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THE
RURAL MUSE.

POEMS

BY

JOHN CLARE.

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TO THE RIGHT HON.
EARL FITZWILLIAM,

THIS VOLUME OF POEMS

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY HIS LORDSHIP'S

MOST HUMBLE AND OBLIGED SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

IT is necessary that I should say something respecting the following Poems. They are selected from a great many, written at different times and under very different feelings; and if I do not crave the reader's indulgence for them, I shall be heartily satisfied of his good opinion, if he gives me the same encouragement as he has done with the others I have published; for if I wished to have it thought that I was careless of censure, or heedless of praise, I should contradict my feelings. They were written to please my own mind; but it will be a most gratifying addition to find that my old friends are as warm as usual, and waiting to cheer me with the welcome praises that encouraged me in the beginning, though ill health has almost rendered me incapable

of doing any thing. If I write a short Preface, it is from no vanity of being thought concise, but on the contrary, from a feeling of inability to say any thing more to the purpose, and with much confidence I leave my little book to the kindness of the reader and the public.

JOHN CLARE.

Northborough, near Market Deeping,
May 9, 1835.

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POEMS.

TO THE RURAL MUSE.

“ Smile on my verse, and look the world to love.”

MUSE of the Fields ! oft have I said farewell
To thee, my boon companion, loved so long,
And hung thy sweet harp in the bushy dell,
For abler hands to wake an abler song.
Much did I fear my homage did thee wrong :
Yet, loth to leave, as oft I turned again ;
And to its wires mine idle hands would cling,
Torturing it into song. It may be vain ;
Yet still I try, ere Fancy droops her wing,
And hopeless Silence comes to numb its ev'ry string.

Muse of the Pasture Brooks ! on thy calm sea
Of poesy I've sailed ; and though the will
To speed were greater than my prowess be,
I've ventur'd with much fear of usage ill,
Yet more of joy. Though timid be my skill,
As not to dare the depths of mightier streams ;
Yet rocks abide in shallow ways, and I
Have much of fear to mingle with my dreams.
Yet, lovely Muse, I still believe thee by,
And think I see thee smile, and so forget I sigh.

Muse of the Cottage Hearth ! oft did I tell
My hopes to thee, nor feared to plead in vain ;
But felt around my heart thy witching spell,
That bade me as thy worshipper remain :
I did so, and still worship. Oh ! again
Smile on my offerings, and so keep them green ;
Bedeck my fancies like the clouds of even,
Mingling all hues which thou from heaven dost glean !
To me a portion of thy power be given, [heaven.
If theme so mean as mine may merit aught of
For thee in youth I culled the simple flower,
That on thy bosom gained a sweeter hue ,
And took thy hand along life's sunny hour,
Meeting the sweetest joys that ever grew ;
More friends were needless, and my foes were few.
Though freedom then be deemed as rudeness now,
And what once won thy praise now meet disdain,
Yet the last wreath I braided for thy brow,
Thy smiles did so commend, it made me vain
To weave another one, and hope for praise again.
With thee the spirit of departed years [dumb ;
Wakes that sweet voice which time hath rendered
And freshens, like to spring, loves, hopes, and fears,
That in my bosom found an early home,
Wooing the heart to ecstasy.—I come
To thee, when sick of care, of joy bereft,
Seeking the pleasures that are found in bloom.
O happy hopes, that Time hath only left
Around the haunts where thou didst erst sojourn !
Then smile, sweet Muse, again, and welcome my
return.

With thee the raptures of life's early day
Appear, and all that pleased me when a boy.
Though pains and cares have torn the best away,
And winters creep between us to destroy,
Do thou commend, the recompence is joy :
The tempest of the heart shall soon be calm.
Though sterner Truth against my dreams rebel,
Hope feels success ; and all my spirits warm,
To strike with happier mood thy simple shell, [well.
And seize thy mantle's hem—O ! say not fare-thee-

Still, sweet Enchantress ! youth's strong feelings move,
That from thy presence their existence took :—
The innocent idolatry and love,
Paying thee worship in each secret nook,
That fancied friends in tree, and flower, and brook,
Shaped clouds to angels and beheld them smile,
And heard commending tongues in ev'ry wind.
Life's grosser fancies did these dreams defile,
Yet not entirely root them from the mind ;
I think I hear them still, and often look behind.

Aye, I have heard thee in the summer wind,
As if commending what I sung to thee ;
Aye, I have seen thee on a cloud reclined,
Kindling my fancies into poesy ;
I saw thee smile, and took the praise to me.
In beauties, past all beauty, thou wert drest ;
I thought the very clouds around thee knelt :
I saw the sun to linger in the west,
Paying thee worship ; and as eve did melt [felt.
In dews, they seemed thy tears for sorrows I had

Sweeter than flowers on beauty's bosom hung,
Sweeter than dreams of happiness above,
Sweeter than themes by lips of beauty sung,
Are the young fancies of a poet's love, [move.
When round his thoughts thy trancing visions
In floating melody no notes may sound,
The world is all forgot and past his care,
While on thy harp thy fingers lightly bound,
As winning him its melody to share; [there?
And heaven itself, with him, where is it then but

E'en now my heart leaps out from grief, and all
The gloom thrown round by Care's o'ershading
E'en now those sunny visions to recall, [wing;
Like to a bird I quit dull earth and sing:
Life's tempests swoon to calms on every string.
Ah! sweet Enchantress, if I do but dream,
If earthly visions have been only mine,
My weakness in thy service woos esteem,
And proves my truth as almost worthy thine:
Surely true worship makes the meanest theme divine.

And still, warm courage, calming many a fear,
Heartens my hand once more thy harp to try.
To join the anthem of the minstrel year:
For summer's music in thy praise is high;
The very winds about thy mantle sigh
Love-melodies; thy minstrel bards to be,
Insects and birds, exerting all their skill,
Float in continued song for mastery;
While in thy haunts loud leaps the little rill,
To kiss thy mantle's hem; and how can I be still?

There still I see thee fold thy mantle grey,
To trace the dewy lawn at morn and night ;
And there I see thee, in the sunny day,
Withdraw thy veil and shine confest in light ;
Burning my fancies with a wild delight,
To win a portion of thy blushing fame.
Though haughty Fancy treat thy power as small,
And Fashion thy simplicity disclaim,
Should but a portion of thy mantle fall [all.
O'er him who woos thy love, 'tis recompense for

Not with the mighty to thy shrine I come,
In anxious sighs, or self applauding mirth,
On Mount Parnassus as thine heir to roam :
I dare not credit that immortal birth;
But mingling with the lesser ones on 'earth—
Like as the little lark from off its nest,
Beside the mossy hill awakes in glee,
To seek the morning's throne a merry guest—
So do I seek thy shrine, if that may be,
To win by new attempts another smile from thee.

If without thee 'neath storms, and clouds, and wind,
I've roam'd the wood, and field, and meadow lea ;
And found no flowers but what the vulgar find,
Nor met one breath of living poesy,
Among such charms where inspirations be ;
The fault is mine—and I must bear the lot
Of missing praise to merit thy disdain.
To feel each idle plea though urged, forgot ;
I can but sigh—though foolish to complain
O'er hopes so fair begun, to find them end so vain.

Then will it prove presumption thus to dare
To add fresh failings to each faulty song,
Urging thy blessings on an idle prayer,
To sanction silly themes : it will be wrong,
For one so lowly to be heard so long.
Yet, sweet Enchantress, yet a little while
Forego impatience, and from frowns refrain ;
The strong are ne'er debarr'd thy cheering smile,
Why should the weak, who need them most, com-
plain
Alone, in solitude, soliciting in vain ?

But if my efforts on thy harp prove true,
Which bashful youth at first so feared to try ;
If aught of nature be in sounds I drew
From hope's young dreams, and doubt's uncer-
tainty,
To these late offerings, not without their sigh ;
Then on thine altar shall these themes be laid,
And past the deeds of graven brass remain,
Filling a space in time that shall not fade ;
And if it be not so—avert disdain,
Till dust shall feel no sting, nor know it toil'd in
vain.

SUMMER IMAGES.

Now swarthy Summer, by rude health embrowned,
 Precedence takes of rosy fingered Spring ;
 And laughing Joy, with wild flowers prank'd, and
 crown'd,
 A wild and giddy thing,
 And Health robust, from every care unbound,
 Come on the zephyr's wing,
 And cheer the toiling clown.

Happy as holiday-enjoying face,
 Loud tongued, and " merry as a marriage bell,"
 Thy lightsome step sheds joy in every place ;
 And where the troubled dwell,
 Thy witching charms wean them of half their cares ;
 And from thy sunny spell,
 They greet joy unawares.

Then with thy sultry locks all loose and rude,
 And mantle laced with gems of garish light,
 Come as of wont ; for I would fain intrude,
 And in the world's despite,
 Share the rude wealth that thy own heart beguiles ;
 If haply so I might
 Win pleasure from thy smiles.

Me not the noise of brawling pleasure cheers,
In nightly revels or in city streets ;
But joys which soothe, and not distract the ears,
That one at leisure meets
In the green woods, and meadows summer-shorn,
Or fields, where bee-fly greets
The ear with mellow horn.

The green-swathed grasshopper, on treble pipe,
Sings there, and dances, in mad-hearted pranks ;
There bees go courting every flower that's ripe,
On baulks and sunny banks ;
And droning dragon-fly, on rude bassoon,
Attempts to give God thanks
In no discordant tune.

The speckled thrush, by self-delight embued,
There sings unto himself for joy's amends,
And drinks the honey dew of solitude.
There Happiness attends
With inbred Joy until the heart o'erflow,
Of which the world's rude friends,
Nought heeding, nothing know.

There the gay river, laughing as it goes,
Plashes with easy wave its flaggy sides,
And to the calm of heart, in calmness shows
What pleasure there abides,
To trace its sedgy banks, from trouble free :
Spots, Solitude provides
To muse, and happy be.

There ruminating 'neath some pleasant bush,
On sweet silk grass I stretch me at mine ease,
Where I can pillow on the yielding rush ;
And, acting as I please,
Drop into pleasant dreams ; or musing lie,
Mark the wind-shaken trees,
And cloud-betravelled sky.

There think me how some barter joy for care,
And waste life's summer-health in riot rude,
Of nature, nor of nature's sweets aware.
When passions vain intrude,
These, by calm musings, softened are and still ;
And the heart's better mood
Feels sick of doing ill.

There I can live, and at my leisure seek
Joys far from cold restraints—not fearing pride—
Free as the winds, that breathe upon my cheek
Rude health, so long denied.
Here poor Integrity can sit at ease,
And list self-satisfied
The song of honey-bees ;

The green lane now I traverse, where it goes
Nought guessing, till some sudden turn espies
Rude batter'd finger post, that stooping shows
Where the snug mystery lies ;
And then a mossy spire, with ivy crown,
Cheers up the short surprise,
And shows a peeping town.

I see the wild flowers, in their summer morn
Of beauty, feeding on joy's luscious hours ;
The gay convolvulus, wreathing round the thorn,
Agape for honey showers ;
And slender kingcup, burnished with the dew
Of morning's early hours,
Like gold yminted new.

And mark by rustic bridge, o'er shallow stream,
Cow-tending boy, to toil unreconciled,
Absorbed as in some vagrant summer dream ;
Who now, in gestures wild,
Starts dancing to his shadow on the wall,
Feeling self-gratified,
Nor fearing human thrall.

Or thread the sunny valley laced with streams,
Or forests rude, and the o'ershadow'd brims
Of simple ponds, where idle shepherd dreams,
Stretching his listless limbs ;
Or trace hay-scented meadows, smooth and long,
Where joy's wild impulse swims
In one continued song.

I love at early morn, from new mown swath,
To see the startled frog his route pursue ;
To mark while, leaping o'er the dripping path,
His bright sides scatter dew,
The early lark that, from its bustle flies,
To hail his matin new ;
And watch him to the skies.

To note on hedgerow baulks, in moisture sprent,
The jetty snail creep from the mossy thorn,
With earnest heed, and tremulous intent,
Frail brother of the morn,
That from the tiny bent's dew-misted leaves
Withdraws his timid horn,
And fearful vision weaves.

Or swallow heed on smoke-tanned chimney top,
Wont to be first unsealing Morning's eye,
Ere yet the bee hath gleaned one wayward drop
Of honey on his thigh;
To see him seek morn's airy couch to sing,
Until the golden sky
Bepaint his russet wing.

Or sauntering boy by tanning corn to spy,
With clapping noise to startle birds away,
And hear him bawl to every passer by
To know the hour of day;
While the uncradled breezes, fresh and strong,
With waking blossoms play,
And breathe Æolian song.

I love the south-west wind, or low or loud,
And not the less when sudden drops of rain
Moisten my glowing cheek from ebon cloud,
Threatening soft showers again,
That over lands new ploughed and meadow grounds,
Summer's sweet breath unchain,
And wake harmonious sounds.

Rich music breathes in Summer's every sound ;
And in her harmony of varied greens,
Woods, meadows, hedge-rows, corn-fields, all around
Much beauty intervenes,
Filling with harmony the ear and eye ;
While o'er the mingling scenes
Far spreads the laughing sky.

See, how the wind-enamoured aspin leaves
Turn up their silver lining to the sun !
And hark ! the rustling noise, that oft deceives,
And makes the sheep-boy run :
The sound so mimics fast-approaching showers,
He thinks the rain's begun,
And hastes to sheltering bowers.

But now the evening curdles dank and grey,
Changing her watchet hue for sombre weed ;
And moping owls, to close the lids of day,
On drowsy wing proceed ;
While chickering crickets, tremulous and long,
Light's farewell inly heed,
And give it parting song.

The pranking bat its flighty circlet makes ;
The glow-worm burnishes its lamp anew ;
O'er meadows dew-besprent, the beetle wakes
Inquiries ever new,
Teazing each passing ear with murmurs vain,
As wanting to pursue
His homeward path again.

Hark ! 'tis the melody of distant bells
That on the wind with pleasing hum rebounds
By fitful starts, then musically swells
O'er the dim stilly grounds ;
While on the meadow-bridge the pausing boy
Listens the mellow sounds,
And hums in vacant joy.

Now homeward-bound, the hedger bundles round
His evening faggot, and with every stride
His leathern doublet leaves a rustling sound,
Till silly sheep beside
His path start tremulous, and once again
Look back dissatisfied,
And scour the dewy plain.

How sweet the soothing calmness that distills
O'er the heart's every sense its opiate dews,
In meek-eyed moods and ever balmy trills !
That softens and subdues,
With gentle Quiet's bland and sober train,
Which dreamy eve renews
In many a mellow strain !

I love to walk the fields, they are to me
A legacy no evil can destroy ;
They, like a spell, set every rapture free
That cheer'd me when a boy.
Play—pastime—all Time's blotting pen conceal'd,
Comes like a new born joy,
To greet me in the field.

For Nature's objects ever harmonize
 With emulous Taste, that vulgar deed annoys ;
 Which loves in pensive moods to sympathize,
 And meet vibrating joys
 O'er Nature's pleasing things ; nor slighting, deems
 Pastimes, the Muse employs,
 Vain and obtrusive themes.

TO * * * *

ON MAY MORNING.

LADY ! 'tis thy desire to move
 Far from the world's ungente throng ;
 Lady ! 'tis thy delight to love
 The muses and the sons of song ;
 Nor Taste alone is theme to praise,
 For thou can'st touch the minstrel wire ;
 And while thou'rt praising others' lays,
 Wake notes that any may admire :
 Forgive me if, in friendship's way,
 I offer thee a wreath of May.

I greet thee with no gaudy flowers,
 For thou art not to fashions prone ;
 But rather lov'st the woodland bowers,
 Where Nature's beauties charm alone.
 The Passion-flower and Cereus fine,
 By wealth and pride are reared alone ;
 Yet flowers more sweet, nor less divine,
 Spring's humbler fields and forests own ;
 To every hand and bosom given,
 And nourished by the dews of heaven.

The little Violet's bloom I weave,
In wreaths I'm fain that thou should'st prize;
Although it comes at winter's eve,
And often in the tempest dies.
The Primrose, too, a doubtful dream
Of what precarious spring may be.
Yet would I not these types should seem
Aught fancy feigns resembling thee ;
And thus belie thy gentle heart,
Where worldly coldness hath no part,

Here, too, are boughs of opening May,
And Lilies of the Valley fair ;
Yet not with idle praise to say
They're types of what is sweet and fair.
I cropt one from the pasture hedge,
The others from the forest dell ;
And thou hast given the muses pledge,
Such scenes delight thy bosom well.
'Tis not thy person wakes my lays,
Thy heart alone I mean to praise.

Forgive me though I flatter not ;
Youth's beauties it was thine to wear,
Have been by riper years forgot,
Though thou hast had a happy share :
And I might praise full many a grace,
That lives and lingers yet behind ;
But they like flowers shall change their place ;
Not so the beauties of the mind.
So I have Ivy placed between,
To prove that worth is ever green.

The little blue Forget-me-not
Comes too on friendship's gentle plea,
Spring's messenger in every spot,
Smiling on all—"Remember me!"
But gaudy Tulips find no place
In garlands Friendship would bestow;
Yet here the Cowslip shows its face,
Prized for its sweetness more than show:
Emblems to pomp and pride inclined,
Would but offend a modest mind.

I would not on May's garland fling
The Laurel to the muse and thee,
For fashion's praise, a common thing
Hath made of that once sacred tree;
And trust me, many laurels wear,
That grew not on Parnassus' Hill:
Yet dare and speed, 'tis your's to bear
The muse's laurels if you will.
Let Flattery think her wreaths divine,
Merit by its own worth will shine.

Oh! when I view the glorious host
Of Poets to my country born—
Though sorrow was the lot of most,
And many shared the sneers of scorn,
That now by time and talent tried,
Give life to fame's eternal sun—
Oh! when I mark the glorious pride
That England from her bards hath won;
E'en I, the meanest of the throng,
Warm into ecstasy and song.

The highest gifts each kingdom claims
Are Minstrels, on the Muses' throne ;
And bards who've won the richest fames,
'Tis England's noblest pride to own :
Shakspeares and Miltons, they that heir
The fames immortal o'er decay ;
And Scotts and Byrons, born to wear
The honours of a later day ;
Who join to present past renown,
And sing eternity to crown.

These from proud laurels never won
Their fames and honours more divine ;
They, like the grand eternal sun,
Confer their glories where they shine.
The laurel were a common bough,
Had it not deck'd the Poet's crown ;
And even weeds, so common now,
Placed there would augur like renown,
Bloom satellites in glory's way,
Proud as the laurel and the bay.

Lady !—and thou hast chosen well,
To give the Muses thy regard ;
There, taste from pleasure bears the bell,
There, feeling finds its own reward ;
Though Genius often while she makes
Life's millions happy with her songs,
From Sorrow's cup her portion takes,
And struggles under bitterest wrongs—
To cares of life and song unknown,
The poet's fame be thine alone.

THE VANITIES OF LIFE.

“Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.”

What are life's joys and gains,
 What pleasures crowd its ways,
 That man should take such pains
 To seek them all his days?
 Sift this untoward strife
 On which thy mind is bent—
 See if this chaff of life
 Be worth the trouble spent.

Is pride thy heart's desire?
 Is power thy climbing aim?
 Is love thy folly's fire?
 Is wealth thy restless game?—
 Pride, power, love, wealth, and all,
 Time's touchstone shall destroy;
 And, like base coin, prove all
 Vain substitutes for joy.

Dost think thy pride exalts
 Thyself in others' eyes,
 And hides thy folly's faults,
 Which reason will despise?

Dost strut, and turn, and stride,
Like walking weathercocks ?
The shadow, by thy side,
Becomes thy ape, and mocks.

Dost think that power's disguise
Can make thee mighty seem ?
It may in folly's eyes,
But not in worth's esteem.
When all that thou canst ask,
And all that she can give,
Is but a paltry mask,
Which tyrants wear and live.

Go, let thy fancies range,
And ramble where they may
View power in every change,
And what is its display ?—
The country magistrate,
The lowest shade in power,
To rulers of the state ?—
The meteors of an hour.

View all, and mark the end
Of every proud extreme,
Where flattery turns a friend,
And counterfeits esteem ;
Where worth is aped in show,
That doth her name purloin—
As toys of golden glow,
Are sold for copper coin.

