

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

WITH A MEMOIR.

VOL. III.



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YARROW REVISITED, AND OTHER POEMS

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Filling the soul with sentiments august,—
The beautiful, the brave, the holy, and the just!

No more; Time halts not in his noiseless march,
Nor turns, nor winds, as doth the liquid flood;
Life slips from underneath us, like that arch
Of airy workmanship whereon we stood,
Earth stretched below, heaven in our neighborhood.
Go forth, my little Book! pursue thy way;
Go forth, and please the gentle and the good;
Nor be a whisper stifled, if it say
That treasures, yet untouched, may grace some
future Lay.

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN ITALY.

1837.

TO HENRY CRABB ROBINSON.

COMPANION! by whose buoyant spirit cheered,
In whose experience trusting, day by day
Treasures I gained with zeal that neither feared
The toils nor felt the crosses of the way,
These records take, and happy should I be
Were but the gift a meet return to thee
For kindnesses that never ceased to flow,
And prompt self-sacrifice to which I owe
Far more than any heart but mine can know.

W. WORDSWORTH.

BYDAL MOUNT, Feb. 14th, 1842.

THE Tour of which the following Poems are very inadequate remembrances was shortened by report, too well founded, of the prevalence of Cholera at Naples. To make some amends for what was reluctantly left unseen in the South of Italy, we visited the Tuscan Sanctuaries among the Apennines, and the principal Italian Lakes among the Alps. Neither of those lakes, nor of Venice, is there any notice in these Poems, chiefly because I have touched upon them elsewhere. See, in particular, "Descriptive Sketches," "Memorials of a Tour on the Continent in 1820," and a Sonnet upon the extinction of the Venetian Republic.

I.

MUSINGS NEAR AQUAPENDENTE.

April, 183..

YE Apennines ! with all your fertile vales
 Deeply embosomed, and your winding shores
 Of either sea, an Islander by birth,
 A Mountaineer by habit, would resound
 Your praise, in meet accordance with your claims
 Bestowed by Nature, or from man's great deeds
 Inherited : — presumptuous thought ! — it fled
 Like vapor, like a towering cloud, dissolved.
 Not, therefore, shall my mind give way to sadness ; —

Yon snow-white torrent-fall, plumb down it drops,
 Yet ever hangs or seems to hang in air,
 Lulling the leisure of that high perched town,
 AQUAPENDENTE, in her lofty site,
 Its neighbor and its namesake, — town, and flood
 Forth flashing out of its own gloomy chasm
 Bright sunbeams, — the fresh verdure of this lawn
 Strewn with gray rocks, and on the horizon's verge,
 O'er intervening waste, through glimmering haze,
 Unquestionably kenned, that cone-shaped hill
 With fractured summit, no indifferent sight
 To travellers, from such comforts as are thine,
 Bleak Radicofani ! escaped with joy, —
 These are before me ; and the varied scene
 May well suffice, till noontide's sultry heat

Relax, to fix and satisfy the mind
 Passive yet pleased. What ! with this Broom in flower
 Close at my side ! She bids me fly to greet
 Her sisters, soon like her to be attired
 With golden blossoms opening at the feet
 Of my own Fairfield. The glad greeting given,
 Given with a voice and by a look returned
 Of old companionship, Time counts not minutes,
 Ere, from accustomed paths, familiar fields,
 The local Genius hurries me aloft,
 Transported over that cloud-wooing hill,
 Seat Sandal, a fond suitor of the clouds,
 With dream-like smoothness, to Helvellyn's top,
 There to alight upon crisp moss and range,
 Obtaining ampler boon, at every step,
 Of visual sovereignty, — hills multitudinous,
 (Not Apennine can boast of fairer,) hills
 Pride of two nations, wood and lake and plains,
 And prospect right below of deep coves shaped
 By skeleton arms, that, from the mountain's trunk
 Extended, clasp the winds, with mutual moan
 Struggling for liberty, while undismayed
 The shepherd struggles with them. Onward thence
 And downward by the skirt of Greenside fell,
 And by Glenridding-screes, and low Glencoign,
 Places forsaken now, though loving still
 The Muses, as they loved them in the days
 Of the old minstrels and the border bards. —
 But here am I fast bound ; and let it pass,

The simple rapture; — who that travels far
 To feed his mind with watchful eyes could share
 Or wish to share it? — One there surely was,
 “The Wizard of the North,” with anxious hope
 Brought to this genial climate, when disease
 Preyed upon body and mind, — yet not the less
 Had his sunk eye kindled at those dear words
 That spake of bards and minstrels; and his spirit
 Had flown with mine to old Helvellyn’s brow,
 Where once together, in his day of strength,
 We stood rejoicing, as if earth were free
 From sorrow, like the sky above our heads.

