived? 1580  
 If, then, on the reverse, the mind would mount  
 In magnitude, what mind can mount too far,  
 To keep the balance, and creation poise?  
 Defect alone can err on such a theme:

1572. *The less* (that) *is left*, &c.

1578. *Disclose*: Uncovering.

What is too great, if we the Cause survey? 1585  
 Stupendous Architect! Thou, Thou art all!  
 My soul flies up and down in thoughts of Thee,  
 And finds herself but at the centre still!  
 I AM, thy name! Existence, all thine own!  
 Creation's nothing; flatter'd much, if styled 1590  
 'The thin, the fleeting atmosphere of God.'  
 O for the voice—of what? of whom?—What voice  
 Can answer to my wants, in such ascent,  
 As dares to deem one universe too small?  
 Tell me, Lorenzo! (for now fancy glows, 1595  
 Fired in the vortex of Almighty Power)  
 Is not this home creation, in the map  
 Of universal nature, as a speck,  
 Like fair Britannia in our little ball;  
 Exceeding fair, and glorious for its size, 1600  
 But, elsewhere, far outmeasured, far outshone?  
 In fancy (for the fact beyond us lies,)  
 Canst thou not figure it, an isle, almost  
 Too small for notice, in the vast of being;  
 Sever'd by mighty seas of unbuilt space 1605  
 From other realms; from ample continents  
 Of higher life, where nobler natives dwell;  
 Less northern, less remote from Deity,  
 Glowing beneath the line of the Supreme;  
 Where souls in excellence make haste, put forth 1610

1597. *Home creation* : This earth and its atmosphere.

1599. *Ball* : The globe.

1604. *The vast (extent) of being*.

1609. *The line, &c.* : The equinoctial line. It will be observed that the figurative language of this passage is all drawn from geography. The Deity is conceived as dwelling over the torrid zone of the earth, as if in the neighbourhood of the sun; and as in that region of the earth vegetation is most luxuriant and constant, so those who dwell nearest the Deity, by meditation, prayer, and holy living, put forth *luxuriant growths* of excellence, and *ripen soon to gods*, or acquire a maturity and perfection of moral worth.

Luxuriant growths ; nor the late autumn wait  
Of human worth, but ripen soon to gods ?

## THE DOMINIONS OF THE SUN.

Yet why drown fancy in such depths as these ?  
Return, presumptuous rover ! and confess  
The bounds of man ; nor blame them, as too small. 1615  
Enjoy we not full scope in what is seen ?  
Full ample the dominions of the sun !  
Full glorious to behold ! How far, how wide,  
The matchless monarch, from his flaming throne,  
Lavish of lustre, throws his beams about him, 1620  
Farther, and faster, than a thought can fly,  
And feeds his planets with eternal fires !  
This Heliopolis, by greater far,  
Than the proud tyrant of the Nile, was built ;  
And He alone, who built it, can destroy. 1625  
Beyond this city, why strays human thought ?  
One wonderful, enough for man to know !  
One infinite, enough for man to range !  
One firmament, enough for man to read !  
O what voluminous instruction here ! 1630  
What page of wisdom is denied him ? None ;  
If learning his chief lesson makes him wise.  
Nor is instruction, here, our only gain ;  
There dwells a noble pathos in the skies,

1615. *The bounds of man* : The limits of research assigned to man.

1623. *This Heliopolis* : This city of the sun, as the word indicates, the sun being here compared to the ancient city of that name, situated near the apex of the Delta of the Nile, not far from modern Cairo. It was ornamented with a splendid temple of the sun. Nothing now remains of the city but a single obelisk. There was another city in Syria of the same name, and noted for a temple devoted to the same Deity. Its modern name is Baalbeck.

1634. *A noble pathos in the skies* : They have the power to affect our feelings in a strong and elevating manner and degree.

Which warms our passions, proselytes our hearts. 1635  
 How eloquently shines the glowing pole!  
 With what authority it gives its charge,  
 Remonstrating great truths in style sublime,  
 Though silent, loud! heard earth around; above  
 The planets heard; and not unheard in hell: 1640  
 Hell has her wonder, though too proud to praise.  
 Is earth, then, more infernal? Has she those,  
 Who neither praise (Lorenzo!) nor admire?

## THE FIRST VOLUME OF THE DEITY.

Lorenzo's admiration, pre-engaged,  
 Ne'er ask'd the moon one question; never held 1645  
 Least correspondence with a single star;  
 Ne'er rear'd an altar to the queen of heaven  
 Walking in brightness; or her train adored.  
 Their sublunary rivals have long since  
 Engross'd his whole devotion; stars malign, 1650  
 Which made their fond astronomer run mad;  
 Darken his intellect, corrupt his heart;  
 Cause him to sacrifice his fame and peace  
 To momentary madness, call'd Delight:  
 Idolater, more gross than ever kiss'd 1655  
 The lifted hand to Luna, or pour'd out

1647-48. *Queen of heaven walking, &c.*: Job xxxi. 26, 27, "Or the moon walking in brightness, and my heart hath been recently enticed," &c.

1650. *Stars malign*: Malignant stars. An expression used to denote the worldly objects that attracted and corrupted Lorenzo. It was an ancient superstition that the sun, moon, and planets, in certain relative positions, or appearing at particular conjunctures, exerted upon individuals a disastrous influence.

1656. *Luna*: The moon. We learn from the above quotation, that early as the days of Job, the moon was an object of adoration, B. C. 1520, or earlier according to some.



The blood to Jove!—O THOU, to whom belongs  
 All sacrifice! O thou Great Jove unfeign'd!  
 Divine Instructor! thy first volume, this,  
 For man's perusal; all in capitals! 1660  
 In moon, and stars (heaven's golden alphabet!)  
 Emblazed to seize the sight; who runs may read;  
 Who reads, can understand. 'Tis unconfined  
 To Christian land, or Jewry; fairly writ,  
 In language universal, to mankind; 1665,  
 A language, lofty to the learn'd; yet plain  
 To those that feed the flock, or guide the plough,  
 Or, from its husk, strike out the bounding grain.  
 A language, worthy the Great Mind that speaks!  
 Preface and comment, to the-sacred page! 1670  
 Which oft refers its reader to the skies,  
 As presupposing his first lesson there,  
 And Scripture 'self a fragment, that unread.  
 Stupendous book of wisdom, to the wise!  
 Stupendous book! and open'd, Night! by thee. 1675

## WHERE IS THE CREATOR'S THRONE?

By thee much open'd, I confess, O Night!  
 Yet more I wish; but how shall I prevail!  
 Say, gentle Night! whose modest, maiden beams  
 Give us a new creation, and present  
 The world's great picture soften'd to the sight; 1680  
 Nay, kinder far, far more indulgent still,

657. *Jove*: Jupiter, the chief god of the Romans; the same as the *Zeus* of the Greeks.

1664. *Jewry*: Judea. Dan. v. 13.

1673. *That unread*: The first volume, or the book of Nature, being unread, unobserved.