Ambition's haughty nod
With fancies may deceive—
Nay, tell thee thou'rt a God ;
And wilt thou such believe ?—
Go, bid the seas be dry ;
Go, hold earth like a ball ;
Or throw thy fancies by,
For God can do it all.

Dost thou possess the dower
Of laws, to spare or kill ?
Call it not heavenly power,
When but a tyrant's will.
Know what a God will do,
And know thyself a fool ;
Nor tyrant-like pursue,
Where he alone should rule.

O put away thy pride,
Or be ashamed of power
That cannot turn aside
The breeze that waves a flower ;
Or bid the clouds be still—
Though shadows, they can brave,
Thy poor power-mocking will,
Then make not man a slave.

Dost think, when wealth is won,
Thy heart has its desire ?
Hold ice up to the sun,
And wax before the fire ;

Nor triumph o'er the reign
Which they so soon resign,
In this world's ways they gain
Insurance safe as thine.

Dost think life's peace secure
In houses and in land ?
Go, read the fairy lure—
To twist a cord of sand,
Lodge stones upon the sky,
Hold water in a sieve ;
Nor give such tales the lie,
And still thine own believe.

Whoso with riches deals,
And thinks peace bought and sold,
Will find them slippery cels,
That slide the firmest hold ;
Though sweet as sleep with health
Thy lulling luck may be,
Pride may o'erstride thy wealth,
And check prosperity.

Dost think that beauty's power
Life's sweetest pleasure gives ?
Go, pluck the summer flower,
And see how long it lives :
Behold the rays glide on
Along the summer plain,
Ere thou canst say, " They're gone !"
And measure beauty's reign.

Look on the brightest eye,
Nor teach it to be proud,
But view the clearest sky,
And thou shalt find a cloud ;
Nor call each face you meet
An angel's, 'cause it's fair,
But look beneath your feet,
And think of what they are.

Who thinks that love doth live
In beauty's tempting show,
Shall find his hopes misgive,
And melt in reason's thaw ;
Who thinks that pleasure lies
In every fairy bower,
Shall oft, to his surprise,
Find poison in the flower.

Dost lawless passions grasp ?—
Judge not thou deal'st in joy ;
Its flowers but hide the asp,
Thy revels to destroy.
Who trusts a harlot's smile,
And by her wiles is led,
Plays with a sword the while,
Hung dropping o'er his head.

:
Dost doubt my warning song ?—
Then doubt the sun gives light ;
Doubt truth to teach the wrong,
And wrong alone as right ;

And live as lives the knave,
Intrigue's deceiving guest ;
Be tyrant or be slave,
As suits thy ends the best.

Or pause amid thy toils
For visions won and lost,
And count the fancied spoils,
If ere they quit the cost ;
And if they still possess,
Thy mind as worthy things ;
Plat straws with bedlam Bess,
And call them diamond rings.

Thy folly's past advice,
Thy heart's already won,
Thy fall's above all price,
So go, and be undone :
For all who thus prefer
The seeming great for small,
Shall make wine vinegar,
And sweetest honey gall.

Wouldst heed the truths I sing,
To profit wherewithal ?
Clip Folly's wanton wing,
And keep her within call.
I've little else to give,
What thou canst easy try ;
The lesson how to live,
Is but to learn to die.

AUTUMN.

SYREN of sullen moods and fading hues,
 Yet haply not incapable of joy,
 Sweet Autumn ! I thee hail
 With welcome all unfeigned ;

And oft as morning from her lattice peeps
 To beckon up the sun, I seek with thee
 To drink the dewy breath
 Of fields left fragrant then,

In solitudes, where no frequented paths
 But what thy own foot makes betray thine home,
 Stealing obtrusive there
 To meditate thy end :

By overshadowed ponds, in woody nooks,
 With ramping sallows lined, and crowding sedge,
 Which woo the winds to play,
 And with them dance for joy ;

And meadow pools, torn wide by lawless floods,
 Where water-lilies spread their oily leaves,
 On which, as wont, the fly
 Oft battens in the sun ;

Where leans the mossy willow half way o'er,
 On which the shepherd crawls astride to throw
 His angle, clear of weeds
 That crowd the water's brim ;

Or crispy hills, and hollows scant of sward,
Where step by step the patient lonely boy,
Hath cut rude flights of stairs
To climb their steepy sides ;

Then track along their feet, grown hoarse with noise,
The crawling brook, that ekes its weary speed,
And struggles through the weeds
With faint and sullen brawl.—

These haunts I long have favoured, more as now
With thee thus wandering, moralizing on ;
Stealing glad thoughts from grief,
And happy, though I sigh.

Sweet Vision, with the wild dishevelled hair,
And raiment shadowy of each wind's embrace,
Fain would I win thine harp
To one accordant theme.

Now not inaptly craved, communing thus,
Beneath the curdled arms of this stunt oak,
While pillowed on the grass,
We fondly ruminate

O'er the disordered scenes of woods and fields,
Ploughed lands, thin travelled with half-hungry sheep,
Pastures tracked deep with cows,
Where small birds seek for seed :

Marking the cow-boy that so merry trills
His frequent, unpremeditated song,
Wooing the winds to pause,
Till echo brawls again ;

As on with plashy step, and clouted shoon,
He roves, half indolent and self-employed,
 To rob the little birds
 Of hips and pendant haws,

And sloes, dim covered as with dewy veils,
And rambling bramble-berries, pulpy and sweet,
 Arching their prickly trails
 Half o'er the narrow lane :

Noting the hedger front with stubborn face
The dank bleak wind, that whistles thinly by
 His leathern garb, thorn proof,
 And cheek red hot with toil ;

While o'er the pleachy lands of mellow brown,
The mower's stubbling scythe clogs to his foot
 The ever eking whisp,
 With sharp and sudden jerk,

Till into formal rows the russet shocks
Crowd the blank field to thatch time-weathered barns,
 And hovels rude repair,
 Stript by disturbing winds.

See ! from the rustling scythe the haunted hare
Scampers circuitous, with startled ears
 Prickt up, then squat, as by
 She brushes to the woods,

Where reeded grass, breast-high and undisturbed,
Forms pleasant clumps, through which the soothing
 Soften her rigid fears, [winds
 And lull to calm repose.

Wild Sorceress! me thy restless mood delights,
More than the stir of summer's crowded scenes,
Where, jostled in the din,
Joy palled my ear with song;

Heart-sickening for the silence, that is here
Not broken inharmoniously, as now
That lone and vagrant bee
Booms faint with weary chime.

Now filtering winds thin winnow through the woods
In tremulous noise, that bids, at every breath,
Some sickly cankered leaf
Let go its hold, and die.

And now the bickering storm, with sudden start,
In flirting fits of anger carps aloud,
Thee urging to thine end,
Sore wept by troubled skies.

And yet, sublime in grief! thy thoughts delight
To show me visions of most gorgeous dyes,
Haply forgetting now
They but prepare thy shroud;

Thy pencil dashing its excess of shades,
Improvident of waste, till every bough
Burns with thy mellow touch
Disorderly divine.

Soon must I view thee as a pleasant dream
Droop faintly, and so reckon for thine end,
As sad the winds sink low
In dirges for their queen;

While in the moment of their weary pause,
To cheer thy bankrupt pomp, the willing lark
Starts from his shielding clod,
Snatching sweet scraps of song.

Thy life is waning now, and Silence tries
To mourn, but meets no sympathy in sounds,
As stooping low she bends,
Forming with leaves thy grave;

To sleep inglorious there mid tangled woods,
/ Till parched lipped Summer pines in drought away,
Then from thine ivy'd trance
Awake to glories new.

THOUGHTS IN A CHURCH-YARD.

AH ! happy spot, how still it seems
Where crowds of buried memories sleep ;
How quiet Nature o'er them dreams,
'Tis but our troubled thoughts that weep.
Life's book shuts here—its page is lost
With them, and all its busy claims,
The poor are from its memory crost,
/ The rich leave nothing but their names.

There rest the weary from their toil ;
There lie the troubled, free from care ;
Who through the strife of life's turmoil
Sought rest, and only found it there.

With none to fear his scornful brow,
There sleeps the master with the slave ;
And heedless of all titles now,
Repose the honoured and the brave.

There rest the miser and the heir,
Both careless who their wealth shall reap ;
E'en love finds cure for heart-aches here,
And none enjoys a sounder sleep.
The fair one far from folly's freaks,
As quiet as her neighbour seems,
Unconscious now of rosy cheeks,
Without a rival in her dreams.

Strangers alike to joy and strife,
Heedless of all its past affairs.
They're blotted from the list of life,
And absent from its teasing cares.
Grief, joy, hope, fear, and all their crew
That haunt the memory's living mind,
Ceased, when they could no more pursue,
And left a painless blank behind.

Life's ignis fatuus light is gone,
No more to lead their hopes astray ;
Care's poisoned cup is drain'd and done,
And all its follies past away.
The bill's made out, the reck'ning paid,
The book is cross'd, the business done ;
On them the last demand is made,
And heaven's eternal peace is won.

SONNET.

TO NAPOLEON.

THE heroes of the present and the past
 Were puny, vague, and nothingness to thee :
 Thou did'st a span grasp mighty to the last,
 And strain for glory when thy die was cast.
 That little island, on the Atlantic sea,
 Was but a dust-spot in a lake ; thy mind
 Swept space as shoreless as eternity.
 Thy giant powers outstript this gaudy age
 Of heroes ; and, as looking at the sun,
 So gazing on thy greatness, made men blind
 To merits, that had adoration won
 In olden times. The world was on thy page
 Of victories but a comma. Fame could find
 No parallel, thy greatness to presage.

THE NIGHTINGALE'S NEST.

UP this green woodland-ride let's softly rove,
 And list the nightingale—she dwells just here.
 Hush ! let the wood-gate softly clap, for fear
 The noise might drive her from her home of love ;

For here I've heard her many a merry year—
At morn, at eve, nay, all the live-long day,
As though she lived on song. This very spot,
Just where that old-man's-beard all wildly trails
Rude arbours o'er the road, and stops the way—
And where that child its blue-bell flowers hath got,
Laughing and creeping through the mossy rails—
There have I hunted like a very boy,
Creeping on hands and knees through matted thorn
To find her nest, and see her feed her young.
And vainly did I many hours employ:
All seemed as hidden as a thought unborn.
And where those crimping fern-leaves ramp among
The hazel's under boughs, I've nestled down,
And watched her while she sung; and her renown
Hath made me marvel that so famed a bird
Should have no better dress than russet brown.
Her wings would tremble in her ecstasy,
And feathers stand on end, as 'twere with joy,
And mouth wide open to release her heart
Of its out-sobbing songs. The happiest part
Of summer's fame she shared, for so to me
Did happy fancies shapen her employ;
But if I touched a bush, or scarcely stirred,
All in a moment stopt. I watched in vain:
The timid bird had left the hazel bush,
And at a distance hid to sing again.
Lost in a wilderness of listening leaves,
Rich Ecstasy would pour its luscious strain,
Till envy spurred the emulating thrush
To start less wild and scarce inferior songs;
For while of half the year Care him bereaves,

To damp the ardour of his speckled breast ;
The nightingale to summer's life belongs,
And naked trees, and winter's nipping wrongs,
Are strangers to her music and her rest.
Her joys are evergreen, her world is wide—
Hark ! there she is as usual—let's be hush—
For in this black-thorn clump, if rightly guest,
Her curious house is hidden. Part aside
These hazel branches in a gentle way,
And stoop right cautious 'neath the rustling boughs,
For we will have another search to day,
And hunt this fern-strewn thorn-clump round and
round ;
And where this reeded wood-grass idly bows,
We'll wade right through, it is a likely nook :
In such like spots, and often on the ground,
They'll build, where rude boys never think to look—
Aye, as I live ! her secret nest is here,
Upon this white-thorn stump ! I've searched about
For hours in vain. There ! put that bramble by—
Nay, trample on its branches and get near.
How subtle is the bird ! she started out,
And raised a plaintive note of danger nigh,
Ere we were past the brambles ; and now, near
Her nest, she sudden stops—as choking fear,
That might betray her home. So even now
We'll leave it as we found it : safety's guard
Of pathless solitudes shall keep it still.
See there ! she's sitting on the old oak bough,
Mute in her fears ; our presence doth retard
Her joys, and doubt turns every rapture chill.
Sing on, sweet bird ! may no worse hap befall

Thy visions, than the fear that now deceives.
We will not plunder music of its dower,
Nor turn this spot of happiness to thrall ;
For melody seems hid in every flower,
That blossoms near thy home. These harebells all
Seem bowing with the beautiful in song ;
And gaping cuckoo-flower, with spotted leaves,
Seems blushing of the singing it has heard.
How curious is the nest ; no other bird
Uses such loose materials, or weaves
Its dwelling in such spots : dead oaken leaves
Are placed without, and velvet moss within,
And little scraps of grass, and, scant and spare,
What scarcely seem materials, down and hair ;
For from men's haunts she nothing seems to win.
Yet Nature is the builder, and contrives
Homes for her children's comfort, even here ;
Where Solitude's disciples spend their lives
Unseen, save when a wanderer passes near
That loves such pleasant places. Deep adown,
The nest is made a hermit's mossy cell.
Snug lie her curious eggs in number five,
Of deadened green, or rather olive brown ;
And the old prickly thorn-bush guards them well.
So here we'll leave them, still unknown to wrong,
As the old woodland's legacy of song.

THE ETERNITY OF NATURE.

LEAVES, from eternity, are simple things
 To the world's gaze—where, lo ! a spirit clings
 Sublime and lasting. Trampled under foot,
 The daisy lives, and strikes its little root
 Into the lap of time : centuries may come,
 And pass away into the silent tomb,
 And still the child, hid in the womb of time,
 Shall smile and pluck them, when this simple rhyme
 Shall be forgotten, like a churchyard stone,
 Or lingering lie unnoticed and alone.
 When eighteen hundred years, our common date,
 Grow many thousands in their marching state,
 Aye, still the child, with pleasure in his eye,
 Shall cry—the daisy ! a familiar cry—
 And run to pluck it, in the self-same state,
 As when Time found it in his infant date ;
 And, like a child himself, when all was new,
 Might smile with wonder, and take notice too.
 It's little golden bosom, frilled with snow,
 Might win e'en Eve to stoop adown, and show
 Her partner, Adam, in the silky grass,
 This little gem, that smiled where pleasure was,
 And loving Eve, from Eden followed ill,
 And bloomed with sorrow, and lives smiling still.
 As once in Eden under heaven's breath,
 So now on earth, and on the lap of death

It smiles for ever.—Cowslips of gold bloom,
That in the pasture and the meadow come,
Shall come when kings and empires fade and die ;
And in the closes, as Time's partners, lie
As fresh two thousand years to come as now,
With those five crimson spots upon their brow.
The little brooks that hum a simple lay,
In green unnoticed spots, from praise away,
Shall sing, when poets in time's darkness hid,
Resemble memory in a pyramid,
Forgetting, yet not all forgot though lost,
Like a thread's end in ravelled windings crost.
The little humble-bee shall hum as long
As nightingales, for Time protects the song ;
And Nature is their soul, to whom all clings,
Of fair or beautiful in lasting things.
The little robin in the quiet glen,
Hidden from fame and all the strife of men,
Sings unto Time a pastoral, and gives
A music that lives on and ever lives.
Spring and autumnal years shall bloom, and fade,
Longer than songs that poets ever made.
Think ye not these, Time's playthings, pass proud skill?
Time loves them like a child, and ever will ;
And so I seek them in each bushy spot,
And sing with them, when all else notice not :
And feel the music of their mirth agree
With that sooth quiet that bestirs in me.
And if I touch aright that quiet tone—
That soothing truth that shadows forth their own,
Then many a year to come, in after-days,
Shall still find hearts to love my quiet lays.

Thus cheering mirth with thoughts sung not for fame,
But for the joy that with their utterance came,
That inward breath of rapture urged not loud,
—Birds, singing lone, fly silent past a crowd—
In these same pastoral spots, which childish time
Makes dear to me, I wander out and rhyme ;
What hour the dewy morning's infancy
Hangs on each blade of grass and every tree,
And sprengs the red thighs of the humble bee,
Who 'gins betimes unwearied minstrelsy ;
Who breakfasts, dines, and most divinely sups,
With every flower save golden buttercups,—
On whose proud bosoms he will never go,
But passes by with scarcely " how do ye do,"
Since in their showy, shining, gaudy cells,
Haply the summer's honey never dwells.
All Nature's ways are mysteries ! Endless Youth
Lives in them all, unchangeable as Truth.
With the odd number five, her curious laws
Play many freaks, nor once mistake the cause ;
For in the cowslip-pips this very day
Five spots appear, which Time wears not away,
Nor once mistakes in counting—look within
Each pip, and five, nor more nor less are seen.
So trailing bindweed, with its pinky cup,
Five leaves of paler hue go streaking up.
And many a bird too keeps the rule alive,
Laying five eggs, nor more nor less than five.
But flowers, how many own that mystic power ;
With five leaves ever making up the flower !
The five-leaved grass, mantling its golden cup
Of flowers—five leaves make all for which I stoop.

The briony, in the hedge, that now adorns
The tree to which it clings, and now the thorns,
Owns five-starred pointed leaves of dingy white ;
Count which I will, all make the number right.
The spreading goose-grass, trailing all abroad
In leaves of silver green about the road—
Five leaves make every blossom all along.
I stoop for many, none are counted wrong.
'Tis Nature's wonder, and her Maker's will,
Who bade Earth be, and Order owns him still,
As that superior Power, who keeps the key
Of wisdom, and of might, through all eternity.

MARY LEE.

I HAVE traced the valleys fair
In May morning's dewy air,
My bonny Mary Lee !
Wilt thou deign the wreath to wear,
Gathered all for thee ?
They are not flowers of pride,
For they graced the dingle-side ;
Yet they grew in heaven's smile,
My gentle Mary Lee !
Can they fear thy frowns the while,
Though offered by me ?

Here's the lily of the vale,
That perfumed the morning gale,
My fairy Mary Lee!
All so spotless and so pale,
Like thine own purity.
And, might I make it known,
'Tis an emblem of my own
Love—if I dare so name
My esteem for thee.
Surely flowers can bear no blame,
My bonny Mary Lee!

Here's the violet's modest blue,
That 'neath hawthorns hides from view,
My gentle Mary Lee,
Would show whose heart is true,
While it thinks of thee.
While they choose each lowly spot,
The sun disdains them not;
I'm as lowly too indeed,
My charming Mary Lee;
So I've brought the flowers to plead,
And win a smile from thee.

Here's a wild rose just in bud;
Spring's beauty in its hood,
My bonny Mary Lee!
'Tis the first in all the wood
I could find for thee.
Though a blush is scarcely seen,
Yet it hides its worth within,

Like my love ; for I've no power,
My angel, Mary Lee,
To speak, unless the flower
Can make excuse for me.

Though they deck no princely halls,
In bouquets for glittering balls,
My gentle Mary Lee !
Richer hues than painted walls
Will make them dear to thee ;
For the blue and laughing sky
Spreads a grander canopy,
Than all wealth's golden skill,
My charming Mary Lee !
Love would make them dearer still,
That offers them to thee.

My wreathed flowers are few,
Yet no fairer drink the dew,
My bonny Mary Lee !
They may seem as trifles too—
Not I hope to thee.
Some may boast a richer prize
Under pride and wealth's disguise ;
None a fonder offering bore
Than this of mine to thee ;
And can true love wish for more ?
Surely not, Mary Lee !

ON AN INFANT KILLED BY LIGHTNING.

As fearless as a cherub's rest,
Now safe above the cloud,
A babe lay on its mother's breast
When thunders roared aloud.
It started not to hear the crash,
But held its little hand
Up, at the lightning's fearful flash,
To catch the burning brand.

The tender mother stayed her breath
In more than grief awhile,
To think the thing that brought its death
Should cause her babe to smile.
Aye, it did smile a heavenly smile
To see the lightning play ;
Well might she shriek when it turned pale,
And yet it smiled in clay.

O woman ! the dread storm was given
To be to each a friend ;
It took thy infant pure to heaven,
Left thee impure to mend.
Thus Providence will oft appear
From God's own mouth to preach :
Ah ! would we were as prone to hear
As Mercy is to teach !

