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Title: The palace of fantasy

or, the bard's imagery; with other poems

Author: John Stockdale Hardy

Release date: August 22, 2025 [eBook #76716]

Language: English

Original publication: London: Smith, Elder and Co, 1845

Credits: Charlene Taylor, Chuck Greif and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team at https://www.pgdp.net (This file was produced from images generously made available by The Internet Archive/American Libraries.)

\*\*\* START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE PALACE OF FANTASY \*\*\*

THE PALACE OF FANTASY;

OR,

THE BARD’S IMAGERY

With Other Poems.

BY J. S. HARDY,

AUTHOR OF “HOURS OF THOUGHT; OR, POETIC MUSINGS.”

LONDON:

SMITH, ELDER AND CO., 65, CORNHILL.

MDCCCXLV.

London:

Printed by STEWART and MURRAY,

Old Bailey.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The favourable notice of the Author’s former publication by the

periodical press in general, (for which he offers his best

acknowledgments) has emboldened him to venture a second time, under the

hope of deserving the like approbation. If it be the means of leading

any to “look through Nature up to Nature’s God,” his object is attained;

while the cultivation of the “Muses” he deems to be its own “exceeding

great reward.”

PREFACE.

The following Poem, being a sketch or shadowing out of objects and

things that are beautiful or grand, may be divided into the descriptive,

the allegorical, and the imaginative. “Fantasy” or Fancy is the

personification of an imaginary character; and is represented as holding

a Court, at which the crowd or multitude, considered as the world at

large, are invited to attend, and are conducted by Sir Herald, a

fantastic sort of personage, to the Palace of Fantasy; who on their

entrance are immediately attired in suitable costume by an attendant

page, a somewhat strange and half human figure, who courteously leads

the way to the Saloon of Imagery, whose pictured tapestry is there

described. Admitted to an audience, Dan Fantasy deputes his favourite

companion, the Bard, as their attendant and guide through his wide

domain, to point out its wonders with the intent to instruct, as also to

amuse. For this purpose they are led to survey the hidden things of

earth, marvels of nature, art, literature, and science, which are

severally shown;--the whole intended as a moral to induce mankind to

forego grovelling for loftier pursuits, as leading the mind and enticing

it to extend its flight to a far nobler and more enduring destiny.

The Miscellaneous Poems, with some few exceptions, have appeared in

several periodicals of the day; but are now collected for the first

time, and added to the present volume, with the hope that they may not

be less acceptable in their new dress.

\_Peckham.\_

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THE PALACE OF FANTASY.

CANTO I.

I.

O child of earth, who treads this mortal life

With weary steps, and turmoil hard to bear,

Forego, if e’er ye can, your care, and strife,

The sigh oppressive, and the trickling tear;

A truce for once to every anxious fear,

Let Fancy brighten up the passing hour;

Fain would she lead you in her flight’s career,

From noyance free, and cloud seen dark to low’r,

To spend your pleasant time ’neath her enchanting bow’r.

II.

Far tow’ring seen, a lofty palace rose,

Where stately cedars thick embow’ring grew;

A spot that some fell wizard would have chose,

So hid it was to gaze of public view;

At least the bustling world scarce of it knew,

And yet I ween it was a lovely spot;

The site once known it all enticed drew,

Whose blandishments made mortals bless their lot,--

More like to Arcady, fabled of old, I wot.

III.

Straight issued forth from yonder postern gate,

Mounted on dappled steed that paw’d the ground,

A strange, fantastic varlet, clad in state,

Big with importance, and with look profound,

While at his back there slung a horn to sound;

Part herald seem’d he in his gold attire,

And Mercury liken to as glanced he round;

A Sir Knight more to wonder than admire,

And yet his bearing showed no post in sooth stood higher.

IV.

Eftsoons, he ’gan his clarion loud to blow,

That bade with startling sound the welkin ring;

Anon a tide of gaping folk did flow,

With wonder filled, all eager hastening;

In troth it was a goodly gathering

That soon around Sir Herald forced their way;

Yet ere his mandate speech essayed to bring,

He waited for the crowd’s rude noise to stay,

Then blew again his horn, he brooked no more delay.

V.

“Ye toiling race, whose careworn visage tell

Of nights and days your wasted life hath led,

Know that I come with message to dispel

The gloomy dulness that seems on ye shed,

Whose scanty pittance makes ye poorly fed;

Dan Fantasy, my lord, in clemency,

Hath sped me to announce both board and bed,

With gracious ingress sent to all, and free

To range his spacious bounds, that ye may happy be.

VI.

“Yet one injunction I must first enforce,

Ere I admit you to my lord’s domain,

That you no outbreak wilful have recourse,

And from disorder you must needs refrain,

If ye for entrance hope without restrain;

Though ye at large may stray, free as the wind,

Be not too lavish when ye freedom gain,

For though Dan Fantasy’s indulgent kind,

You will, if ye transgress, a stinging scorpion find.”

VII.

Thus warned, Sir Herald turned his palfrey’s head,

His high behest accomplished, and fair speech;

Through postern way the panting crowd he led,

That did essay the entrance proud to reach,

Whose clamour loud enforced him silence preach.

And to their noisy mirth give some restrain;

Though little heeded they what he did teach,

’Till yonder marble porch was seen full plain,

When discord ceased, lest they should no admittance gain.

VIII.

Yon gorgeous structure that they now drew near,

Stood out in vast proportions, huge and bold,

Whose architectural contour did appear

Of various orders formed in beauty’s mould;

Doric and Saxon did the eye behold,

And columns fair Corinthian there uprose;

With windows carved in Gothic semblance old;

More like to what some gnome king would have chose,--

A genii’s palace seen at twilight eve’s repose.

IX.

No sooner had the motley gathered fry,

Like swarm of bees toward the entrance strove,

Than they with speed ’gan mount the steps hard by,

That in one flight continuous rose above;

When lo! the lofty portal ’gan to move,

And ope its ponderous sides ’mid radiance bright.

But ere right leave they had within to rove,

They must be shorn of their ungainly plight,

And doff their garments rude, and show more seemly sight.

X.

With that, the ragged troop were silent led

To ante-room, to change their outward gear.

Their strange conductor courtly bowed his head,

And eke soon furnished each with robes to wear;

While oft his eye, with sprightly gaze and leer,

Watched the deep motion of their wond’ring sight,

As deftly he the costliest made appear;

And like some varlet or mischievous wight,

So chuckled he Sir Page to see their alter’d plight.

XI.

He was, I ween, an elfish-looking wight,

With satin doublet slashed of velvet rare;

Agile in shape, half human and half sprite,

And yet, withal, a page-like look and air,

Showed gracefully, ’neath plumed cap he did wear.

A goodly personage, to boot, was he,

To shine at courts and royal favour share;

Or doff right low, and drop on bended knee,

Where lowly grace yblent with that of high degree.

XII.

Straightway he led them ’long the corridor,

Like guests equipped to meet invite of host;

Nor lingered they, but paced the marble floor,

And followed close the imp-like gliding ghost,

Whose flitting movements quick they almost lost,

And cross’d the hall resplendent once again;

Such circuit made as if exploring coast,

When right before them stood the entrance plain,

While in his pageship went an audience to obtain.

XIII.

He soon returned with gracious beck’ning smile,

That show’d his mission had accomplished been,

When he his lord’s fair pleasure spake awhile,

In words announcing “They might enter in,

And yet discreetly, and withouten din.”

This was the tenor of his high command,

“No Babel discord was allowed within,

On sure infliction of a scourging brand;”

For nought so chafed his Grace, whose nature else was bland.

XIV.

Awhile adjusting their disordered dress,

Late somewhat ruffled by their hurried speed;

The wide saloon admits the eager press,

Who under guidance in slow rank proceed,

When to their ear came dulcet pipe or reed,

That in the distance seem’d to die away,

And thrill’d the heart it did emove indeed

With sounds whose swelling notes brooked no delay,

But took the imprison’d soul and held it in its sway.

XV.

Meantime, upon their vision sudden fell

A lustrous light all dazzling to behold,

As if transported by enchanter’s spell

To scenes like that of famed Aladdin told,

Where lamps aglittering hung like burnish’d gold;

Anon, the lofty and capacious dome

Rose to the view in vast dimensions bold,

Akin to that famed cupola of Rome

That struck frail pigmy man, lost in its greatness dumb.

XVI.

The walls on each side hung with tapestry,

On amber ground in divers colours wove,

By fairy fingers wrought so marvellously,

Liken to what a Linwood’s needle strove

By art to charm, and each emotion move;

There nymphs and fawns half hid ’neath foliage seen,

Alist’ning Pan’s sweet pipe amid the grove,

And flocks white fleeced that cropped th’ unsullied green,

With fair Sicilian maids, made one Arcadian scene.

XVII.

And there were Druids by the gnarled oak,

Attendant seen on their night mysteries deep,

Mid torchlight’s gleam there awful did invoke,

As thro’ their scattered locks the winds did sweep,

Wild were their looks while orgies dread they keep

With blood-stained arms their muttered spells yblent,

And round their victim in contortion leap,

No living voice, nor sound, but theirs ylent,

Save wood, dark-stream, and blast, like genii moaned assent.

XVIII.

There eftsoons pricked his way thro’ forest glade,

A belted knight intent on val’rous deed,

With coat of mail well armed and trusty blade,

Borne graceful onward by his snorting steed,

Proud curveting impatient to proceed;

While merry woodsman with sharp bill and bow,

Blithe as the lark that carols ’bove his head;

Ere chariot wheels of Phœbus ’gan to glow,

Is seen thro’ brushwood copse to start the bounding roe.

XIX.

The caravan of Eastern climes was there,

O’er desert sands pursued its lengthened rout,

With stately camels bearing burthen rare,

Led in advance by wild accoutred scout,

Armed to protect or track the streamlet sought,

Certes to them a cheering welcome sound,

Delicious more to those who suffer drought

From barren soil where stream can scarce be found,

No bale so sad have they, whose land with springs abound.

XX.

Daughters of Ind’ were seen with glossy skin,

And Hindoo maids in deep prostration knelt,

Where wide spread Ganges’ rolling waves did shine,

Besides its banks the sacred influence felt,

Whose treasured stream the adoring soul ymelt;

There devotees in thronging groups repair,

While others sought where lonely Dervise dwelt,

Him to engage and lead devotion’s prayer

’Neath palm trees lovely shade, skreened from the noontide glare.

XXI.

For tapestry, pictorial grace displayed,

Creative art wrought out by sylvan hand,

Not painter’s skill like Angelo’s portrayed,

Colours more brilliant than did there expand,

In sooth there rose as if by fairy’s wand,

That legion fair yclept mount Helicon,

Where pearly streams enriched that pleasant land,

That flowed from Hippocrene’s pure fountain known,

And kiss’d the flow’ry mead in dalliance as it roune.

XXII.

While round about that rugged mountain side,

Some climb’d the steep, to breathe empyrean air,

And did essay to view the landscape wide,

Tho’ few could in that dainty prospect share,

Save gifted spirits born with genius rare,

Who soaring ’mid the clouds empurpled hue

Their pastime joy’d in that ethereal sphere,

Where floating shapes yblent in that clear blue,

That light as gossamer each other did pursue.

XXIII.

There straight the moving crowd did eke behold,

A spot of land that overhung the sea,

That bounded sparkling to that nook like gold,

So bright the waves ran murm’ring pleasantly,

While there uprose a lofty promont’ry,

On which a tall and sable figure stood,

And yet withal a startling dignity,

As one not ’habitant of earth:--the flood

Drew fixed that being’s gaze, who seemed not flesh and blood.

XXIV.

And there the eye it fell on frowning wood,

On mountain blue that did its form disclose,

With precipice and rugged causeway rude,

Where plunged the restless stream without repose;

That from its pebbly bed in spray uprose,

Seen thro’ yon vale of loveliness to wind

Thro’ ’bosky dell,’ its sinuous course to lose,

There wandered lone the thoughtful lettered hind,

’Mid sylvan glades and scenes whose charm delight the mind.

XXV.

And they had longer gazed the wond’ring crowd,

As with emblazoned skill each picture rose,

Had not the varlet troop heard summons loud,

That, hastening, urged their audience not ylose;

Which gracious mandate they may not refuse,

As they at once quick marshall’d by Sir Page,

No parley held, but did the offer choose,

Right glad such condescension did engage

Them as his honour’s guests, who seemed both lord and sage.

XXVI.

There sat Dan Fantasy in lofty state,

To whose ascending throne the group drew near,

On each side ranged the Graces on him wait,

Aonian maidens of the fountain clear;

While he a crown of dazzling stars did wear,

Like to Urania’s diadem of night,

His brows with laurel graced did eke appear,

A sky-blue tunic formed his vestment bright,

O’er which a saffron robe, like summer’s air, fell light.

XXVII.

And there were instruments of music brought,

With dulcet sounds that could enchantment wake;

But chief the lyre, the soul enthrilling caught,

And all its tones of sweetness did partake,

Harmonic chords, that one Elysium make;

The Thalian sock and buskin were displayed,

And mask, that caused the sides with laughter shake,

The lyric song, and pastoral, scattered laid,

And there the Homeric muse, the lofty mind portrayed.

XXVIII.

With hurried glance they scarce had time to scan

Those fond pursuits that did Sir Dan employ,

Ere through the long saloon a whisp’ring ran,

That did delight them with a pleasing joy;

Not children blithe so hankered after toy,

When known it was his Grace would shortly speak,

And give them full invite without annoy,

Whose thought did o’er their weary spirits break,

Like cheerful matin dawn, that doth th’ horizon streak.

XXIX.

“Ye care-worn, toiling race,” he thus began,

“In moody dulness doomed to moil for bread,

Children of earth, to soothe, if soothe I can,

Your thorny path, and cheer your drooping head;

And if my art have power, some sunshine shed;

For you my anxious breast oft heav’d the sigh,

When to your fate my roving thoughts were led;

Sad fate! like brutes immured in filthy sty,

Ye seemed to grovel on, nor cared to live or die.

XXX.

“What could entice ye pent in loathsome den,

From dawn of day to shadowy close of eve,

A charnel-house of labour, choked with men,

Women, and children wan; ye may perceive

The factory stalking-ghosts, here doomed to weave

For their employer’s wealth; poor recompense

The dole dealt out, for loss of health to grieve,

And ling’ring groan, sad poverty’s offence,

Their shorten’d thread of life ’neath want and abstinence.

XXXI.

“What pleasure is there in your drudgery found,

Like mere machines in motion set, I trow,

That go the same unvaried, sick’ning round,

The mind as dull, without an ebb or flow,

Stagnant, that scarce the vital spark doth show,

Like him, immersed in wildering ledger huge,

Pores o’er the page, to cast if right or no,

With addled brain, that few can envious grudge,

His unrequited pains, poor pate-disturbed drudge!

XXXII.

“’Twas thus in pity I beheld your state,

Abject, forlorn, without one cheering ray;

A very mole, as blind, with sluggish gait,

That seemed to burrow on your plodding way;

A cold existence, dragging through the day;

Which led me thus some pastime search for you,

Creation of my brain that sometimes stray,

And doth its airy pageantry pursue,

Till Fiction’s ideal dream starts into life anew.

XXXIII.

“And tho’ I would your leaden thoughts engage,

And thro’ their darken’d cell some light infuse,

To lead the spirit to th’ illumed page

Of Fancy’s scroll, immortal to amuse;

For you unroll its mysteries to peruse

Like that of Herculanean hidden found,

Yet without guidance sooth to wander loose

My rule forbids; your flight Pegasian bound,

Nor too adventurous be to soar the deep profound.