Years followed years, and when, upon the eve
 Of his last going from Tweed-side, thought turned,
 Or by another’s sympathy was led,
 To this bright land, Hope was for him no friend,
 Knowledge no help; Imagination shaped
 No promise. Still, in more than ear-deep seats,
 Survives for me, and cannot but survive,
 The tone of voice which wedded borrowed words
 To sadness not their own, when, with faint smile,
 Forced by intent to take from speech its edge,
 He said, “When I am there, although ‘t is fair,
 ‘T will be another Yarrow.” Prophecy
 More than fulfilled, as gay Campania’s shores
 Soon witnessed, and the City of Seven Hills,
 Her sparkling fountains, and her mouldering tombs;
 And more than all, that Eminence which showed
 Her splendors, seen, not felt, the while he stood

A few short steps (painful they were) apart
 From Tasso’s Convent-haven and retired grave.

Peace to their Spirits! why should Poesy
 Yield to the lure of vain regret, and hover
 In gloom on wings with confidence outspread
 To move in sunshine? — Utter thanks, my Soul!
 Tempered with awe, and sweetened by compassion
 For them who in the shades of sorrow dwell,
 That I — so near the term to human life
 Appointed by man’s common heritage,
 Frail as the frailest, one withal (if that
 Deserve a thought) but little known to fame —
 Am free to rove where Nature’s loveliest looks,
 Art’s noblest relics, History’s rich bequests,
 Failed to reanimate and but feebly cheered
 The whole world’s Darling, — free to rove at will
 O’er high and low, and if requiring rest,
 Rest from enjoyment only.

Thanks poured forth
 For what thus far hath blessed my wanderings.
 thanks

Fervent but humble as the lips can breathe
 Where gladness seems a duty, — let me guard
 Those seeds of expectation which the fruit
 Already gathered in this favored Land
 Enfolds within its core. The faith be mine,
 That He who guides and governs all, approves
 When gratitude, though disciplined to look
 Beyond these transient spheres, doth wear a crown

Of earthly hope put on with trembling hand ;
 Nor is least pleased, we trust, when golden beams,
 Reflected through the mists of age, from hours
 Of innocent delight, remote or recent,
 Shoot but a little way — 't is all they can —
 Into the doubtful future. Who would keep
 Power must resolve to cleave to it through life,
 Else it deserts him, surely as he lives.
 Saints would not grieve nor guardian angels frown
 If one — while tossed, as was my lot to be,
 In a frail bark urged by two slender oars
 Over waves rough and deep, that, when they broke,
 Dashed their white foam against the palace-walls
 Of Genoa the superb — should there be led
 To meditate upon his own appointed tasks,
 However humble in themselves, with thoughts
 Raised and sustained by memory of him
 Who oftentimes within those narrow bounds
 Rocked on the surge, there tried his spirit's strength
 And grasp of purpose, long ere sailed his ship
 To lay a new world open.

Nor less prized

Be those impressions which incline the heart
 To mild, to lowly, and to seeming weak,
 Bend that way her desires. The dew, the storm, —
 The dew whose moisture fell in gentle drops
 On the small hyssop destined to become,
 By Hebrew ordinance devoutly kept,
 A purifying instrument, — the storm
 That shook on Lebanon the cedar's top,

And as it shook, enabling the blind roots
 Further to force their way, endowed its trunk
 With magnitude and strength fit to uphold
 The glorious temple, — did alike proceed
 From the same gracious will, were both an offspring
 Of bounty infinite.

Between Powers that aim

Higher to lift their lofty heads, impelled
 By no profane ambition, Powers that thrive
 By conflict, and their opposites, that trust
 In lowness, — a mid-way tract there lies
 Of thoughtful sentiment for every mind
 Pregnant with good. Young, Middle-aged, and
 Old,

From century on to century, must have known
 The emotion, — nay, more fitly were it said, —
 The blest tranquillity that sunk so deep
 Into my spirit, when I paced, inclosed
 In Pisa's Campo Santo, the smooth floor
 Of its Arcades paved with sepulchral slabs,
 And through each window's open fret-work looked
 O'er the blank Area of sacred earth .
 Fetched from Mount Calvary, or haply delved
 In precincts nearer to the Saviour's tomb,
 By hands of men, humble as brave, who fought
 For its deliverance, — a capacious field
 That to descendants of the dead it holds
 And to all living mute memento breathes,
 More touching far than aught which on the walls
 Is pictured, or their epitaphs can speak,