ON SEEING A SKULL ON COWPER GREEN.

ONE morn I wandered forth 'neath spirits high—
 A mood that morning's piercing breath instils ;
 And like my shade, my mind in ecstasy
 Stretched as a giant o'er the pasture-hills.
 I mused on reasoning man's exalted sway
 O'er the brute world—pride made my feelings
 brave ;
 Creation's lord he seemed to me that day ;
 I felt as if all nature was his slave.
 But Time's glass soon did mock my visioned might :
 I saw, and shrank an insect at the sight.

For as I wandered by a quarry's side,
 Where an old hoary weather-beaten swain
 Was delving sand—in life's rude troubles tried—
 An humble pittance as he strove to gain,
 He stopt his toil, and with a feeble hand
 Pointed to where a human skull lay bare,
 Commingled with the refuse of the land,
 Fallen from life and pride to moulder there.
 I looked upon the relic with deep awe,
 While Silence seemed to question what I saw.

What wert thou upon earth? perhaps a King,
For such the relics of earth's best renown.
Thou pompous shadow! thou proud, trifling thing!
Bare is the brow that triumphed 'neath a crown.
By rank forsaken, stript of pride's attire,
Death's sad reality fate only claims;
All else like shadows bidden to expire.
Time keeps the wreck, to mock at earthly fames;
To show vain Glory, in its golden birth,
Of what poor value it is held by Death.

Wert thou a Tyrant, that disdained, though clay,
The laws of God and man, and with vain power,
For earth's vain glories threw the heavens away?
How art thou fallen at this lonely hour!
Thy vengeance, that did like the thunder sear,
Ordaining hosts of murders with a breath,
Hath vanished; and the slave forgets his fear
Beneath the banner of that tyrant, Death.
Even the little ant now, undismayed,
Creeps o'er thy skull, and doth not feel afraid.

A Warrior thou? who sped in victory's ways,
As over-bearing as a mighty wind?
Ah, little thought thy pride, that Victory's praise
So soon would leave her hero's fame behind.
By war and all its havoc undeterred,
Thy Courage, withering in its mad career,
Bowed before Death, tame as a broken sword;
And ah! how silent doth it harbour here!
Its fame all sunk to nothingness away,
As showers by night wash out the steps of day.

Wert thou a Lover?—ah! what else so warm
As lovers' thoughts, that lead the heart to bliss!
How sad the change, o'ertaken in Death's storm,
Cold, wrecked, and stranded in a place like this!
Love, that will nestle 'neath the eagle's wing,
And find a dwelling in the lion's den,
Hath long forsaken thee, thou lonely thing
Of mystery, and knows thee not again.
Warm hopes, gay thoughts, rapt joys, and fond
desires,
Have lost their home; Death hath put out their fires.

Wert thou a Poet, who in fancy's dream
Saw Immortality throw by her veil,
And all thy labours in Fame's temple gleam
In the proud glory of an after-tale?
If so, how cheated thy ambition died;
How vain the hopes the muse's visions gave!
Death with Eternity scarce took one stride,
Ere thou wert left forgotten in the grave;—
Chilled all thy powers, with thoughts o'erflowing full,
And nought left extant but this empty skull.

Wert thou of poor descent, and like to me,
A toiling worm, earning life's daily bread?—
If so, Death made thee rich, as well as free,
And left thee equal with the noblest dead.
Emperors and kings, no more by flattery fed,
Poor as thou art, their condescension spares
Even to thee a portion of their bed,
And thine's as soft a pillow now as theirs!
O who could grudge the Mighty's guest to be,
Where Kings grow kind, and share their pomp with thee!

In vain I question :—nought will answer me
 Of what thou wert ; yet know I that thou art
 A faithful portrait of what Life shall be :
 Thus much thy mystic vision doth impart.
 King, Tyrant, Warrior, Lover, Bard, and all,
 Shall into nothing every name resign,
 And Fame's proud scroll, at last, shall be the pall
 To hide their history, as Oblivion thine ;
 While Virtue's deeds shall longest live, and be
 A wreath to girdle vast Eternity !

 TO P****

FAIR was thy bloom, when first I met
 Thy summer's maiden-blossom ;
 And thou art fair and lovely yet,
 And dearer to my bosom.
 O thou wert once a wilding flower,
 'All garden flowers excelling,
 And still I bless the happy hour
 That led me to thy dwelling.

Though nursed by field, and brook, and wood,
 And wild in every feature,
 Spring ne'er unsealed a fairer bud,
 Nor found a blossom sweeter.

Of all the flowers the Spring hath met,
And it has met with many,
Thou art to me the fairest yet,
And loveliest, of any.

Though ripening summers round thee bring
Buds to thy swelling bosom,
That wait the cheering smiles of spring
To ripen into blossom ;
These buds shall added blessings be,
To make our loves sincerer :
For as their flowers resemble thee,
They'll make thy memory dearer.

And though thy bloom shall pass away,
By winter overtaken,
Thoughts of the past will charms display,
And many joys awaken.
When time shall every sweet remove,
And blight thee on my bosom—
Let beauty fade—to me, my love,
Thou'lt ne'er be out of blossom !

THE SHEPHERD'S SONG.

MARY ! let us Love employ,
Among the happy smiles of May ;
And let us bind the wings of Joy,
And keep him captive for a day.

Nature in love doth now disclose
Her flowers, in full ripe smiles to thee ;
'Twill be too late to seek the rose
When autumn-leaves have left the tree :
So let us wreathe Joy's brows to-day,
To-morrow he may speed away.

While on this meadow-bank we sit,
Mark thou the sights that might thee move ;
Hear how the winds, in amorous fit,
Woo things inanimate to love.
The bulrush bows, in graceful art,
To kiss the river's lesser weeds ;
And flags, in many a merry start,
Rustling whisper to the reeds :
Shall things inanimate agree
To love, unmoving thee and me ?

See yonder sky-lark, from the corn,
Rises to sing his wedding-lay ;
For he was wed at early morn,
And twilight gave the bride away.
The church above the trees doth climb,
Love ! promise, and we'll soon be there ;
'Tis best to borrow haste from Time,
If Time has present joys to spare ;
Nor leave Love's lot until the Morrow,
Who oft pays backward debts in sorrow.

EMMONSALE'S HEATH.

In thy wild garb of other times
 I find thee lingering still ;
 Furze o'er each lazy summit climbs,
 At nature's easy will.

Grasses that never knew a scythe,
 Wave all the summer long ;
 And wild weed blossoms waken blythe,
 That ploughmen never wrong.

Stern Industry, with stubborn toil,
 And wants unsatisfied,
 Still leaves untouched thy maiden soil,
 In its unsullied pride.

The birds still find their summer shades
 To build their nests again,
 And the poor hare its rushy glade,
 To hide from savage men.

Nature its family protects
 In thy security,
 And blooms, which love what man neglects,
 Find peaceful homes in thee.

The wild rose scents the summer air,
And woodbines weave in bowers,
To glad the swain sojourning there,
And maidens gathering flowers.

Creation's steps one wandering meets
Untouched by those of man :
Things seem the same in such retreats
As when the world began.

Furze, ling, and brake, all mingling free,
And grass for ever green—
All seem the same old things to be
As they have ever been.

The brook o'er such neglected ground,
One's weariness to soothe,
Still wildly winds its lawless bound,
And chafes the pebble smooth ;

Crooked and rude, as when at first
Its waters learned to stray,
And, from their mossy fountain burst,
It washed itself a way.

I've often met with places rude,
Nor failed their sweets to share,
But passed an hour with solitude,
And left my blessing there.

He that can meet the morning wind,
And o'er such places roam,
Nor leave a lingering wish behind
To make their peace his home—

His heart is dead to quiet hours,
Nor love his mind employs,
Nor poesy shares with him its flowers,
Nor solitude its joys.

I've stretched my boyish walks to thee
When May-day's paths were dry,
When leaves had nearly hid each tree,
And grass greened ankle high ;

And mused the sunny hours away,
And thought of little things
That children mutter o'er their play,
When fancy tries its wings.

Joy nursed me in her happy mood,
And all life's little crowd
That haunt the valley, field, and wood,
Would sing their joys aloud.

I thought how kind that mighty Power
Must in his splendour be,
Who spread around my boyish hour
Such gleams of harmony.

Who did with joyous rapture fill
The low as high degree,
And made the ants around the hill
Seem full as blest as me.

Hope's sun is seen of every eye ;
The halo that it gives,
In nature's wide and common sky,
Cheers every thing that lives.

A WORLD FOR LOVE.

OH, the world is all too rude for thee, with much ado
and care ;
Oh, this world is but a rude world, and hurts a
thing so fair ;
Was there a nook in which the world had never been
to sear,
That place would prove a paradise when thou and
Love were near.

And there to pluck the blackberry, and there to
reach the sloe,
How joyously and happily would Love thy partner go ;
Then rest when weary on a bank, where not a grassy
blade
Had e'er been bent by Trouble's feet, and Love thy
pillow made.

For Summer would be ever green, though sloes were
in their prime,
And Winter smile his frowns to Spring, in beauty's
happy clime ;
And months would come, and months would go, and
all in sunny mood,
And everything inspired by thee grow beautifully good.

And there to make a cot unknown to any care and
pain,

And there to shut the door alone on singing wind
and rain—

Far, far away from all the world, more rude than
rain or wind,

Oh who could wish a sweeter home, or better place
to find ?

Than thus to love and live with thee, thou beautiful
delight !

Than thus to live and love with thee the summer
day and night !

The Earth itself, where thou hadst rest, would surely
smile to see

Herself grow Eden once again, possess of Love and
thee.

SONG.

O the voice of woman's love !
 What a bosom-stirring word !
 Was a sweeter ever uttered,
 Was a dearer ever heard,
 Than woman's love ?

How it melts upon the ear,
 How it nourishes the heart !
 Cold, ah ! cold, must his appear,
 Who hath never shared a part
 Of woman's love.

'Tis pleasure to the mourner,
 'Tis freedom to the thrall ;
 The pilgrimage of many,
 And the resting place of all,
 Is woman's love.

'Tis the gem of beauty's birth,
 It competes with joys above
 What were angels upon earth,
 If without a woman's love—
 A woman's love ?

BALLAD.

WHERE is the heart thou once hast won,
 Can cease to care about thee ?
 Where is the eye thou'st smiled upon .
 Can look for joy without thee ?
 Lorn is the lot one heart hath met,
 That's lost to thy caressing ;
 Cold is the hope that loves thee yet,
 Now thou art past possessing—
 Fare thee well.

We met, we loved, we've met the last,
 The farewell word is spoken ;
 O Mary, can'st thou feel the past,
 And keep thy heart unbroken ?
 To think how warm we loved, and how
 Those hopes should blossom never ;
 To think how we are parted now,
 And parted, O ! for ever—
 Fare thee well.

Thou wert the first my heart to win,
 Thou art the last to wear it ;
 And though another claims a kin,
 Thou must be one to share it.

O had we known when hopes were sweet,
That hopes would once be thwarted,
That we should part, no more to meet,
How sadly we had parted !
Fare thee well.

LOVE.

Love, though it is not chill and cold,
But burning like eternal fire,
Is yet not of approaches bold,
Which gay dramatic tastes admire.
Oh ! timid love, more fond than free,
In daring song is ill pourtrayed,
Where, as in war, the devotee
By valour wins each captive maid ;—

Where hearts are prest to hearts in glee,
As they could tell each other's mind ;
Where ruby lips are kissed as free,
As flowers are by the summer wind.
No ! gentle love, that timid dream,
With hopes and fears at foil and play,
Works like a skiff against the stream,
And thinking most finds least to say.

It lives in blushes and in sighs,
In hopes for which no words are found ;
Thoughts dare not speak but in the eyes,
The tongue is left without a sound.
The pert and forward things that dare
Their talk in every maiden's ear,
Feel no more than their shadows there—
Mere things of form, with nought of fear.

True passion, that so burns to plead,
Is timid as the dove's disguise ;
'Tis for the murder-aiming gleed
To dart at every thing that flies.
True love, it is no daring bird,
But like the little timid wren,
That in the new-leaved thorns of spring
Shrinks farther from the sight of men.

The idol of his musing mind,
The worship of his lonely hour,
Love woos her in the summer wind,
And tells her name to every flower ;
But in her sight, no open word
Escapes, his fondness to declare ;
The sighs, by beauty's magic stirred,
Are all that speak his passion there.

BALLAD.

THE spring returns, the pewet screams
 Loud welcomes to the dawning,
 Though harsh and ill as now it seems,
 'Twas music last May morning.
 The grass so green—the daisy gay
 Wakes no joy in my bosom,
 Although the garland, last May day,
 Wore not a finer blossom.

For by this bridge my Mary sat,
 And praised the screaming plover
 As first to hail the day, when I
 Confessed myself her lover ;
 And at that moment stooping down
 I plucked a daisy blossom,
 Which smilingly she called her own
 May-garland, for her bosom.

And in her breast she hid it there,
 As true love's happy omen ;
 Gold had not claimed a safer care—
 I thought Love's name was Woman.
 I claimed a kiss, she laughed away,
 I sweetly sold the blossom,
 I thought myself a king that day,
 My throne was Beauty's bosom.

I little thought an evil hour
Was bringing clouds around me,
And, least of all, that little flower
Would turn a thorn to wound me.
She showed me, after many days,
Though withered, how she prized it;
Then she inclined to wealthy praise,
And my poor love—despised it.

Aloud the whirring pewet screams,
The daisy blooms as gaily,
But where is Mary?—Absence seems
To ask that question daily.
No where on earth where joy can be,
To glad me with her pleasure;
Another name she owns—to me
She is as stolen treasure.

When lovers part, the longest mile
Leaves hope of some returning;
Though mine's close by, no hopes the while
Within my heart are burning.
One hour would bring me to her door;
Yet sad and lonely hearted,
If seas between us both should roar,
We were not farther parted.

Though I could reach her with my hand,
Ere sun the earth goes under;
Her heart from mine—the sea and land
Are not more wide asunder.

The wind and clouds, now here, now there,
Hold not such strange dominion
As woman's cold perverted will,
And soon estranged opinion.

DECAY.

O POESY is on the wane,
For Fancy's visions all unfitting ;
I hardly know her face again,
Nature herself seems on the flitting.
The fields grow old and common things,
The grass, the sky, the winds a-blowing ;
And spots, where still a beauty clings,
Are sighing "going! all a-going!"
O Poesy is on the wane,
I hardly know her face again.

The bank with brambles overspread,
And little molehills round about it,
Was more to me than laurel shades,
With paths of gravel finely clouted ;
And streaking here and streaking there,
Through shaven grass and many a border,
With rutty lanes had no compare,
And heaths were in a richer order.
But Poesy is on the wane,
I hardly know her face again.

I sat beside the pasture stream,
When Beauty's self was sitting by,
The fields did more than Eden seem,
Nor could I tell the reason why.
I often drank when not a-dry,
To pledge her health in draughts divine ;
Smiles made it nectar from the sky,
Love turned e'en water into wine.
O Poesy is on the wane,
I cannot find her face again.

The sun those mornings used to find,
Its clouds were other-country mountains,
And heaven looked downward on the mind,
Like groves, and rocks, and mottled fountains.
Those heavens are gone, the mountains grey
Turned mist—the sun, a homeless ranger,
Pursues alone his naked way,
Unnoticed like a very stranger.
O Poesy is on the wane,
Nor love nor joy is mine again.

Love's sun went down without a frown,
For very joy it used to grieve us ;
I often think the West is gone,
Ah, cruel Time, to undeceive us.
The stream it is a common stream,
Where we on Sundays used to ramble,
The sky hangs o'er a broken dream,
The bramble's dwindled to a bramble !
O Poesy is on the wane,
I cannot find her haunts again.

Mere withered stalks and fading trees,
And pastures spread with hills and rushes,
Are all my fading vision sees ;
Gone, gone are rapture's flooding gushes !
When mushrooms they were fairy bowers,
Their marble pillars over-swelling,
And Danger paused to pluck the flowers,
That in their swarthy rings were dwelling.
Yes, Poesy is on the wane,
Nor joy, nor fear is mine again.

Aye, Poesy hath passed away,
And Fancy's visions undeceive us ;
The night hath ta'en the place of day,
And why should passing shadows grieve us ?
I thought the flowers upon the hill
Were flowers from Adam's open gardens ;
But I have had my summer thrills,
And I have had my heart's rewardings.
So Poesy is on the wane,
I hardly know her face again.

And Friendship it hath burned away,
Like to a very ember cooling,
A make-believe on April day,
That sent the simple heart a fooling ;
Mere jesting in an earnest way,
Deceiving on and still deceiving ;
And Hope is but a fancy-play,
And Joy the art of true believing ;
For Poesy is on the wane,
O could I feel her faith again !

NATURE'S HYMN TO THE DEITY.

ALL Nature owns, with one accord,
 The great and universal Lord :
 The Sun proclaims him through the day—
 The Moon, when daylight drops away ;
 The very Darkness smiles to wear
 The stars that show us God is there !
 On moonlight seas soft gleams the sky,
 And “ God is with us !” waves reply.

Winds breathe, “ From God’s abode we come ;”
 Storms louder call, “ God is our home !”
 And Thunders, with yet louder call,
 Sound Him as mightiest over all ;
 Till Earth, right loth the proof to miss,
 Echoes triumphantly “ He is !”
 And Air and Ocean make reply,
 “ God reigns on earth, in air, and sky !”

All Nature owns with one accord
 The great and universal Lord :
 Insect, and Bird, and Tree, and Flower—
 Are witnesses of every hour,
 Respondent to the common cry,
 For “ God is with us !” these reply.
 The first link in the mighty plan
 Is mute—All Nature upbraids Man !

IMPULSES OF SPRING.

DAY burnishes the distant hills,
 And clouds blush far away ;
 Life's heart with Nature's rapture thrills
 To hail this glorious day.
 The morning falls in dizzy light
 On mountain tops and towers,
 But speeds with soft and gentle flight
 Among these valley-flowers.

There's music in the waking woods,
 There's glory in the air ;
 Birds, in their merry summer moods,
 Now rant and revel there :
 Joy wakes, and wantons all around,
 Love laughs in every call,
 Music in many hearts is found,
 And Poesy breathes in all.

The merry new-come nightingale
 Woos Night's dull hours along,
 Till Daylight at the sound turns pale,
 And hastes to share the song.
 A waste of sunny flowers is seen,
 And incense fills the air ;
 No sunless place is found too mean
 Spring's blushing gems to wear.

The horse-blob by the water-mill
 Blooms in the foaming dam,
And pilewort flares around the hill,
 Beside the sleeping lamb.
Spring is the happy breathing time
 For young Love's stolen joys ;
| Spring is the Poet's luscious prime—
 He revels in the noise

Of waking insects humming round,
 And birds upon the wing,
And all the gushing soul of sound
 That echoes of the Spring ;
For in their joys his own are met,
 Though tears stand in his eye ;
In their gay mirth he half forgets
 He ever knew to sigh.

He feeds on Spring's precarious boon,
 A being of her race,
Where light, and shade, and shower, and sun,
 Are ever changing place.
To-day he buds, and glows to meet
 To-morrow's promised shower,
Then crushed by Care's intruding feet,
 He fades—a broken flower !

His hopes, they change like summer clouds,
 And fairy phantasies ;
His pleasures, wrapt in gayer shrouds,
 Are sorrows in disguise :

The sweetest smiles his heart can find
Possess his tears as well ;
His highest pleasures leave behind
Their heart-ache, and farewell !

His are the fading “ joys of grief ;”
Care grows his favoured guest :
And Sorrow gives his heart relief,
Because it knows him best.
The sweetest flower on pleasure’s path
Will bloom on sorrow’s grave,
And earthly joys, and earthly mirth,
Their share of grief shall have.

True Poesy owns a haunted mind,
A thirst-enduring flame,
Burning the soul to leave behind
The memory of a name.
Though life be reckoned sweetly sold
For toil so ill repaid—
The marble epitaph, how cold !
Although with gold inlaid.