XXXIV.

“One have I chosen as your trusty guide,

The dear companion of my lonely hours;

Whose converse soothe like waters heard to glide,

Gurgling melodious ’mong Aonian flowers;

He will conduct you to my pleasant bowers,

And thread the windings of my loved retreat

As with a silken clue; whose playful powers

With bland discourse your ravished ear shall greet,

That ye, ymolten, will hang on his words, I weet.”

XXXV.

With that, Dan Fantasy, with beck’ning smile

That caught the twinkling eye of gifted bard,

Who left his darling pastime to beguile

The fleeting hours (his unalloyed reward),

To give attendance and bestow regard,

As his right honoured lord would have him show;

In troth he felt it was a boon conferr’d

He would not slight or willingly forego,

But do his best to please, and all his art bestow.

XXXVI.

Clad in a costume loose, half \_negligée\_,

In flowing robe like scribe he did appear;

His forehead high o’ergraced with fadeless bay,

While stray wild locks did ’neath his bonnet peer,

Which he unconscious seemed to careless wear;

His thoughts engaged seen in his dark fixed eye,

That dwelt enraptured on the ideal near

Creations of the mind that flitted by,

Whom he dismiss’d anon, to lead the company.

XXXVII.

Led by the bard the press fast followed close,

Whose voices heard to marvel as they went,

Wond’ring the winding passages he chose,

As tho’ he would the building circumvent;

Marshalling the way as one on purpose bent

Softly descending on an inclined plane,

’Mid glimmering light, and mute astonishment,

Until a high-arched doorway straight they gain,

At which they waiting stood admittance to obtain.

XXXVIII.

When straight the minstrel bard his girdle sought,

Whereon a brazen key with others slung,

Which he at once, as if by custom taught,

Essayed to use, when back, loud grating, flung

The portal wide, on massy hinges hung;

That to a flight of lengthened steps ylead,

Down which their way groped cautiously ymong

Deep vaulted chambers, by the pale ray shed,

Of flickering lamps disclosed a subterranean bed.

XXXIX.

O’er whose rough, rugged, surface, straggling went

The wand’ring troop, like pioneers in search

If outlet could be found; thus vent’rous bent,

So hardy missing seamen left in lurch,

Thro’ weary cavern’s length do wend their march;

Until an opening they descried in view,

Thus they with toil hard struggling sought to reach,

And gladly hail’d it, as they nearer drew,

Like coast explorers, when the right track they pursue.

XL.

Escaped the dark and vaulted cavern way,

Before their ken a wondrous scene arose,

Stretching far off, a wide extended bay,

Like that of Naples, sunk in soft repose;

The silvery wave, did there itself ylose

’Mong coral reefs, heard murm’ring sweet to run;

And pearly sands that did that beach compose,

There seen to glow the newly risen sun

Tracking yon orient sky his bright march had begun.

XLI.

High overhead on one side shaggy frowned,

With horrid front, a huge promont’ry bold,

Around whose base a shelt’ring cove was found,

Where treasured heaps, deposited of old,

Here in their bed hath slumbered where they rolled;

Things prized of earth,--the miser’s glittering hoard,

Vessels of silver, ingots, bars of gold;

Caskets of dazzling gems, once lost, appeared,

The hoardings of the deep, that glittered undisturbed.

XLII.

Wending their course by path to them unknown,

The bard still led with thoughtful steps the way,

Until they gained a causeway faced with stone,

O’er which they passed withouten more delay,

Between two cliffs upreared that frowned dismay;

That to a giant archway straightway led,

Diluvian old, that did invite to stray,

Through which a dimly burning light was shed,

Like that sepulchral gleam that hovers o’er the dead.

XLIII.

This hollow way, cut through the womb of earth,

Wrought out alone by Nature’s secret hand,

In elder time primeval took its birth,

That cast in shade the work of delving band,

Of earth’s industrious miners, wondrous plann’d;

Showing the various strata ’bove arrayed,

Layer of clay, with marl, and chalky land,

With petrifactions curious time hath made,

In undisturbed repose, as they had ever laid.

XLIV.

Through archway rude an outlet last they found,

Like some old porch by Saxon built of yore,

By which amazed, they entering gazed around,

Scene of enchantment that did on them pour;

From whose high dazzling roof, and pearly floor,

There flashed a radiance wondrous to behold,

Liken to romance read in ancient lore,

Of fell magician, or enchanter bold,

Who doth with waving wand a fairy scene unfold.

XLV.

From that o’erfretted roof suspended hung,

Fair lustres bright, with crystal branches spread,

A thousand lights from each their radiance flung,

That fairy-like a dazzling whiteness shed

On what seemed temples reared with spiral head,

Towers and glorious fanes, with nodding groves,

Landscapes far seen, with waters’ glassy bed,

In every form of beauty, fancy roves,

Where Nature secret works, moulds, fashions as she loves.

XLVI.

Colossal-like, the sparry columns rose,

Tow’ring above in awful grandeur seen,

Magnificent as Staffa in repose,

When gliding moonbeams gild its glorious scene,

Resting in shadow of a deep serene;

Whose span of arch, more beautiful to gaze,

Did seem against the blue vault sky to lean,

That bade th’ abstracted spirit upward raise

One full entranced look of wonder and amaze.

XLVII.

From their revering gaze called off straightway,

By hast’ning footsteps of delighted bard,

Who bade the troop behold without delay,

These hidden marvels of the earth’s deep hoard,

Which time ere long would them no sight afford,

As other scenes the surface globe would claim,

Himself their Cicerone, his proud reward,

Thro’ fancy’s medium point man’s highest aim;

To one supreme great Cause, ah! this the poet’s fame.

XLVIII.

The threshold passed of that awe-stricken cave,

They wend their way that to a grotto led,

Inlaid with that light roamer of the wave,

The pearl-white nautilus, where conches spread

In wild profusion glitt’ring overhead

That formed a concave roof of sea-shells rare,

Like fair Calypso’s grot with moss-green bed,

And overhanging woodbine did appear,

A cool inviting spot, screened from the noon-tide glare.

XLIX.

There sat them down their weary limbs to rest,

While on their ear a sound of waters played,

Melodious rippling that becalmed the breast,

As the fresh fountain from its channel laved,

Each several spring there stood a nymph-clad naiad

Of brook and stream, Aonian sisters fair,

Who here, the cool translucent wave conveyed

From its pure source, their pastime-tending care,

O’er which they did preside, with glossy, dripping hair.

L.

Fair deities of limpid pool and spring,

The watercourse that through the valleys run;

Cold, dropping wells, that give their offering,

With rivulets that sparkle in the sun,

Wind among hills the sunny glare to shun,

From these fresh virgin founts, rivers arise,

The rolling Danube’s swelling course began,

Wide spreading Ganges, found ’neath eastern skies,

While dark Missouri flowed, proud as the swarth Ind’s eyes.

LI.

“Thus have I shown ye,” spake at last their guide,

“The hidden wonders of the earth’s deep veins,

To where my Lord Dan Fantasy doth glide,

When the calm spirit of reflection reigns;

And lonely solitude, here sought, obtains;

Marvels of Nature’s secret working seen,

Which I have e’en disclosed with muckle pains,

Knowledge with pleasure as ye scann’d each scene,

This was the object dear unto my heart I ween.”

LII.

With that the attentive group he onward led,

By other path, a steep ascending way,

Travelling thro’ gloom, a dusky twilight spread;

Nor dark, nor light, an intermittent ray,

That show’d far off a speck like glimpse of day;

To which wished point their eager footsteps bend,

Like those who thro’ a lengthened cavern stray,

Right pleased when they can just descry the end,

Then urge their laggard speed, with freshened spirits wend.

LIII.

Th’ outlet found of this their arduous toil,

Far distant seen, though now at last attained,

With expectation raised ’neath sweat and moil,

As those who through a wood intricate, gained

Some lofty eminence; where, unrestrained,

The widening prospect opened to their view;

Such champaign fair the eager troop far-kenned,

Luxuriant spread, hill, mountain, valley drew

The eyes’ fond gaze; that swept the deep unclouded blue.

LIV.

Cities and towns with lofty turrets rose,

The busy haunts of man with commerce spread,

Seen on the horizon’s verge in soft repose,

With forest huge that lifts its waving head,

And sinuous course of mighty streams thus led,

That fertile flowed to irrigate the land,

Majestic bounding swell’d the ocean bed;

To these the kindling poet waved the hand,

Their panoramic beauties drew with accents bland.

LV.

“To these I will your mute attention claim,”

(At which his listening audit’ry gave ear),

“While thus I draw by pleasant paths my aim,

And make instruction more invite appear;

I do propose to bring your vision near,

That we descend this green mount’s sloping side,

Myself each object may define more clear,

For ’tis my \_art\_, in which I do confide,

To give the ideal life a local name beside.

LVI.

“But fain, I must, before ye make descent,

Direct your vision’s utmost farthest gaze,

To Andes’ lofty chain in wonderment;

Let fancy’s pinion have her flights amaze,

And here her eager sight enchanted raise,

Lost in the greatness of its vast extent,

Of Chimborazo’s height commanding praise,

Loftiest ’mong lesser hills of beauty blent;

Yet now I would call off on further progress bent.

LVII.

With that he led them down the vale beneath,

Sweet spot like Enna’s soft enchanting scene,

Where flushed Adonis flow’r with perfumed breath,

And roses wild sprang up ’mong hillocks green;

In loveliness of beauty, gathering seen

To pluck half hid Sicilia’s flowery mead,

Persephone herself, the fairest queen,

Who drew the gloomy eye of Pluto dread,

Thus snatched from violet banks to dwell among the dead.

CANTO II.

ARGUMENT.

Four ways leading to Nature, Literature, Art, and Science--The

Entrance Porch of Nature Portrayed--Alpine Scenery--Polar

Regions--The Torrent--The Atlantic Ocean--A Ship tossed by the

Waves, and a Calm--The Gorge, Jungfrau--Floating Islands and Hot

Wells--Staffa--Fingal’s Cave--Lake of Killarney--The Isle of

Skye--Jura and the Lake of Geneva--Digression--Object and Aim

proposed--Progress continued--The Forest--Wild Beasts’ Lair--The

Constrictor--The Contrast in reference to Eden--Millennium--The

Discourse--The Grove and Lovely Valley--Variety of Nature

unexplored--The Poet’s Instruction.

CANTO II.

LVIII.

Four ways branched forth from out yon sylvan vale,

Each entrance varied, formed t’ arrest the eye

Of those, the explorers of that thymy dale,

Who thirsted for, and did for knowledge sigh;

No wassailler nor grovelling soul passed by,

Or strove to seek its more than pleasant spot;

Their mind a blank who have no sympathy

With nature; science, art, attract them not;

And literature may woo and charm in vain, I wot.

LIX.

Right ’fore them stood Nature’s wide opening, made

Precipitous, o’ergrown with shaggy wood,

’Neath two high banks that cast an awful shade,

As if for solemn rites some priestess stood

To minister beneath its entrance rude;

At once their guide, with gaze of awe led on

In quest of mysteries dread, did silent brood

How to unveil, not mere sublime alone,

But attributes of power Omnipotence make known.

LX.

They scarce yon greenwood arch had passed by,

Uncouth, that higher rose than art e’er made--

The vestibule of Nature’s masonry;

No chisell’d gateway showed so fair array’d,

That skill of man was cast in humble shade;

When on their straining sight in grandeur reared

A mountain-chain, with snow-white wreaths o’erlaid;

Fair scen’ry, Alpine, op’ning wide appeared,

O’er which “Mont Blanc” arose as they their pathway steered.

LXI.

An unknown wildness ’gan to creep o’er all

Who gazed on that cold landscape, still as death,

Where the hoar mountain’s peak, sublimely tall,

Looked darkly frowning on the vale beneath;

Dizzy ’bove clouds that stole away the breath

Of those who did essay to climb so high,

Save he, the chamois hunter, seen by stealth

To dare the slipp’ry verge ’twixt earth and sky,

While flew the cormorant disturbed loud screaming by.

LXII.

Before them stretched immense the Arctic sea,

That in review did glide by poet’s art,

Whose waving wand produced the mystery,

To fix the eye, and bid the gazer start,

And through the senses deftly reach the heart;

His business now stern nature’s workings shown,

As seen in polar regions, to impart

Marvels wrought out ’mong fields of ice made known,

Huge floating heard to meet and crash with horrid groan.

LXIII.

Pile upon pile of thick-ribbed ice upreared,

Icebergs, here found in many a floating heap,

Rudely magnificent in form appeared,

Drifting in sparry columns huge and steep,

Like moving mountains of the slumb’rous deep;

Or semblance shaped to temple, tower, or fane,

By hardy Briton on the horizon’s sweep,

Seen stately sailing like St. Paul’s full plain;

So named by seamen bold, who did first sight obtain.

LXIV.

Precipitous the mighty torrent rushed--

The object changed by magic of the bard,--

Through rugged cavern’s mouth, loud foaming gushed

O’er shelving bank, that nothing could retard,

Or stay the progress of its leap onward,

To rocky bed engulfed with deaf’ning roar,

That scarce the sea-mew’s screaming note was heard,

With darting wing o’ersplashed th’ abyss to soar,--

Such scene tumultuous found by dark Missouri’s shore.

LXV.

In wonder fixed each mute beholder stood,

Awe-struck at sight of water’s ’whelming flow,

Till waked from gaze abstract of yonder flood,

Was heard the voice of their good guide below,

Who, unobserved, had glided on to show

What object else was worthy their regard;

The secret works of Nature taught to know,

For they are infinite;--his high reward

To lead to one Supreme; so thought the tuneful bard.

LXVI.

“Hither, ye wandering mortals, hither led”

(So spake the minstrel and devoted seer),

“From this high spot, and glacier’s dizzy head”

Behold the mountain wave in tumult near,

Wild in pursuit, like hunted, foaming deer,

Before your sight th’ Atlantic billows roll;

Doth it not blanch the cheek with awe and fear,

To think how great the power that can control

And curb yon tempest’s flood, o’erwhelming to the soul?

LXVII.

“See yonder fragile bark, like cockle-shell,

So small it seems, belab’ring o’er the deep,

Down to the depths engulfed ’mid ocean’s swell,

Then on the wave it rises high and steep;

Poised, flutt’ring, hurled again with dang’rous leap,

While through the shrouds the piping winds are borne,

In hollow fitful blasts heard loud to sweep;

The ship’s wet canvass loosed, all rent and torn,

That cause the seamen gaze with upward look forlorn.

LXVIII.

“Lo! the wind lulls, the storm has passed away,

The sun breaks out, the ruffled waves subside;

The vessel rights that late on beam-ends lay,

Her sails unfurled, in gallant trim doth ride,

With freshened breeze she treads the waters wide,

The boatswain’s whistle heard, and crew’s voice shrill,

Jocund and blithe, as they propitious glide,

Their spirits light from threatened dangers ill,

So late escaped; whose thought makes messmate’s bosom thrill.

LXIX.

“Ere we descend this Alpine dizzy height,

I fain one other scene would first unfold,

But skirt we must this base to gain the sight

Of yon dread gorge, magnificent and bold.”

So spake their ardent guide, and bade behold

The vapo’ry mist that veil’d the depth below,

And up the ravine’s sides all hideous roll’d,

That through the tossing mist did faintly show

A goodly prospect fair, that to the eye did glow.

LXX.