1675. *And open'd, &c.*: We discover more of the distant wonders of creation by night than in the day-time: were it not for the night, vastly the greater part of them could not be discovered by us at all, in consequence of the blaze of sunlight.

Say, thou, whose mild dominion's silver key  
 Unlocks our hemisphere, and sets to view  
 Worlds beyond number; worlds conceal'd by day,  
 Behind the proud and envious star of noon! 1685  
 Canst thou not draw a deeper scene?—and shew  
 The mighty Potentate, to whom belong  
 These rich regalia, pompously display'd  
 To kindle that high hope? Like him of Uz,  
 I gaze around; I search on every side— 1690  
 O for a glimpse of Him my soul adores!  
 As the chased hart, amid the desert waste,  
 Pants for the living stream; for Him who made her,  
 So pants the thirsty soul, amid the blank  
 Of sublunary joys. Say, goddess! where? 1695  
 Where, blazes His bright court? Where burns His throne?  
 Thou know'st; for thou art near Him; by thee, round  
 His grand pavilion, sacred fame reports  
 The sable curtain drawn. If not, can none  
 Of thy fair daughter-train, so swift of wing, 1700  
 Who travel far, discover where He dwells?  
 A star His dwelling pointed out below.  
 Ye Pleiades! Arcturus! Mazzaroth!  
 And thou, Orion! of still keener eye!  
 Say ye, who guide the wilder'd in the waves, 1705

1685. *Envious star of noon*: The sun, here represented as a person enviously concealing by his effulgence the other glories of the sky, that he might have our undivided admiration.

1689. *Him of Uz*: Job. "Oh that I knew where I might find him, that I might even come to his seat," &c. Job xxiii. 3, 8, 9.

1692. *As the chased hart*, &c.: Psalm lxiii.

1695. *Goddess*: Night.

1698. *Sacred fame*, &c.: Psalm xviii.

1700. *Daughter-train*: Comets.

1702. *A star*, &c.: Matthew ii. 2.

1703-4. *Ye Pleiades*, &c.: Names of several constellations mentioned in the book of Job, chap. xxxviii. 31, 32.

1705. *The wilder'd*: Those who have lost their track.

And bring them out of tempest into port!  
 On which hand must I bend my course to find Him?  
 These courtiers keep the secret of their King;  
 I wake whole nights, in vain, to steal it from them.

I wake; and, waking, climb Night's radiant scale, 1710  
 From sphere to sphere; the steps by nature set  
 For man's ascent; at once to tempt, and aid;  
 To tempt his eye, and aid his towering thought;  
 Till it arrives at the great goal of all.

## A JOURNEY THROUGH THE HEAVENS.

In ardent contemplation's rapid car, 1715  
 From earth, as from my barrier, I set out.  
 How swift I mount! Diminish'd earth recedes;  
 I pass the moon; and, from her farther side,  
 Pierce heav'n's blue curtain; strike into remote;  
 Where, with his lifted tube, the subtile sage 1720  
 His artificial, airy journey takes,  
 And to celestial lengthens human sight.

I pause at every planet on my road,  
 And ask for Him who gives their orbs to roll,  
 Their foreheads fair to shine. From Saturn's ring, 1725  
 In which, of earths an army might be lost,  
 With the bold comet take my bolder flight,  
 Amid those sovereign glories of the skies,  
 Of independent, native lustre proud;

The souls of systems! and the lords of life, 1730  
 Through their wide empires!—What behold I now?  
 A wilderness of wonders burning round;

1710. *Scale*: Ladder.

1714. *Goal*: The end, the object aimed at; alluding to the terminating point of a race-course, and implying, therefore, active exertion as being used in reaching it.

1720. *Tube*: The telescope.

1730. *The souls of systems*: The suns from which planetary systems derive their light, and life, and motion (subordinately to Divine agency).

Where larger suns inhabit larger spheres ;  
 Perhaps the villas of descending gods !  
 Nor halt I here ; my toil is but begun ; 1735  
 'Tis but the threshold of the Deity ;  
 Or, far beneath it, I am grovelling still.  
 Nor is it strange ; I built on a mistake !  
 The grandeur of his works, whence folly sought  
 For aid, to reason sets his glory higher ; 1740  
 Who built thus high for worms (mere worms to Him ;)

O where, Lorenzo ! must the Builder dwell ?  
 Pause, then ; and, for a moment, here respire—  
 If human thought can keep its station here.  
 Where am I ?—Where is earth ?—Nay, where art thou, 1745  
 O sun ?—Is the sun turn'd recluse ?—And are  
 His boasted expeditions short to mine ?—  
 To mine, how short ! On nature's Alps I stand,  
 And see a thousand firmaments beneath !  
 A thousand systems, as thousand grains ! 1750  
 So much a stranger, and so late arriv'd,  
 How can man's curious spirit not inquire,  
 What are the natives of this world sublime,

1733. *Inhabit larger spheres* : Occupy a higher position. The phraseology is obsolete, being borrowed from the Ptolemaic astronomy, long since exploded.

1734. *Perhaps the villas, &c.* : A tasteful writer, Mrs. Ellis, says that the idea of "descending gods" requiring "villas," or half-way houses to halt at, is wholly unworthy of the dignity of the author of "Night Thoughts." But she mistakes the author's idea, which was, that these might be the temporary residences of angels in their descent to our earth. The idea of halting there related to the poet and not to angels. But what is there unbecoming the dignity of our poet, in intimating that *perhaps* the angels occasionally took up their abode in those magnificent luminaries, the centres of planetary systems ?

1736. *The threshold (of the palace) of the Deity* : Or the entrance to his vast dominions, the far greater part of which lie beyond, and yet unexplored.

1748. *On nature's Alps* : On nature's highest eminence, &c.

Of this so foreign, unterrestrial sphere,  
Where mortal, untranslated, never stray'd? 1755

## THE INHABITANTS OF OTHER WORLDS INTERROGATED.

'O ye, as distant from my little home,  
As swiftest sun-beams in an age can fly!  
Far from my native element I roam,  
In quest of new, and wonderful, to man.  
What province this, of His immense domain, 1760  
Whom all obey? Or mortals here, or gods?  
Ye bord'ers on the coast of bliss! what are you?  
A colony from heav'n? Or, only raised,  
By frequent visit from heav'n's neighbouring realms,  
To secondary gods, and half divine?— 1765  
Whate'er your nature, this is past dispute,  
Far other life you live, far other tongue  
You talk, far other thought, perhaps, you think,  
Than man. How various are the works of God!  
But say, What thought? Is reason here enthroned, 1770  
And absolute? or sense in arms against her?  
Have you two lights? Or need you no reveal'd?  
Enjoy your happy realms their golden age?

1772. *Two lights*: Nature and Revelation.