While the rude clown of thoughtless clay,
In feelings unrefined,
Lives out life’s cloudless holiday,
With nothing on his mind ;—
Then sound as ever king hath slept,
On earth’s green lap he lies ;
While Beauty’s tears, so sweetly wept,
And Friendship’s warmest sighs

Are left upon his lowly grave,
And live his only fame,
While frowning Envy never gave
One insult to his name;
Yet who would from their cares be free
For such unconscious bliss?
A living blank in life to be,
Pain's sympathy to miss?

To meet enthusiastic May
As but dull Winter's hours,
And primrose pale, and daisy gay,
As white and yellow flowers,
And not as friends in our esteem,
To cheer dull life's sojourn;—
Let me, throughout its cheating dream,
Much rather feel and mourn

The bliss and grief, though past control,
That with extremes inflame;
Feelings, blood-rushing through the soul,
Not uttered in a name;
Where no words live, to free the mind
From hidden hopes or fears,
Where all the utterance can find
Are gushing smiles and tears.

Yet woo I not that burning flame,
Enkindling ecstasy,
Blazing in dreams to win a name
From Fame's eternity.

Fame's yearning breath breeds not my sigh,
Nor eats my heart away,
Burning life's every channel dry
To triumph o'er decay.

Yet with the minstrelsy on earth
I too would love the lyre,
For heaven ne'er gave the meanest birth,
To quench that holy fire :
It owns the muse's sweetest smiles,
And scatters life around ;
Grief, sick with Hope's heart-broken toils,
Grows happy at the sound.

The lyre is pleasure's blest abode,
And round it angels throng ;
The lyre is as the voice of God,
The prophets spake in song.
And as the sun this day brings forth
Creations every hour,
Care's wreath warms at the muse's mirth,
And blushes into flower.

PASTORAL FANCIES.

SWEET pastime here my mind so entertains,
 Abiding pleasaunce, and heart-feeding joys,
 To meet this blithsome day these painted plains,
 These singing maids, and chubby laughing boys,
 Which hay-time and the summer here employs,—
 My rod and line doth all neglected lie ;
 A higher joy my former sport destroys :
 Nature this day doth bait the hook, and I
 The glad fish am, that's to be caught thereby.

This silken grass, these pleasant flowers in bloom,
 Among these tasty molehills that do lie
 Like summer cushions, for all guests that come ;
 Those little feathered folk, that sing and fly
 Above these trees, in that so gentle sky,
 Where not a cloud dares soil its heavenly light ;
 And this smooth river softly grieving bye—
 All fill mine eyes with so divine a sight,
 As makes me sigh that it should e'er be night.

In sooth, methinks the choice I most should prize
Were in these meadows of delight to dwell,
To share the joyaunce heaven elsewhere denies,
The calmness that doth relish passing well,
The quiet conscience, that aye bears the bell,
And happy musing Nature would supply,
Leaving no room for troubles to rebel :
Here would I think all day, at night would lie,
The hay my bed, my coverlid the sky.

So would I live, as nature might command,
Taking with Providence my wholesome meals ;
Plucking the savory peascod from the land,
Where rustic lad oft dainty dinner steals.
For drink, I'd hie me where the moss conceals
The little spring so chary from the sun,
Then lie, and listen to the merry peals
Of distant bells—all other noises shun ;
Then court the Muses till the day be done.

Here would high joys my lowly choice requite ,
For garden plot, I'd choose this flow'ry lea ;
Here I in culling nosegays would delight,
The lambtoe tuft, the paler culverkey :
The cricket's mirth were talk enough for me,
When talk I needed ; and when warmed to pray,
The little birds my choristers should be,
Who wear one suit for worship and for play,
And make the whole year long one sabbath-day.

A thymy hill should be my cushioned seat ;
An aged thorn, with wild hops intertwined,
My bower, where I from noontide might retreat ;
A hollow oak would shield me from the wind,
Or, as might hap, I better shed might find
In gentle spot, where fewer paths intrude,
The hut of shepherd swain, with rushes lined :
There would I tenant be to Solitude,
Seeking life's gentlest joys, to shun the rude.

Bidding a long farewell to every trouble,
The envy and the hate of evil men ;
Feeling cares lessen, happiness redouble,
And all I lost as if 'twere found again.
Vain life unseen ; the past alone known then :
No worldly intercourse my mind should have,
To lure me backward to its crowded den ;
Here would I live and die, and only crave
The home I chose might also be my grave.

THE AUTUMN ROBIN.

SWEET little bird in russet coat,
The livery of the closing year !
I love thy lonely plaintive note,
And tiny whispering song to hear.

While on the stile, or garden seat,
I sit to watch the falling leaves,
The song thy little joys repeat,
My loneliness relieves.

And many are the lonely minds
That hear, and welcome thee anew;
Not Taste alone, but humble hinds,
Delight to praise, and love thee too.
The veriest clown, beside his cart,
Turns from his song with many a smile,
To see thee from the hedgerow start,
To sing upon the stile.

The shepherd on the fallen tree
Drops down to listen to thy lay,
And chides his dog beside his knee,
Who barks, and frightens thee away.
The hedger pauses, ere he knocks
The stake down in the meadow-gap—
The boy, who every songster mocks,
Forbears the gate to clap,

When in the hedge that hides the post
Thy ruddy bosom he surveys,—
Pleased with thy song, in transport lost,
He pausing mutters scraps of praise.
The maiden marks, at day's decline,
Thee in the yard, on broken plough,
And stops her song, to listen thine,
Milking the brindled cow.

Thy simple faith in man's esteem,
From every heart hath favour won ;
Dangers to thee no dangers seem—
Thou seemest to court them more than shun.
The clown in winter takes his gun,
The barn-door flocking birds to slay,
Yet should'st thou in the danger run
He turns the tube away.

The gipsy boy, who seeks in glee
Blackberries for a dainty meal,
Laughs loud on first beholding thee,
When called, so near his presence steal.
He surely thinks thou knew'st the call ;
And though his hunger ill can spare
The fruit, he will not pluck it all,
But leaves some to thy share.

Upon the ditcher's spade thou'lt hop,
For grubs and wreathing worms to search ;
Where woodmen in the forest chop,
Thou'lt fearless on their faggots perch ;
Nay, by the gipsies' camp I stop,
And mark thee dwell a moment there,
To prune thy wing awhile, then drop,
The littered crumbs to share.

Domestic bird ! thy pleasant face
Doth well thy common suit commend ;
To meet thee in a stranger-place
Is meeting with an ancient friend.

I track the thicket's glooms around,
And there, as loth to leave, again
Thou comest, as if thou knew the sound
And loved the sight of men.

The loneliest wood that men can trace
To thee a pleasant dwelling gives ;
In every town and crowded place
The sweet domestic robin lives.
Go where one will, in every spot
Thy little welcome mates appear ;
And, like the daisy's common lot,
Thou'rt met with every where.

The swallow in the chimney tier,
Or twittering martin in the eaves,
With half of love and half of fear
His mortared dwelling shily weaves ;
The sparrows in the thatch will shield ;
Yet they, as well as e'er they can,
Contrive with doubtful faith to build
Beyond the reach of man.

But thou'rt less timid than the wren,
Domestic and confiding bird !
And spots, the nearest haunts of men,
Are oftenest for thy home preferred.
In garden-walls thou'lt build so low,
Close where the bunch of fennel stands,
That e'en a child just taught to go
May reach with tiny hands.

Sweet favoured bird ! thy under-notes
In summer's music grow unknown,
The concert from a thousand throats
Leaves thee as if to pipe alone ;
No listening ear the shepherd lends,
The simple ploughman marks thee not,
And then by all thy autumn friends
Thou'rt missing and forgot.

The far-famed nightingale, that shares
Cold public praise from every tongue,
The popular voice of music heirs,
And injures much thy under-song :
Yet then my walks thy theme salutes ;
I find thee autumn's favoured guest,
Gay piping on the hazel-roots
Above thy mossy nest.

'Tis wrong that thou shouldst be despised,
When these gay fickle birds appear ;
They sing when summer flowers are prized—
Thou at the dull and dying year.
Well ! let the heedless and the gay
Bepraise the voice of louder lays,
The joy thou steal'st from Sorrow's day
Is more to thee than praise.

And could my notes win aught from thine,
My words but imitate thy lay,
Time could not then his charge resign,
Nor throw the meanest verse away,

But ever at this mellow time,
He should thy autumn praise prolong,
As they would share the happy prime
Of thy eternal song.

THE EVENING STAR.

How blest I've felt on summer eves,
When resting on a stile,
Half hid in hazel's moistening leaves,
So weary after toil !

And gazing on the Evening Star,
That shed its ruddy light
Like joys, which something came to mar,
Retreating out of sight.

O'er the wood-corner's sombre brown,
The lamp of dewy eve,
No sooner up than sloping down,
Seemed always taking leave.

Yet 'tis a lovely sight to see,
And beautiful the time
It shines in heaven's canopy
At evening's gentle prime.

Akin to images and things
That glad the quiet mind,
A calmness o'er the heart it flings,
That poets love to find.

It shines o'er sheep within the fold,
O'er shepherds whistling home ;
The plough lies in the fallow mould,
The horse is free to roam.

'Tis welcome to the weary breast,
It sweetens life's employ,
It sees the labourer to his rest,
The lover to his joy.

The wanderer seeks his easy chair,
The light is in his cot,
His Evening Star is shining there,
And troubles are forgot.

It looks on many a happy place,
Where lovers steal to meet ;
It gilds the milkmaid's ruddy face,
While on her rustic seat.

Upon the old tree in the glen,
That by the hovel lay,
The shepherd there had set his pen,
And whistled on his way.

It shines o'er many a whispered pledge,
By fondness told again;
In cowsheds by the woodland hedge,
'Neath hawthorns by the lane.

It brings the balm to summer nights,
Like incense from afar,
And every musing mind delights
To hail the Evening Star.

THE PETTICHAP'S NEST.

WELL! in my many walks I've rarely found
A place less likely for a bird to form
Its nest—close by the rut-gulled waggon-road,
And on the almost bare foot-trodden ground,
With scarce a clump of grass to keep it warm!
Where not a thistle spreads its spears abroad,
Or prickly bush, to shield it from harm's way;
And yet so snugly made, that none may spy
It out, save peradventure. You and I
Had surely passed it in our walk to-day,
Had chance not led us by it!—Nay, e'en now,
Had not the old bird heard us trampling bye,
And fluttered out, we had not seen it lie,

Brown as the road-way side. Small bits of hay
Plucked from the old propt haystack's pleachy brow,
And withered leaves, make up its outward wall,
Which from the gnarl'd oak-dotterel yearly fall,
And in the old hedge-bottom rot away.
Built like an oven, through a little hole,
Scarcely admitting e'en two fingers in,
Hard to discern, the birds snug entrance win.
'Tis lined with feathers warm as silken stole,
Softer than seats of down for painless ease,
And full of eggs scarce bigger even than peas!
Here's one most delicate, with spots as small
As dust, and of a faint and pinky red.
—Well! let them be, and Safety guard them well;
For Fear's rude paths around are thickly spread,
And they are left to many dangerous ways.
A green grasshopper's jump might break the shells,
Yet lowing oxen pass them morn and night,
And restless sheep around them hourly stray;
And no grass springs but hungry horses' bite,
That trample past them twenty times a day.
Yet, like a miracle, in Safety's lap
They still abide unhurt, and out of sight.
—Stop! here's the bird—that woodman at the gap
Frightened him from the hedge:—'tis olive-green.
Well! I declare it is the Pettichap!
Not bigger than the wren, and seldom seen.
I've often found her nest in chance's way,
When I in pathless woods did idly roam;
But never did I dream until to-day
A spot like this would be her chosen home.

INSECTS.

THESE tiny loiterers on the barley's beard,
And happy units of a numerous herd
Of playfellows, the laughing Summer brings,
Mocking the sunshine on their glittering wings,
How merrily they creep, and run, and fly !
No kin they bear to labour's drudgery,
Smoothing the velvet of the pale hedge-rose ;
And where they fly for dinner no one knows—
The dew-drops feed them not—they love the shine
Of noon, whose suns may bring them golden wine.
All day they're playing in their Sunday dress—
When night reposes, for they can do no less ;
Then, to the heath-bell's purple hood they fly,
And like to princes in their slumbers lie,
Secure from rain, and dropping dews, and all,
In silken beds and roomy painted hall.
So merrily they spend their summer-day,
Now in the corn-fields, now the new-mown hay.
One almost fancies that such happy things,
With coloured hoods and richly burnished wings,
Are fairy folk, in splendid masquerade
Disguised, as if of mortal folk afraid,
Keeping their joyous pranks a mystery still,
Lest glaring day should do their secrets ill.

THE YELLOWHAMMER'S NEST.

JUST by the wooden bridge a bird flew up,
 Scared by the cow-boy, as he scrambled down
 To reach the misty dewberry.—Let us stoop,
 And seek its nest. The brook we need not dread—
 'Tis scarcely deep enough a bee to drown,
 As it sings harmless o'er its pebbly bed.
 —Aye, here it is! stuck close beside the bank,
 Beneath the bunch of grass, that spindles rank
 Its husk-seeds tall and high :—'tis rudely planned
 Of bleached stubbles, and the withered fare
 That last year's harvest left upon the land,—
 Lined thinly with the horse's sable hair.
 Five eggs, pen-scribbled o'er with ink their shells,
 Resembling writing-scrawls, which Fancy reads
 As Nature's poesy, and pastoral spells—
 They are the Yellowhammer's; and she dwells,
 Most poet-like, where brooks and flowery weeds
 As sweet as Castaly her fancy deems;
 And that old mole-hill is Parnassus' hill,
 On which her partner haply sits, and dreams
 O'er all his joys of song. Let's leave it still
 A happy home of sunshine, flowers, and streams.
 Yet is the sweetest place exposed to ill,
 A noisome weed, that burthens every soil;
 For snakes are known, with chill and deadly coil,
 To watch such nests, and seize the helpless young;
 And like as if the plague became a guest,
 To leave a houseless home, a ruined nest:
 Aye! mournful hath the little warbler sung
 When such like woes have rent his gentle breast.

TO A POET.

POET of mighty power ! I fain
 Would court the muse that honoured thee,
 And, like Elisha's spirit, gain
 A part of thy intensity ;
 And share the mantle which she flung
 Around thee, when thy lyre was strung.

Though faction's scorn at first did shun
 With coldness thy inspired song,—
 Though clouds of malice passed thy sun,
 They could not hide it long ;
 Its brightness soon exhaled away
 Dank night, and gained eternal day.

The critics' wrath did darkly frown
 Upon thy muse's mighty lay ;
 But blasts that break the blossom down
 Do only stir the bay ;
 And thine shall flourish green, and long,
 With the eternity of song.

Thy genius saw, in quiet mood,
 Gilt Fashion's follies pass thee by,
 And, like the monarch of the wood,
 Towered o'er it to the sky,
 Where thou couldst sing of other spheres.
 And feel the fame of future years !

Though bitter sneers and stinging scorns
Did throng the muse's dangerous way,
Thy powers despised such little thorns,
They gave thee no dismay ;
The scoffer's insult passed thee by,
Thou smiled, and made him no reply.

Envy will gnaw its heart away,
To see thy genius gather root ;
And as its flowers their sweets display,
Scorn's malice shall be mute ;
Hornets, that summer warmed to fly,
Shall at the death of summer die.

Though friendly praise hath but its hour,
And little praise with thee hath been,
The bay may loose its summer flower,
But still its leaves are green ;
And thine, whose buds are on the shoot,
Shall only fade to change to fruit.

Fame lives not in the breath of words,
In public praise's hue and cry ;
The music of those summer birds
Is silent in a winter sky,
When thine shall live, and flourish on,
O'er wrecks where crowds of fames are gone.

The ivy shuns the city wall,
Where busy clamorous crowds intrude,
And climbs the desolated hall
In silent solitude ;

The time-worn arch, the fallen dome,
Are roots for its eternal home.

The bard his glory ne'er receives
Where summer's common flowers are seen,
But winter finds it, when she leaves
The laurel only green ;
And Time, from that eternal tree,
Shall weave a wreath to honour thee—

A sunny wreath—for poets meet,
From Helicon's immortal soil,
Where sacred Time, with pilgrim-feet,
Walks forth to worship, not to spoil :
A wreath which Fame creates, and bears,
And deathless Genius only heirs.

Nought but thy ashes shall expire :
Thy Genius at thy obsequies
Shall kindle up its living fire,
And light the muse's skies ;—
Aye, it shall rise, and shine, and be
A Sun in song's posterity !

THE SKYLARK.

ABOVE the russet clods, the corn is seen
 Sprouting its spiry points of tender green,
 Where squats the hare, to terrors wide awake,
 Like some brown clod the harrows failed to break.
 Opening their golden caskets to the sun,
 The buttercups make schoolboys eager run,
 To see who shall be first to pluck the prize—
 Up from their hurry see the Skylark flies,
 And o'er her half-formed nest, with happy wings
 Winnows the air, till in the cloud she sings,
 Then hangs a dust spot in the sunny skies,
 And drops, and drops, till in her nest she lies,
 Which they unheeded passed—not dreaming then
 That birds, which flew so high, would drop again
 To nests upon the ground, which any thing
 May come at to destroy. Had they the wing
 Like such a bird, themselves would be too proud,
 And build on nothing but a passing cloud!
 As free from danger, as the heavens are free
 From pain and toil, there would they build, and be,
 And sail about the world to scenes unheard
 Of and unseen,—O were they but a bird!
 So think they, while they listen to its song,
 And smile, and fancy, and so pass along;
 While its low nest, moist with the dews of morn,
 Lies safely, with the leveret, in the corn.

THE QUIET MIND.

THOUGH low my lot, my wish is won,
 My hopes are few and staid ;
 All I thought life would do is done,
 The last request is made.
 If I have foes, no foes I fear,
 • To fate I live resigned ;
 I have a friend I value here,
 And that's a quiet mind.

I wish not it was mine to wear
 Flushed Honour's sunny crown ;
 I wish not I were Fortune's heir—
 She frowns, and let her frown :
 I have no taste for pomp and strife,
 Which others love to find :
 I only wish the bliss of life—
 A poor and quiet mind.

The trumpet's taunt in battle-field,
 The great man's pedigree,—
 What peace can all their honours yield ?
 And what are they to me ?
 Though praise and pomp, to eke the strife,
 Rave like a mighty wind,
 What are they to the calm of life—
 A still and quiet mind ?

I mourn not that my lot is low,
I wish no higher state,
I sigh not that Fate made me so,
Nor tease her to be great.
I am content—for well I see
What all at last shall find,
That life's worst lot the best may be,
If that's a quiet mind.

I see the world pass heedless by,
And pride above me tower ;
It costs me not a single sigh
For either wealth or power :
They are but men, and I'm a man
Of quite as great a kind,—
Proud too that life gives all she can,
A calm and quiet mind.

I never mocked at Beauty's shrine,
To stain her lips with lies ;
No knighthood's fame or luck was mine,
To win Love's richest prize ;
And yet I've found in russet weed,
What all will wish to find,
True love—and comfort's prize indeed,
A glad and quiet mind.

And come what will of care or woe,
As some must come to all,
I'll wish not that they were not so,
Nor mourn that they befall :

If tears for sorrows start at will,
They're comforts in their kind ;
And I am blest, if with me still
Remains a quiet mind.

When friends depart, as part they must,
And love's true joys decay,
That leave us like the summer dust,
Which whirlwinds puff away ;
While life's allotted time I brave,
Though left the last behind,
A prop and friend I still shall have,
If I've a quiet mind.

ADVENTURES OF A GRASSHOPPER.

A GRASSHOPPER, idle the whole summer long,
Played about the tall grass with unthinking delight,
And spent the whole day with his hopping and song,
And sipped of the dew for his supper at night.
Thus night brought him food, and the red rising sun
Awoke him, fresh fed, to his singing again ;
And thus he went on, with his frolic and fun,
Till winter winds whistled—and where was he then ?

The plain wore no longer the hue of his wing—
All withered and brown, as a desert could be ;
In vain he looked round for the shelter of spring,
While the longest green sprig scarcely reached to
his knee.

The rime-feathered night fell as white as a sheet,
And dew-drops were frozen before they could fall ;
The shy creeping sun too denied him his heat ;—
Thus the poor silly soul was deserted of all.