Showing far hamlet spread embower’d in wood,

Where hence did curling smoke seen upward shoot;

And sweet was heard the music brawling flood,

That tumbling headlong over craggy foot

Of rock precipitous, with oak-fixed root

O’ergrown, sinuous around the mountain’s base

To wend its way, or cadence speak its route;

While blue-capp’d mountain ridge far off could trace--

Wood, water, hill, and dale, the view it doth embrace.

LXXI.

Which turning from, they climbed down the steep

To follow him who joy’d to lead the way,

Who down the slipp’ry marge did bound and leap,

As he were wont the Apennine to stray;

Right firm of step, withouten fear, dismay,

He did descend from Jungfrau’s dizzy height,

And urged their speed, and that without delay,

To leave the spot that ravished the sight;

Their senses all enwrapped, in visions steeped quite.

LXXII.

From whence they did, at foot of yon high hill,

As on a lake a floating isle they saw:

Now lost, now found, upon the surface still,

Rising as if to make for yonder shore;

And now hot spouting wells in columns pour,

Scald’d springs that rise from bowell’d-heated earth,

That boil and bubbling flow with steamy store

From out the surfaced ground, since Time’s rude birth,

Oft found by sickly crowds t’ impart its healing worth.

LXXIII.

In quest of Nature in her pristine prime,

Her freaks of masonry majestic wrought;

Such “Fingal’s cave” by Staffa’s isle sublime,

Whose entrance-arch the eye magnific caught;

And columns reared high roofed, and deftly fraught,

With yon fair other, named the “Cormorant’s cave,”

Whom that lone bird its dreary cavern sought,

When ocean dread with cadence loud doth lave,

Far heard on sounding shore, its sadly moaning wave.

LXXIV.

Or where Killarney lifts its monstrous head,

From whence cascades rush headlong tumbling down,

Where, too, the royal bird doth rear its bed,

Th’ eagle’s nest! so called and proudly known;

Where echo dwells and calls the spot her own,

Whom hid unseen, her voice through cave far deep,

Re-echoes from her haunts seclusion lone,

’Mid wood and rocks where sparkling waters leap,

And answer vocal gives, from every mountain steep.

LXXV.

Their vision bland beheld the Isle of Skye,

Whose famed basaltic columns reared their head,

Where falcon’s sweep, and num’rous wild birds fly,

Here hither woo’d by crag and fastness led;

And there by Swinna rushed two whirlpools dread,

In huge circumference, cone-like, dang’rous played,

As heedless vessels neared sucked down its bed,

In ’whelming vortex depthless all conveyed;

A sorry fate for souls, who there unweeting strayed.

LXXVI.

He thence did guide them to more placid scene,

Where frowning Jura overlooked fair lake,

That ran ’tween banks of ever verdant green,

Whose waters sparkling led did rippling break,

In murm’ring sweetness, heard for murmurs’ sake,

And there the sun, ymolten, all beside

Himself did cast bright beams his thirst to slake,

In that so smooth and sweet transparent tide,

Where gondolas, dressed gay, did on its surface glide.

LXXVII.

The thronging crowd that press’d each marvel see,

That he the mentor Bard did deftly show,

Were now called off by word of energy,

That from his honeyed gentle lips did flow;

Delectable in speech he was, I trow,

With learned lore, and mild instruction fraught,

And knowledge such as blessed only know,

Based on eternal truth, ’twas thus he taught,

Nor cared he more to teach, none other had he sought.

LXXVIII.

“Ye gentle flock, for ye so called I must,

Whose track hath followed at my high behest,

For your instruction hither brought I trust,

Delight, and soul’s advantage found the best,

As leading to that one eternal rest,

Of which this life is but the entrance scene,

Probation’s school and trial of the blest;

Which I would fain impress, whose course thus shene,

Is my dear object’s scope that leads to life serene.

LXXIX.

“Nature inanimate have we discoursed,

Ocean, and flood, and hoary mountain bold;

Wonders of earth, which my rude speech enforced,

As their great Maker’s handiwork of old;

The half of which has not been hither told,

For Nature animate all teems with life,

Which erst we will explore and eke unfold,

Human, divine, forsooth; make known in priefe,

And roam creation wide, with living creatures rife.”

LXXX.

Thus having spake he did diverge their course,

To where a blackened forest distant lay;

Discoursing meantime with a winning force,

Did entertain them in a pleasant way;

Of wilds he told, that devious led astray,

Of hairbreadth ’scapes, of gins, and traps also,

That did the guideless traveller betray,

Of yon huge forest he would have them know,

There dwelt the rav’nous beast, whose haunt he soon would show.

LXXXI.

Meanwhile they reached the shade of awful wood,

Whose gloom-wrapped branches waved with sighing sound;

A deep, dark dell, on one side where they stood,

With furze o’ergrown, and brushwood did abound;

A solemn stillness wont the air surround,

Save when at midnight fell, the lordly beast

For prey roared dreadful, shaking all yground,

And lashed his tail, fierce prowling kenn’d no rest,

Until his ravening maw with blood-stained food was blest.

LXXXII.

Wending their path through furze and matted grass,

That did their feet entangle all the way,

They reached at last a narrow dreary pass,

That led to cave or den, where couching lay

The kingly lion watching for his prey,

With glaring eye, and aspect fierce and dread;

While rushed the tiger from his lair to stray,

With cruel fangs by gnawing hunger led,

Panthers, hyena fell, there prowl’d ymong the dead.

LXXXIII.

And there the hideous snake all folded lay,

With forked tongue of deadly venom fraught;

Basked, hid in loathsome den from glare of day,

Constrictor, bloated with foul victim caught,

Half torpid stretched till hunger him ywrought

To rear his crest, and drag his fearful trail,

With vigour bold, as though his maw had nought,

Or ample fare had gorged, whose eye glared bale,

In ready act to seize, ’neath folds that death entail.

LXXXIV.

Creatures so formed by Nature cruel shown,

Nature corrupted from its pristine state,

That bounded once in innocence long flown,

Ferocious seen in couching posture wait,

Malignant, that no kindness can abate,

By man’s transgression branded by the fall,

Once playful, docile, gentle in their gait,

’Mid happy Eden herded one and all,

Scenes of soft love, and peace, what bliss do they recall.

LXXXV.

“And yet I see, by ancient seer foretold”

(So spake the poet, kindling at the thought),

“I see that glorious prophecy, of old,

The dawn of that millennium peaceful taught,

When earth shall smile with loveliness o’erfraught;

Lion and tiger roam in concord meet;

The wolf and lamb then harmlessly consort;

While with the crested snake, in dalliance sweet,

The little child shall play, nor fear the pard’s retreat.

LXXXVI.

“And man his fellow-man shall hurt no more,

By war and rapine to destroy his kind;

But gentle peace shall charity restore,

And all the virtues in one union bind

In chords of love, where hatred filled the mind;

The glittering spear a ploughshare shall become,

And the sharp sword a pruning-hook consigned;

Bellona dread no longer heard to roam,

But quietude doth reign in man’s disturbless home.”

LXXXVII.

“’Tis time we now depart this shaggy wild,

To lead your steps to more inviting scene--

To yonder grove, where all the air is mild,

And trees o’erhung with ever-during green--

Through opening where the blue sky shines between.”

To which fair spot they speedy bend their way,

Each marvelling what sight might there be seen;

Yet nothing loath such windings loved to stray,

And listen to their guide, and all he had to say.

LXXXVIII.

For he discoursed as eke a poet might,

To while away the time in pleasant talk;

And not a brook that bubbled in their sight,

Or stream that cross’d their wild entangled walk,

Or hedge flower seen to stray, or lowly stalk,

But yielded subject for the thoughtful mind,

Which worldly scenes may try in vain to balk,

For these are Nature’s teachings--books to find

Sibylline leaves, that leave no rankling thorn behind.

LXXXIX.

They now had entered that delicious grove,

Which they whilome in distance loved to view,

Through shady brake, with careless boughs enwove,

Inviting entrance where the hawthorn grew;

That now enticed their footsteps hither drew,

When on a sudden opened wide a scene

That Oberon might envy, with his crew,

To gambol there upon the smooth-shorn green,

And round about it dance with his swift-footed queen.

XC.

Fair nodding trees in varied foliage drest,

Encircled yon smooth plat of fairy green,

Where birds of Paradise, with golden crest,

Sat on the boughs, in glossy plumage seen;

The warbling choir poured forth from thicket’s screen

Mellifluous song, that fill’d the charmed ear;

Sweet odour-dropping flower did twine, and lean

Its lovely head in wild profusion near,

And drank in nectared dew that hung in pearl-drops clear.

XCI.

Here Nature’s fruitful store was lavish spread:

The citron, pomegranate, luxurious hung,

While burnish’d fly, by fragrant petals led,

With velvet wing pursued its flight among

Flowers, and dainties that Pomona flung;

’Twas such like scene \_his\_[A] wand’ring footsteps drew

To wilds of Surinam, ’mid branches slung,

The wood-bird’s song to learn, their habits view--

From morn to dewy eve his loved task did pursue.

XCII.

That sweet enclosure’s soft enchanting mead

Did so delight the crowd to linger there,

That they at once like children take the lead,

Joyous to roam withouten fear or care,

Pursuit of pastime eagerly to share,

Or breathe the vernal gale. There branches hung

With fruit in clust’ring ripeness did appear;

While notes that through the woods melodious rung,

Like aerial music heard through fairy island sung.

XCIII.

They still had lingered ’neath harmonious sound,

Nor cared they from that valley sweet to part,

Where lovely verdure overspread the ground;

Though called to leave, they left with heavy heart,

As their right trusty guide began to start,

For other knowledge he must needs explore--

Pursuits of man make known, and works of art;

Yet Nature, boundless, has a teeming store,

Which time would not permit that he should tell them more.

XCIV.

“With microscopic eye we might explore

The insect world, o’erlaid with scales of gold;

Th’ aqueous deep, with all its finny store,

The secret channel of its depths unfold:

Monsters ten thousand fathoms sunk behold,

Which eye hath never seen, that swim the flood;

Such hidden wonders must remain untold.

Nature, all wondrous, whom we scanned but rude,

We fain must now break off, and quit its solitude.”

XCV.

“For know, Dan Fantasy, ye list’ning crowd,

When in saloon of tap’stry late ye gazed,

In audience seated, girt in tunic proud,

Elf-like, that drew your wond’ring look amazed,

Whose flowing robe of sapphire ye bepraised,

Did strict enjoin, I nothing should withhold

That can instruct the mind excursive raised,

And by my art delight; while I unfold

Knowledge, all hidden searched, more dear than precious gold.”

CANTO III.

ARGUMENT.

The Porch of Art--Entrance thereto--A Sight of the

Pyramids--Statues at Memphis--Pompey’s Pillar--The Hanging Gardens

of Babylon--Pompeii--Palmyra--The Temple of the Sun--Wall of

China--The Eddystone--A more minute Survey of Art--The Gallery of

Painting--Statuary--Distant Music--The great Masters of Science and

Art pass in review, Raphael, &c., Milton, Newton--The Garden of

Delight--Shakspeare--Leaving the Vale of Tempé, they are led to the

Repository of Art, Armoury, &c.--Painted Glass--Models,

&c.--Mechanical Objects--Steam Power--The Printing Press--The

\_Times\_ Journal--Modern Improvements--Inventions--Progress of Art.

CANTO III.

XCVI.

To this great end he did them straightway lead

To yon fair other entrance, “Art” beknown,

Adjoining that of Nature; found indeed

A wild-formed way that we have rudely shown,

A frowning mass ’neath shadowy trees o’ergrown,

That formed a wild’rness and secluded spot;

But here proud masonry did th’ archway crown

With bust and bold device, time ne’er can blot,

That uncorroded stands in pillared strength, I wot.

XCVII.

“Behold the porch,” the lofty bard exclaimed,

“That leads to native art and works of man;

His ingenuity thus matured and warmed

’Neath genius, working out each mighty plan

That can engross, or fix the thought to scan

Th’ undying lay, or music’s thrilling chord;

Or painter’s skilful hand, that first began

From nature draw; or sculptor’s bust record

In Parian marble, starting into life restored.”

XCVIII.

The words scarce died upon his lips away,

When they the threshold crossed with hasty tread,

Each dwelling on what he, their guide, would say,

And what new marvels did enforce him lead,

And were they lovely things, or things of dread,

That he did ponder deep to them unfold;

Such thought came o’er them as they ’gan proceed,

When on their startled sight, in outline bold,

Arose a mighty pile, as seen in days of old.

XCIX.

There stood the wonder of the gazing earth,

The lofty pyramid by Cheops raised;

Three thousand years have vanished since its birth,

Whose pristine form the swarth Egyptian gaz’d,

As tow’ring high it met his sight amazed;

The glorious sunshine hath illumed its head,

And arrow’d lightning on its summit blazed,

As raging tempests all its fury shed--

Unscathed by fiery-bolt of heav’n’s artillery dread.

C.

Seen o’er yon arid waste, close by there stood

Those Memphian statues known through ages past,

Far-famed; of which the head of Memnon woo’d

Titan’s warm rays, symphonious in the blast,

Whose mournful cadence o’er the desert cast

Sounds oft emitted, heard to fill the air

In tones vibration swept too sweet to last,

That died away like music strange and rare:

When from that image struck angelic chords rose there.

CI.

They likewise looked upon a column fair,

In spiral beauty ’neath cerulean skies,

Formed of red granite, beautiful, and rare;

In fine proportion polished seen to rise

Its capitol, that drew admiring eyes,

Like “Pompey’s noble pillar” proudly named,

By fearless Tar once scaled that dared emprize;

Whose gallery’s height those vent’rous bold ones climb’d,

What will not Briton’s dare, for daring exploit famed.

CII.

There rose the wonder of the olden time,

Fair groves that seemed suspended from the sky,

In form an amphitheatre sublime,

Tier above tier in terraces spread high,

Dark shrubs and noble trees that met the eye--

A garden hung like Babylon’s of yore,

Whose walls that city girt in majesty,

Stupendous reared, as in her palmy pow’r,

With massy gates and towers, that frowned in grandeur hoar.

CIII.

Of all the glories that they yet beheld,

None in review surpass’d Pompeii’s site,

At foot of Mount Vesuvius reveal’d,

Which fifteen centuries have hid in night,

Stood there disclosed to each beholder’s sight;

A city dazzling in its pomp and gold,

Its palace gates, and nobles in their might,

And glittering troops, with shining halberts bold,

While luxury’s full tide through that famed city rolled.

CIV.

Pointing the clouds, bright golden fanes upreared,

On which the sun with unveil’d splendour shone;

Fountains and marble palaces appeared,

And living life beamed out in sculptured stone,

Whom eloquence, the warrior, genius own;

Painting and poetry, sister arts divine,

Perfection wrought, so exquisite made known--

Imaged to live, immortal in design.

Such gorgeous works graced art in age Pompeiian thine.

CV.

And rain’s greatness pass’d before their sight--

Princely Palmyra, glorious in decay;

The giant base, from which the shaft rose light,

That to the ether blue did soar away,

Crown’d by its capitol’s superb array;

Whose classic arch and columns beauteous stone

Formed proud piazza, or low prostrate lay

In scatter’d groups magnificent were shown;

Now stretched o’er Syrian waste, lone as the night wind’s moan.

CVI.

Surrounded by a spacious court there stood

The “Temple of the Sun,” a glorious shrine;

Its lone inhabitant was the Mameluke rude,

’Mid broken shaft, and cornice carved divine,

And exquisite pilaster’s wrought design;

Whose porch the Syrian devotee adored,

Where mystic rites were seen to blaze and shine,

Before the awe-struck multitude revered,

Where prostrate serf once bowed, and helmed chief with sword.