1773. *Golden age*: Their primitive condition of felicity. There is an allusion to the fancies of the classical poets who divided all history into four periods: the first, or *golden age*, when there was an eternal spring, and when the earth spontaneously poured forth her harvests, and man

——— "vindice nullo  
Sponte sua sine lege fidem rectumque colebat,"

was coeval with the reign of Saturn upon earth. The next, or *silver age*, was marked by the change of seasons, and the division and cultivation of lands. The third, or *brazen age*, is described as

\* Sævior ingenils, et ad horrida promptior arma;  
Nec sceleratis tamen."

And then came the last, or *iron age*, full of all sorts of hardships and wickedness, which still continues (Ovidii Metamorp. i. 89, &c.)—*Brande*.

And had your Eden an abstemious Eve ?  
 Our Eve's fair daughters prove their pedigree, 1775  
 And ask their Adams—' Who would not be wise ?  
 Or, if your mother fell, are you redeem'd ?  
 And if redeem'd—is your Redeemer scorn'd ?  
 Is this your final residence ? If not,  
 Change you your scene, translated ? or by death ? 1780  
 And if by death, what death ?—Know you disease ?  
 Or horrid war ?—With war, this fatal hour,  
 Europa groans (so call we a small field,  
 Where kings run mad.) In our world, death deposes  
 Intemperance to do the work of ages ; 1785  
 And, hanging up the quiver nature gave him,  
 As slow of execution, for despatch  
 Sends forth imperial butchers ; bids them slay  
 Their sheep (the silly sheep they fleeced before,)  
 And toss him twice ten thousand at a meal. 1790  
 Sit all your executioners on thrones ?  
 With you, can rage for plunder make a god ?  
 And bloodshed wash out ev'ry other stain ?  
 But you, perhaps, can't bleed : from matter gross  
 Your spirits clean, are delicately clad 1795  
 In fine-spun ether, privileged to soar,  
 Unloaded, uninfected ; how unlike  
 The lot of man ! How few of human race  
 By their own mud unmurder'd ! How we wage  
 Self-war eternal !—Is your painful day 1800

1780. *Translated* : Conveyed or transported, as Enoch was, without suffering death, Gen. v. 24 ; Heb. xi. 5.

1783. *Europa* : Europe.

1788. *Imperial butchers* : Such as Alexander, Cæsar, Napoleon.

1792. *Make a god* : As in the case of Alexander, and others—that is, their admirers or flatterers assigned them a place among the gods.

1796. *Ether* : Subtle matter, thinner than the atmosphere.

1799. *By their own mud* : A disparaging epithet, equivalent to clay, dust, and means the same as fellow-creature, all being alike made of the dust of the earth.

Of hardy conflict o'er? or, are you still  
 Raw candidates at school? And have you those  
 Who disaffect reversions, as with us?—  
 But what are we? You never heard of man;  
 Or earth; the bedlam of the universe! 1805  
 Where reason (undiseased with you) runs mad,  
 And nurses Folly's children as her own;  
 Fond of the foulest. In the sacred mount  
 Of holiness, where reason is pronounced  
 Infallible, and thunders, like a god; 1810  
 E'en there, by saints, the demons are outdone;  
 What these think wrong, our saints refine to right;  
 And kindly teach dull hell her own black arts:  
 Satan, instructed, o'er their morals smiles.—  
 But this, how strange to you, who know not man! 1815  
 Has the least rumour of our race arrived?  
 Call'd here Elijah, in his flaming car?  
 Past by you the good Enoch, on his road  
 To those fair fields, whence Lucifer was hurl'd;  
 Who brush'd perhaps, your sphere in his descent, 1820  
 Stain'd your pure crystal ether, or let fall  
 A short eclipse from his portentous shade?  
 O, that that fiend had lodged on some broad orb  
 Athwart his way; nor reach'd his present home,  
 Then blacken'd earth with footsteps foul'd in hell, 1825  
 Nor wash'd in ocean, as from Rome he past  
 To Britain's isle; too, too conspicuous there!

1803. *Disaffect reversions*: Disdain a prospective inheritance, alluding to immortality.

1805. *Bedlam*: Madhouse, lunatic asylum.

1808. *Sacred Mount*, &c.: The Vatican at Rome.

1811. *Saints*: Those who claim to be such. The Jesuits are characterized in this passage with not too great severity.

1817. *Elijah*, &c.: 2 Kings ii. 11.

1818. *Enoch*, &c.: Gen. v. 24

1819. *Lucifer*: Satan.

1826. *Nor washed*, &c.: And not washed.

## THE QUESTION RESUMED—WHERE IS THE CREATOR'S THRONE?

But this is all digression. Where is He,  
 That o'er heav'n's battlements the felon hurl'd  
 To groans, and chains, and darkness? Where is He, 1830  
 Who sees creation's summit in a vale?  
 He, whom, while man is man, he can't but seek;  
 And if he finds, commences more than man?  
 O for a telescope His throne to reach!  
 Tell me, ye learn'd on earth, or blest above! 1835  
 Ye searching, ye Newtonian angels—tell,  
 Where your great Master's orb? His planets where?  
 Those conscious satellites, those morning stars,  
First-born of Deity! from central love,  
 By veneration most profound, thrown off; 1840  
 By sweet attraction, no less strongly drawn,  
 Awed, and yet raptured; raptured, yet serene;  
 Past thought illustrious, but with borrow'd beams;  
 In still approaching circles, still remote,  
 Revolving round the sun's eternal Sire? 1845  
 Or sent, in lines direct, on embassies  
 To nations—in what latitude?—Beyond  
 Terrestrial thought's horizon!—And on what  
 High errands sent?—Here human effort ends;  
 And leaves me still a stranger to His throne. 1850  
 Full well it might! I quite mistook my road;  
 Born in an age, more curious than devout;  
 More fond to fix the place of heaven, or hell,  
 Than studious this to shun, or that secure.  
 'Tis not the curious, but the pious path, 1855

1832. *He can't, &c.*: Man can't but seek.

1838. *Morning stars*: The holy angels.

1840–41. *Thrown off—drawn*: Expressions borrowed from astronomy alluding to the centrifugal and centripetal forces which govern the revolution of the satellite around its primary.

1843. *Illustrious*: Luminous, bright.



That leads me to my point : Lorenzo ! know,  
 Without or star, or angel, for their guide,  
Who worship God, shall find him. Humble love,  
 And not proud reason, keeps the door of heaven ;  
Love finds admission, where proud science fails. 1860  
 Man's science is the culture of his heart ;  
 And not to lose his plummet in the depths  
 Of nature, or the more profound of God.  
 Either to know, is an attempt that sets  
 The wisest on a level with the fool. 1865  
 To fathom nature, (ill attempted here !)  
 Past doubt, is deep philosophy above ;  
 Higher degrees in bliss archangels take,  
 As deeper learn'd ; the deepest, learning still.  
 For, what a thunder of Omnipotence 1870  
 (So might I dare to speak) is seen in all !  
 In man ! in earth ! in more amazing skies !  
 Teaching this lesson, pride is loth to learn—  
 Not deeply to discern, not much to know,  
 Mankind was born to wonder, and adore.' 1875

## THE RELIGIOUS DEVOTION OF OTHER WORLDS.

And is there cause for higher wonder still,  
 Than that which struck us from our past surveys ?  
 Yes ; and for deeper adoration too.  
 From my late airy travel unconfined,  
 Have I learn'd nothing ?—Yes, Lorenzo ; this : 1880  
 Each of these stars is a religious house ;  
 I saw their altars smoke, their incense rise ;  
 And heard hosannas ring through every sphere,  
 A seminary fraught with future gods.