The ant had forewarned him of what he would be,
When he laughed at her toil on the parched summer plain ;
He now saw the folly he then could not see,
But advice ta'en too late is but labour in vain.
If he wished to work now, there was nothing to find,
The winter told plain 'twas too late in the day ;
In vain he looked round in the snow and the wind,
Unable to toil, and too saddened for play.

He looked back, and sighed o'er his singing and racket,
And employed the last hope he had left him—to beg ;
So he sought in the woods withered leaves for a jacket,
Of a rush he made crutches, and limped of a leg.
The winds whistled round him while, seeking for pity,
O'er the white crimping snows he went limping along,
Sighing sad at each cottage his sorrowful ditty ;
But a song out of season is poverty's song.

The first hut he came to belonged to a mouse,
Beneath a warm bank at the foot of a tree ;
Dead rushes and grass nodded over her house,
And made it as snug as a dwelling could be.
He told his sad tale, and the mouse, as in fear,
Bade him work for a living, and shrank from his
sight,

For she at that moment was nibbling an ear
Of barley, she'd stol'n from a barn over-night.

He left her, and journeyed, half hopeless and chill,
And met with a beetle, that bustled away
To a crack called his home, in a sun-slanting hill,
And he'd scarce stop to hear what the beggar
would say.

Though he held 'neath his arm a huge crumble of
bread,

Which a shepherd-boy dropped on his cold dinner-
seat,

And well might he haste, when from danger he fled,
For his dog had nigh crushed him to death with
his feet.

At the hut of an earwig he next made a call,

Who crept from the cold in a down-headed thistle,
That nodded, and threatened each minute to fall,

While winnowing by it the tempest did whistle.
The beggar's loud rapping soon scared her from sleep,
And her bosom for safety did terribly quake,
For she thought it the treading-down rustle of sheep,
But slept undisturbed when she'd found the mis-
take.

Hot summer's sweet minstrel, the large humble-bee,
The one that wears clothing of tawny and brown,
Who early in spring's kindled suns we may see
Booming round peeping blossoms, and bowing
them down ;

Our beggar, though hopeless, resolved to try all,
And came to his hut in an old rotten oak ;
The bee thought it spring, and was glad at the call,
But frowned a denial as soon as he spoke.

He then sought a ladycow's cottage of moss—
An old summer friend—with as little success,
And told his misfortunes to live by the loss—
She pitied, but pity's no food for distress.
A chrysalis dwelt on the back of dead leaves
In a palace of silk, and it gladdened his heart ;
But wealth rarely sleeps without dreaming of thieves,
So she kept her door bolted, and bade him depart.

He then shunned the road, and went up by a hedge,
Where some gnats had collected to dance in the
sun,
And the day smiled so warm 'neath the bushes and
sedge,
That hopes had nigh whispered the summer's
begun.

His heart even jump'd at the sight of their play ;
But ere his sad steps to their revels had come,
A cloud hid the sun, which made night at noonday,
And each gnat soon was missing away to his
home.

Over hill-spotted pasture and wild rushy lea,

A poor houseless vagabond, doomed for all weathers,
He wandered where none was left wretched but he,
While the white flaky snow fell about him like
feathers.

In vain he sought shelter, and down in the vale,
By the brook, to an old hollow willow did roam,
For there e'en a foot-foundered, slow-creeping snail,
Had crept in before him, and made it her home.

Her door was glued up from the frost and the snow ;
As a bee in its hive, she was warm in her shell ;
And the storm, it might drift, and the wind, it might
blow,

She was safe, and could dream about spring in her
cell.

He knocked, and begged hard e'en to creep in the
porch,

If she'd no room for two in her parlour to spare ;
But as dead as a dormouse asleep in a church,
All was silent and still as no tenant were there.

Thus pleading and praying, and all to no good,

Telling vainly a story of troubles and wants,
He bethought of an old snubby oak by a wood,
Where flourished in summer a city of ants ;
And though they reproved him for singing and
play,

And told him that winter would bring its reward,
He knew they were rich, and he hoped on his way
That pity's kind ear would his sorrows regard.

From people so rich, trifles could not be missed—

So he thought, ere his hopes to their finish had
come ;

Though as to their giving he could not insist,

Yet he might from such plenty be sure of a crumb.
Thus he dreamed on his journey ; but guess his sur-
prise,

When come to the place where such bustle had been,
A high wooden wall hid it all from his eyes,
And an ant round about it was not to be seen.

Their doors were shut up till the summer returned,

Nor would one have come out had he stood for a
day ;

Again, in despair, with his wants he sojourned,

And sighed lone and sad on his sorrowful way.

He limped on his crutches in sorrow and pain,

With not a hope left to indulge his distress,
While snows spread a carpet all over the plain,
And hiding his path made him travel by guess.

He roamed through the wood, where he'd fain made
a stop,

But hunger so painful still urged him away ;

For the oak, though it rocked like a cradle at top,

Was as still at its root as a midsummer day,
Where the leaves that the wind whirligig'd to the
ground,

And feathers pruned off from the crow's sooty wing,
Lie amid the green moss that is blooming around,

Undisturbed till the bird builds its nest in the
spring.

The night came apace, and the clouds sailing bye
Wore the copper-flushed tints of the cold setting sun,
And crows to their rime-feathered forests did fly,
And owls round about had their whoopings begun.
He hopped through rough hedges and rude creaking
wickets,
Till a shepherd's lodge-house in the fields met his
eye,
Where he heard with surprise the glad chirping of
crickets,
And hoped his companions and summer were nigh.

He paused with delight on the chitter and mirth,
And tried to steal in through a crack in the door,
When a cat, half asleep on the warm cottage hearth,
Dreamed a mouse made the rustle, and bounced
on the floor.

Our beggar, half frightened to death at the sight,
Hopped off, and retreated as fast as he could,
Better pleased to tramp on in the star-studded night,
Than hazard such danger for shelter and food.

In passing a barn he a dwelling espied,
Where silk hangings hung round the room like a
hall,

In a crack of the wall. Once again he applied,
And who but a spider should come at the call ;
The grasshopper said he was weary and lost,
And the spider gave welcome with cunning dis-
guise ;

Although a huge giant in size to his host,
Our beggar's heart trembled in terror's surprise.

For he set down before him dried wings of a fly,
And bade him with shy sort of welcome to eat,
But hunger found nothing its wants to supply,
And fear made him ready to sink through his
seat.

Then to bed he went quaking with dread ; well he
might,

Where murdered things lay round the room in a
heap !

Too true did he dream o'er his dangers that night,
For the spider watched chances, and killed him
asleep.

In the morning a robin hopped down from his perch,
And fluttered about by the side of the wall,
When the murdering spider peeped out on the lurch,
And thought a new beggar was going to call.

The robin soon found what the spider was at,
And killed him, and bore the dead beggar away,
But whether to bury, or eat him, or what,
Is a secret he never would tell to this day.

Thus Idleness ever will sorrows attend,
Who often shakes hands with repentance too late,
And is forced to take up with a foe as a friend ;

Then death and destruction are certain as fate.
Had the grasshopper ta'en the advice of the ant,
He had shunned the sad snares of bad company
then,

And free, with his brothers and sisters, from want,
Had lived to see summer and singing again.

Now, Anna, my child, to this story of truth
Pay attention, and learn, as thy reason comes on,
To value that sweetest of seasons, thy youth,
Nor live to repent of its loss when 'tis gone.
Shun the idle, that spend all their childhood in play,
And pass them to school without tear or regret,
Where thy books, they will show thee that this is
the way
To shun the sad fate which the grasshopper met.

GENIUS.

A CHARM appears in every land,
A voice in every clime,
That beautifies the desert sand,
And renders earth sublime.

Some meet it in the poet's song,
Some in the sage's fame ;
Wherever seen, it pleases long,
And Genius is its name.

Scott found it with the Muse at first,
A stranger to her song ;
He started as the music burst
In tremors from his tongue.

He wondered at the sounds he made,
And thought himself alone ;
But by him stood that Spirit-shade
That marked him for her own ;

Who smiled to see his timid hand
Pause on the sounding strings,
That echoed charms o'er sea and land
For peasants and for kings.

But Byron, like an eagle, flew
His daring flight, and won ;
And looked, and felt, as though he knew
Eternity begun.

As thunder in its startled call—
As lightning from the cloud—
Seen, heard, and known above them all—
The proudest of the proud !

He dared the world a war to wage,
He scorned the critics' mock,
And soared the mightiest of the age.—
The condor of the rock

Screamed from the dizzy Apennines,
As startled by his flight,
When Manfred sought the searing shrines
Of demons in his might.

Fear left him to the thunder-shock,
His eyrie none could own ;
The smaller birds in coveys flock—
The eagle soars alone.

He died, as Glory wills to die—
A martyr to its name ;
A youth, in manhood's majesty,
A patriarch in fame.

From history's visions Scott has won
A heritage sublime ;
Rising a giant in the sun,
Too overgrown for Time,

Who fled to see a mortal soar,
And leave him underneath,
As one of old, his conqueror—
So sought the aid of Death,

Who lays the mighty with the low,
The humble with the brave ;—
Behind his cloud the sun must go,
And Scott is in his grave.

But Genius soars above the dead,
Too mighty for his power ;
And deserts where his journey led,
Spell-bound, are still in flower !

By poesy kept for times unborn ;
And when those times are gone,
The worth of a remoter morn
Shall find them shining on.

For poesy is verse or prose,
Not bound to Fashion's thrall ;
No matter where true Genius grows,
'Tis beautiful in all.

Or high or low, its beacon-fires
Shall rise in every way,
Till drowsy Night the blaze admires,
And startles into day—

A day that rises like the sun
From clouds of spite and thrall,
Which gains, before its course be run,
A station seen by all.

Its voice grows thunder's voice with age,
Till Time turns back, and looks ;
Its breath embalms the flimsy page,
And gives a soul to books.

Through night at first it will rejoice,
And travel into day,
Pursuing, with a still small voice,
That light that leads the way.

The grave its mortal dust may keep,
Where tombs and ashes lie ;
Death only shall Time's harvest reap,
For Genius cannot die.

FIRST LOVE'S RECOLLECTIONS.

FIRST love will with the heart remain
When all its hopes are bye ;
As frail rose-blossoms still retain
Their fragrance when they die.
And Joy's first dreams will haunt the mind
With shades from whence they sprung,
As Summer leaves the stems behind
On which Spring's blossoms hung.

Mary ! I dare not call thee dear,
I've lost that right so long ;
Yet once again I vex thine ear
With memory's idle song.
Had time and change not blotted out
The love of former days,
Thou wert the first that I should doubt
Of pleasing with my praise.

When honey'd tokens from each tongue
Told with what truth we loved,
How rapturous to thy lips I clung,
Whilst nought but smiles reproved.
But now, methinks, if one kind word
Was whispered in thine ear,
Thou'dst startle like an untamed bird,
And blush with wilder fear.

How loth to part, how fond to meet,
Had we two used to be !
At sunset, with what eager feet
I hastened unto thee !
Scarce nine days passed us, ere we met
In spring—nay, wintry weather ;
Now, nine years' suns have risen and set,
Nor found us once together.

Thy face was so familiar grown,
Thyself so often by,
A moment's memory, when alone,
Would bring thee to mine eye ;
But now my very dreams forget
That witching look to trace ;
And though thy beauty lingers yet,
It wears a stranger's face.

I felt a pride to name thy name,
But now that pride hath flown ;
My words e'en seem to blush for shame,
That own I love thee on.

I felt I then thy heart did share,
Nor urged a binding vow ;
But much I doubt if thou couldst spare
One word of kindness now.

And what is now my name to thee,
Though once nought seemed so dear ?
Perhaps a jest, in hours of glee,
To please some idle ear.
And yet, like counterfeits, with me
Impressions linger on,
Though all the gilded finery
That passed for truth is gone.

Ere the world smiled upon my lays,
A sweeter meed was mine ;
Thy blushing look of ready praise
Was raised at every line.
But now, methinks, thy fervent love
Is changed to scorn severe ;
And songs, that other hearts approve,
Seem discord to thine ear.

When last thy gentle cheek I pressed,
And heard thee feign adieu,
I little thought that seeming jest
Would prove a word so true.
A fate like this hath oft befell
E'en loftier hopes than ours ;
Spring bids full many buds to swell
That ne'er can grow to flowers.

A TENDER FLOWER.

THERE is a tender flower,
 Yet found in every clime,
 That decks the rudest bower,
 Nor stays for place or time :
 In caves or desert sands,
 Unblest with sun or shower,
 Wherever life expands,
 Is found this tender flower.

Where storms with keenest breath
 Bids stranger-flowers decay—
 Where suns e'en shun its birth,
 It is content to stay :
 In sunshine and in gloom,
 As if 'twere Sorrow's dower,
 In Grief's lap it will bloom,
 Or die, a lovely flower.

Within life's wilderness,
 This fond and tender flower
 Doth every bosom bless,
 And garlands Sorrow's bower.
 Rude Falsehood may despise
 Its bloom, when in its power,
 And idle themes devise,
 To mock this injured flower.

Yet Truth hath long agreed
To call it first of flowers,
Though treated like a weed
Too oft in Folly's bowers.
On earth it loves to dwell,
Though blest with heavenly power,
And sure I need not tell
That LOVE's the lauded flower.

BALLAD.

I DREAMED not what it was to woo,
And felt my heart secure,
Till Robin dropt a word or two
Last evening on the moor.
Though with no flattering words, the while
His suit he urged to move,
Fond ways informed me with a smile
How sweet it was to love.

He left the path to let me pass,
The dropping dews to shun,
And walked himself among the grass—
I deemed it kindly done.
And when his hand was held to me,
As o'er each stile we went,
I deemed it rude to say him nay,
Good manners to consent.

He saw me to the town, and then
He sighed, but kissed me not,
And whispered "we shall meet again,"
But didn't say for what.
Yet on my breast his cheek had lain,
And though it gently prest,
It bruised my heart, and left a pain
That robs it of its rest.

THE MILKING HOUR.

THE sun had grown on lessening day
A table, large and round,
And in the distant vapours grey
Seemed leaning on the ground;
When Mary, like a lingering flower,
Did tenderly agree
To stay beyond her milking hour,
And talk awhile with me.

We wandered, till the distant town
Was silenced nearly dumb,
And lessened on the quiet ear,
Small as a beetle's hum.
She turned her milkpails upside down,
And made us each a seat,
And there we talked the evening brown,
Beneath the rustling wheat.

And while she milked her breathing cows
I sat beside the streams,
In musing o'er our evening joys,
Like one in pleasant dreams :
The bats and owls, to meet the night,
From hollow trees had gone,
And e'en the flowers had shut for sleep,
Yet still she lingered on.

We mused in raptures side by side,
Our wishing seemed as one ;
We talked of Time's retreating tide,
And sighed to find it gone.
And we had sighed more deeply still
O'er all our pleasures past,
If we had known what now we know,
That we had met the last.

THE BACKWARD SPRING.

THE day waxes warmer,
The winter's far gone,
Then come out, my charmer,
And bring summer on.
Thy beauty is gleaming
So sweetly to see ;
'Tis summer and sunshine
To be only with thee.

I thought in some quarrel
The too tardy Spring
Had ta'en Winter's apparel—
But no such a thing ;
For the snow 'neath the hedges
Hath packed up and gone,
And May's little pledges
For Summer come on.

The flower's on the hawthorn,
Oak-balls on the tree,
And the blackbird is building
Love's palace in glee ;
Then come out, my charmer,
And lead Summer on,
Where'er thou art smiling,
Care and Winter are gone.

Even snows, 'neath thy feet,
I could fancy to be
A carpet of daisies.
The rime on the tree
Would bloom in thy smiling,
And quickly appear
Like blossoms, beguiling
The prime of the year.

The ice on the waters,
Oh ! I could agree
That Winter had changed
To a palace for thee—

Turning pools into mirrors,
And silence to glee,
Reflecting the image
Of rapture in thee.

Then come forth, my charmer !
Thy presence can charm
Into summer the winter,
To sunshine the storm.
Though without thee I feel
What a desert would be,
I should think, in thy presence,
'Twas Eden with me.

NUTTING.

RIGHT rosy gleamed the autumn morn,
Right golden shone the autumn sun,
The mowers swept the bleachy corn,
While long their early shades did run ;
The leaves were burnt to many hues,
The hazel nuts were ripe and brown ;
My Mary's kindness could but choose
To pluck them, when I bore them down.

The shells, her auburn hair did show
Faint semblance to, yet beautiful ;
She smiled to hear me tell her so,
Till I forgot the nuts to pull.
I looked up to an ash and thorn
For nuts—my wits were all away ;
She laughed so rich that autumn morn,
All, all but Love was wide away.

And soon the day was on its wane,
Ere Joy had thought one hour away ;
Who could but wish Time back again,
When Love was so inclined to stay !
She started at each little sound
The branches made ; yet would her eye
Regret the gloom encroaching round,
That told her night was in the sky.

I helped her through the hedge-row gap,
And thought the very thorns unkind,
As not to part ;—while in her lap
She sought the ripest bunch to find.
Then on a hill, beneath a tree,
We shelled the nuts ;—as lovers' spells,
She often threw the nuts at me,
And blushed to see me hoard the shells—

Love-tokens for an after day,
Passports, a blushing kiss to claim.
Soon went that Autumn-eve away,
And never more its fellow came.

The west was in a glorious trim
Of colours, mixed in endless thrall,
And on the dark wood's distant rim
The sun hung like a golden ball.

Right luscious were those nutting bowers,
Impulses sweet for many a day !
Joy never smiled on sweeter hours,
Or sighed o'er sweeter passed away.
'Twas Mary's smiles and sweet replies
That gave the sky so sweet a stain—
So bright, I never saw him rise,
Nor ever set so sweet again.

HOME HAPPINESS.

LIKE a thing of the desert, alone in its glee,
I make a small home seem an empire to me ;
Like a bird in the forest, whose world is its nest,
My home is my all, and the centre of rest.
Let Ambition stretch over the world at a stride,
Let the restless go rolling away with the tide,
I look on life's pleasures as follies at best,
And, like sunset, feel calm when I'm going to rest.

I sit by the fire, in the dark winter's night,
While the cat cleans her face with her foot in delight,
And the winds all a-cold, with rude clatter and din
Shake the windows, like robbers who want to come
in ;

Or else, from the cold to be hid and away,
By the bright burning fire see my children at play,
Making houses of cards, or a coach of a chair,
While I sit enjoying their happiness there.

I walk round the orchard on sweet summer eves,
And rub the perfume from the black-currant leaves,
Which, like the geranium, when touched, leave a
smell

That lad's-love and sweet-briar can hardly excel.
I watch the plants grow, all begemmed with the
shower,

That glitters like pearls in a sun-shiny hour ;
And hear the pert robin just whistle a tune,
To cheer the lone hedger when labour is done.

Joys come like the grass in the fields springing there,
Without the mere toil of attention or care ;
They come of themselves, like a star in the sky,
And the brighter they shine when the cloud passes
by.

I wish but for little, and find it all there,
Where peace gives its faith to the home of the hare,
Who would else, overcome by her fears, run away
From the shade of the flower and the breeze of the
day.

O the out-of-door blessings of leisure for me !
Health, riches, and joy !—it includes them all three.
There Peace comes to me—I have faith in her smile—
She's my playmate in leisure, my comfort in toil ;
There the short pasture-grass hides the lark on its
nest,
Though scarcely so high as the grasshopper's breast ;
And there its moss-ball hides the wild honey-bee,
And there joy in plenty grows riches for me.

Far away from the world, its delusions and snares—
Whose words are but breath, and its breathing but
cares,—

Where trouble's sown thick as the dews of the morn,
One can scarce set a foot without meeting a thorn—
There are some view the world as a lightly thrown
ball,

There are some look on cities like stones in a wall—
Nothing more. There are others, Ambition's proud
heirs,

Of whom I have neither the courage nor cares.

So I sit on my bench, or enjoy in the shade
My toil as a pasture, while using the spade ;
My fancy is free in her pleasure to stray,
Making voyages round the whole world in a day.
I gather home-comforts where cares never grew,
Like manna, the heavens rain down with the dew,
Till I see the tired hedger bend wearily by,
Then like a tired bird to my corner I fly.

THE PASTURE.