CVII.

From hence their eye a new direction found,

That caught their wonder and astonishment,

Where flanked there rose, with lofty turrets crowned,

A massy wall upreared in bold ascent,

With battlements all armed with deadly bent,

That stretched o’er mountain ridge its winding way

In many a league of wond’rous extent,

That length unlimited it did convey,

Like that through Tartar land, that rose above decay.

CVIII.

“One other object of man’s practised art,

Where ’mid the torrent wave he builds on high,

I would ye should behold ere we depart--

Famed bulwark Smeeton’s, of the sea and sky--

The rock-based Eddystone, that waves defy,

As surge loud roaring lifts its white-crest head,

Rocking th’ edifice in its energy;

That frowns defiance to the monster dread,

And back repels the flood, hurled to its stormy bed.

CIX.

“’Tis time we take a more minute survey

Of painting, sculpture, in its chisell’d grace.

Haste follow me, and I will lead the way,

Where master hand of genius you may trace

In canvass glow, or sculptor’s form embrace;

And where the thrilling soul of poesy,

With her enraptured sweet translated face,

That claims an essence that can never die

So much of heav’nly beam, of inborn energy.”

CX.

The crowd at once, as he thus forthway led,

Right gladly followed where he pleased to guide,

Till reached a vestibule, show’d arched o’erhead,

Which he to ope with key took from his side,

When straightway flung the creaking doorway wide,

That opened to a spacious gallery high,

Surpassing far-famed “Louvre” in its pride,

Or that of “Fonthill,” noble to the eye,

So vast its vista’s length, and glorious canopy.

CXI.

That noble gallery, hung with works of art

Which crowded every space, a goodly show;

A Claude’s soft tints did each fair charm impart,

The dreamy landscape of the summer’s glow,

Where love-sick swain might nurse his am’rous woe:

Such Poussin drew; while he, sublimely bold,

Great artist Angelo, like to heav’n’s bow

His pencil dipt radiant as molten gold,

Whose canvass glowing breathed all wondrous to behold.

CXII.

At further end of this proud gallery led

The charmed spectator to famed sculpture’s room,

Where statuary did infuse with life the dead,

So living like the marble did assume;

There seen to burst the portals of the tomb,

With dart erect to strike the deadly blow,

The grim fell tyrant of the grave’s deep gloom;

While eloquence seemed rife, with graceful flow,

The senate’s orator, and bard with pensive brow.

CXIII.

Sweet thrilling airs now met their ravish’d ear,

That sudden broke in ling’ring sweetness fell--

Now distant heard, now stealing softly near,

The senses wrapt in one enchanting spell:

Chords that a master struck, harmonious swell,

As Handel once in soul-absorbing mood,

By heav’n so taught, did seraph’s harpings tell,

When the full organ, borne on music’s flood,

Thrill’d the vast list’ning throng that ’neath th’ Abbey stood.

CXIV.

With that methought, with beck’ning silence grave,

Their tireless guide their mute attention sought;

With gentle tread did best behaviour crave;

So urged he those whom hither he had brought,

Then led them noiseless wrapp’d in deepest thought,

Where they might see, as in a vision’s trance,

Those whom the world hath art or science taught,

And not themselves be seen by any chance,

As figures ’fore them pass’d, a scene of strange romance.

CXV.

Great master spirits of a bygone age

Were here beheld, each in his fond employ

In which their lives were spent, and did engage

At utmost stretch their powers ’bove others joy:

Spurred on by Fame, tho’ hard to win, and coy,

Oft never reached till death hath crown’d with bays

The living found not, but neglects annoy,

In which they struggled hard thro’ nights and days,

In vain pursuit to gain the fleeting phantom--praise!

CXVI.

There Raphael’s form divine pass’d ’fore their eyes,

Poussin and Claude, with Angelo sublime,

Engaged in art that wakes awe’s deep surprise;

Salvator Rosa, painter for all time;

Rubens, whose easel gave the portrait prime;

And he, Correggio, artist great to name;

Reynolds and Lawrence, whom we gladly chime;

Fuseli bold, whose wildest flight doth claim

Praise, glowing praise, at sight of their immortal fame.

CXVII.

Appelles, too, whom nature drew to life,

And Phidias, famed for sculpture in his day;

Or he whose Trojan horse, with armed men rife;

Colossus huge of Chares, Rhodes’ display,

Beneath whose giant strides ship pass’d that way;

And Chantrey they beheld, whose chisel wrought

Sweet babes of loveliness, in slumber lay;

Baily, whose lovely Eve fresh fountain sought,

So seemed with breathing life the polish’d marble fraught.

CXVIII.

Then passing thro’ a lofty corridor,

By which their charmed conductor onward led,

That brought them to an old oak carved door,

Half ope’d, thro’ which a sombre light was shed,

That show’d the outline of a reverend head,

With flowing locks that graced his shoulders fell,

Absorbed as tho’ on dainty thought he fed;

Like old inspired man in hermit cell,

Or like to prophet seer, yon blind bard lone did dwell.

CXIX.

The hour it was of inspiration’s flow,

When the soul’s thoughts essay’d for utterance find,

In strains Æolian bade the blind bard glow,

As flow’d the argument to his great mind,

Sublimely sung the fate of lost mankind;

Words from his lips with glowing fervour fell,

As moved the burning seraph, bliss enshrined,

To touch his harp, to charm the heav’nly dell

With airs symphonious, such as choir of angels swell.

CXX.

And one they sought in other chamber found,

On telescope’s discoveries thoughtful bent,

That his hand wrought to gaze the stars around,

By science taught to read the firmament;

Careless were strew’d dials and prisms blent,

Tangents and globes, mechanic art’s design,

The youthful artist plann’d with mind intent;

Prismatic colours, with the zodiac shine,

And planetary orbs, their motions traced divine.

CXXI.

He, sage philosopher, absorbed in thought,

On geometric figures conning deep,

With algebraic skill each distance sought,

And ranged the field of stars with optic sweep;

Saw from his vantage ground discovery’s steep,

The balanced harmony of the nightly spheres

By gravitation’s laws their orbits keep:

Grand science, that repaid the toil of years!

’Twas so to Newton’s mind, great without boast appears.

CXXII.

Descending now what seem’d a marble flight,

That from a noble terrace winding led,

And brought them to a garden of delight:

Delicious groves, a blue sky over head,

Green alleys, whose unsullied verdure shed

Inviting softness, sunk in eve’s repose;

Such as Adonis found and made his bed,

Weary with hunting, sought his eyelids close,

And threw his dainty limbs--just such a spot he chose.

CXXIII.

The shadowy trees, thro’ which the flaming sun

With slanting ray fell on the velvet green,

Made graceful avenue to look upon;

Soft verdant slopes in distance lovely sheen,

Clear flow’d the rivulet far winding seen;

The plumaged bird, with golden glossy wing,

Was spied to dart thro’ foliag’d boughs between;

And minstrels heard thro’ thicket loud to sing,

Their sweet delicious notes caused wood and valley ring.

CXXIV.

There, on a bank of flowery verdure clad,

List’ning the harmony of wild songster sweet,

Half-dreaming sunk, with look nor blithe nor sad,

Where playful thought and muse inspired meet,

A noble countenance did beholder greet;

Whereat each wondered at that face divine,

And eagerly their guide ’gan loud entreat

Knowledge of him, whose form drew gazers’ eyne,

That paragon ’mong men, that did all men outshine.

CXXV.

“Those lineaments divine ye now behold”

(He answering spake, with animated tone),

“Of one whose name, to ages yet untold,

Shall like a phœnix rise and blaze alone;

No living wight can e’er approach his throne;

Born for all time, nature’s decipherer,

His likeness vain it is to look upon;

Famed son, of Tudor’s age the boast. Draw near,

Mark how the spirit’s glow lights up those features clear.”

CXXVI.

In fancy’s mood on gentle slope reclined,

Besprent with flowers that shed sweet fragrance round,

The poet, wrapt in vision of the mind,

Soared to fair regions of delight and sound;

The lovely haunts of fairy troop he found,

And there disporting hied right merrily;

No footing pleased him like to fairy ground,

Or so entic’d in musing’s hour to lie,

And ken the blissful bowers of clouds in amber sky.

CXXVII.

Inspired they saw the Swan of Avon stream,

Whose eye it glanced on earth, from earth to heav’n,

In a fine frenzy rolling, poet’s dream;

To him, supreme of mortals, gifts were giv’n,

That did partake ethereal baser riv’n,

As gold from dross or spark the metal flies;

The spirit’s essence, over matter striv’n,

And lief t’ escape its prison house ytries,

Far into empty space, winged sprite that never dies.

CXXVIII.

To him the air sent forth an aerial sound,

In strains unearthly borne, remote, then near:

Music of fairies as they feat the ground

By glimpse of moonbeam, heard to mortal ear,

And ply their tasks, and quaff their elfish cheer;

All nature vocal, every purling brook

Danced eddying forth in gurglings loud and clear;

And satyrs stole to gaze, from hidden nook,

While nymphs of glade and stream their secret haunts forsook.

CXXIX.

Leaving th’ enchantment of this wizard spot,

Whereto the Muses haunt th’ Aonian spring,

For genius culture fitted most, I wot,

When Nature lavish doth her dainties fling,

Hill, spring, and valley, all that she can bring,

To lap the soul in one Elysium dream,

And sing herself away on soaring wing;

Rapt poet’s land, and sweet enchanting stream,

Where fancy plumes her flight, as sinks Sol’s prancing team.

CXXX.

Others a noble band of spirits choice,

We fain unsought must leave illustrious names,

Made known from age to age with trumpet voice,

Poets’, and painters’, sculptors’, meed proclaims,

Unwist forsooth to them a world of fames;

They rest in peace, the dull cold ear of death

Heeds not applause once sought, far higher aims,

Than fading earth’s renown, and fleeting breath,

A loftier prize in view, a holier fadeless wreath.

CXXXI.

On other object and pursuit thus led,

Far from this scene of quiet’s rural space,

Too loath to quit its landscape lovely spread,

Its velvet lawn mote now no longer trace,

Or gold-fringed cloud that soars the heav’ns with grace,

Its groves, and murmuring streams, and purple sky,

And fanning air of Zephyr’s sweet embrace,

Enticing to the sense as incense nigh,

Such Tempé’s vale they leave ymolt with melody.

CXXXII.

These lonely scenes they fain must now forego,

Haunts of the Muses, and their fond retreat,

For sober “Art” their guide would eke them show,

Invention’s school where she doth hold her seat,

While onward led man’s cunning skill to weet,

That to a building brought at distance spied,

Which urged, them quicken now their sluggish feet,

So roadside travellers by their journey tried,

Press on their toilsome march the “hamlet” last descried.

CXXXIII.

The building gained of noble length was seen,

Of cunning workmanship’s device full rare,

With pillars curious wrought with frieze, I ween,

That show’d a portico most wondrous fair,

Than which no other could with it compare;

Its columns fluted alabaster white;

And marble figures graceful ranged appear,

In emblematic groups, a goodly sight,

With steps that led thereto, a wide ascending flight.

CXXXIV.

The door wide open flung, all eager press,

With expectation raised each mind was fraught,

For they did mickle of instruction guess,

Would hence ensue from what their guide had taught,

Whose converse lured them as he hither brought,

Like crowds enticed by some attractive sight,

Expectant rush and eagerly resort;

So fast they flock like wonder-gazing wight,

And fill the spacious floor, each struck with strange delight.

CXXXV.

Around was seen, in many a quaint device,

Target, and spear, and shield’s emblazonry;

The steel-clad warrior armed for val’rous prise;

In onset couched his lance, his prowess try

On charger fierce; while coats of heraldry,

And banners, martial ’neath the carved roof hung,

Artillery mounted hideous yawned close by,

Trophy of brass, with antlers huge, ymong,

With sturdy warder’s horn that loud o’er welkin rung.

CXXXVI.

The windows richly dight, with stained glass showed,

In brilliant colours formed, fair groups design,

That marked the skill th’ artist had bestowed,

Bright as the sunny landscape seen to shine

Where laughed the Graces, sketched with glow divine,

Peace, Plenty smiled with her o’erflowing horn,

And Bacchus quaff’d the grape’s delicious wine,

He, mighty Nimrod, chased the bounding fawn,

While Jubel struck the lyre, its chords to heav’n upborne.

CXXXVII.

The centre of that noble room was fill’d

With various models, deftly carved, and true,

The rocky base of Gibraltar, piled

In frowning strength, sterility to view;

Axle and wheel revolving turned, and screw,

Were here employ’d with nicely balanced skill,

The flying shaft, untiring did pursue

Its evolutions, while the grinding mill

With mechanism wrought, its unresistless will.

CXXXVIII.

The spinning-jenny’s rude simplicity,

With late improvements of an Arkwright wrought;

That greatest of inventions met the eye,

Its motions urged like living creature fraught,

All-powerful “steam,” a hissing demon taught

By Watt, ingenious made, to run with speed,

And round the globe distance to set at nought,

How would our first of Georges stare indeed,

To see our railroads take the start of prancing steed.

CXXXIX.

That mighty wonder of this teeming age,

And great mercurial power, the “printing press,”

Did next the troop of gazers deep engage,

Its vast machinery in its swift progress,

The like they ne’er had seen they did confess,

Its cylinders, and huge revolving wheel,

That set the whole at work with rapidness;

Their inward pleasure they could not conceal,

When struck the flying sheet its printing did reveal.

CXL.

That paragon of presses then was shown,

Where human art and skill were wond’rous blent,

Whom herald fame its prowess hath made known,

That in its stride the globe did circumvent;

The journal of the mighty “Times” far sent

To every land, o’er seas and mountains high:

Who can the power of its instrument,

Or record publish of its history,

Like Araby’s story, read of so marvellously.

CXLI.

How would a Caxton, with a look astound,

Could he pierce thro’ the gloom that shrouds his head;

With what surprise akin to awe profound,

To view his great invention so dispread,

The blaze would blind his eyes, so strongly shed,

So great the glare of knowledge bursting forth,

Compared with his own darksome day now fled;

Famed Woodfall, too, whose mortal labour wrought,

Laborious nights and days, outshone, eclipsed his worth.

CXLII.

A thousand other things Invention taught,

To bore the earth, or ocean’s bosom sweep,

Air-pumps, machines hydraulic, hither brought,

Or flying-bridge that rapid rivers leap,

Huge diving-bell, and plummets sounding deep,

Galvanic batteries, with the electric wire,

And instruments to measure mountains steep,

The microscope that marvels new inspire,

And Davy’s safety lamp, and telescope’s great pow’r.

CXLIII.

“Those I have shown are few of native art,

The pivot chief round which the world doth turn,

Great moving spring that action doth impart,

As heart’s pulsation shows that life doth burn,

To those who can progressive art discern,

What can withstand the great magician steam,

Progress of letters check who strive to learn,

’Tis like the streak of early morning’s gleam,

Or streamlet’s gentle rise that flows a mighty stream.

CXLIV.

“But now break off, ’tis time we now forego,

This school of art that doth entice us here,

My lord and master bade me further show

That other porch, whilome will soon appear,

His dear delight and mine to study there;”

The ardent poet kindling as he spake.

“Haste, follow me, yon lovely haunts to share,

Haunts of the muses;--fount of bliss partake,

Once drank, if pure the stream, that fount ye’ll ne’er forsake.

CANTO IV.

ARGUMENT.