1863. *The more profound* : The deeper depths.

1870. *What a thunder of Omnipotence* : What an impressive demonstration of Omnipotence, thunder (with lightning) being one of the most impressive manifestations of power.

1884. *Future gods* : Future beings of a superhuman order, and of an ex-

Nature, all o'er, is consecrated ground, 1885  
 Teeming with growths immortal, and divine.  
 The great Proprietor's all-bounteous hand  
 Leaves nothing waste ; but sows these fiery fields  
 With seeds of reason, which to virtues rise  
 Beneath his genial ray ; and, if escaped 1890  
 The pestilential blasts of stubborn will,  
 When grown mature, are gather'd for the skies.  
 And is devotion thought too much on earth,  
 When beings, so superior, homage boast,  
 And triumph in prostrations to the Throne ? 1895

## REVIEW OF THE NOCTURNAL LANDSCAPE.

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

alted moral character: the term *gods* being used very frequently by our author in this secondary and moderate sense.

1902. *Feign'd Eridanus*: This is the Greek name of the river Po in Italy, and the name of a winding constellation in the southern hemisphere.

Great Vine! on Thee, on Thee the cluster hangs ;  
 The filial cluster! infinitely spread 1915  
 In glowing globes, with various being fraught ;  
 And drinks (nectareous draught!) immortal life.  
 Or, shall I say, (for who can say enough?)  
 A constellation of ten thousand gems,  
 (And, O! of what dimensions! of what weight!) 1920  
 Set in one signet, flames on the right hand  
 Of Majesty Divine! the blazing seal,  
 That deeply stamps, on all-created mind,  
 Indelible, his sovereign attributes,  
 Omnipotence, and love! that, passing bound ; 1925  
 And this, surpassing that. Nor stop we here,  
 For want of power in God, but thought in man.  
 E'en this acknowledged, leaves us still in debt:  
 If greater aught, that greater all is thine,  
 Dread Sire!—Accept this miniature of Thee; 1930  
 And pardon an attempt from mortal thought,  
 In which archangels might have fail'd, unblamed.'  
 How such ideas of th' Almighty's power,  
 And such ideas of the Almighty's plan,  
 (Ideas not absurd,) distend the thought 1935  
 Of feeble mortals! Nor of them alone!  
 The fulness of the Deity breaks forth  
 In inconceivables to men, and gods.

1914. *Great Vine*: Jesus Christ. John xv. 1.

1915. *The filial cluster*: The cluster of sons—the collection of similar and harmonious worlds. The word *cluster* is used in correspondence with the figure of the *vine* on which they hang.

1919. *Gems*: The figure from a cluster hanging on a vine, is here changed to numberless *gems* glittering in the *signet* ring which adorns the *right hand of Majesty Divine*. An allusion is here made, perhaps, to the *seal* used by the king or queen of England in sealing private letters or grants in accordance with parliamentary bills.

The seal, in the text, is very properly represented as marked with the attributes of Omnipotence and Love.

1938. *Inconceivables*: Things inconceivable.

Think, then, O think ! nor ever drop the thought ;  
 How low must man descend, when gods adore ! 1940  
 Have I not, then, accomplish'd my proud boast ?  
 Did I not tell thee, ' We would mount, Lorenzo !  
 And kindle our devotion at the stars ?'

And have I fail'd ? and did I flatter thee ?  
 And art all adamant ? And dost confute 1945  
 All urged, with one irrefragable smile ?  
 Lorenzo ! mirth how miserable here ?

Swear by the stars, by Him who made them, swear,  
 Thy heart, henceforth, shall be as pure as they :  
 Then thou, like them, shalt shine ; like them, shalt rise 1950  
 From low to lofty ; from obscure to bright ;

By due gradation, nature's sacred law.  
 The stars, from whence ?—Ask Chaos—he can tell.  
 These bright temptations to idolatry,  
 From darkness, and confusion, took their birth ; 1955  
 Sons of deformity ! from fluid dregs  
 Tartarean, first they rose to masses rude ;  
 And then, to spheres opaque ; then dimly shone ;  
 Then brighten'd ; then blazed out in perfect day.

1945. *And art* (thou), &c. *And dost* (thou) *confute*.

1956–57. *From fluid dregs Tartarean*: Our author here obviously borrows from Milton, as in a former instance cited:

Darkness profound  
 Cover'd th' abyss ; but on the wat'ry calm  
 His brooding wings the Spirit of God outspread,  
 And vital virtue infused, and vital warmth  
 Throughout the fluid mass, but downward purged  
 The black Tartareous cold infernal dregs  
 Adverse to life: then founded, then conglobed  
 Like things to like, the rest to sev'ral place  
 Disparted, &c.—*Paradise Lost, Book VII, 233—241.*

So, in describing a subsequent process of the creation, the poet says .

For, of celestial bodies, first the sun,  
 A mighty sphere, he framed, unlightsome first,  
 Though of ethereal mould : then form'd the moon  
 Globose, and ev'ry magnitude of stars,  
 And sow'd with stars the Heav'n thick as a field:  
 Of light, &c.—*Paradise Lost, Book VII, 354—359.*

Nature delights in progress ; in advance 1960  
 From worse to better : but, when minds ascend,  
 Progress, in part, depends upon themselves.  
 Heaven aids exertion ; greater makes the great ;  
 The voluntary little lessens more.  
 O be a man ! and thou shalt be a god ! 1965  
 And half self-made !—Ambition how divine !

## ADDRESS TO THE UNDEVOUT.

O thou, ambitious of disgrace alone !  
 Still undevout ? unkindled ?—Though high taught,  
 School'd by the skies, and pupil of the stars ;  
 Rank coward to the fashionable world ! 1970  
 Art thou ashamed to bend thy knee to Heaven ?  
 Cursed fume of pride, exhaled from deepest hell !  
 Pride in religion, is man's highest praise.  
 Bent on destruction ! and in love with death !  
 Not all these luminaries, quench'd at once, 1975  
 Were half so sad, as one benighted mind,  
 Which gropes for happiness, and meets despair.  
 How, like a widow in her weeds, the Night,  
 Amid her glimmering tapers, silent sits !  
 How scrowful, how desolate, she weeps 1980  
 Perpetual dews, and saddens nature's scene !  
 A scene more sad sin makes the darken'd soul,  
 All comfort kills, nor leaves one spark alive.

1963–64. *Greater (exertion) makes the great* (or great minds). *The voluntary little (exertion) lessens more*: Tends more to contract the mind than great exertions tend to enlarge it.