THE pewit is come to the green,
 And swoops o'er the swain at his plough.
 Where the greensward in places is seen,
 Pressed down by the lairs of the cow,
 The mole roots her hillocks anew,
 For seasons to dress at their wills
 In their thyme, and their beautiful dew ;
 For the pasture's delight is its hills.

They invite us, when weary, to drop
 On their cushions awhile ; and again
 They invite us, when musing, to stop,
 And see how they checker the plain :
 And the old hills swell out in the sun,
 So inviting e'en now, that the boy
 Has his game of peg-morris begun,
 And cuts his rude figures in joy.

When I stroll o'er the mole-hilly green,
 Stepping onward from hillock to hill,
 I think over pictures I've seen,
 And feel them deliciously still.

I think when the glad shepherd lay
On the velvet sward stretched, for a bed,
On the bosom of sunshiny May,
While a hillock supported his head.

I think when, in weeding, the maid
Made choice of a hill for her seat ;
When the winds so deliciously played
In her curls, 'mid her blushes so sweet.
I think of gay groups in the shade,
In hay-time, with noise never still,
When the short sward their gay cushions made.
And their dinner was spread on a hill.

I think when, in harvest, folks lay
Underneath the green shade of a tree,
While the children were busy at play,
Running round the huge trunk in their glee.
Joy shouted wherever I went ;
And e'en now such a freshness it yields,
I could fancy, with books and a tent,
What delight we could find in the fields.

SONNETS.

I.

RURAL SCENES.

I NEVER saw a man in all my days—

One whom the calm of quietness pervades—

Who gave not woods and fields his hearty praise,

And felt a happiness in summer shades.

There I meet common thoughts, that all may read

Who love the quiet fields :—I note them well,

Because they give me joy as I proceed,

And joy renewed, when I their beauties tell

In simple verse, and unambitious songs,

That in some mossy cottage haply may

Be read, and win the praise of humble tongues

In the green shadows of some after-day.

For rural fame may likeliest rapture yield

To hearts, whose songs are gathered from the field.

II.

WATER-LILIES.

THE water-lilies on the meadow stream
 Again spread out their leaves of glossy green ;
 And some, yet young, of a rich copper gleam,
 Scarce open, in the sunny stream are seen,
 Throwing a richness upon Leisure's eye,
 That thither wanders in a vacant joy ;
 While on the sloping banks, luxuriantly,
 Tending of horse and cow, the chubby boy,
 In self-delighted whims, will often throw
 Pebbles, to hit and splash their sunny leaves :
 Yet quickly dry again, they shine and glow
 Like some rich vision that his eye deceives ;
 Spreading above the water, day by day,
 In dangerous deeps, yet out of danger's way.

III.

SUMMER MOODS.

I LOVE at even-tide to walk alone,
 Down narrow lanes o'erhung with dewy thorn,
 Where from the long grass underneath, the snail
 Jet black creeps out and sprouts his timid horn.

I love to muse o'er meadows newly mown,
Where withering grass perfumes the sultry air ;
Where bees search round with sad and weary drone,
In vain for flowers that bloomed but newly there ;
While in the juicy corn, the hidden quail
Cries " wet my foot !" and hid as thoughts unborn,
The fairy-like and seldom seen land-rail
Utters " craik, craik," like voices underground :
Right glad to meet the evening's dewy veil,
And see the light fade into glooms around.

IV.

THE VILLAGE BOY.

FREE from the cottage corner, see how wild
The village boy along the pasture hies,
With every smell, and sound, and sight beguiled,
That round the prospect meets his wondering eyes ;
Now stooping eager for the cowslip-pips,
As though he'd get them all ; now tired of these,
Across the flaggy brook he eager leaps
For some new flower his happy rapture sees ;
Now tearing 'mid the bushes on his knees,
On woodland banks, for blue bell-flowers he creeps ;
And now, while looking up among the trees,
He spies a nest, and down he throws his flowers,
And up he climbs with new-fed extacies—
The happiest object in the summer hours.

V.

EVENING SCHOOLBOYS.

HARK to that happy shout!—the school-house door
 Is open thrown, and out the youngers teem;
 Some run to leap-frog on the rushy moor,
 And others dabble in the shallow stream,
 Catching young fish, and turning pebbles o'er
 For muscle shells. Look in that sunny gleam,
 Where the retiring sun, that rests the while,
 Streams through the broken hedge! How happy
 seem
 Those friendly schoolboys leaning o'er the stile,
 Both reading in one book!—Anon a dream,
 Rich with new joys, doth their young hearts beguile,
 And the book's pocketed right hastily.
 Ah, happy boys! well may ye turn, and smile,
 When joys are your's that never cost a sigh.

VI.

THE DEITY.

OMNIPOTENT Eternal!—known Unknown!
 The world whose footstool is, the heaven whose throne!
 Who is it spreads this glory all around
 Star-studded skies, and flower-bewildered ground?

Who is it speaks those wonders, and they be ?
 Who is it, dread Omnipotent, but thee !
 Thou on the sun didst breathe thy power's desire,
 And instant kindled his eternal fire ;
 Thou badest the unpillared skies their arch expand—
 Thy breath is underneath them, and they stand ;
 Thou badest the seas in tides to rise and fall,
 And earth to swell triumphant over all.
 Thy mercy, co-eternal with thy skill,
 Saw all was good, and bids it flourish still !

VII.

SEDGE-BIRD'S NEST.

FIXED in a white-thorn bush, its summer guest,
 So low, e'en grass o'er-topped its tallest twig,
 A sedge-bird built its little benty nest,
 Close by the meadow pool and wooden brig,
 Where schoolboys every morn and eve did pass,
 In seeking nests, and finding, deeply skilled,
 Searching each bush and taller clump of grass,
 Where'er was likelihood of bird to build :
 Yet did she hide her habitation long,
 And keep her little brood from danger's eye,
 Hidden as secret as a cricket's song,
 Till they, well-fledged, o'er widest pools could fly ;
 Proving that Providence is ever nigh,
 To guard the simplest of her charge from wrong.

VIII.

THE SHEPHERD'S TREE.

HUGE elm, with rifted trunk all notched and scarred,
 Like to a warrior's destiny ! I love
 To stretch me often on thy shadowed sward,
 And hear the laugh of summer leaves above ;
 Or on thy buttressed roots to sit, and lean
 In careless attitude, and there reflect
 On times, and deeds, and darings that have been—
 Old castaways, now swallowed in neglect ;
 While thou art towering in thy strength of heart,
 Stirring the soul to vain imaginings,
 In which life's sordid being hath no part.
 The wind of that eternal ditty sings
 Humming of future things, that burn the mind
 To leave some fragment of itself behind.

IX.

AN IDLE HOUR.

SAUNTERING at ease, I often love to lean
 O'er old bridge walls, and mark the flood below,
 Whose ripples, through the weeds of oily green,
 Like happy travellers chatter as they go ;

And view the sunshine dancing on the arch,
Time keeping to the merry waves beneath.
While on the banks some drooping blossoms parch,
Thirsting for water in the day's hot breath,
Right glad of mud-drops splashed upon their leaves,
By cattle plunging from the steepy brink ;
Each water-flower more than its share receives,
And revels to its very cups in drink :—
So in the world, some strive, and fare but ill,
While others riot, and have plenty still.

X.

THE SHEPHERD BOY.

PLEASED in his loneliness, he often lies,
Telling glad stories to his dog, or e'en
His very shadow, that the loss supplies
Of living company. Full oft he'll lean
By pebbled brooks, and dream with happy eyes
Upon the fairy pictures spread below,
Thinking the shadowed prospects real skies,
And happy heavens, where his kindred go.
Oft we may track his haunts, where he hath been
To spend the leisure which his toils bestow,
By nine-peg-morris nicked upon the green,
Or flower-stuck gardens, never meant to grow,
Or figures cut on trees, his skill to show,
Where he a prisoner from a shower hath been.

XI.

LORD BYRON.

A SPLENDID SSUN hath set!—when shall our eyes
 Behold a morn so beautiful arise
 As that which gave his mighty genius birth,
 And all eclipsed the lesser lights on earth!
 His first young burst of twilight did declare
 Beyond that haze a Sun was rising there;
 As when the morn, to usher in the day,
 Speeds from the east in sober garb of grey
 At first, till warming into wild delight,
 She casts her mantle off, and shines in light.
 The labour of small minds an age may dream,
 And be but shadows on Time's running stream;
 While Genius, in an hour, makes what shall be,
 The next, a portion of eternity.

XII.

EVENING PASTIME.

MUSING beside the crackling fire at night,
 While singing kettle merrily prepares
 Woman's solacing beverage, I delight
 To read a pleasant volume, where the cares

Of life are sweetened by the muse's voice—

Thomson, or Cowper, or the bard that bears
Life's humblest name, though Nature's favoured choice,

Her pastoral Bloomfield ;—and as evening wears,
Heavy with reading, list the little tales

Of laughing children, who edge up their chairs
To tell the past day's sport, which never fails

To cheer the spirits. While my fancy shares
Their artless talk, man's sturdy reason quails,
And memory's joy grows young again with their's.

XIII.

THE WREN.

WHY is the cuckoo's melody preferred,

And nightingale's rich songs so madly praised
In poets' rhymes ! Is there no other bird

Of Nature's minstrelsy, that oft hath raised
One's heart to extacy and mirth as well ?

I judge not how another's taste is caught,
With mine are other birds that bear the bell,

Whose song hath crowds of happy memories
brought :—

Such the wood robin, singing in the dell ;

And little wren, that many a time hath sought
Shelter from showers, in huts, where I did dwell

In early spring, the tenant of the plain,
Tending my sheep ; and still they come to tell
The happy stories of the past again.

XIV.

A SPRING MORNING.

THE Spring comes in with all her hues and smells,
 In freshness breathing over hills and dells ;
 O'er woods where May her gorgeous drapery flings,
 And meads washed fragrant by their laughing
 springs.

Fresh are new opened flowers, untouched and free
 From the bold rifling of the amorous bee.
 The happy time of singing birds is come,
 And Love's lone pilgrimage now finds a home ;
 Among the mossy oaks now coos the dove,
 And the hoarse crow finds softer notes for love.
 The foxes play around their dens, and bark
 In joy's excess, 'mid woodland shadows dark.
 The flowers join lips below ; the leaves above ;
 And every sound that meets the ear is Love.

XV.

SPRING.

| Now that the Spring the quickening Earth espouses,
 And Nature's feathered folk keep holiday,
 And each with song in bush and tree carouses,
 Who would not from dull cities flee away,

From smoke-enveloped streets and gloomy houses,
To fields where forth Health's merry maidens fare,
To milk their red cows ; and when that is done,
To spend in sport the time they have to spare,
Pressing the gold locks of the enamoured Sun
On pleasant banks, with young Love toying there !
Oh whoso wishes for a blest estate,
That in the golden mean would fear no fall,
Needs neither seek to be or rich or great,
While a poor milkmaid lives enjoying all.

XVI.

CROWLAND ABBEY.

IN sooth, it seems right awful and sublime
To gaze by moonlight on the shattered pile
Of this old Abbey, struggling still with Time,—
The grey owl hooting from its rents the while ;
And tottering stones, as wakened by the sound,
Crumbling from arch and battlement around,
Urging dread echoes from the gloomy aisle,
To sink more silent still.—The very ground
In Desolation's garment doth appear,
The lapse of age and mystery profound.
We gaze on wrecks of ornamented stones,
On tombs whose sculptures half erased appear,
On rank weeds, battening over human bones,
Till even one's very shadow seems to fear.

XVII.

A PLEASANT PLACE.

Now Summer comes, and I with staff in hand
 Will hie me to the sabbath of her joys,—
 To heathy spots, and the unbroken land
 Of woodland heritage, unknown to noise
 And toil;—save many a playful band
 Of dancing insects, that well understand
 The sweets of life, and with attuned voice
 Sing in sweet concert to the pleasant May.
 There by a little bush I'll listening rest,
 To hear the nightingale, a lover's lay
 Chaunt to his mate, who builds her careless nest
 Of oaken leaves, on thorn-stumps, mossed and grey;
 Feeling, with them, I too am truly blest
 By making sabbaths of each common day.

XVIII.

VANITY OF FAME.

WHAT boots the toil to follow common fame,
 With youth's wild visions of anxiety,
 And waste a life to win a feeble claim
 Upon her page, which she so soon turns by

To make new votaries room, who share the same
Rewards,—and with her faded memories lie
Neighbours to shadows !—'Tis a sorry game
To play in earnest with ;—to think one's name,
Buoyant with visions of eternity,
And as familiar now in the world's ear
As flowers and sunshine to the summer's eye,
Shall be forgot, with other things that were ;
And like old words grown out of use, thrown by,
In the confused lap of still Obscurity.

XIX.

MEMORY.

I would not that my being all should die,
And pass away with every common lot ;
I would not that my humble dust should lie
In quite a strange and unfrequented spot,
By all unheeded and by all forgot ;
With nothing save the heedless winds to sigh,
And nothing but the dewy morn to weep
About my grave, far hid from the world's eye :
I fain would have some friend to wander nigh,
And find a path to where my ashes sleep—
Not the cold heart that merely passes by,
To read who lies beneath ; but such as keep
Past memories warm with deeds of other years,
And pay to Friendship some few friendly tears.

XX.

DEATH OF BEAUTY.

Now thou art gone, the fairy rose is fled,
 That erst gay Fancy's garden did adorn.
 Thine was the dew on which her folly fed,
 The sun by which she glittered in the morn.
 Now thou art gone, her pride is withered;
 In dress of common weeds she doth array,
 And vanity neglects her in its play.
 Thou wert the very index of her praise,
 Her borrowed bloom was kindled from thy rays :
 Like dancing insects that the sun allures,
 She little heeded it was gained from thee.
 Vain joys ! what are they now their sun's away ?
 What ! but poor shadows, that blank night obscures,
 As the grave hides what would dishonoured be.

XXI.

F A M E.

WHAT'S future fame ?—a melody loud playing
 In crowds where one is wanting, whose esteeming
 Would love to hear it best :—a sun displaying
 A solitary glory, whose bright beaming,

Smiling on withered flowers and leaves decaying,
Lingers behind its world :—a crown vain gleaming
Around a shade, whose substance Death hath banished :
A living dream, o'er which Hope once was dreaming:
A busy echo, on each lip delaying,
When he that woke it into life is vanished :
A picture, that from all hearts praise is stealing—
A statue, towering over Glory's game—
That cannot feel ; while he that was all feeling
Is past, and gone, and nothing but a name.

XXII.

TO THE MEMORY OF BLOOMFIELD.

SWEET unassuming Minstrel ! not to thee
The dazzling fashions of the day belong ;
Nature's wild pictures, field, and cloud, and tree,
And quiet brooks, far distant from the throng,
In murmurs tender as the toiling bee,
Make the sweet music of thy gentle song.
Well ! Nature owns thee : let the crowd pass by ;
The tide of fashion is a stream too strong
For pastoral brooks, that gently flow and sing :
But Nature is their source, and earth and sky
Their annual offering to her current bring.
Thy gentle muse and memory need no sigh ;
For thine shall murmur on to many a spring,
When prouder streams are summer-burnt and dry.

XXIII.

THE THRUSH'S NEST.

WITHIN a thick and spreading hawthorn bush,
 That overhung a molehill large and round,
 I heard from morn to morn a merry thrush
 Sing hymns to sunrise, and I drank the sound
 With joy; and, often an intruding guest,
 I watched her secret toils from day to day—
 How true she warped the moss, to form a nest,
 And modelled it within with wood and clay;
 And by and by, like heath-bells gilt with dew,
 There lay her shining eggs, as bright as flowers,
 Ink-spotted over shells of greeny blue;
 And there I witnessed, in the sunny hours,
 A brood of Nature's minstrels chirp and fly,
 Glad as that sunshine and the laughing sky.

XXIV.

THE SYCAMORE.

IN massy foliage of a sunny green
 | The splendid sycamore adorns the spring,
 Adding rich beauties to the varied scene,
 That Nature's breathing arts alone can bring.

Hark ! how the insects hum around, and sing,
| Like happy Ariels, hid from heedless view—
And merry bees, that feed, with eager wing,
On the broad leaves, glazed o'er with honey dew.
(The fairy Sunshine gently flickers through
Upon the grass, and buttercups below ;
And in the foliage Winds their sports renew,
| Waving a shade romantic to and fro,
That o'er the mind in sweet disorder flings
A fitting dream of Beauty's fading things.

XXV.

THE CRAB-TREE.

SPRING comes anew, and brings each little pledge
That still, as wont, my childish heart deceives ;
I stoop again for violets in the hedge,
Among the ivy and old withered leaves ;
And often mark, amid the clumps of sedge,
The pooty-shells I gathered when a boy :
But cares have claimed me many an evil day,
And chilled the relish which I had for joy.
Yet when Crab-blossoms blush among the May,
As erst in years gone by, I scramble now
Up 'mid the bramble for my old esteems,
Filling my hands with many a blooming bough ;
Till the heart-stirring past as present seems,
Save the bright sunshine of those fairy dreams.

XXVI.

WINTER.

OLD January, clad in crispy rime,
 Comes limping on, and often makes a stand;
 The hasty snow-storm ne'er disturbs his time,
 He mends no pace, but beats his dithering hand.
 And February, like a timid maid,
 Smiling and sorrowing follows in his train;
 Huddled in cloak, of miry roads afraid,
 She hastens on to meet her home again.
 Then March, the prophetess, by storms inspired,
 Gazes in rapture on the troubled sky,
 And now in headlong fury madly fired,
 She bids the hail-storm boil and hurry by.
 Yet 'neath the blackest cloud, a Sunbeam flings
 Its cheering promise of returning Springs.

XXVII.

BEANS IN BLOSSOM.

THE south-west wind ! how pleasant in the face
 It breathes ! while, sauntering in a musing pace,
 I roam these new ploughed fields ; or by the side
 Of this old wood, where happy birds abide,

And the rich blackbird, through his golden bill,
Utters wild music when the rest are still.
Luscious the scent comes of the blossomed bean,
As o'er the path in rich disorder lean
Its stalks ; whence bees, in busy rows and toils,
Load home luxuriantly their yellow spoils.
The herd-cows toss the molehills in their play ;
And often stand the stranger's steps at bay,
Mid clover blossoms red and tawny white,
Strong scented with the summer's warm delight.

XXVIII.

BOYS AT PLAY.

THE shepherd boys play by the shaded stile,
While sunshine gleams with warm and idle smile ;
Or hide 'neath hedges, where the linnets sing,
And leaves spread curtains round the bubbling spring.
The winds with idle dalliance wave the woods,
And toy with Nature in her youthful moods,
Fanning the feathers on the linnet's breast,
And happy maid in lightsome garments drest,
Sweeping her gown in many a graceful shade,
As if enamoured of the form displayed.
Upon the south-west wind the boiling showers
Bring sweet arrivals of all sorts of flowers,
Enjoying, like the laughing boys at play,
Sabbaths of Sunshine's out-door holiday.

XXIX.

NOVEMBER.

SYBIL of Months, and worshipper of winds !

I love thee, rude and boisterous as thou art ;
And scraps of joy my wandering ever finds

'Mid thy uproarious madness ;—when the start
Of sudden tempests stirs the forest leaves

Into hoarse fury, till the shower set free,
Stills the huge swells. Then ebb the mighty heaves,
That sway the forest like a troubled sea.

I love thy wizard noise, and rave in turn

Half-vacant thoughts, and rhymes of careless form ;
Then hide me from the shower, a short sojourn,

'Neath ivied oak ; and mutter to the storm,
Wishing its melody belonged to me,
That I might breathe a living song to thee.

XXX.

OLD POESY.

SWEET is the poesy of the olden time,

In the unsullied infancy of rhyme,

When Nature reigned omnipotent to teach,

And Truth and Feeling owned the powers of speech.

Rich is the music of each early theme,
And sweet as sunshine in a summer dream,
Giving to stocks and stones, in rapture's strife,
A soul of utterance and a tongue of life.
Sweet are these wild flowers in their disarray,
Which Art and Fashion fling as weeds away,
To sport with shadows of inferior kind,
Mere magic-lanterns of the shifting mind,
Automatons of wonder-working powers,
Shadows of life, and artificial flowers.

XXXI.

TO DEWINT.