The Porch of Learning--Its Appearance Described--The Appeal--An

Encomium on the Place--The Grove and Academy of Plato--Cicero’s

Villa--The Sea-shore--Athenæum--Its noble Apartment--Busts of great

Names--The Library--An Eulogy on Poetry--Emulation Inspired.

CANTO IV.

CXLV.

Anon he led the trooping crowd, right glad

His steps to follow on discovery bent,

For he had soothed their drooping spirits sad,

As with enchanter’s wand, where’er they went;

The hours with them were golden visions blent;

Aladdin’s lamp could not enchant them more,

Or fairy spell ywove to circumvent

The soul enchained, when wrapt in legend’s lore

Of dreams Hesperia’s grove, or some peace rippling shore.

CXLVI.

At length they reach that rugged steep ascent

And entrance fair, that led to Learning’s bow’rs,

Unfading laurels its habiliment.

The summit gained, sprung up eternal flow’rs,

Where zephyrs balmy breathed Aonian hours;

There dwell those virgins pure, the “sacred Nine,”

And mental vigour grows with all its pow’rs,

The mind’s unclouded seat, and sweet sunshine,

Where she may sit and muse, and bask in thought divine.

CXLVII.

On each side yonder arch Corinthian stood

Two noble pillars Parian marble white;

Its sculptured façade proud adornment show’d

The lyre, and oaten pipe and ploughshare bright;

Caduceus’ rod, Medusa direful sight;

Show’d far-famed ægis of Minerva dread;

Toga, and scroll, and wisdom’s owl of night;

The olive, and the lamp nocturnal shed,

Symbol of student’s toil, were here decyphered.

CXLVIII.

On pedestal, half raised on either side,

Two lovely statues, virgin nymphs, there stood;

A thoughtful air did on each brow abide,

As tho’ they mused in silent solitude:

Th’ historic muse was one, that did o’erbrood

On history’s page, fair Clio virgin hight;

And Calliope with eloquence endued,

Muse of heroic verse, her rapt delight;

’Bove all, Mæonides surmounted caught the sight.

CXLIX.

Nor cared they linger long that company,

For they impatient burned to enter there;

Their eye it caught its walks of pleasantry,

Its winding groves, and plots of green so cheer;

At once they enter, glad enough to peer

That sacred sweet enclosure fairy ground,

To which the sons of song, enticed near,

Do hail the spot, and learned ones abound,

Who here resort for lore, in happy groups were found.

CL.

“Ye grov’ling souls, whose only heed and care

Is pleasure’s wiles, or love of greedy gain,

Who ply your task with dull and leaden stare,

And to this clod of earth would still remain;

Who hug your chains of ignominy and pain,

The soul encaged like some poor silly bird,

That careth not its freedom to attain,

Or force its prison cage, so strongly wir’d;

Your bonds ye love too well ’gainst them to be conspir’d.

CLI.

“My pleasure ’tis a lovelier path to show,

That leads to more enduring happiness

Than your dull life, who grovel here below

Deep sunk in sordid low pursuit, I guess.

Your abject state is one of sad distress;

A higher destiny awaits you here,

More kin to minds whom nobler objects press,

To climb the steep ascent and proud career

Of knowledge nobly won in learning’s hemisphere.

CLII.

“Oh! that I could impart the same delight

I too have felt in this, the Muse’s seat,

To walk as tho’ by heav’nly radiance bright;

Such, such is knowledge in its gain, I weet--

Food of the gods, so sung is not more sweet,

Or that Hesperian fruit fabled of old;

Here only found in Pallas’ calm retreat,

Its dear delights, fond task to you untold,

Of which it doth partake of pleasures manifold.”

CLIII.

All rife with gladsome joy, the gather’d throng

Their leader crowd around where he may guide,

To saunter, if they will, green alleys ’mong,

Where thoughtful student, lull’d by streamlet’s glide,

Doth lonely haunt its margent banks beside,

To list sweet notes of Philomela’s lay,

Or Luna pale to watch, night’s lovely bride,

High ’bove the blue vault soar in bright array,

About her gems of stars that beautify her way.

CLIV.

There they beheld, in deep seclusion’s walk,

Embow’ring groves beloved by sage of yore,

Th’ “Athenian Bee,” so famed for wisdom’s talk,

Who here discoursed on theme of learned lore,

From his mind’s cell of philosophic store,

Instructive heard; in that Academy

In “Dialogues” its master did outpour

From lips all bland with sweet serenity,

And words of mild appeal enforced he did apply.

CLV.

From hence they did emerge from wood’s wild glade,

As travellers eke some opening bright are shown,

Right glad to quit the forest’s gloomy shade

For Sol’s blest beam, that thro’ the welkin shone;

A brawling stream thro’ valley wended lone,

A lovely dell, I ween, with villas crowned,

That overshaded was with dark trees grown,

And mountains swelling ’bove the clouds around--

A spot of lavish grace liken to fairy ground.

CLVI.

Retreat like this did Roman eloquence

Invite his guests his charming villa view,

Whose landscape did them fully recompense,

Who hither sought and did its bounds pursue,

Where solemn groves in rich luxuriance grew;

The willow there it kiss’d the laving stream,

As low it drooped to see its image true,

Thus calm reflected in that twilight gleam,

A shady haunt, I ween, dreamt of in airy dream.

CLVII.

And there, oft heard, the roar of ocean’s waves

Fall on the ear in sullen murmurs deep;

Chafed in its fury, madly wild it raves,

Its bosom restless that can never sleep;

The screaming petrel doth its surface sweep,

With joyous wing exulting in its flight,

As far it roams, or scales the rocky steep;

On such lone sounding shore, with wild delight,

Demosthenes declaimed ’bove foaming billows might.

CLVIII.

“But yon Athenian pile our steps invite--

Sacred enclosure, where the studious mind

Doth there resort, and find therein delight

To pore o’er records, annals of mankind,

Proud names of glorious memory consigned,

Long since lone dwellers of the silent tomb,

Whose works survive, a new existence find;

Beauties, long hid, fresh burst from Time’s dark womb,

So sparkling gem illumes with sudden light the gloom.”

CLIX.

So spake their guide with glow of ardent love,

For he whiloime had passed a winsome hour

Of dear delight, the studious soul can prove

Who oft hath felt its soft bewitching pow’r;

When syren poesy’s lov’d charms allure,

Its influence sweet doth feel like placid lake,

When the sun peers thro’ clouds that passing lower;

The world shut out, he doth indeed forsake

Its noisy clamour loud, and quiet study take.

CLX.

With feelings thus attuned he led the throng

To lofty entrance famed for Doric grace,

Thro’ which they glided quick, nor linger’d long

Its cupola to gaze and frieze-work trace,

But enter’d straight that learning’s pleasant place;

A noble fair apartment ’twas, I ween,

Rich mouldings skilful wrought it did embrace,

Pillars of porphyry polished bright were seen

In graceful rows, that gave a beauty to the scene.

CLXI.

Here busts of noble names surmounted stood,

Illustrious sons renowned in classic lore,

Those whom th’ immortal sisters ardent woo’d,

Or poured from intellect its richest store,

The treasury of mind’s electric pow’r;

’Mong men the chief divinest Shakespeare seen;

Milton, tho’ blind, sublimity his dower;

Hesiod and Homer in their glories sheen;

Bacon, Locke, Newton great, and Mantuan bard serene.

CLXII.

On num’rous shelves, arranged pile above pile,

Ten thousand volumes met the student’s eye,

Unique and scarce, black letter’s olden style,

Rare manuscripts, and missals could descry,

And pond’rous tomes of noble ancestry

Heraldic, and the illuminated page,

The tourney field, and martial chivalry,

In costly colours drawn, did them engage,

With many quaint device accordant with the age.

CLXIII.

In various wide compartments classified,

Man’s hist’ry handed down from age to age;

Geology, with strata-earth described;

Arts, science, and the biographic page;

With great discoveries of the olden sage;

Or modern ingenuity and skill,

Inventions new, and projects that engage

This ever restless era’s movements still,

That rolls its progress forth like waves’ resistless will.

CLXIV.

And there arranged were works of classic lore,

Deep physical, or structure of man’s frame;

The bibliopist’s and theologian’s store,

Whereas none nobler, or hath higher aim;

Ethics and science did assert their claim,

And jurisprudence with its code of laws;

With tomes of burning thought’s consuming flame--

Time’s test, and not ephemeral applause;

Writers of truth divine, who own a First Great Cause.

CLXV.

And poesy’s immortal gems were there,

Heroic, pastoral, and descriptive verse,

Elegiac and the lyric, moving tear,

Eclogue and lofty ode, I could rehearse,

As Petrarch’s sonnet, Laura’s heart to pierce;

All witching words, all thoughts of burning glow,

The soul’s rich mine extracted from its source,

Whose treasured heaps like golden ore did show

What hidden stores were there, th’ unquench’d spirit’s flow.

CLXVI.

Oh! poesy divine, enchanting maid,

What spell is thine, what ardour kindling soul!

What piercing sight, tho’ dark as owlet’s shade,

Can stay thy glance, thy pinion’s flight control?

The past and future o’er thy vista roll,

The mind’s creative pageantry sublime,

That forms th’ ideal shape and living whole,

Thy wizard wand can raise with charmed rhyme,

O’ersweep the bounds of space, and outstrip panting Time.

CLXVII.

No seat of learning gave a goodlier show,

Or Gottingen, or Upsall’s city famed,

Or Newton’s college, where bright Cam doth flow,

Or library famous Radcliffe’s donor named,

That oft th’ aspiring breast of student flamed,

Where Isis’ silvery stream doth murm’ring play,

And genius’ sons her studious cloister claimed,

So like in this academy might stray

All who for knowledge thirst, or marvels pleasant way.

CLXVIII.

And longer had they gazed, the wistful throng,

That studious nook and bookworm’s dormit’ry,

Where lone in thought his life did glide along,

In loop-hole sweet of marvellous story,

Nor cared in this retreat for aught to sigh

Save chronicle of what the great have writ,

Revered works of sage to glorify,

Repast that fed on gave new appetite,

Delectable when found, increasing man’s delight.

CLXIX.

And they no cared to quit its classic shade,

Had not their guide and beck’ning cicerone

First led the way to seek that sylvan glade,

Where four ways branched forth, the last unknown;

Nature, and art, and learning, he had shown,

It only now remained that science porch

(For man’s regard the loftiest, I must own)

Should straight engage their inmost souls’ research,

Upward to light the mind, as with a burning torch.

CANTO V.

ARGUMENT.

The Bard leads the way to the Entrance Porch of Science--Discourses

by the way--The Porch, and its Description--The Entrance and

Prospect--Sunrise--The Eagle, Falcon, and

Vulture--Noon--Sunset--The Nightly Tower--Its Ascent--Astronomers,

Galileo, &c.--Heathen Philosophers, Plato, &c.--A View of the

Starry Heavens--The Moon--A Moonlight Scene--The Vault of

Night--Planets--Milky Way--Harmony of the Earth’s Evolution, and

her attendant Planet--Reflections on the Immensity of the Universe.

CANTO V.

CLXX.

Marshalling the way, by tract untrod before,

Discoursing mainly on fair science theme,

Geology, and geometric lore,

Attraction’s laws, and rainbow optic’s beam,

Prismatic hues that Newton learned to gleam,

And gravity the fallen fruit made known

To his great mind, on whom discovery’s stream

Poured her clear light, and claimed him as her own;

Galileo, Pascal, Boyle, renowned names, were shown.

CLXXI.

Beguiled with knowledge and instructive speech

Until they gained the porch, fair science, hight,

By that fair sylvan glade they joy’d to reach,

That marv’lous led to pleasantries delight:

The spot whereof their guide had charmed the sight

With bright illusions, not less bright than true;

Revealed again the past, tho’ hid in night,

And what was old once more revived as new;

Things ’neath, and on the earth, those ’bove, they now pursue.

CLXXII.

With awe akin to rev’rence they beheld

What seem’d a porch or entrance bold display’d,

Baseless as tho’ on floating clouds propell’d,

Yet show’d fair columns thro’ the mist array’d,

Like those of Pallas, half obscured in shade,

With figures geometral carved in stone,

That did adorn that portico’s façade;

The zodiac signs and optic tube were shown,

And here Urania crowned with stars emblazoned shone.

CLXXIII.

They entered straight up steps that rose in air,

So buoyant seemed that lofty flight’s ascent,

From whose high top it oped on vision fair,

Not goodlier showed from mount or battlement,

That much they wondered at its wide extent;

All marv’lous fill’d with that enticing view,

The ambient air they seemed to circumvent,

As glanced their sight o’er dizzy mountains blue,

And ever varied sky, o’ertinged with golden hue.

CLXXIV.

For now they took their stand on some huge height

Apennine, or like to Caucasus upborne,

From whence they could descry the golden light,

When Phœbus first unbars the gates of morn,

Dispread his amber golden locks unshorn,

When as a god his forehead’s orient beam

Doth usher in the ruddy streaked dawn,

When Phæton-like he guides his fiery team,

Whose axle’s glow doth fright dark Erebus’ foul dream.

CLXXV.

Far from the earth they tracked the eagle’s haunt,

They saw the king of birds his eyry rear,

Watching his clam’rous brood of eaglets gaunt,

Or pounce for prey, then soaring upward bear,

With cruel talons strong, the kid to tear;

They saw him take his strong and awful flight,

With dusky pinion cleaving wide the air,

O’er turmoil wave beneath, or craggy height,

There gazing on the sun his fixed undazzled sight.

CLXXVI.

And other birds of prey, with rav’nous maw:

The falcon, stooping o’er his quarry weak;

The vulture, horrid bird, neck bare they saw,

Scenting the air his carrion foul to seek,

And glut on entrails with his tearing beak;

Like that fierce bird Prometheus cruel found,

That gnawed his heart, and did its vengeance wreak,

Upon his agonizing victim bound

That ever fed, and found new flesh at every wound.

CLXXVII.

Lo! now bright Sol had risen high, and strong

The mountains crimsoned o’er were capp’d with gold;

O’er tow’r and tree the radiance stole along,

Swept o’er the vale, while wave empurpled roll’d;

And nature smiled, her glories to unfold;

The warbling choir at heav’n’s gate did sing;

The air, with teeming life rejoicing, told

Of insects’ jubilee, and their off’ring,

That bask in sunny ray, or spread the burnished wing.

CLXXVIII.

The zenith pass’d, the glorious orb of day,

His sloping wheels fast hast’ning to the west,

Dispreads his gorgeous vestment’s gold array,

Swift hurrying on his fiery team to rest,

The goal to reach, fair islands of the blest;

A voice went up from ocean, earth, and air,

In pæons heard spontaneous loud addrest,

That fill’d th’ empyrean vast with acclaim clear:

Oh! would but thankless man record the Giver’s care.

CLXXIX.

Yet what sublimer can enchant the sight,

Or can with its magnificence compare

Its evening setting and its morning light,

Of which mankind its daily glories share,

Nor sees the Hand that guides the blazing sphere,

That up the shining way treads like a god,

Diurnal seen, if seen with brutish stare,

Nor aught attracts beyond this earthly clod,

Their being’s end and aim is dormouse-like to plod.

CLXXX.

But lo! the shadows dim like pale ghosts rise,

That warns we should descend this promont’ry,

And gain yon tow’r, just seen beneath the skies

In twilight gloom of deep solemnity;

The air breathes still as silence seated by,

That suits our purpose o’er the heav’ns to gaze:

There trace the Hand that spreads the stars on high,

Man’s noblest thoughts in adoration raise,

And in the wond’rous search his great Creator praise.