1973. *Pride in religion is, &c.*: Our author does not mean to say that religious pride is praiseworthy, but that a great and unconcealed delight in the duties of religion is the highest praise of man.

1974. *Love death*: Borrowed from Proverbs viii. 36, "He that sinneth against me (wisdom, or true religion), wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death."

1978. *Like a widow, &c.*: What a beautifully touching comparison have we here !

## WHAT THE GRANDEUR OF THE UNIVERSE TEACHES.

Though blind of heart, still open is thine eye :  
 Why such magnificence in all thou seest ? 1985  
 Of matter's grandeur, know, one end is this,  
 To tell the rational, who gazes on it—  
 'Though that immensely great, still greater he,  
 Whose breast capacious, can embrace, and lodge,  
 Unburden'd, nature's universal scheme ; 1990  
 Can grasp creation with a single thought ;  
 Creation grasp ; and not exclude its Sire'—  
 To tell him farther—' It behoves him much  
 To guard th' important, yet depending, fate  
 Of being, brighter than a thousand suns : 1995  
 One single ray of thought outshines them all.'  
 And if man hears obedient, soon he'll soar  
 Superior heights, and on his purple wing,  
 His purple wing bedropp'd with eyes of gold,  
 Rising, where thought is now denied to rise, 2000  
 Look down triumphant on these dazzling spheres.

Why then persist ?—No mortal ever lived,  
 But dying, he pronounced (when words are true)  
 The whole that charms thee, absolutely vain ;  
 Vain, and far worse !—Think thou, with dying men ; 2005  
 O condescend to think as angels think !  
 O tolerate a chance for happiness !  
 Our nature such, ill choice ensures ill fate ;  
 And hell had been, though there had been no God.  
 Dost thou not know, my new astronomer ! 2010  
 Earth, turning from the sun, brings night to man ?  
 Man, turning from his God, brings endless night,  
 Where thou canst read no morals, find no friend,

1988. *He* : That is, man.

1994–95. *Fate of being* : Destined condition or state of existence.

2011. The author, in the next line, makes an admirable use of this circumstance

Amend no manners, and expect no peace.  
 How deep the darkness! and the groan, how loud! 2015  
 And far, how far, from lambent are the flames!—  
 Such is Lorenzo's purchase! such his praise!  
 The proud, the politic Lorenzo's praise!  
 Though in his ear, and levell'd at his heart,  
 I've half read o'er the volume of the skies. 2020

## THE VOICE OF NATURE.

For think not thou hast heard all this from me;  
 My song but echoes what great nature speaks.  
 What has she spoken? Thus the goddess spoke,  
 Thus speaks for ever:—'Place at nature's head,  
 A Sovereign, which o'er all things rolls his eye, 2025  
 Extends his wing, promulgates his commands,  
 But, above all, diffuses endless good:  
 To whom, for sure redress, the wrong'd may fly;  
 The vile, for mercy; and the pain'd, for peace:  
 By whom, the various tenants of these spheres, 2030  
 Diversified in fortunes, place, and powers,  
 Raised in enjoyment, as in worth they rise,  
 Arrive at length (if worthy such approach)  
 At that bless'd fountain-head, from which they stream;  
 Where conflict past redoubles present joy; 2035  
 And present joy looks forward on increase;  
 And that, on more; no period! every step  
 A double boon! a promise, and a bliss.'  
 How easy sits this scheme on human hearts.  
 It suits their make; it soothes their vast desires; 2040  
 Passion is pleased, and reason asks no more;  
 'Tis rational! 'tis great!—But what is thine?  
 It darkens! shocks! excruciates! and confounds!  
 Leaves us quite naked, both of help, and hope,  
 Sinking from bad to worse; few years, the sport 2045  
 Of fortune; then, the morsel of despair.

2016. *Lambent*: Playful, harmless.

## THE FOLLY OF VICE AND IRRELIGION.

Say, then, Lorenzo, (for thou know'st it well,  
 What's vice?—Mere want of compass in our thought.  
 Religion, what?—The proof of common sense.  
 How art thou hooted, where the least prevails! 2050  
 Is it my fault, if these truths call thee fool?  
 And thou shalt never be miscall'd by me.  
 Can neither shame, nor terror, stand thy friend?  
 And art thou still an insect in the mire?  
 How, like thy guardian angel, have I flown; 2055  
 Snatch'd thee from earth; escorted thee through all  
 Th' ethereal armies; walk'd thee, like a god,  
 Through splendours of first magnitude, arranged  
 On either hand; clouds thrown beneath thy feet;  
 Close cruised on the bright paradise of God; 2060  
 And almost introduced thee to the Throne!  
 And art thou still carousing, for delight,  
 Rank poison; first, fermenting to mere froth,  
 And then subsiding into final gall?  
 To beings of sublime, immortal make, 2065  
 How shocking is all joy, whose end is sure!  
 Such joy, more shocking still, the more it charms!  
 And dost thou choose what ends, ere well begun;  
 And infamous, as short? And dost thou choose  
 (Thou, to whose palate glory is so sweet) 2070  
 To wade into perdition, through contempt,  
 Not of poor bigots only, but thy own?  
 For I have peep'd into thy cover'd heart,  
 And seen it blush beneath a boastful brow;  
 For, by strong guilt's most violent assault, 2075  
 Conscience is but disabled, not destroy'd.  
 O thou most awful being, and most vain!  
 Thy will, how frail! how glorious is thy power!

2077. *Most awful being*: Man is so from the power which he possesses (2078-81).



Though dread eternity has sown her seeds  
 Of bliss, and wo, in thy despotic breast ; 2080  
 Though heaven, and hell, depend upon thy choice ;  
 A butterfly comes 'cross, and both are fled.  
 Is this the picture of a rational ?  
 This horrid image, shall it be most just ? \\  
 Lorenzo ! no : it cannot—shall not, be, 2085  
 If there is force in reason ; or, in sounds,  
 Chanted beneath the glimpses of the moon,  
 A magic, at this planetary hour,  
 When slumber locks the general lip, and dreams  
 Through senseless mazes hunt souls uninspired. 2090  
 Attend—the sacred mysteries begin——  
 My solemn night-born adjuration hear ;  
 Hear, and I'll raise thy spirit from the dust ;  
 While the stars gaze on this enchantment new ;  
 Enchantment, not infernal, but divine ! 2095

## SOLEMN NIGHT-BORN ADJURATION.

' By Silence, death's peculiar attribute ;  
 By Darkness, guilt's inevitable doom ;  
 By Darkness, and by Silence, sisters dread !  
 That draw the curtain round night's ebon throne,  
 And raise ideas, solemn as the scene ! 2100  
 By Night, and all of awful, night presents  
 To thought, or sense, (of awful much, to both,  
 The goddess brings !) By these her trembling fires,  
 Like Vesta's, ever burning ; and, like hers,

2088. *A magic* : A mysterious process for producing extraordinary effects.

2092. *Adjuration* : Solemn appeal, by which one person lays upon another an obligation to speak or act in a certain manner, as if under the solemnity of an oath.