. Of the changed City's long-departed power,
Glory, and wealth, which, perilous as they are,
Here did not kill, but nourished, Piety.
And, high above that length of cloistral roof,
Peering in air and backed by azure sky,
To kindred contemplations ministers
The Baptistry's dome, and that which swells
From the Cathedral pile ; and with the twain
Conjoined, in prospect mutable or fixed,
(As hurry on in eagerness the feet,
Or pause,) the summit of the Leaning Tower.
Nor less remuneration waits on him
Who, having left the Cemetery, stands
In the Tower's shadow, of decline and fall
Admonished not without some sense of fear,
Fear that soon vanishes before the sight
Of splendor unextinguished, pomp unscathed,
And beauty unimpaired. Grand in itself,
And for itself, the assemblage, grand and fair
To view, and for the mind's consenting eye
A type of age in man, upon its front
Bearing the world-acknowledged evidence
Of past exploits, nor fondly after more
Struggling against the stream of destiny,
But with its peaceful majesty content.
— O what a spectacle at every turn
The Place unfolds, from pavement skinned with
moss,
Or grass-grown spaces, where the heaviest foot
Provokes no echoes, but must softly tread;

Where Solitude with Silence paired stops short
Of Desolation, and to Ruin's scythe
Decay submits not.

But where'er my steps
Shall wander, chiefly let me cull with care
Those images of genial beauty, oft
Too lovely to be pensive in themselves,
But by reflection made so, which do best
And fitliest serve to crown with fragrant wreaths
Life's cup, when almost filled with years, like mine.
— How lovely robed in forenoon light and shade,
Each ministering to each, didst thou appear,
Savona, Queen of territory fair
. As aught that marvellous coast thro' all its length
Yields to the Stranger's eye. Remembrance holds
As a selected treasure thy one cliff,
That, while it wore for melancholy crest
A shattered Convent, yet rose proud to have
Clinging to its steep sides a thousand herbs
And shrubs, whose pleasant looks gave proof how
kind
The breath of air can be where earth had else
Seemed churlish. And behold, both far and near,
Garden and field all decked with orange bloom,
And peach and citron, in Spring's mildest breeze
Expanding ; and, along the smooth shore curved
Into a natural port, a tideless sea,
To that mild breeze with motion and with voice
Softly responsive ; and, attuned to all
Those vernal charms of sight and sound, appeared

Smooth space of turf which from the guardian fort
 Sloped seaward, turf whose tender April green,
 In coolest climes too fugitive, might even here
 Plead with the sovereign Sun for longer stay
 Than his unmitigated beams allow,
 Nor plead in vain, if beauty could preserve
 From mortal change aught that is born on earth
 Or doth on time depend.

While on the brink

Of that high Convent-crested cliff I stood,
 Modest Savona ! over all did brood
 A pure poetic Spirit, — as the breeze,
 Mild, — as the verdure, fresh, — the sunshine,
 bright, —

Thy gentle Chiabrera ! — not a stone,
 Mural or level with the trodden floor,
 In Church or Chapel, if my curious quest
 Missed not the truth, retains a single name
 Of young or old, warrior, or saint, or sage,
 To whose dear memories his sepulchral verse
 Paid simple tribute, such as might have flowed
 From the clear spring of a plain English heart,
 Say rather, one in native fellowship
 With all who want not skill to couple grief
 With praise, as genuine admiration prompts.
 The grief, the praise, are severed from their dust,
 Yet in his page the records of that worth
 Survive, uninjured ; — glory then to words,
 Honor to word-preserving Arts, and hail,
 Ye kindred local influences, that still,

If Hope's familiar whispers merit faith,
 Await my steps when they the breezy height
 Shall range of philosophic Tusculum ;
 Or Sabine vales explored inspire a wish
 To meet the shade of Horace by the side
 Of his Blandusian fount ; or I invoke
 His presence to point out the spot where once
 He sat, and eulogized with earnest pen
 Peace, leisure, freedom, moderate desires ;
 And all the immunities of rural life
 Extolled, behind Vacuna's crumbling fane.
 Or let me loiter, soothed with what is given,
 Nor asking more, on that delicious Bay,
 Parthenope's Domain, Virgilian haunt,
 Illustrated with never-dying verse,
 And, by the Poet's laurel-shaded tomb,
 Age after age to Pilgrims from all lands
 Endeared.