CLXXXI.

They eftsoons gained that gray-worn lonely tow’r,

Whose spiral stone-flight they ’gan quick ascend;

Led by the bard, they reached its secret bow’r,

Where nightly watchers of the stars oft wend,

And night with ebon wand his rites attend,

Joined with Hecâte, solemn mysteries keep;

Here the pale lamp its glim’ring flame did lend,

Faint to illume th’ apartment high and steep,

Where starry science oft pursued her studies deep.

CLXXXII.

In such a tow’r Philosophy, heav’n born,

Hath here, by glimpse of chaste Diana’s ray,

Outwatched the “Bear” with optic glass till morn,

When Lucifer’s bright forehead dawned the day.

Such drew the Tuscan artist to survey

Th’ etherial field, discoveries new t’ unfold,

Which Pythagoras early led the way,

Hence Copernicus drew his system bold,

And proved the central sun, round whom the planets roll’d.

CLXXXIII.

“Plato divine, so call’d, the learned great,

From such an elevation thus could scan

The concave heav’n;--make known a future state,

A Being vast supreme define to man,

As far as reason of an heathen can,

That hath not Revelation’s light to guide,

Unknown to him redemption’s mighty plan,

Eke hid from Cato, Socrates beside,

Bless’d truth revealed to man, in which he can confide.”

CLXXXIV.

Thus spake the bard with sweet digressive speech,

That from his lips like Hybla honey fell,

On whom his list’ners hung as he did teach

With winning voice that seemed to please them well;

Not fair Calypso, from her grotto cell,

With more endearment drew Ulysses’ son,

Or did enforce, like Mentor, grave counsel

In wisdom, science’ walks, delightful shown,

As his recital gave, and charmingly made known.

CLXXXV.

Ascending, then, its frowning battlement,

From which the field of space they did command,

Wide as from Pharos seen for bold extent--

Ocean and sky, and point of farthest land;

There upward pointing rose from lofty stand,

Like Herschel’s telescope of mighty pow’r,

Whose pond’rous tube surprised the gazing band,

And more amazed when told how vast its tour,

That compass’d rolling suns, planets, and stars obscure.

CLXXXVI.

See! Hesperus now leads the starry host,

With silver-zoned Diana, goddess fair,

Who love-enamoured came to Caria’s coast,

To Latmos mountain nightly did repair,

Endymion boy to kiss with glossy hair,

Fabled in youthful loveliness to sleep;

And Orion, whom pale Phœbe’s love did share;

There glitt’ring Pleiades calm watchings keep,

That bid the sailor steer in safety o’er the deep.

CLXXXVII.

Full orbed the moon, “Luna” yclep’d in heav’n,

See how she parts the silv’ry skirted cloud,

That o’er her pathway wends by winds fast driv’n,

And doth her form of beauty oft enshroud,

’Neath yon pavilion as her head she bow’d,

Or mounting soars once more the azure night;

Not fairer her whom robed as Isis show’d,

Egypt’s fair queen in her adornment bright,

That drew the Roman’s gaze and love-entranced sight.

CLXXXVIII.

Soaring ’mid highest noon her lucid beam,

Illumes with mellow light, rock, hill, valley,

And nodding wood, and rivers flowing gleam,

And white sail seen in calm serenity,

And limpid spring heard murm’ring pleasantly;

While curfew’s chime swings loud from distant shore,

Where silvery moonbeams fall on tow’r and tree,

Nor voice of multitude like ocean’s roar

Disturbs the tranquil night, Salvator’s soft-like hour.

CLXXXIX.

See yon expanse fretted with golden fires,

In mazy dance their several orbits wend

Harmonious round, that never stops nor tires,

A flight immeasurable that knows no end,

In number infinite, that cannot blend!

Each nicely balanced by attractions pow’r

And centrifugal force, their course attend;

Projectile hurled on their stupendous tour,

Orb following orb sublime in one eternal sphere.

CXC.

Yon planet see, nearest the orb of day,

Mercury of sparkling red, great Hermes named;

And Venus fair, with white and purest ray;

Our Earth, and Mars with fiery aspect flamed,

Emblem of war, that terror, discord, claimed;

And Jupiter, resplendent orb of light,

With his attendant moons and belts so famed;

Ringed Saturn, dimly red with sluggish flight,

Whose children Rhea bore devouring quenched in night.

CXCI.

And far beyond yon outer circle’s range

The Georgium Sidus wheels thro’ space immense;

And more, eccentric Comet’s orbit strange,

That frights the nations as it flames intense,

The brandished scimitar of Omnipotence,

Or shoots a train that arc of heav’n doth span,

Onward through space; nor back returneth hence,

For philosophic eye again to scan,

Till ages thrice have swept the myriad race of man.

CXCII.

See yon faint stream of light the heav’ns embrace,

The galaxy or milky-way so hight,

Like nebula spread infinite o’er space,

Studded in clusters thick as Bootes bright;

The greater and the lesser Bear of night,

Conspicuous seen athwart the northern sky,

That cheers the tempest-tost ’plex’d seamen’s sight,

And polar fixed star he doth descry,

To guide his vent’rous bark, borne on the billows high.

CXCIII.

These seven revolving planets, ever bright,

That round our system’s sun all glorious roll,

And shine all radiant with a borrowed light,

Form but a section of the mighty whole.

The thought it kindled up the poet’s soul,

To stretch her pinion o’er the vast profound,

System on system ’bove the starry pole,

That man’s poor intellect it doth astound,

Whose flight, like Icarus, soon hastens to the ground.

CXCIV.

“Know then” (so ’gan the rapt inspired bard)

“This glorious earth, on which we live and move,

Sings as it spins (its Maker’s chief regard,

Scene of man’s fall, and eke redeeming love),

In loveliest harmony like yon orbs above;

With gentle slope that gives the varied year

Revolving, deviates not its track to rove,

And on its axis doth diurnal steer:

Hence day and night, sweet change, harmonious doth appear.

CXCV.

“And yon fair moon, gem of the silent night,

Is earth’s attendant handmaid seen to wait;

Her head ’kerchiefed in fleecy robe of light;

Not eastern bride displays more lovely state,

Or Peri hath a lovelier, softer gait;

I’ve wooed her many a time with love-strained eye,

When she the heav’ns hath trod, with look elate,

A flood of light outpouring from the sky,

Or bowed her radiant brow ’neath cloudy canopy.

CXCVI.

“Our system vast stupendous to descry,

Yon golden sun and planets wheeling round

Is but a speck lost in immensity,

So infinite, amazing, and profound;

Thought, reason, staggers with a look astound,

Heights to explore and depths unknown to delve;

As the least grain, where ocean’s sands abound,

So doth our planetary world revolve

As small, compared with space, nor missed though it dissolve.

CXCVII.

“How like an angel sings this moving globe,

Shining resplendent thro’ her orbit’s flight,

Majestic moonlike doth her form enrobe,

But larger seen amid the vault of night

Than our fair satellite, climbing heav’n’s height,

Yet to th’ universe but a twinkling star,

As Hesperus, or Lucifer as bright,

From utmost Ferro seen, or Borneo far,

So ’mid the firmament earth wends her crystal car.

CXCVIII.

“How infinite the thought, surpassing great,

That this huge globe, with all its pomp and pride,

Mountains sublime, and nature’s awful state;

Its sea of wonders, glorious in its tide,

That rolls remotest shores its billows wide;

Its temples, glorious to beholder’s eye;

Triumphs and gorgeous pageantry, beside:

Though all dissolve and into chaos fly,

Creation still revolves, nor lays her glories by.

CXCIX.

“Gaze as you will, and multiply your pow’rs,

’Tis but a little span ye scan at most,

A moment’s ken, compared with minutes, hours,

Or countless years, to tell yon shining host:

Height above height, a world’s unbounded coast,

And other heav’ns and star-bespangled sky;

Could we the boundless search exploring boast,

Whose light more swift than thought doth speed and fly,

Nor yet our globe hath reached, travelling immensity.

CC.

“Suffice we must our higher flight suspend,

Our wing restrain, conjecture infinite,

‘In wand’ring mazes lost,’ withouten end,

Blinded our gaze with uncreated light,

And only giv’n to immortal sight;

Those shackles loosed that doth our spirit bound,

Ere we can entertain such vision bright,

That mortal man exclaims, with deep astound,

How wonderful Thy works, how marvellous are found!’”

CANTO VI.

ARGUMENT.

A Recapitulation of the Wonders Shown--The Proper Use of Knowledge

enforced--The Infinite Value of Man’s Soul and Highest Destiny--An

Inducement the Happiness of the Blest--The Scenes of Life chequered

for a Wise Purpose--Man’s Redemption--The Summons--The Poet’s

Departure--The Crowd, led by Sir Page, resume their Common Dress;

after which they are brought by Sir Herald to the Postern Gate; who

checks the Rabble Rout by a Blast of his Horn--The Crowd

dismissed--Disperse their several Ways--Variety of their

Pursuits--Dan Fantasy’s Palace is again illuminated--Other Folks

invited--Sir Herald Prepares a Second Time to sound.

CANTO VI.

CCI.

“Thus have I pictured what my art could show;

Some fair illusions hidden brought to light:

The depth of earth, the bowell’d earth below,

Dark as the gloomy reign of Pluto’s night;

And ocean’s secret wonders bared to sight,

Its viewless monsters and its treasure’s heap;

Gems costly hid in many a cluster bright,

Embedded sunk as mine Golconda deep.

These have we gazed, and shown where Neptune’s waters sleep.

CCII.

“And we have looked on Nature’s lovely face,

The smiling landscape and the glorious sun,

Gilding the morn to run his radiant race;

Mountains and glaciers dread we’ve gazed upon;

The mighty flowing river seen to run;

Nature beheld in woody-wild and glen,

’Mid rites of blood by ancient Druid stone;

Have tracked the savage beast in hidden den,

And swelling torrent’s roar, far from the haunts of men.

CCIII.

“The wondrous works of Art we have display’d,

Temple and column tow’ring to the sky;

The chisel’s skill, in statuary array’d,

And living canvass’ glowing imagery;

And walls adorned with ancient tapestry.

Some things of marvel looked with awe upon,

That still exist to all posterity;

Smile o’er the desert reared its ancient stone,

And have the pyramids and hoary Stonehenge shown.

CCIV.

“And some illustrious darling sons of fame

Have in review pass’d glorious in our sight,

And left behind them an enduring name,

Whose works refresh our spirits, and invite,

Fadeless as flowers that drink ambrosial light,

A flame that sheds a never quenchless ray;

So shines Hespèrus, sparkling through the night;

Or Lucifer that ushers in the day:

Such in their hemisphere ‘Learning’ and ‘Mind’ display.

CCV.

“The feather’d fowl, that upward heav’n doth scale,

These we have followed in their dusky flight;

The eagle strong, or lark, or loud land-rail,

And vulture fierce, with cruel talons’ might

Bearing his victim to his craggy height;

View’d all the air with living creatures swarm,

Dance in the sunbeam with a golden light:

These we discoursed, enraptured with the charm

Of Nature fair dispread, that doth the fancy warm.

CCVI.

“And last we did direct your utmost gaze

To yonder golden fires that blaze on high,

Filling the mind with wonder and amaze;

Her boldest pinion vain attempts to fly,

Or threshold reach, its glories to descry;

She cannot stretch so far, her vision dim

Sees but the outskirts of immensity.

The fulness of His glory dwells with Him;

We but the shadow scan--how great to earth’s pilgrim!

CCVII.

“But vain the search, if scarce no higher aim

Than curious wonder, or mere idle gaze;

Employ our reason, that hath loftier claim,

No less than our immortal nature raise

To Him the giver,--all adoring praise

His matchless works, in glory infinite!

Vast in an atom as yon starry blaze;

So great the pow’r display’d to mortal sight--

So skilful in design, past searching out His might!

CCVIII.

“For knowledge vain it is, and reason’s pow’rs,

If man’s chief end it doth not teach enforce,

And bid him turn from earth to heav’nly bowers,

The soul’s implanted wish and purest source;

But downward dragg’d by sin’s debasing choice,

His noble spirit vain essays to rise,

Till heav’nly guidance leads to holier course,

And cause him mount once more his native skies,

For which he ardent pants, for which he inward sighs.

CCIX.

“For oh! how vast is one immortal soul,

Its end, capacity, duration great:

Compared, how small creation’s mighty whole,

Earth, with its glorious canopy of state,

That last must wane and meet its doomed fate;

But man’s immortal spirit ever lives,

For him, new clothed, eternal garments wait,

Fresh amaranthine bloom, and bliss derives,

His being, powers, renewed, godlike Creator gives.

CCX.

“Such destiny, co-eval with the skies,

Is man’s, whose thought most like to angel’s soars,

With mind endued pre-eminent, that tries

To cast its slough, and try its latent pow’rs,

A new existence found ’neath blissful bowers;

So shines the chrysalis, with golden wing

Escaped to sip on nectar-dropping flow’rs.

If, when life’s trammels burst, new life doth spring,

Embrace, hold fast the Truth, seek mercy’s offering.

CCXI.

“For why should creature man not strive for good,

And evil fly, to gain eternal joy;

Climb Pisgah’s height, where Hebrew prophet stood,

And gaze the ‘promised land,’ where no alloy,

But pleasures manifold for e’er employ

Those who have cross’d by faith dark Jordan’s stream;

There sin doth ever flee, nor care annoy,

In that unsullied state, whose light doth beam,

A holy radiance shed--‘Redeeming love’ the theme.

CCXII.

“And all that pleasant is through earth dispread,

How chequer’d all things with its opposite;

The azure sky with clouds soon overspread,

Zephyr the storm, heat cold, and day the night,

And summer’s glow by burly winter’s might;

So human joy and sorrow mingled flow,

Else earth would bind us with too much delight,

And thus enchain the soul to things below.

Oh! blessed, holy cross, that doth our folly show.

CCXIII.

“What love and pity for our fallen state--

Almighty arms extended, us to save!

Who of ourselves could not release our fate,

But unredeemed sink hopeless to the grave.

Thrice blessed gift that proffered mercy gave

In that vicarious sacrifice of love!

Whom scorn and cruel death did righteous brave,

All for our good, who did but rebels prove.

Oh! love of heav’nly God, such clemency to move!

CCXIV.

“But list! we must break off, a well-known tread

Comes softly hither, sent by my good lord,

That bids me linger not, but quickly sped,

Nor longer discourse can for you afford,

Though willingly I would, be ye assured,

On works of highest God for you relate,

So that some truths my feeble speech record.

Dan Fantasy holds audience, and doth wait

Anon my presence, whilst Sir Page attends ye straight.”

CCXV.

With that Sir Page, with courtier-like address,

Eftsoons his message to the bard made known;

Then ’gan adroitly marshal lead the press

To where the stately pile ’mid cedars frown,

That brought them to the entrance hall we’ve shown;

When here the poet waved the crowd adieu,

And onward passed, from their lost sight soon flown,

When he, Sir varlet Page, attention drew

To ante-room, to doff their borrowed garments new.

CCXVI.

And as he did disrobe from their attire,

Each to resume his own habiliment,

A roguish chuckle, with an elfish leer,

Upon his pliant features came and went,

Show’d mischief lurked, but was suppress’d instant;

And then anon obsequious seen to stand,

And bowed his head, and low like courtier bent;

With graceful stride then led the motley band,

Where Herald mounted rode in outer court at hand.

CCXVII.