2095. *Enchantment* : A secret process, in which certain agents, real or imaginary, are invoked for producing singular results.

2103. *Fires* : The stars.

2104. *Like Vesta's* : She was the Pagan deity that presided over the do-

Sacred to thoughts immaculate, and pure! 2105  
 By these bright orators, that prove, and praise,  
 And press thee to revere, the Deity ;  
 Perhaps, too, aid thee, when revered a while,  
 To reach his throne ; as stages of the soul,  
 Through which, at different periods, she shall pass, 2110  
 Refining gradual, for her final height,  
 And purging off some dross at every sphere !  
 By this dark pall thrown o'er the silent world !  
 By the world's kings, and kingdoms, most renown'd,  
 From short ambition's zenith set for ever ; 2115  
 Sad presage to vain boasters, now in bloom !  
 By the long list of swift mortality,  
 From Adam downward to this evening knell,  
 Which midnight waves in fancy's startled eye ;  
 And shocks her with a hundred centuries, 2120  
 Round death's black banner thron'd, in human thought !  
 By thousands, now, resigning their last breath,  
 And calling thee—wert thou so wise to hear !  
 By tombs o'er tombs arising ; human earth  
 Ejected, to make room for—human earth ; 2125  
 The monarch's terror ! and the sexton's trade !  
 By pompous obsequies, that shun the day,  
 The torch funereal, and the nodding plume,  
 Which makes poor man's humiliation proud ;  
 Boast of our ruin ! triumph of our dust ! 2130  
 By the damp vault that weeps o'er royal bones ;  
 And the pale lamp, that shews the ghastly dead,  
 More ghastly through the thick incumbent gloom !  
 By visits (if there are) from darker scenes,  
 The gliding spectre ! and the groaning grave ! 2135  
 By groans, and graves, and miseries that groan

mestic hearth, or the social interests of the family. In her temple at Rome was a sacred fire, attended by six virgins, called Vestals, who were specially charged, under severe penalties to preserve the sacred flame from going out. In case of its going out through their neglect, it was rekindled from the rays of the sun.

For the grave's shelter! By desponding men,  
Senseless to pains of death, from pangs of guilt!  
By guilt's last audit! By yon moon in blood,  
The rocking firmament, the falling stars, 2140  
And thunder's last discharge, great nature's knell!  
By second chaos; and eternal night'—  
Be wise—Nor let Philander blame my charm;  
But own not ill discharged my double debt,  
Love to the living, duty to the dead. 2145

For know, I'm but executor; he left  
This moral legacy; I make it o'er  
By his command: Philander hear in me,  
And Heaven in both.—If deaf to these, oh! hear  
Florello's tender voice: his weal depends 2150  
On thy resolve; it trembles at thy choice:  
For his sake—love thyself. Example strikes  
All human hearts! a bad example more;  
More still a father's; that ensures his ruin.

As parent of his being, wouldst thou prove 2155  
Th' unnatural parent of his miseries,  
And make him curse the being which thou gavest?  
Is this the blessing of so fond a father?

If careless of Lorenzo, spare, oh! spare,  
Florello's father, and Philander's friend! 2160  
Florello's father ruin'd, ruins him;

And from Philander's friend the world expects  
A conduct, no dishonour to the dead.  
Let passion do, what nobler motives should;  
Let love, and emulation, rise in aid 2165  
To reason; and persuade thee to be—bless'd.

This seems not a request to be denied;

2139. *Last audit* Last examination or reckoning in regard to the character and conduct of one's past life.

2143. *Philander*: See Night I. 383–6; 434–7.

2150. *Florello's tender voice*: He was the young son of Lorenzo (2154–60)

2164. *Passion*: Love, ardent and impulsive.

Yet (such th' infatuation of mankind!)  
 'Tis the most hopeless, man can make to man.  
 Shall I, then, rise in argument, and warmth; 2170  
 And urge Philander's posthumous advice,  
 From topics yet unbroach'd?——  
 But, oh! I faint! my spirits fail!—Nor strange!  
 So long on wing, and in no middle clime!  
 To which my great Creator's glory call'd: 2175  
 And calls—but, now, in vain. Sleep's dewy wand  
 Has stroked my drooping lids, and promises  
 My long arrear of rest; the downy god  
 (Wont to return with our returning peace)  
 Will pay, ere long, and bless me with repose. 2180  
 Haste, haste, sweet stranger! from the peasant's cot,  
 The ship-boy's hammock, or the soldier's straw,  
 Whence sorrow never chased thee: with thee bring,  
 Not hideous visions, as of late; but draughts  
 Delicious of well-tasted, cordial, rest; 2185  
 Man's rich restorative; his balmy bath,  
 That supples, lubricates, and keeps in play,  
 The various movements of this nice machine,  
 Which asks such frequent periods of repair.  
 When tired with vain rotations of the day, 2190  
 Sleep winds us up for the succeeding dawn;  
 Fresh we spin on, till sickness clogs our wheels,  
 Or death quite breaks the spring, and motion ends.  
 When will it end with me?

2174. *In no middle clime*: So Milton characterizes his own song:

That with no middle flight intends to soar  
 Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues  
 Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.

2176. *Wand*: An allusion to the rod used by jugglers and fortune-tellers in performing their achievements. *Sleep* is personified as the "drowsy god"—the god of sweet repose.

2188. *Nice machine*: The body is here compared to a clock or watch, which statement will explain many terms used in the following lines.

## AN ADDRESS TO THE DEITY.

- ‘Thou only know’st, 2195  
 Thou, whose broad eye the future, and the past,  
 Joins to the present; making one of three  
 To mortal thought! Thou know’st, and Thou alone,  
 All-knowing!—all unknown!—and yet well known!  
 Near, though remote! and, though unfathom’d, felt! 2200  
 And, though invisible, for ever seen!  
 And seen in all! the great, and the minute:  
 Each globe above, with its gigantic race,  
 Each flower, each leaf, with its small people swarm’d,  
 (Those puny vouchers of Omnipotence!) 2205  
 To the first thought, that asks, ‘From whence?’ declare  
 Their common Source. Thou Fountain, running o’er  
 In rivers of communicated joy!  
 Who gavest us speech for far, far humbler themes!  
 Say, by what name shall I presume to call 2210  
 Him I see burning in these countless suns,  
 As Moses, in the bush? Illustrious Mind!  
 The whole creation, less, far less, to Thee,  
 Than that to the creation’s ample round.  
 How shall I name Thee?—How my labouring soul 2215  
 Heaves underneath the thought, too big for birth!  
 ‘Great System of perfections! Mighty Cause  
 Of causes mighty! Cause uncaused! Sole Root  
 Of nature, that luxuriant growth of God!  
 First Father of effects! that progeny 2220  
 Of endless series; where the golden chain’s

2199–2201. Some striking *contrasts* will here be noticed and admired. The description of the Godhead that follows is uncommonly sublime and awe-inspiring, altogether worthy of the sanctified genius of the poet.