DEWINT! I would not flatter; nor would I
Pretend to critic-skill in this thy art;
Yet in thy landscapes I can well descry
The breathing hues as Nature's counterpart.
No painted peaks, no wild romantic sky,
No rocks, nor mountains, as the rich sublime,
Hath made thee famous; but the sunny truth
Of Nature, that doth mark thee for all time,
Found on our level pastures:—spots, forsooth,
Where common skill sees nothing deemed divine.
Yet here a worshipper was found in thee;
And thy young pencil worked such rich surprise,
That rushy flats, befringed with willow tree,
Rivalled the beauties of Italian skies.

XXXII.

THE MILKING SHED.

Good Heaven ! and can it be, that such a nook

As this can raise such sudden rapture up ?

Two dottrel trees, an oak and ash, that stoop
Their aged bodies o'er a little brook,

And raise their sheltering heads above and o'er
A little hovel, raised on four old props

Old as themselves to look on—and what more ?
Nought but a hawthorn hedge !—and yet one stops

In admiration and in joy, to gaze
Upon these objects, feeling, as I stand,

That nought in all this wide world's thorny ways
Can match this bit of feeling's fairy land.

How can it be ? Time owns the potent spell—

I've known it from a boy, and love it well.

XXXIII.

THE HAPPY BIRD.

THE happy White-throat on the swaying bough,

Rocked by the impulse of the gadding wind
That ushers in the showers of April,—now

Carols right joyously; and now reclined,

Crouching, she clings close to her moving seat,
To keep her hold ;—and till the wind for rest
Pauses, she mutters inward melodies,
That seem her heart's rich thinkings to repeat.
But when the branch is still, her little breast
Swells out in rapture's gushing symphonies ;
And then, against her brown wing softly prest,
The wind comes playing, an enraptured guest,
This way and that she swings—till gusts arise
More boisterous in their play, then off she flies.

XXXIV.

THE BREATH OF MORNING.

How beautiful and fresh the pastoral smell
Of tedded hay breathes in this early morn !
Health in these meadows must in summer dwell,
And take her walks among these fields of corn.
I cannot see her, yet her voice is out
On every breeze that fans my hair about.
Although the Sun is scarcely out of bed,
And leans on ground as half awake from sleep,
The boy hath left his mossy-thatched shed,
And bawls right lustily to cows and sheep ;
Or taken with the woodbines overspread,
Climbs up to pluck them from their thorny bowers,
Half drowned by drops which patter on his head
From leaves bemoistened by night's secret showers.

XXXV.

GLINTON SPIRE.

GLINTON ! thy taper spire predominates
 Over the level landscape ; and the mind,
 Musing the pleasing picture, contemplates
 What elegance of beauty, much refined
 By taste, effects. It almost elevates
 One's admiration ; making common things
 Around it glow with beauties not their own.
 Thus in this landscape, earth superior springs ;
 Those straggling trees, though lonely, seem not lone,
 But in thy presence wear a conscious power ;
 Even these tombs of melancholy stone,
 Gleaning cold memories round Oblivion's bower,
 Types of eternity appear, and hire
 A lease from Fame by thy enchanting spire.

XXXVI

BURTHORP OAK.

OLD noted oak ! I saw thee in a mood
 Of vague indifference ; and yet with me
 Thy memory, like thy fate, hath lingering stood
 For years, thou hermit, in the lonely sea

Of grass that waves around thee!—Solitude
Paints not a lonelier picture to the view,
Burthorp ! than thy one melancholy tree,
Age-rent, and shattered to a stump. Yet new
Leaves come upon each rift and broken limb
With every spring ; and Poesy's visions swim
Around it, of old days, and chivalry ;
And desolate fancies bid the eyes grow dim
With feelings, that Earth's grandeur should decay,
And all its olden memories pass away.

XXXVII.

EVENING PRIMROSE.

WHEN once the sun sinks in the west,
And dew-drops pearl the Evening's breast ;
Almost as pale as moonbeams are,
Or its companionable star,
The Evening Primrose opes anew
Its delicate blossoms to the dew ;
And hermit-like, shunning the light,
Wastes its fair bloom upon the Night ;
Who, blindfold to its fond caresses,
Knows not the beauty he possesses.
Thus it blooms on while Night is by ;
When Day looks out with open eye,
'Bashed at the gaze it cannot shun,
It faints, and withers, and is gone.

XXXVIII.

SUDDEN SHOWER.

BLACK grows the southern sky, betokening rain,
 And humming hive-bees homeward hurry by :
 They feel the change ; so let us shun the grain,
 And take the broad road while our feet are dry.
 Aye there, some drops fell moistening on my face,
 And pattering on my hat—'tis coming nigh !—
 Let's look about, and find a sheltering place.
 The little things around us fear the sky,
 And hasten through the grass to shun the shower.
 Here stoops an ash-tree—hark ! the wind gets high,
 But never mind ; this ivy, for an hour,
 Rain as it may, will keep us drily here :
 That little wren knows well his sheltering bower,
 Nor leaves his covert, though we come so near.

XXXIX.

CARELESS RAMBLES.

I LOVE to wander at my idle will,
 In summer's luscious prime, about the fields,
 To kneel, when thirsty, at the little rill,
 And sip the draught its pebbly bottom yields ;

And where the maple bush its fountain shields,
To lie, and rest a sultry hour away,
Cropping the swelling peascod from the land ;
Or 'mid the sheltering woodland-walks to stray,
Where oaks for aye o'er their old shadows stand ;
'Neath whose dark foliage, with a welcome hand,
I pluck the luscious strawberry, ripe and red
As Beauty's lips ;—and in my fancy's dreams,
As 'mid the velvet moss I musing tread,
Feel Life as lovely as her picture seems.

XL.

THE OLD WILLOW.

THE juicy wheat now spindles into ear,
And trailing pea-blooms ope their velvet eyes ;
And weeds and flowers, by crowds, far off and near,
In all their sunny liveries appear,
For summer's lustre boasts unnumbered dyes.
How pleasant, 'neath this willow by the brook—
Its ancient dwelling-place for many a year—
To sit ; and o'er these crowded fields to look,
And the soft-dropping of the shower to hear,
Ourselves so sheltered, e'en a pleasant book
Might lie uninjured from the fragrant rain,
For not a drop gets through the bowery leaves ;
But dry as housed in my old hut again,
I sit, and troublous Care but half its claim receives.

XLI.

THE WRYNECK'S NEST.

THAT summer bird its oft-repeated note

Chirps from the dottrel ash, and in the hole
The green woodpecker made in years remote,
It makes its nest. When peeping idlers stroll
In anxious plundering moods, they by and by

The Wryneck's curious eggs, as white as snow,
While squinting in the hollow tree, espy.

The sitting bird looks up with jetty eye,
And waves her head in terror to and fro,
Speckled and veined with various shades of brown ;
And then a hissing noise assails the clown.

Quickly, with hasty terror in his breast,
From the tree's knotty trunk he slides adown,
And thinks the strange bird guards a serpent's nest.

XLII.

THE HAPPINESS OF IGNORANCE.

ERE I had known the world, and understood
How many follies Wisdom names its own,
Distinguishing things evil from things good,
The dread of sin and death—ere I had known

Knowledge, the root of evil—had I been
Left in some lone place where the world is wild,
And trace of troubling man was never seen,
Brought up by Nature as her favourite child,
As born for nought but joy where all rejoice,
Emparadised in ignorance of sin,
Where Nature tries with never chiding voice,
Like tender nurse, nought but our smiles to win—
The future, dreamless, beautiful would be ;
The present, foretaste of eternity.

XLIII.

FOREST FLOWERS.

YE simple weeds, that make the desert gay,
Disdained of all, e'en by the youngster's eye,
Who lifts his stick, a weapon in his play,
And lops your blossoms as he saunters by,
In mockery of merriment !—Yet I
Hail you, as favourites of my early days ;
And every year, as 'mid your haunts I lie,
Some added pleasure claims my lonely gaze :—
Star-pointed thistle, with its ruddy flowers ;
Wind-waving rush, left to bewildered ways,
Shunning the scene which culture's toil devours ;
Ye thrive in silence where I glad recline,
Sharing with finer blooms Spring's gentle showers,
That show ye're prized by better taste than mine.

XLIV.

THE ASS.

Poor patient creature ! how I grieve to see
 Thy wants so ill supplied—to see thee strain
 And stretch thy tether for the grass, in vain,
 Which Heaven's rain nourishes for all but thee.
 The fair green field, the fulness of the plain,
 Add to thy hunger ; colt and heifer pass,
 And roll, as though they mocked thee, on the grass,
 Which would be luxury to the bare brown lane
 Where thou'rt imprisoned, humble, patient Ass !
 Cropping foul weeds, yet scorning to complain.
 Mercy at first “ sent out the wild ass free,”
 A ranger “ of the mountains ;” and what crimes
 Did thy progenitors, that thou should'st be
 The slave and mockery of later times ?

 XLV.

NOTHINGNESS OF LIFE.

I NEVER pass a venerable tree,
 Pining away to nothingness and dust ;
 Ruin's vain shades of power I never see,
 Once dedicated to Time's cheating trust—

But warm Reflection wakes her saddest thought,
And views Life's vanity in cheerless light,
And sees Earth's bubbles, youth so eager sought,
Burst into emptiness of lost delight,
And all the pictures of Life's early day,
Like evening's striding shadows, haste away.
Yet there's a glimmering of pleasure springs
From such reflections of Earth's vanity ;
We pine and sicken o'er life's mortal things,
And feel a relish for Eternity.

XLVI.

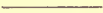
ROUND-OAK SPRING.

SWEET brook ! I've met thee many a summer's day,
And ventured fearless in thy shallow flood,
And rambled oft thy sweet unwearied way,
'Neath willows cool that on thy margin stood,
With crowds of partners in my artless play,
Grasshopper, beetle, bee, and butterfly,
That frisked about, as though in merry mood,
To see their old companion sporting by.
Sweet brook ! life's glories once were thine and mine,
Shades clothed thy spring that now doth naked lie,
On thy white boiling sand the sweet woodbine
Darkened, and dipt its flowers :—I mark and sigh,
And muse o'er troubles since we met the last,
Like too fond friends whose happiness is past.

XLVII.

THE MAGIC OF BEAUTY.

AN Imperfection as Perfection's guest,
 Gives greater joy than charms immaculate—
 And tawny moles upon a woman's breast,
 Grow very jewels in their fair estate.
 So is it where the heart's conceptions wait
 On Beauty as her lacquey—up we climb,
 And from the very sun on heaven's own gate
 Snatch a rich jewel gracing common time,
 Making earth heaven in our fancy's dream,
 And woman as an idol in esteem,
 Fairest companion of fair thoughts, akin
 To grace's perfectness in heaven's own grace.
 To worship such therefore can be no sin,
 If heaven's own copy lives in Beauty's face.



XLVIII.

THE MOLE.

RUDE architect! rich instinct's natural taste
 "Is thine by heritage.—Thy little mounds,
 Bedecking furze-clad heath, and rushy waste,
 And traced with sheep-tracks, shine like pleasure-
 grounds.

No rude inelegance thy work confounds,
But scenes of picturesque and beautiful
Lie 'mid thy little hills of cushioned thyme,
On which the cow-boy, when his hands are full
Of wild flowers, leans upon his arm at rest,
As though his seat were feathers. When I climb
Thy little fragrant mounds, I feel thy guest,
And hail Neglect thy patron, who contrives
Waste spots for thee on Nature's quiet breast,
Taste loving best where thy still labour thrives.

XLIX.

FIRST SIGHT OF SPRING.

THE hazel-blooms, in threads of crimson hue,
Peep through the swelling buds, foretelling Spring
Ere yet a white-thorn leaf appears in view,
Or March finds throstles pleased enough to sing.
To the old touchwood tree woodpeckers cling
A moment, and their harsh-toned notes renew ;
In happier mood, the stockdove claps his wing ;
The squirrel sputters up the powdered oak,
With tail cocked o'er his head, and ears erect,
Startled to hear the woodman's understroke ;
And with the courage which his fears collect,
He hisses fierce half malice, and half glee—
Leaping from branch to branch about the tree,
In winter's foliage, moss and lichens, drest.

L.

EARTH'S ETERNITY.

MAN, Earth's poor shadow! talks of Earth's decay :

But hath it nothing of eternal kin ?

No majesty that shall not pass away ?

No soul of greatness springing up within ?

Thought-marks without ? hoar shadows of sublime ?

Pictures of power, which if not doomed to win

Eternity, stand laughing at old Time

For ages, in the grand ancestral line

Of things eternal, mounting to divine ?—

I read Magnificence where ages pay

Worship, like conquered foes to the Apennine,

Because they could not conquer. There sits Day,

Too high for Night to come at—mountains shine,

Outpeering Time, too lofty for Decay.

LI.

HONESTY.

THERE is a valued, though a stubborn weed,

That blooms but seldom, and is found, but rare,

In sunless places, where it cannot seed—

Would Earth, for truth's sake, had more room to
spare !

Cant hates it—hypocrites condemn—the herd
Seeking self-interest frown, and pass it by :
'Tis trampled on—'tis bantered. Undeterred,
Though scoffed at, mocked at, yet it doth not
die ;

But like a diamond for a century lost,
Buried in darkness and obscurity,
When found again, it loses not in cost,
But keeps its value and its purity,
By time unsullied—still the prince of gems,
And first of jewels in all diadems.

LII.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

THE rich man claims it ; but he often buys
Its substitute, that is not what it seems ;
While Poverty, ennobled in disguise,
Its simple bloom oft worships and esteems.
Knaves boast possession, but they forge its name ;
Mobs laud and praise it, but with them 'tis noise,
Or the mere passport to some hidden game,
Beneath whose garb Self-interest lurks, and lies.
'Tis by the good man only deemed a prize
Too valued to be scoffed at, or oppressed ;
'Tis evermore respected by the wise,
Though thousands treat it as a common jest :
And that thou may'st not slight so grand a dower,
'Tis Honesty. Go thou, and wear the flower.

LIII.

SLANDER.

THERE is a viper, that doth hide its head
 In the recesses of the human heart,
 There is a serpent, that doth make its bed
 On manhood's prime, and God's own counterpart.
 It feeds upon the honours of the great,
 It mars the reputation of the just;
 It eats its being into worth's estate,
 And levels all distinctions in the dust.
 Goodness is smitten by its bitter gibes,
 Greatness is wounded by the slime it breeds;
 It lives the worst of all its evil tribes,
 For poisonous actions and for damning deeds.
 Nay, Slander, keener than a serpent's breath,
 Poisons far deeper, and yet brings not death.

LIV.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

IT feeds on falsehood, and on clamour lives;
 And Truth, like sunshine, dims its watering eyes;
 It cannot bear the searching light she gives,
 But in her splendour struggles, writhes, and lies

A crushed and wounded worm, that vainly turns
 All ways for rest and ease, yet findeth none.
 Of its own venom-breath it wastes and burns
 Away, like putrid waters in the sun.
 It stains, as footmarks in a frosty morn,
 Left on the bruising grass by early swain ;—
 Truth's spring soon comes, and laughs them all to
 scorn ;
 They disappear—the grass is green again ;
 And hearts that feed the falsehood Slander brings
 Are all that feel at last the venom of its stings.

 LV.

ANTIQUITY.

MYSTERY ! thou subtile essence !—Ages gain
 New light from darkness ; still thy blanks remain ;
 And Reason tries to chace old Night from thee.
 When Chaos fled, thy parent took the key,
 Blank Darkness ; and the things Age left behind
 Are locked for aye in thy unspeaking mind.
 Towers, temples, ruins, on and under ground,
 So old—so dark—so mystic—so profound—
 Old Time, himself so old, is like a child,
 And can't remember when these blocks were piled,
 Or caverns scooped ; and with amazed eye
 He seems to pause, like other standers-by,
 Half thinking, that the wonders left unknown
 Were born in ages older than his own.

LVI.

DECAY.

AMIDST the happiest joy, a shade of grief
 Will come ;—its mark, in summer time, a leaf,
 Tinged with the Autumn's visible decay,
 As pining to forgetfulness away,—
 Aye, blank Forgetfulness !—that coldest lot,
 To be,—and to have been,—and then be not.
 E'en Beauty's self, love's essence, heaven's prime,
 Meet for eternity in joys sublime,
 Earth's most divinest,—is a mortal thing,
 And nurses Time's sick Autumn for its Spring ;
 And fades, and fades, till Wonder knows it not,
 And Admiration hath all praise forgot ;
 Coldly forsaking an unheeding past,
 To fade, and fall, and die, like common things at last.

LVII.

THE FOUNTAIN OF HOPE.

TRUTH old as heaven is, and God is Truth,
 And Hope is never old, but still a youth.
 When I unclothe the volume which began
 Its essence and its interest with man,

I see that mystery unspeakable,
 Where Deity as Three Almighty dwell,
 And rise above myself o'er Reason's shrine,
 And feel my origin is Love divine ;
 Older than earth, o'er worlds however high,
 An essence to be crushed, but not to die ;
 That like a light hereafter shall arise,
 A star or comet, in those mighty skies,
 Where God, the sun, smiles on it like a flower,
 And bids it live in light 'neath his almighty power.

 LVIII.

MERIT.

HARD words to vague pretension blast like Death,
 And kill its feeble efforts with a breath ;
 But insults thrown on Merit's struggling way,
 Are helpmates to her journey—not decay.
 As fires lie smouldering till the wind sweeps past,
 Then burst to flame and kindle with the blast ;
 So from the throes of envy, hate, and strife,
 Genius bursts forth and breathes eternal life.
 In vain the taunt would blight, the scoff would sear ;
 Like cobweb network falls the gibe and sneer.
 When Genius like a sun, burst from the cloud,
 Throws forth her light, her mind is heard aloud ;
 The Nights of malice into light decay,
 And aid her exaltation into Day.

LIX.

SUN-SET.

WELCOME, sweet Eve! thy gently sloping sky, A
 And softly whispering wind that breathes of rest; B
 And clouds unlike what Day-light galloped by, A
 Now stopt as weary, huddling in the west, B
 Each, by the farewell of Day's closing eye, A
 Left with the smiles of heaven on its breast. B
 Meek nurse of weariness! how sweet to meet C
 Thy soothing tenderness to none denied; D
 To hear thy whispering voice—ah, heavenly sweet, C
 Musing and listening by thy gentle side; D
 Lost to life's cares, thy coloured skies to view, E
 Picturing of pleasant worlds unknown to care; F
 And when our bark the rough sea flounders through, E
 Warming in hopes its end shall harbour there. F

LX.

M A Y.

Now comes the bonny May, dancing and skipping
 Across the stepping stones of meadow streams;
 Bearing no kin to April showers a-weeping,
 But constant Sunshine as her servant seems.

Her heart is up—her sweetness all a-maying,
Streams in her face, like gems on Beauty's breast ;
The swains are sighing all, and well-a-daying,
Love-sick and gazing on their lovely guest.
The sunday paths, to pleasant places leading,
Are graced by couples linking arm in arm ;
Sweet smiles enjoying, or some book a-reading,
Where Love and Beauty are the constant charm ;
For while the bonny May is dancing by,
Beauty delights the ear, and Beauty fills the eye.

LXI.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

BIRDS sing and build, and Nature scorns alone
On May's young festival to be a widow ;
The children too have pleasures all their own,
In gathering lady-smocks along the meadow.
The little brook sings loud among the pebbles,
So very loud, that water-flowers, which lie
Where many a silver curdle boils and dribbles,
Dance too with joy as it goes singing by.
Among the pasture mole-hills maidens stoop,
To pluck the luscious marjoram for their bosoms ;
The greensward's littered o'er with buttercups,
And white-thorns, they are breaking down with
blossoms !
'Tis Nature's livery for the bonny May,
Who keeps her court, and all have holiday.

LXII.

MAY, *continued.*

PRINCESS of Months !—so Nature's choice ordains,
 And Lady of the Summer still she reigns ;
 In spite of April's youth, who charms in tears,
 And rosy June, who wins with blushing face ;
 July, sweet shepherdess, who wreathes the shears
 Of shepherds with her flowers of winning grace ;
 And sun-tanned August, with her swarthy charms,
 The beautiful and rich ; and pastoral gay
 September, with her pomp of fields and farms ;
 And wild November's sybilline array ;—
 In spite of Beauty's calendar, the Year
 Garlands with Beauty's prize the bonny May.
 Where'er she goes, fair Nature hath no peer,
 And Months do lose their queen when she's away.