Who, thus instructed, led to postern gate

The rabble rout, for so they push’d and strove;

So in this world, each jostling crowds his mate

To push him by, and strive before him move;

So urged the crowd, more like to herd or drove,

While he Sir Herald’s charger paw’d the ground,

Impatient check’d his fiery speed to prove;

Sir Gallant’s bearing awed the throng around,

When high he held his horn, as if prepared to sound.

CCXVIII.

One shrill loud blast the noisy rabble stay’d,

That far resounded through the spacious court,

And with less tumult silenced them afraid,

And caused their egress make with grave deport;

For rude disorder was forbid resort,

Nor could admittance to that palace gain,

But disobeyed sore punishment it brought.

This he, Sir Herald, hinted to restrain

Their rude unseemly din, from which they did refrain.

CCXIX.

The lofty entrance-porch they straightway reach,

Through whose wide gate the multitude outpour;

The world before them spread, o’er which to search

For happiness, perchance for them in store,

An “\_Ignis Fatuus\_” proved in days of yore;

If pleasure be their aim, or sordid gain,

Such do their seekers cheat for evermore;

While others, virtuous knowledge to attain

Far wiser, deem all else as profitless and vain.

CCXX.

Some charm’d by Art, others by Science led,

And Nature some her secret wonders trace;

Fresh beauties found thus lavishly dispread,

So far surpassing art in bounteous grace;

Some thoughtful seek the darling Muse embrace,

While, Cincinnatus like, some wield the plough;

Or laws bestow, Lycurgus of their race;

Soft pleasure seek, or love for mammon show;

Or sluggish, sottish live, like swine in filthy slough.

CCXXI.

Their several ways dispersed, and noisy sound

Of rabble route, that silence scared to hear,

Which glades and woods affrighted heard around,

Unusual uproar and loud discord near,

Whereat went bounding forth the startled deer,

Whose forests have resumed their silent reign,

With here and there a note of wild bird clear,

Mellifluous heard with sad and mournful plain;

While all reposed as if nought living did remain.

CCXXII.

The slow descending sun hath shed his beam

With slanting ray, that fall on turret bright,

And shone on oriel stained with golden gleam;

Its porphyry pillars blazed with dazzling light,

Like fair enchantment to beholder’s sight,

A palace spied of some dark wizard king;

But now the shadows dim of coming night

’Gan hover round, its gloomy folds to fling

O’er every living wight and every living thing.

CCXXIII.

Its ling’ring shadows scarce had waned their last

When sudden brilliance struck beholder’s sight,

As through that long saloon its lustre cast,

And show’d eftsoons a court was held that night,

In which Dan Fantasy took much delight,

And more, that child of earth should roam his ground,

And pleasures manifold that there invite.

This known, Sir Herald, pausing, gazed around,

Then blew once more his horn, for other folk to sound.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

ON VIEWING THE TESSELLATED PAVEMENT

LATELY DISCOVERED ON THE SITE OF THE LATE FRENCH PROTESTANT CHURCH,

THREADNEEDLE STREET.

We gaze upon yon relic of past time

As on a glorious vision fair displayed,

That passes in review, held up sublime,

The pageantry of other years arrayed!

A thousand generations leap to life;

The startling millions that now slumber on,

They seem to wake again to busy strife

As fancy gazes on yon ancient stone!

The Roman, clad in panoply of steel,

And senators of once imperial Rome,

Here might have traversed; here been seen to kneel

The cowled monk, as ’neath some shrine or dome;

Or Norman, famed for deeds of chivalry,

Saxon and Briton on thy surface stood;

And borderer brave, intent on revelry,

Or maiden seen in glow of youthful blood,

Yet tim’rous as the fawn, with lightsome tread,

Fresh as the rose-blush, and as fragrant too,

With flutt’ring hope, to meet her lover led

On wings of love, to speak his passion true.

Or yonder antique masonry restored

Might to some Roman bath have led the way,

Where pontiff, cardinal, or patrician lord,

Here could resort at close of summer’s day!

All is conjecture what thou once hath been;

Thy annals lost amid the lapse of time;

Yet thou in thine own garniture art seen,

Fresh as in ages past, when swell’d the curfew’s chime.

ON THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ROYAL EXCHANGE BY FIRE, ON THE NIGHT OF

JANUARY 10, 1838.

“A heap of dust alone remains of thee.”

Yon belfry clock, that struck the hour, has ceased its wonted chime,

While points[B] the hand the fatal hour that closed its note of time:

The fatal hour, when lurid flame the noble fabric razed,

And threw a glare o’er heav’n’s high vault, as fierce it upward blazed.

What fearful desolation reigns where yon piazza rose,

Nor busy tread of merchants more awakes its deep repose;

Some weeping Marius there might sit and mourn thy fallen stone,

Where ruin marks, with silence dread, thy corridors o’erthrown!

Thou proud Exchange, alas, art fall’n; thy statues, rais’d to kings--

Thy Tudors, Stuarts, Brunswick’s line, are dust, becrumbled things!

A heap of marble relics now, where late, in proud array,

They graced thy famed quadrangle, crowned in regal vesture’s sway!

Thy founder’s[C] statue rears its head amid the scatter’d heap,

And had the marble life, it might amid the ruin weep;

While undisturb’d still stands erect the Second Charles[D] alone,

Who, where yon centre pillar rests, first laid thy structure’s stone.

Thy well-worn pavement echoes not with hasty footsteps’ tread

Of merchants met, of ev’ry clime, by eager traffic led;

Deserted now thy crowded walks, by Frank, Gaul, Turk, and Jew,

And Muscovite, and Hollander, and Indian’s swarthy hue!

Th’ accustom’d bell gives tongue no more from out its iron throat,

To summon groups of barterers, with loud and stunning note,

To hasten from the Babel scene ere massy gates they close,

And leave anon the echoing roof to stillness and repose.

Farewell, thou once fam’d edifice! whose grandeur now is flown;

We mourn thy drear deserted walls, thy sceptred kings o’erthrown;

Thy mournful dirge was chimed[E] by thee, upon that fatal night,

When thou, a burning, blazing pile, fell on the sick’ning sight!

LINES,

ON HEARING OF AN INFANT, DURING WEANING, BEING FOUND IN ITS NURSERY

SLEEPING ON ITS MOTHER’S PICTURE.

O! that I could sweet speech, or utterance, give

To lips of thine, dear infant--words to live;

To tell of all that throbbed thy gentle heart,

Whose tender grief no language can impart:

How heard to call in vain, “Sweet mother, dear!”

In melting tones that told she was not near;

Her accents came not, with its soothing voice

To glad thy spirit, and thine ear rejoice,

And dissipate the sadness on that face,

Or kiss that cheek, and give the fond embrace.

Methinks I see thee, on thy nursery-floor,

Pleased with each toy and plaything as before,

Yet ever and anon a tear would stray,

Her form remembered, in its childish play;

Baulked in its hopes, with sad half-pouting look,

That spoke of sorrow young, and hard to brook,

Whose inward thought and lisping tongue would say,

“Why, mother dear, ah! why art thou away?”

Then for a time, with glistening tears still wet,

Renew glad sports, maternal smiles forget;

Ah! yes I see thee, lovely sleeping boy,

Tired with the pastime of each headless toy,

With circling arms, of dimpled roundness seen,

As though thou didst on her dear bosom lean,

Thy mother’s “Semblance” in the nursery found,

Clasping it closely in affection round.

Imaged in sleep (for childhood hath its dream),

Perchance of her, was had a passing gleam,

Or felt caresses of a parent’s love,

Nestling in arms of fondness, like the dove,

And on those lips sweet kisses soft imprest,

Whose smiles beguiled thee, and whose love carest;

These floated gently, vision’s dream of flowers,

That came to vanish with awakening hours,

While absence caused fresh poignant grief renew,

The loss deep felt, ah! felt, dear child, by you;

Sleep on, loved innocent, why wake to grieve,

When thou such balmy comfort dost receive?

Why could we wish those curtained lids unclose,

Disturb thy slumber, happy in repose,

Its little cares now hushed, again recall,

And hear the sobbing babe, “Sweet mother” call:

Ah! yes, though sound, those dreaming spells must break,

The oblivious sleep dissolved, for thy dear sake,

That schooled to learn each chequered ill to bear,

In crosses, trials, taught thy part to share;

Thus early brought to suffer, and to know

How transient all things that delight below;

Weaned from love’s fondlings, torn from their embrace,

Affections warm, thus blighted, doomed to trace;

’Twas \_his\_, whose sentient nature, taught to prove,

How dear the memory of a mother’s love.

The “Bard of Olney,” severed from those ties,

Deplored and wept amid a life of sighs,

A darker shade than falls to every lot,

His spirit clouded, and was ne’er forgot;

The world delusive proved, from hence might rise

Hopes brighter fixed, joy, love, that never dies.

THOUGHTS ON SOLITARINESS.

“Eagles fly alone, and they are but sheep which always herd

together.”--\_Sidney.\_

Lone watchings of the night,

When stars attract with beaming;

’Tis loneliness alone that gives delight,

The poet’s hour of dreaming.

Why doth the eagle soar,

With lone and wandering wing?

Ah! loves he not his silent flight the more,

Far borne from living thing?

To stand upon the shore,

And list the sounding flood,--

Is there aught music like the ocean’s roar

To child of solitude?

Who, roaming, heeds the cry

Of bittern’s piercing note;

With cadence of the stormy petrel nigh,

Now heard far off remote?

Is not the awful shade

Of dark, receding grove,

To him endeared, its leaf embow’ring glade,

Seclusion’s haunts to rove?

Why doth the enchantress pour

Mellifluous note alone?

Loves Philomel the midnight brake the more,

Plaintive, unseen, to moan.

So to the tender heart

Of maiden touched with love.

Doth covert shade of twilight eve impart--

Its secret solace prove.

Is’t not to recluse sweet,

’Mid sheltering cave reclined,

Listening in solitude to waves that beat--

To musing dreams resigned.

Is grandeur heard in sound?

Hath harmony its power?

Give me expressive silence, when ’tis found,

Nature’s own hush’d, still hour.

Sweet chord must strive in vain,

Its diapason teach;

It cannot swell like that Æolian strain

The mind’s deep tone to reach.

He who hath waked the lyre,

Can tell its potent spell;

Within is found an all-consuming fire,

That mute gaze lone may tell.

Yet he is least alone--

The child of poesy;

Who peoples ideal beings, all his own--

Creatures of fantasy,

That at his bidding come,

Like beckoned shadows dim;

Sylphs of the brain, that with Titania roam--

Fancy’s all sprighting whim:

Those shadowy tribes of mind

To call from their retreat;

Sweet parlance hold, then scatter to the wind,

Back to their airy seat.

Like melancholy Jacques,

To nurse the tender thought,

Doth fly to woods embrowned, man’s haunts forsakes,

For scenes of quiet sought,

As by some classic stream,

In idless mood reclined,

Deep moralize, or lost in fairy dream

Of meditative mind;

Or yet more thoughtful theme,

The sacred page explore;

Its holy words, as sang by Babel’s stream--

Song of the exile’s shore.

Or climb the lofty tower,

Like Plato, hoary seer;

The Chaldean sage of that star-twinkling hour,

And maze-revolving sphere.

When the cold spectral night

Gleams on the column’s stone,

As Luna pale Endymion’s locks doth light,

Kissing his forehead lone,

Be mine with silence found,

When, through the gloom o’erstealing,

Is traced the lingering, pensive nymph profound,

Her shadowy form revealing.

THE WRECK.[F]

“All lost! to prayers, to prayers! all lost!”--\_Tempest.\_

Weep for her loss, in pity weep,

That down engulfed beneath the deep

The fated vessel sunk, with all on board;

Three score and ten, save one, to tell

The horror of their dying knell,

That mingled ’bove the surge, when loud it roared.

Weep for their fate, if tears may show

A grief too great for tears to flow;

And words are vain, looks, sighs, but faint express;

Their dread dismay, by tempest borne,

When hope and human help were gone,

One overwhelming flood of deep distress.

Weep for the mother’s, children’s doom,

Gone down to one unfathomed tomb;

Brave hearts that late embarked from India’s shore,

’Neath joyous hope’s bright banner furled:

How changed!--To depths of ocean hurled,

The traceless wave hath swept,--they are no more!

Weep for their death; no arm to save

Beneath the hurrying, moaning wave;

Almost in sight of their loved haven lost,

On coast of France, by storm-wind driven,

The vessel struck on rock--hath riven,

Dispersed in fragments, o’er the foam-wave tost.

Weep for the fated ship, ah! weep!--

Proud name--o’ermastered by the deep,

That late through peril’s seas careered her way,

“Home bound:”--yet wherefore weep?--poor souls!

O’er them the mighty billow rolls!--

Their sufferings past;--their God their only stay.

THE WAILING SPIRIT OF THE “ROUND-DOWN CLIFF.”[G]

“That was a dark and low’ring day,

That sealed my fate ere set of sun;

My tow’ring grandeur’s passed away,

The triumph of combustion won:

Sad triumph! I the victim made,

To supersede pickaxe and spade;

I doleful, do remember well,

My spirit shrieks the deed to tell,

The blasting power within me pent,

That boded evil, dread intent,

When ‘engineers’ my entrails tore,

Like ‘Guy Faux,’ laid the train in store,

That was to rend my heart in twain,

And hurl me to the surging main;

’Twas so my glory, quenched in night,

Cast down, to mourn my dismal plight:

I could recount my pride of power,

Now swallowed up in one short hour,

My noble site, and swelling form,

That rose above the ocean’s storm,

And drew majestic eagle’s flight,

To rear his eyrie far from sight;

And Phœbus, bright from rosy bed,

His rising glories on me shed,

Or, as he dipt his burning wheel,

His rays my form did oft reveal,

Delight of each fond gazing eye,

When thus beheld at evening sky;

My sombre hue in morning gray,

In mist my head enwrapped all day,

In cloudy darkness hid from view,

With terror clad a wild-bird flew,

Loud notes heard shrill upon the blast,

As hast’ning on the storm-wind past;

Thus veil’d in nature’s awful mood,

Beloved ’mid years of solitude,

Thro’ ages borne unscathed from harm,

That gave my cliff’s bold front its charm;

Those who the ‘picturesque’ admire,

Must burn like me with jealous fire,

To mark the bulwarks of our coast

Appear, like me, a shattered ghost,

And white-cliff’d Albion doomed to be

A level coast, view’d from the sea,

Shorn of its ancient majesty:

O! heed your sad dejected sprite,

Who just discerns by feeble light,

Majestic in its strength close by,

Th’ adjacent rock, that mounts the sky,

For old renown made famous still,

By one famed bard, immortal ‘Will:’

Make level heights! whate’er you please!

For ‘Dover line’ demolish trees!

But spare my country’s sacred boast,

Dear ‘Shakspere’s Cliff,’ our pride of coast!

For list! ’tis my departed knell,

‘Disturb not yon hoar crag--Farewell!’”

ON READING WORDSWORTH’S BEAUTIFUL LINES ON GRACE DARLING.

Thanks, gifted bard, to thee best thanks are due,

For graceful lay, in melody attuned,

Like thine own gurgling springs, harmonious flow;

The subject, too, that interests ev’ry heart,

That lists, or can appreciate thy song;

So touching, simple, every flowing word;

A narrative of courage, sweetly told,

Exploit of one, a fair Northumbrian maid;

Made doubly deathless, too, by verse of thine:

Poet excursive, of sweet Ambleside,

Whose philosophic mind, in pensive mood,

Surveys with nice discernment nature’s sweets,

Each herb, upspringing seen, o’erhung with dew,

Or lowly daisy, in sequestered nook,

That meets the cherished glance of thy fond gaze,

When morn thy steps hath led o’er dewy mead,

As the keen air blows fresh upon thy cheek:

There’s not a sound escapes thy tuneful ear,

As hum of insect, or the minstrel lark,

That swells her highest note to hail the dawn;

But every feeling in accordance found,

With wide luxuriant nature, bounteous spread,

Leads thee to moralize, and ponder deep:

O! sight, ennobling to humanity!