2203. *Gigantic race*: Its large and heavy satellites—its planets or moons.

2212. *In the bush*: See Exod. iii. 2. *Mind*: Jehovah.

2214. *Ample round*: The boundless space that stretches on every hand beyond the limits of creation.

Last link admits a period, who can tell?  
 Father of all that is or heard, or hears!  
 Father of all that is or seen, or sees!  
 Father of all that is, or shall arise! 2225  
 Father of this immeasurable mass  
 Of matter multiform; or dense, or rare;  
 Opaque, or lucid; rapid, or at rest;  
 Minute, or passing bound! in each extreme,  
 Of like amaze, and mystery, to man. 2230  
 Father of these bright millions of the night!  
 Of which the least, full Godhead had proclaim'd,  
 And thrown the gazer on his knee—Or, say,  
 Is appellation higher still, Thy choice?  
 Father of matter's temporary lords! 2235  
 Father of spirits! nobler offspring! sparks  
 Of high paternal glory; rich endow'd  
 With various measures, and with various modes  
 Of instinct, reason, intuition; beams  
 More pale, or bright from day divine, to break 2240  
 The dark of matter organized (the ware  
 Of all created spirit;) beams, that rise  
 Each over other in superior light,  
 Till the last ripens into lustre strong,  
 Of next approach to Godhead. Father fond 2245  
 (Far fonder than e'er bore that name on earth)  
 Of intellectual beings! beings bless'd  
 With powers to please Thee; not of passive ply  
 To laws they know not; beings lodged in seats  
 Of well-adapted joys, in different domes 2250  
 Of this imperial palace for thy sons;

2222. *Period*: Termination.

2223–24. *Or heard*: Either heard. *Or seen*: Either seen.

2230. *Amaze*: Amazement.

2241. *The ware, &c.*: The material upon which created spirit operates, or the instrument it employs.

2248. *Ply*: Inclination or bias.

Of this proud, populous, well-policied,  
 Though boundless habitation, plann'd by Thee :  
 Whose several clans their several climates suit ;  
 And transposition, doubtless, would destroy. 2255

Or, oh ! indulge, immortal King ! indulge  
 A title, less august, indeed, but more  
 Endearing ; ah ! how sweet in human ears !  
 Sweet in our ears, and triumph in our hearts !  
*Father of immortality to man !* 2260

A theme that lately set my soul on fire.—  
 And Thou the next ! yet equal ! Thou, by whom  
 That blessing was convey'd ; far more ! was bought ;  
 Ineffable the price ! by whom all worlds  
 Were made ; and one redeem'd ! illustrious Light 2265  
 From Light illustrious ! Thou, whose regal power,  
 Finite in time, but infinite in space,  
 On more than adamantine basis fix'd,  
 O'er more, far more, than diadems, and thrones,  
 Inviolably reigns ; the dread of gods ! 2270

And, oh ! the friend of man ! beneath whose foot,  
 And by the mandate of whose awful nod,  
 All regions, revolutions, fortunes, fates,  
 Of high, of low, of mind, and matter, roll  
 Through the short channels of expiring time, 2275  
 Or shoreless ocean of eternity,  
 Calm or tempestuous (as thy Spirit breathes,)  
 In absolute subjection !—And, O Thou  
 The glorious Third ! distinct, not separate !  
 Beaming from both ! with both incorporate ; 2280  
 And (strange to tell !) incorporate with dust !  
 By condescension, as thy glory, great,

2252. *Well-policied* : Well-regulated.

2261. *That lately*, &c. Nights VI. and VII.

2262. *Thou* : The Son of God, the Second Person in the holy Trinity.

2279. *The glorious Third Person* in the Trinity—the Holy Spirit.

Enshrined in man! of human hearts, if pure,  
 Divine inhabitant; the tie divine  
 Of heaven with distant earth! by whom, I trust, 2285  
 (If not inspired) uncensured this address  
 To Thee, to Them—To whom?—Mysterious Power;  
 Reveal'd—yet unreveal'd! darkness in light!  
 Number in unity! our joy! our dread!  
 The triple bolt that lays all wrong in ruin! 2290  
 That animates all right, the triple sun!  
 Sun of the soul! her never-setting sun!  
 Triune, unutterable, unconceived,  
 Absconding, yet demonstrable, Great God!  
 Greater than greatest! better than the best! 2295  
 Kinder than kindest! with soft pity's eye,  
 Or (stronger still to speak it) with thine own,  
 From thy bright home, from that high firmament,  
 Where Thou, from all eternity, hast dwelt;  
 Beyond archangels' unassisted ken; 2300  
 From far above what mortals highest call;  
 From elevation's pinnacle; look down,  
 Through—what? confounding interval! through all,  
 And more than labouring fancy can conceive;  
 Through radiant ranks of essences unknown; 2305  
 Through hierarchies from hierarchies detach'd  
 Round various banners of Omnipotence,  
 With endless change of rapturous duties fired:  
 Through wondrous beings' interposing swarms,  
 All clustering at the call, to dwell in Thee; 2310

2283. *Enshrined*: The Scriptures speak of man as the temple of the Holy Ghost. He is said to dwell in the humble and contrite heart of man.

2286. *If not, &c.*: Though not, &c.

2288. *Unreveal'd*: Not fully comprehended.

2289. *Number in unity*: Three in one—three Persons (or distinctions) in one Godhead.

2294. *Absconding*: Withdrawing from open or distinct view.

2300. *Ken*: Reach of sight.



Through this wide waste of worlds! this vista vast,  
 All sanded o'er with suns; suns turn'd to night  
 Before thy feeblest beam—Look down—down—down,  
 On a poor breathing particle in dust,  
 Or, lower,—an immortal in his crimes. 2315  
 His crimes forgive! forgive his virtues, too!  
 Those smaller faults, half converts to the right;  
 Nor let me close these eyes, which never more  
 May see the sun (though night's descending scale  
 Now weighs up morn,) unpitied, and unblest'd! 2320  
 In Thy displeasure dwells eternal pain;  
 Pain, our aversion; pain, which strikes me now:  
 And, since all pain is terrible to man,  
 Though transient, terrible; at Thy good hour,  
 Gently, ah gently, lay me in my bed, 2325  
 My clay-cold bed! by nature, now, so near;  
 By nature, near; still nearer by disease!

2312. *All sanded o'er with suns*: A wonderfully sublime conception. Suns, which are globes larger than we can conceive of, are here compared to grains of sand, to indicate their insignificance contrasted with the majesty and power of their Great Author, and in the next place to denote their countless multitude.

The next idea, which relates to their luminous splendour, is equally sublime. It is lost, *and turned to night*, when brought into the presence of the *feeblest beam* of THE LIGHT of the universe. There is great eloquence, moreover, in the repetition of the word *down*.

2316. *Forgive his virtues*: Even these require forgiveness, because, being imperfect, they are so far criminal. They are only *half converts to the right*, half conformed to the Divine rule of rectitude.