LXIII.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

UP like a princess starts the merry Morning,
 In draperies of many coloured cloud ;
 And Sky-larks, minstrels of the early dawning,
 Pipe forth their hearty anthems long and loud.

The bright enamoured Sunshine goes a-Maying,
 And every flower his laughing eye beguiles ;
 And on the milk-maid's rosy face a-playing,
 Pays court to Beauty in its softest smiles.
 For May's divinity of Joy begun,
 Adds life and lustre to the golden sun ;
 And all of life, beneath its glory straying,
 Is by May's beauty into worship won ;—
 Till golden Eve ennobles all the west,
 And Day goes blushing like a bride to rest.

 LXIV.

TO CHARLES LAMB.

FRIEND Lamb ! thou choosest well, to love the lore A
 Of our old by-gone bards, whose racy page B
 Rich mellowing Time makes sweeter than before D
 It ever was ; for the long-garnered store A
 Of fruitage is right luscious in its age, B
 Although to Fashion's taste austere. What more A
 Can be expected from the popular rage B
 For tinsel gauds, that are to gold preferred ? C
 Me much it grieved ; for I did long presage B
 Vain Fashion's foils had every heart deterred C
 From the warm homely phrase of other days, D
 Until thy muse's ancient voice I heard. C
 And now right fain, yet fearing, honest Bard, C
 I pause to greet thee with so poor a praise. D

LXV.

BOSTON CHURCH.

MAJESTIC pile ! thy rich and splendid tower ^A
 O'erlooks the ocean with aspiring pride, ^B
 Daring the insults rude of wind and shower, ^{A B}
 And greeting Time with presence dignified. ^A
 Firm as a rock yet seems thy massy power,
 Though thou hast seen life's mightiest thrust aside, ^B
 And Ages crumble at thy feet in dust ; ^{C A}
 And the imperious Sea, as rightful dower,
 Claim thousands of wrecked ships, to hold in trust, ^C
 As dark Oblivion's harvests of the storm. ^D
 Waves yet may lash, and the loud hurricane ^E
 Threaten thy cloud-capt dwelling, and deform ^D
 The sky in glooms around thee,—all is vain :
 Empires may pass away, but thou'lt remain— ^{E E}

LXVI.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

SMILING in sunshine, as the storm frowns by, ^A
 Whose dreadful rage seems to thy quiet thrall ^B
 As small birds' twitterings, that beneath thee fly. ^A
 Winds call aloud, and they may louder call, ^B

For, deaf to Danger's voice, sublime and grand ^C
 Thou tower'st in thy old majesty o'er all. ^B
 Tempests, that break the tall masts like a wand, ^C
 Howl their rage weary round thee ; and no more ^D
 Impression make, than summer winds that bow ^E
 The little trembling weeds upon thy wall. ^B
 Lightnings have blazed their centuries round thy brow, ^E
 And left no print-marks :—so in shadows hoar ^D
 Time decks and spares thee, till that doom is hurled ^F
 That burns the ocean dry, and wrecks the world. ^F

 LXVII.

IZAAC WALTON.

SOME blame thee, honest Izaak ! aye, and deem
 Thy pastime cruel, by the silent stream
 Of the unwooded Lea : but he, that warms
 In eloquence of grief o'er suffering worms,
 Throws by his mourning quill, and hunts the hare
 Whole hours to death, yet feels no sorrow there.
 Yet this mock sentimental man of moods
 On every pastime but his own intrudes :—
 Not so with thee, thou man of angel-mind !
 That, like thy Master, gentle was, and kind ;
 Fit emblem of the prime apostles' days,
 And worthy even of the Scripture praise ;
 For men of God's own heart must surely be
 Those honest souls that most resemble thee.

LXVIII.

NUTTING.

THE Sun had stooped, his westward clouds to win,
 Like weary traveller seeking for an inn ;
 When from the hazelly wood we glad descried
 The ivied gateway by the pasture side.
 Long had we sought for nuts amid the shade,
 Where Silence fled the rustle that we made ;
 When torn by briars, and brushed by sedges rank,
 We left the wood, and on the velvet bank
 Of short sward pasture-ground we sat us down,
 To shell our nuts before we reached the town.
 The near-hand stubble-field, with mellow glower,
 Showed the dimmed blaze of poppies still in flower ;
 And sweet the mole-hills were we sat upon —
 Again the thyme's in bloom, but where is Pleasure
 gone ?

LXIX.

THE WOODMAN.

Now evening comes, and from the new-formed hedge ^A
 The woodman rustles in his leathern guise ; ^B
 Hiding in ditches, lined with bristling sedge, ^R
 His bill and mittens from Theft's meddling eyes ; ^B

Within his wallet storing many a pledge ^A
 Of flowers and boughs from early-sprouting trees, ^C
 And painted pooties from the ivied hedge, ^A
 About its mossy roots,—his boys to please, ^C
 Who wait with merry joy his coming home, ^D
 Anticipating presents such as these ^C
 Gained far a-field, where they, or night or morn, ^E
 Find no school leisure long enough to go; ^F
 Where flowers but rarely from their stalks are torn, ^E
 And birds scarce lose a nest the season through. ^F

LXX.

SHADOWS.

THE fairest summer hath its sudden showers;
 The clearest sky is never without clouds;
 And in the painted meadow's host of flowers
 Some lurking weed a poisonous death enshrouds.
 Sweet days, that upon golden sunshine spring,
 A gloomy night in mourning waits to stain;
 The honey-bees are girt with sharpest sting,
 And sweetest joys oft breed severest pain.
 While like to Autumn's storms, sudden and brief,
 Mirth's parted lips oft close in silent grief,
 Amid this checkered life's disastrous state,
 Still Hope lives green amid the desolate;
 As Nature, in her happy livery, waves
 O'er ancient ruins, palaces, and graves.

LXXI.

MORNING PLEASURES.

THE dewy virtues of the early morn
 Breathe rich of health, and lead the mind to joy ;
 While, like a thrilling pleasure newly born,
 Each little hamlet wakes its shouting boy
 Right earlily, to wander out a-field,
 Brushing the dew-drops from the bending corn,
 To see what nests are in the hedge-row thorn ;
 What cuckoo-flowers the neighbouring pastures yield ;
 Where, 'mid the dark dog-mercury that abounds
 Round each moss stump, the woodlark hides her nest.
 The delicate hare-bell, that her home surrounds,
 Bows its soft fragrance o'er her spotted breast,
 Till startled, from the boy's rude step she flies,
 Who turns the weeds away, and vainly seeks the prize.

LXXII.

HAY-MAKING.

'Tis hay-time ; and the red-complexioned Sun
 Was scarcely up, ere blackbirds had begun,
 Along the meadow-hedges here and there,
 To sing loud songs to the sweet-smelling air,

Whose scent of flowers, and grass, and grazing cow,
Flings o'er one's senses streams of fragrance now ;
While in some pleasant nook the swain and maid
Lean o'er their rakes, and loiter in the shade,
Or bend a minute o'er the bridge, and throw
Crumbs in their leisure to the fish below.
Hark at that happy shout, and song between !
'Tis Pleasure's birth-day, in her meadow-scene.
What joy seems half so rich, from pleasure won,
As the loud laugh of maidens in the sun !

LXXIII.

STEPPING STONES.

THOSE stepping-stones, that cross the meadow-streams,
Look picturesque amid Spring's golden gleams,
Where strides the traveller with a weary pace ;
And boy, with laughing leisure in his face,
Sits on the midmost stone, in very whim,
To catch the struttles, that beneath him swim.
Even stones across the hollow lakes are bare,
And winter floods no more rave dangers there ;
But, 'mid the scum left where it roared and fell,
The schoolboy hunts to find the pooty shell.
Yet there the boisterous geese, with golden broods,
Hiss fierce and daring in their summer moods :
The boys pull off their hats, while passing by,
In vain to fright—their selves being forced to fly.

LXXIV.

PLEASANT PLACES.

OLD stone-pits, with veined ivy overhung ;
 Wild crooked brooks, o'er which is rudely flung
 A rail, and plank that bends beneath the tread ;
 Old narrow lanes, where trees meet over-head ;
 Path-stiles, on which a steeple we espy,
 Peeping and stretching in the distant sky ;
 Heaths overspread with furze-bloom's sunny shine,
 Where Wonder pauses to exclaim, " Divine !"

Old ponds, dim shadowed with a broken tree ;—
 These are the picturesque of Taste to me ;
 While painting Winds, to make complete the scene,
 In rich confusion mingle every green,
 Waving the sketchy pencils in their hands,
 Shading the living scenes to fairy lands.

LXXV.

THE HAIL-STORM IN JUNE, 1831.

DARKNESS came o'er like chaos ; and the Sun,
 As startled with the terror, seemed to run
 With quickened dread behind the beetling cloud ;
 The old wood groaned, like Nature in her shroud ;

And each old rifted oak-tree's mossy arm
Seemed shrinking from the presence of the storm.
As it still nearer came, they shook beyond
Their former fears, as if to burst the bond
Of earth, that bound them to that ancient place,
Where Danger seemed to threaten all their race.
They had withstood all tempests since their birth,
Yet now seemed bowing to the very earth ;
Like reeds they bent, like drunken men they reeled,
And man for safety ran and sought the open field.

LXXVI.

ETERNITY OF TIME.

AMAZING, grand eternity of Time !
Where things of greatest standing grow sublime,
Less from long fames, and universal praise,
Than wearing as the " ancient of old days."
" Old days," once spoken, seems but half the way
To reach that night-leap of eternal Day.
Miltonic centuries, each a mighty boast—
Shakspearian eras—worlds, without their host,
Engraved upon the adamant of fame
By pens of steel, in characters of flame—
To which the forest-oaks' eternal stay
Are but as points and commas in their way,—
These less than nothings are to Ruin's doom,
When Suns grow dark, and Earth a vast and lonely
tomb.

LXXVII.

THE FAIRY RINGS.

HERE on the greensward, 'mid the old mole-hills,
 Where ploughshares never come to hurt the things
 Antiquity hath charge of,—Fear instils
 Her footsteps, and the ancient fairy rings
 Shine black, and fresh, and round—the gipsy's fire,
 Left yesternight, scarce leaves more proof behind
 Of midnight sports, when they from day retire,
 Than in these rings my fancy seems to find
 Of fairy revels ; and I stoop to see
 Their little footmarks in each circling stain,
 And think I hear them, in their summer glee,
 Wishing for night, that they may dance again ;
 Till shepherds' tales, told 'neath the leaning tree
 While shunning showers, seem Bible-truths to me—

LXXVIII.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

AYE, almost Scripture-truths !—My poorer mind
 Grows into worship of these mysteries,
 While Fancy doth her ancient scrolls unbind
 That Time hath hid in countless centuries ;

And when the morning's mist doth leave behind
The fungus round, and mushroom white as snow,
They strike me, to romantic moods inclined,
As shadows of things modelled long ago :
Halls, palaces, and marble columned domes,
And modern shades of fairies' ancient homes,
Erected in these rings and pastures still,
For midnight balls and revelry ; and then
Left like the ruins of all ancient skill,
To wake the wonder of mere common men.

LXXIX.

THE MORNING WIND.

THERE'S more than music in this early wind,
Awaking like a bird refreshed from sleep ;
And joy that Adam might in Eden find,
When he with angels did communion keep.
It breathes all balm and incense from the sky,
Blessing the husbandman with freshening powers ;
Joy's manna from its wings doth fall and lie,
Harvests for early wakers with the flowers.
The very grass in Joy's devotion moves ;
Cowslips, in adoration and delight,
This way and that bow to the breath they love
Of the young Winds, that with their dew-pearls play,
Till smoking chimneys sicken the young light,
And Feeling's fairy visions fade away.

LXXX.

THE FLOOD.

ON Lolham brigs, in wild and lonely mood,
 I've seen the winter floods their gambols play
 Through each old arch, that trembled while I stood
 Bent o'er its wall to watch the dashing spray,
 As its old stations would be washed away.
 Crash came the ice against the piers, and then
 A shudder jarred the arches ; yet once more
 It breasted raving waves, and stood again
 To wait the shock, as stubborn as before.
 White foam, brown crested with the russet soil,
 As washed from new ploughed lands, would dart
 beneath,
 Then round and round in thousand eddies boil
 On t'other side ;—then pause, as if for breath,
 One minute—then engulfed—like life in death.

LXXXI.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

WAVES trough—rebound—and furious boil again,
 Like plunging monsters rising underneath,
 Who at the top curl up a shaggy mane,
 A moment catching at a surer breath,

Then plunging headlong down and down, and on
Each following whirls the shadow of the last ;
And other monsters rise when those are gone,
Crest their fringed waves—plunge onward, and are
past.

The chill air comes around me oceanly,
From bank to bank the waterstrife is spread ;
Strange birds, like snow-spots o'er the whizzing sea,
Hang where the wild duck hurried past and fled.
On roars the flood, all restless to be free,
Like Trouble wandering to Eternity.

LXXXII.

SHEPHERD'S HUT.

THE shepherd's hut, propt by the double ash,
Huge in its bulk and old in mossy age,
Shadowing the dammed-up brook, where, plash and
plash,

The little mills did younkers' ears engage—
Delightful hut, rude as romances old,
Where huge old stones make each an easy chair,
With brake and fern for luxuries manifold,
And flint and steel are all that Want needs there.
The light was struck, and then the happy ring
Crouched round the blaze—O those were happy
times !

Some telling tales, and others urged to sing
Themes of old things, in rude yet feeling rhymes,
That raised the laugh, or stirred the stifled sigh,
Till Pity listened in each vacant eye.

LXXXIII.

SHEPHERD'S HUT, *continued.*

THOSE rude old tales !—man's memory augurs ill,
Thus to forget the fragments of old days,
Those long old songs ;—their sweetness haunts me
still,
Nor did they perish for my lack of praise.
But old disciples of the pasture sward,
Rude chroniclers of ancient minstrelsy,
The shepherds, vanished all ; and Disregard
Left their old music, like a vagrant bee,
For summer's breeze to murmur o'er, and die.
Still in these spots my Mind, and Ear, and Eye,
Turn listeners—till the very wind prolongs
The theme, as wishing, in its depths of joy,
To recollect the music of old songs,
And meet the hut that blessed me when a boy.

LXXXIV.

A WOODLAND SEAT.

WITHIN this pleasant wood, beside the lane,
 Let's sit, and rest us from the burning sun,
 And hide us in the leaves, and entertain
 An hour away ;—to watch the wood-brook run
 Through heaps of leaves, drop dribbling after drop,
 Pining for freedom, till it climbs along
 In eddyng fury o'er the foamy top ;
 And then loud laughing sings its whimpling song,
 Kissing the misty dewberry by its side,
 With eager salutations, and in joy ;
 Making the flag-leaves dance in graceful pride,
 Giving and finding joy.—Here we employ
 An hour right profitably, thus to see
 Life may meet joys where few intruders be.

LXXXV.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

OBSERVE the flowers around us, how they live,
 Not only for themselves, as we may feel,
 But for the joy which they to others give ;
 For Nature never will her gifts conceal

From those who love to seek them.—Here amid

These trees, how many blooms disclose their pride ;
From the unthinking rustic only hid,

Who never turns him from the road aside,
To look for beauties which he values not.

It gives one greater zest to feel the joys
We meet in this sweet solemn-suited spot ;

And with high ecstasy one's mind employs,
To bear the worst that fickle Life prepares,
Finding her sweets are common as her cares.

LXXXVI.

A WOODLAND SEAT, *continued.*

IN every trifle something lives to please ^A

Or to instruct us. Every weed and flower ^B
Heirs Beauty as a birth-right, by degrees ^A

Of more or less ; though Taste alone hath power ^B
To see and value what the rest pass by. ^C

This common Dandelion—mark how fine ^D
Its hue !—the shadow of the Day's proud eye ^C

Glow's not more rich of gold :—that nettle there, ^E
Tro'd down by careless rustics every hour— ^B

Search but its slighted blooms, kings cannot wear ^E
Robes pranked with half the splendour of a flower ^B

Pencilled with hues of workmanship divine,— ^D
Bestowed to simple things, denied to power, ^B
And sent to gladden hearts as low as mine. ^D

ON LEAVING THE COTTAGE OF MY BIRTH.



I've left my own old Home of Homes,
 Green fields, and every pleasant place :
 The Summer, like a stranger comes,
 I pause—and hardly know her face.
 I miss the hazel's happy green,
 The blue-bell's quiet hanging blooms,
 Where envy's eye is never seen,
 Where tongue of malice never comes.

I miss the heath, its yellow furze,
 Mole-hills, and rabbit-tracks, that lead
 Through besom-ling and teasel burrs,
 That spread a wilderness indeed :

The woodland oaks, and all below,
That their white powder'd branches shield,
The mossy paths—the very crow
Croaks music in my native field.

I sit me in my corner chair,
That seems to feel itself alone ;
I here find music,—here, and there,
From hawthorn-hedge and orchard come.
I hear—but, all is strange and new :
I sat on my old bench, *last June* ;
The sailing puddock's shrill “ pee-lew,”
O'er Royce-wood, seemed a sweeter tune.

I walk adown the narrow close,
The nightingale is singing now ;
But, like to me, she seems at loss
For “ Royce-wood,” and its shielding bough !
I lean upon the window sill,
The trees and summer happy seem,
Green, sunny green they shine—but still
My heart goes far away, to dream

Of happiness !—and thoughts arise,
With home-bred pictures, many a one—
Green lanes, that shut out burning skies,
And old crook'd stiles to rest upon.
Above them hangs the maple-tree,
Below, grass swells in velvet hill ;
And little foot-prints, sweet to see,
Are seeking sweeter places still :

With, by and by, a brook to cross,
O'er which a narrow arch is thrown :
No brook is here—I feel the loss
From nature's haunts, and all alone—
The stone-pit, whose old shelving side
Grew hanging rocks in my esteem ;
And then, the prospect stretching wide
From “ Langley-bush ; ”—and so I seem

Alone ! and in a stranger scene,
Far, far from spots my heart esteems—
The closes, with their ancient green,
Heaths, woods, and pastures, running streams.
The hawthorns here are hung with May,
But still they look of duller green ;
The sun e'en seems to lose its way,
Nor knows the quarter it is in.

I dwell on trifles, like a child—
I feel as ill becomes a man ;
And yet my thoughts, like weedlings wild,
Grow up, and blossom where they can :
They turn to places known so long,
And feel that joys were dwelling there,
So home-fed pleasure fills my song
That hath no present joy to share.

Northborough, June 20, 1832.

TO AN EARLY FRIEND.

THOU'ST been to me a friend indeed,
 I've proved it long ago ;
 I once did kindness deeply need,
 And thou did'st thine bestow ;
 And shall my bosom be its grave,
 That proved thy help divine ?
 No ! one return true worth shall have,
 Though ill requiting thine.

When some were coy, and fear'd to praise,
 Thine fearlessly was given ;
 Thy smile that cheer'd my early lays,
 Was like a smile from Heaven.
 When lone I droop'd in drear distress,
 From pride and scoffers rude,
 Thy helping hand was held to bless—
 I took it and pursued.

Thy praise did drooping hopes renew,
 That shrunk from feared disdain ;
 And joys like blossoms hung with dew,
 Held up their heads again ;
 Thy friendship met my heart as such,
 Whence heart-felt joys ensue,
 Nor have they been the world's so much,
 To prophesy untrue.

I prove thee now as none of those
Too often proved before,
That promise peace, with hopeless woes
To disappoint the more.
As sun-beams in a winter's sky
Smile warm, and chill again ;
These rude pretenders flirted by
With promise void and vain.

I have been teased with many a form
Of friendship idly told,
Intruding language uttered warm,
And soon as uttered—cold ;
Hope's blighted blossoms have been mine,
And these to many fall ;
But I have met and found in thine,
A recompense for all.

The world need not know whom thou art,
'Twill add no fame to thee ;
'Twould deem thy deeds a patron's part,
But they are more to me.
And should'st thou doubt the nameless birth,
To whom these lines belong ;
Then think whose heart has proved thy worth,
And thine will claim the song.



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