And if exalted, ’tis exalted here,

To see the good man in the vale of years,

And that a poet, too, of well-earned fame,

(On whom the laureateship has been bestowed,)

In virtue’s fond pursuit pre-eminent,

Stealing his way, like autumn’s closing eve,

That gilds th’ horizon, ere it sinks to rest:

With youthful freshness of his mental powers,

In vigour intellectual, still poured forth;

Delight to give, and admiration claim,

From those who love the hallowed feast of mind,

And have a taste for pure ambrosial food;

Whose muse hath gait sedate, and grovels not

In low pursuit--but soars on loftier wing,

Her pinion silvered, as with virtue bright;

Whene’er a theme, a fitting theme invites,

To lure, as late it hath, thy master chord,

Attuned to her, the wreck’s life-saving child,

The skiff-toss’d maiden, of the “Light-House” known,

For prowess sanctified by approving Heav’n.

THE EMIGRANTS.

“Downward they move, a melancholy band,

Pass from the shore, and darken all the strand.”--\_Goldsmith.\_

Borne o’er the bosom of the trackless main,

Far from the shore they loved, and left with pain;

Compell’d, by hard necessity, to rove,

And quit those scenes of early bliss and love,

That close endeared them to their humble shed:

But those endearments now, alas! are fled:

The straw-thatched roof, whose curling smoke was seen;

The shady lane, and oft-frequented green,

Where many a gambol drew the village throng

At eve, when old and young their sports prolong;

Graceful ’bove trees the ancient spire uprose,

In calm seclusion, emblem of repose;

The purling brook, that turned the cotter’s mill;

The dark-robed wood, and softly swelling hill,

From whence low bleatings murmured thro’ the vale,

And rustic’s joy came o’er the passing gale.

Such mem’ry pictured in her loveliest dress;

How keen their anguish, words but faint express,

As wafted hence their sorrowing tears they flow,

Their trials real, and unfeigned their woe;

Lone wand’ring exiles, doomed in grief to part,

And leave their country with an aching heart,

To far Australia, or Van Diemen’s shore,

A num’rous band, those regions wild explore;

Or wide dispersed, Canadia’s woods they range,

The lonely settlers of the forest strange.

Before their gaze the swelling distance shows

Mountains o’ermantled in eternal snows;

Far as the eye can stretch huge forests rise,

Or dreary moors, or plains of other skies;

A rugged soil, that claims enduring toil,

That oft the labourer doth resist and foil.

The Emigrants thus feel the curse renewed,

Ere yields the stubborn earth, by toil subdued;

Perchance their little group of children round

Join in the task--young tillers of the ground;

A world before them spread,--a houseless band.

Such are the wanderers of a foreign land.

And should their enterprise succeed, how blest

The prospect “home-bound,” to return and rest;

Spend the sweet close of their remaining days,

Their setting sun descend in peaceful rays,

Once more revisit their own happier clime,

With feelings stronger felt by lapse of time;

Review the spot they sorrowing left behind,

When misery drove them outcasts to the wind:

The same delightful scenes engage the eye,

Their only wish is there at last to die;

The same engaging charms allure them still,

The sloping meadows and the rippling rill;

The cheerful woodland pipe of joyous swain,

The swinging sign-post and the stile remain,

That they so often climbed, when ruddy youth,

Happy and heedless of life’s sober truth,

Enjoyed the present through the live-long day,

Nor gave a thought to-morrow in their play;

Such lovely scenes their influence sweet o’ercast,

Their wand’rings softened, and their hardships past,

Whose fondest wish, their chequered troubles o’er,

To Albion’s shore return, nor migrate more.

LINES ON THE PURSUITS OF GENIUS AND LEARNING,

ADDRESSED TO THE LITERATI IN ALL COUNTRIES.

“‘I can make lords of you every day, but I cannot create a Titian,’

said the Emperor Charles V. to his courtiers, who had become

jealous of the hours and the half hours which the monarch stole

from them, that he might converse with the man of genius at his

work.”--\_D’Israeli’s Literary Characters.\_

Ye wakeful spirits, o’er the midnight oil,

Who ply your task, in one unceasing toil;

Your books, the sweet companions of the hour,

That have a silent and all-winning power,

The world scarce knows of, in your brooding cell,

Whose mental alchemy hath powerful spell,

The crucible that brings forth purest gold,

Is yours, ye sons obscure, of genius mould;

Yet little heeded, in your great employ,

Who labour still with soul-ennobling joy;

The same divine, immortal spirit reigns,

As moved Apelles, or a Titian’s pains;

As drew the spark that flash’d from Milton’s breast,

Or fired a Pindar, and was Goethe’s guest;

That bade our own immortal Shakspere soar

On roaming Fancy’s wing, new worlds explore.

Sons of seclusion, why should ye repine?

Your toil is noble, and the work divine:

A true nobility awaits his name,

Who presses on th’ ascent that leads to fame;

And tireless tracks the eagle flights of mind--

Arts, science, teach, a blessing to mankind.

How poor the heraldry of noble birth,

Compared with yours, ye great ones of the earth;

Undying honours, that ennoble man--

A regal splendour, that makes theirs but wan;

Mind is the gem, that hath the truest worth,

This the rich diamond--theirs the dross of earth.

What ardour kindles in the studious soul,

Borne, on the car of knowledge, to the goal,

In emulation, ’midst the gifted throng,

Is soul-rapt poesy, divine in song;

Music, all-thrilling, as the airs of heav’n;

Painting and sculpture, like to Phidias giv’n;

And there deep sage, Philosophy, in sight,

With bright Urania soars the stars of night,

Castalia’s nymphs, a fair celestial band,

That in the mazy dance join hand in hand,

Yours gifted race, the Athenian’s sacred hours,

The fount whence flows the stream from Learning’s bowers;

Nurtured in climes, though wide as zone from zone,

Congenial spirits vibrate to one tone;

As mountain’s spring flows murm’ring under ground,

Its goal, vast ocean, in its depths profound,

So ye, your sinuous course, unruffled sped,

And pour your tribute’s store, by Science led.

CORN FIELDS.

“Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness, and Thy paths drop fatness.”

The loaded fields, now ripe with yellow grain,

That undulates, with waving richness fraught,

’Neath every breeze, that sweeps the bending stalk;

Denotes that harvest has again arrived,

To bless the fruitful land;--and echo joy

From thousand thankful hearts, spontaneous felt;

And who but owns the rich provision sent,

Sent undeserved, by kindly Providence

To man bestowed, too thankless for the grant!

How lowly cottager, now smiles content,

And should have cause, when such abundance pours

From plenty’s fruitful barn:--so lavish spread:

The sun-burnt swain, his shining sickle plies,

And the full sheaf falls heavy from his hand,

Scattering the grain, let fall for gleaner’s use;

They round the reapers hang, the boon to catch,

And, Ruth-like, bear the gathered treasure home;

Perchance, an aged parent’s eye to cheer,

That glistens more at thought of filial love;

What sight more pleasing to an English breast,

Than fields of British growth, embrowned with corn;

Full eared and large, that speak abundant crop;

When fear of short supply is far removed,

And all a farmer’s hopes are crowned at once;

Whose barns in prospect sees well stored with wheat:

The sheaves to bind, a busy group attend,

To gather and dispose the graceful heap;

While slowly drags along, the creaking wain,

High piled, that groans beneath the precious load:

Such sights enlivening, every where abound

At this glad season of the bounteous year;

And Albion glories, is her son’s employ,

To bring her native growth, mature and ripe,

Safe housed in granary, or securely stacked.

But other lands partake the joy, as well

As England’s peasant, whom his corn fields cheer;

So rustic labourer of the German States,

And Poland’s breadth of land, ’neath harvest smiles,

With fruitful Spain, that pours her thousands forth

To gather in the produce of her soil;

A rich luxuriance spreads each distant shore,

And far Canadia swells with ripening grain,

While “Harvest Home” resounds through every land,

A joyous and exhilarating sound,

That wafting should man’s gratitude bespeak;

If others are unconscious of the gift,

At least let Britain’s thanks responsive rise

To Heaven!--such meed of praise she owes,

Her flowing fields attest, of waving corn,

Dispersed; thro’ length and breadth of her rich vales,

In golden seasons, thrice prolific shed,

O’er England’s happy isle! so prosperous blest.

THE APPROACH.

The sweet spring is coming, with bud and with flow’r,

The snow-drop peeps forth from the ground;

And the violet blue, from its odorous bow’r,

Wide scatters its fragrance around.

Lo! Winter, rude churl, has pass’d sullen away,

Return’d to his dreary domain;

And the wood-bird again resumes her sweet lay,

While verdure enlivens the plain.

The hedge-brier puts on its loveliest dress,

And hawthorn its sweetest perfume;

I marvel indeed, when dull worldlings confess,

They observe not Spring and its bloom.

I could point to the wing-soaring lark in the sky,

As she warbles mellifluous song;

Or the insect, that flutters rejoicingly by,

A lesson might teach to the throng.

Ah! why not adore the Creator Divine,

While mountains and streams are made glad:

And say, should not man with all Nature combine,

When earth blooms an Eden o’erclad?

Oh! sweet Spring is coming, with bud and with flow’r,

Mild Zephyr breathes soft on the hill;

Come, welcome then April’s bright plentiful show’r,

And May shall be welcomer still.

ON MY NEW-BORN SON.

When first I heard thine infant voice,

How did my beating heart rejoice

To think the hour of peril past,

Thou and thy mother safe at last;

And anxious fear thus giv’n place

To beaming joy, at thy sweet face,

To view a mother smile on thee,

And list thy cry with ecstacy,

While thousand joys unknown before

Swell at her breast, and beat the more.

My boy! those words come like a spell;

Who does not love that sound full well?

What father hears but feels its sway,

Or turns to th’ innocent to play,

And pat its dimpled cheek the while,

And cast a fond endearing smile.

My boy! what can I hope for thee,

Shouldst thou be spared, ah! spared to me?

A parent’s wish might hope each stage

Of rugged life’s dark pilgrimage

O’erstrewn with flowers, to cheer the way,

In place of wilds that lead astray.

Thy little bark’s advent’rous sail,

Oh! may it meet no adverse gale--

No treach’rous calm around it play,

But Providence direct its sway!

But should thy path with thorns o’erspread,

Or tempests gather o’er thy head,

Then, oh! my child, may grace be giv’n

To seek the fostering care of Heav’n;

To “Jacob’s God” for succour flee,

Who shall, my child, deliver thee!

FIRESIDE MUSINGS.

The hollow winds blow loud and shrill,

In heavy gusts like distant thunder,

Lorn spirits of the howling hill,

I list safe housed in speechless wonder;

The winter blasts of gustful days,

They make, my love, my hearth’s bright blaze.

My fancy flits like rover wild,

Recalls both days and years fast fleeting,

The spring-time, when I was a child,

All vanished with their bright-morn greeting;

Pale wasting Time his glass doth raise,

Advancing, as I watch the blaze.

His stealthy step and gaunt-like form,

His bony hand so grisly shapen,

With mouldering touch, like canker-worm,

I seem to start, half sleep, half waken;

With fixed wild glare, the spoiler gaze,

Then ruminate my red-coals blaze.

I call to aid my best resolve,

My better genius, sage reflection,

To ponder deep as years revolve,

My life’s last close, without dejection;

Resigned my wasting taper gaze,

Such thought awaked the flick’ring blaze.

AN ADDRESS TO THE DAISY.

Sweet, modest Daisy, floweret of the spring,

Just peering ’bove the ground in lowly guise,

With lifted stem half shrinking with surprise,

To be so bold to tend thy offering,

Graceful in form, thou coy and lovely thing,

Why screen thy head, o’erstreaked with crimson dyes,

From man’s too ardent gaze; soft vernal signs

Through yonder brake, with whispering cadence fling

Their wafted sweetness on the breezes borne;

Or fan thy cheek, or kiss the tremulous dew

Hung pearl-like on thy petals seen at morn.

Yon burnished-coated insect he doth sue,

When found thy lone retreat with wooing horn,

Ah! why, thou bonny gem, hide from our view.

I’VE BEEN A-MUSING.

I’ve been a-musing, a-musing, a-musing,

Lonely and pensive by a river’s side,

Half-dreaming sunk, my moody self a-losing,

List’ning the waters tinkling as they glide;

So hasteneth on, methought, life’s passing tide.

I’ve been a-musing, a-musing, a-musing,

Sky-soaring warbler thrill’d the air above;

The osiers dank ’neath breezes light were moving:

Scarce stirr’d the stream, whose haunts the scale tribe rove,

The trem’lous trout it paused, the rushes move.

I’ve been a-musing, a-musing, a-musing,

The playful trout hath glided far away;

Blithe lark has ceas’d the note of her fond choosing,

And hushed the sweet pipe of her am’rous lay,

Thus speedeth earth’s delights that will not stay.

I’ve been a-musing, a-musing, a-musing,

A lovely child came bounding forth in glee;

I dwelt upon its happiness perusing,

Embrace I thought while you can happy be,

Ah! yes the roseate hours take wings and bird-like flee.

I’ve been a-musing, a-musing, a-musing;

There cross’d my sight a youth of noble air,

With bold light step, that told of courage rising;

His eagle eye glanced bright renown to share;

He sought proud fame, which proved delusion’s snare.

I’ve been a-musing, a-musing, a-musing;

A fair and tim’rous one, with virgin grace,

Came tripping soft, her presence show’d so pleasing;

A crimson blush suffused her lovely face;

How soon, methought, will years its bloom efface.

I’ve been a-musing, a-musing, a-musing,

Yon form’s athletic sun-burnt features tell

Of manhood’s prime, glory all vain devising,

And anxious thought that doth his bosom swell,

They lead but to the grave where all must dwell.

I’ve been a-musing, a-musing, a-musing;

An aged sire I saw with stray locks gray,

The heat and burden borne of life now closing;

I watched his features as he knelt to pray,

His spirit fled serene as sun’s last ray,

I’ve been a-musing, a-musing, a-musing,

Lonely and pensive by a river’s side,

In rev’ry sunk my moody self a-losing,

List’ning the waters tinkling as they glide.

Ah! such is life, methought, a passing tide.

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\* \* \* \* \*

January, 1845.

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[A] Alluding to the “Wanderings” of Mr. Waterton; a very delightful and

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[B] Which singular circumstance occurred; the hands pointing to the

hour on the dial-plate at half-past one o’clock, when the fire reached

the machinery of the clock.

[C] The original founder of the first Royal Exchange, Mr. Thomas

Gresham, whose statue remains still entire.

[D] This much admired statue, by Spiller, still stands in the centre of

the piazza, on a pedestal uninjured.

[E] The bells chimed, as usual, to the tune of “There’s nae luck aboot

the house,” till within five minutes of the fire reaching that portion

of the tower.

[F] Written on the occasion of the loss of the “\_Conqueror\_,” East

Indiaman, during the late gales off the Coast of France.

[G] In the vicinity of Dover, lately destroyed by combustion, being

from 300 to 400 feet in height, for the purposes of the South-Eastern

Railway, under the direction of Mr. Cubitt, the engineer.

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