2319. *Night's descending scale*, &c.: Night and Day are here poetically represented as the scales of a balance, or as occupying them; accordingly, as one descends the other rises, and the reverse. The author for this fine figure was probably indebted to Milton:

— for the Sun,  
 Declined, was hastening now with prone career  
 To th' ocean isles, and in th' ascending scale  
 Of Heav'n the stars that usher ev'ning rose.

*Paradise Lost, Book IV., 352—5.*

2326. *By nature*: According to the common course of events.

- Till then, be this, an emblem of my grave :  
 Let it out-preach the preacher ; every night  
 Let it outcry the boy at Philip's ear ; 2330  
 That tongue of death ! that herald of the tomb !  
 And when (the shelter of thy wing implored)  
 My senses, soothed, shall sink in soft repose ;  
 O sink this truth still deeper in my soul,  
 Suggested by my pillow, sign'd by fate, 2335  
 First, in fate's volume, at the page of man—  
*Man's sickly soul, though turn'd and toss'd for ever,*  
*From side to side, can rest on nought but Thee ;*  
*Here, in full trust ; hereafter, in full joy ;*  
 On Thee, the promised, sure, eternal down 2340  
 Of spirits, toil'd in travel through this vale.  
 Nor of that pillow shall my soul despond ;  
 For—Love almighty ! Love almighty ! (sing,  
 Exult, creation !) Love almighty reigns !  
 That death of death ! that cordial of despair ! 2345  
 And loud eternity's triumphant song !  
 ' Of whom, no more :—For, O thou Patron-God !  
 Thou God and mortal ! thence more God to man !  
 Man's theme eternal ! man's eternal theme !  
 Thou canst not 'scape uninjured from our praise. 2350  
 Uninjured from our praise can He escape,  
 Who, disembosom'd from the Father, bows  
 The heaven of heavens, to kiss the distant earth !  
 Breathes out in agonies a sinless soul !  
 Against the cross, death's iron sceptre breaks ! 2355  
 From famish'd ruin plucks her human prey !

2328. *This* : Painful disease (2322).

2330. Philip, king of Macedon, being flushed with his great military success, and in danger of mistaking himself for a god, employed a boy to say to him each day, "Thou art a man."

2332. *Thy wing* : The wing of the god Sleep.

2341. *Toil'd* : Fatigued.

2347. *Patron-God* : Jesus Christ, who is our *advocate* and intercessor.

Throws wide the gates celestial to his foes !  
 Their gratitude, for such a boundless debt,  
 Deputes their suffering brothers to receive !  
 And, if deep human guilt in payment fails ; 2360  
 As deeper guilt, prohibits our despair !  
 Enjoins it, as our duty, to rejoice !  
 And, (to close all) omnipotently kind,  
 Takes his delights among the sons of men.' 2364  
 What words are these !—And did they come from heaven ?  
 And were they spoke to man ? to guilty man ?  
 What are all mysteries to love like this !  
 The song of angels, all the melodies  
 Of choral gods, are wafted in the sound ;  
 Heal and exhilarate the broken heart : 2370  
 Though plunged, before, in horrors dark as night :  
 Rich prelibation of consummate joy !  
 Nor wait we dissolution to be bless'd.  
 This final effort of the moral muse,  
 How justly titled ! Nor for me alone : 2375  
 For all that read ; what spirit of support,  
 What heights of consolation, crown my song !

## FAREWELL TO NIGHT.

Then, farewell Night ! Of darkness, now, no more :  
 Joy breaks, shines, triumphs ; 'tis eternal day.  
 Shall that which rises out of nought complain 2380  
 Of a few evils, paid with endless joys ?  
 My soul ! henceforth, in sweetest union join  
 The two supports of human happiness,

2358-9. *Their gratitude, &c.* Deputes, or authorizes, *their suffering brothers* (or fellow men) to receive from them offices of kindness, as an expression of *their gratitude* to Him for *such a boundless debt*. Matt. xxv. 40.

2363. See Proverbs viii. 31.

2369. *Choral gods* : Gods singing in concert.

2372. *Prelibation* : Foretaste.

2375. *Titled* : "The Consolation."

Which some, erroneous, think can never meet ;  
 True taste of life, and constant thought of death ; 2385  
 The thought of death, sole victor of its dread !  
 Hope, be thy joy ; and probity, thy skill ;  
 Thy patron, He, whose diadem has dropp'd  
 Yon gems of heaven ; eternity, thy prize :  
 And leave the racers of the world their own, 2390  
 Their feather, and their froth, for endless toils :  
 They part with all for that which is not bread ;  
 They mortify, they starve, on wealth, fame, power ;  
 And laugh to scorn the fools that aim at more.  
 How must a spirit, late escaped from earth, 2395  
 Suppose Philander's, Lucia's, or Narcissa's,  
 The truth of things new blazing in its eye,  
 Look back, astonish'd, on the ways of men,  
 Whose lives' whole drift is to forget their graves !  
 And when our present privilege is past, 2400  
 To scourge us with due sense of its abuse,  
 The same astonishment will seize us all.  
 What then must pain us, would preserve us now.  
 Lorenzo ! 'tis not yet too late : Lorenzo !  
 Seize wisdom, ere 'tis torment to be wise ; 2405  
 That is, seize wisdom, ere she seizes thee,  
 For what, my small philosopher ! is hell ?  
'Tis nothing, but full knowledge of the truth,  
When truth, resisted long, is sworn our foe,  
And calls eternity to do her right. 2410  
 Thus, darkness aiding intellectual light, *continued*  
 And sacred silence whispering truths divine,  
 And truths divine converting pain to peace,  
 My song the midnight raven has outwing'd,  
 And shot, ambitious of unbounded scenes, 2415  
 Beyond the flaming limits of the world,  
 Her gloomy flight. But what avails the flight

2391. *Their feather* : Their paltry badges of honor. *Their froth* : Their empty pleasures, or their excitement in the race.

2392. See Isaiah iv. 2.

Of fancy, when our hearts remain below ?  
 Virtue abounds in flatterers, and foes :  
 'Tis pride, to praise her ; penance, to perform. 2420  
 To more than words, to more than worth of tongue,  
 Lorenzo ! rise, at this auspicious hour ;  
 An hour, when Heaven's most intimate with man ;  
 When, like a falling star, the ray divine  
 Glides swift into the bosom of the just ; 2425  
 And just are all, determined to reclaim ;  
 Which sets that title high, within thy reach.  
 Awake, then ; thy Philander calls : awake !  
 Thou, who shalt wake, when the creation sleeps ;  
 When, like a taper, all these suns expire ; 2430  
 When Time, like him of Gaza in his wrath,  
 Plucking the pillars that support the world,  
 In Nature's ample ruins lies entomb'd ;  
 And Midnight, universal Midnight ! reigns.

*Apocalyptic  
 warning*

2421. *Worth of tongue* : Excellence of speech.

2431. *Him of Gaza* : Samson. See Judges xvi. 29, 30.

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