And who, — if not a man as cold
 In heart as dull in brain, — while pacing ground
 Chosen by Rome's legendary Bards, high minds
 Out of her early struggles well inspired
 To localize heroic acts, — could look
 Upon the spots with undelighted eye,
 Though even to their last syllable the Lays
 And very names of those who gave them birth
 Have perished ? — Verily, to her utmost depth,
 Imagination feels what Reason fears not
 To recognize, the lasting virtue lodged
 In those bold fictions that, by deeds assigned

To the Valerian, Fabian, Curian Race,
And others like in fame, created Powers
With attributes from History derived,
By Poesy irradiate, and yet graced,
Through marvellous felicity of skill,
With something more propitious to high aims
Than either, pent within her separate sphere,
Can oft with justice claim.

And not disdaining

Union with those primeval energies
To virtue consecrate, stoop ye from your height,
Christian Traditions ! at my Spirit's call
Descend, and on the brow of ancient Rome,
As she survives in ruin, manifest
Your glories mingled with the brightest hues
Of her memorial halo, fading, fading,
But never to be extinct while Earth endures.
O, come, if undishonored by the prayer,
From all her Sanctuaries ! — Open for my feet,
Ye Catacombs, give to mine eyes a glimpse
Of the Devout, as, 'mid your glooms convened
For safety, they of yore enclasped the Cross
On knees that ceased from trembling, or intoned
Their orisons with voices half suppressed,
But sometimes heard, or fancied to be heard,
Even at this hour.

And thou Mamertine prison,

Into that vault receive me from whose depth
Issues, revealed in no presumptuous vision,
Albeit lifting human to divine,

A Saint, the Church's Rock, the mystic Keys
Grasped in his hand ; and lo ! with upright sword
Prefiguring his own impendent doom,
The Apostle of the Gentiles ; both prepared
To suffer pains with heathen scorn and hate
Inflicted ; — blessed Men, for so to Heaven
They follow their dear Lord !

Time flows, — nor winds,
Nor stagnates, nor precipitates his course,
But many a benefit borne upon his breast
For human-kind sinks out of sight, is gone,
No one knows how ; nor seldom is put forth
An angry arm that snatches good away,
Never perhaps to reappear. The Stream
Has to our generation brought, and brings
Innumerable gains ; yet we, who now
Walk in the light of day, pertain full surely
To a chilled age, most pitifully shut out
From that which *is* and actuates, by forms,
Abstractions, and by lifeless fact to fact
Minutely linked with diligence uninspired,
Unrectified, unguided, unsustained,
By godlike insight. To this fate is doomed
Science, wide-spread and spreading still as be
Her conquests, in the world of sense made known.
So with the internal mind it fares ; and so
With morals, trusting, in contempt or fear
Of vital principle's controlling law,
To her purblind guide, Expediency ; and so
Suffers religious faith. Elate with view

Of what is won, we overlook or scorn
 The best that should keep pace with it, and must,
 Else more and more the general mind will droop,
 Even as if bent on perishing. There lives
 No faculty within us which the Soul
 Can spare, and humblest earthly Weal demands,
 For dignity not placed beyond her reach,
 Zealous coöperation of all means
 Given or acquired, to raise us from the mire,
 And liberate our hearts from low pursuits.
 By gross Utilities enslaved, we need
 More of ennobling impulse from the past,
 If to the future aught of good must come
 Sounder and therefore holier than the ends
 Which, in the giddiness of self-applause,
 We covet as supreme. O grant the crown
 That Wisdom wears, or take his treacherous staff
 From Knowledge ! — If the Muse, whom I have
 served
 This day, be mistress of a single pearl
 Fit to be placed in that pure diadem,
 Then not in vain, under these chestnut-boughs
 Reclined, shall I have yielded up my soul
 To transports from the secondary founts
 Flowing of time and place, and paid to both
 Due homage ; nor shall fruitlessly have striven,
 By love of beauty moved, to enshrine in verse
 Accordant meditations, which in times
 Vexed and disordered, as our own, may shed
 Influence, at least among a scattered few,

To soberness of mind and peace of heart
 Friendly ; as here to my repose hath been
 This flowering broom's dear neighborhood, the light
 And murmur issuing from yon pendent flood,
 And all the varied landscape. Let us now
 Rise, and to-morrow greet magnificent Rome.*

II.

THE PINE OF MONTE MARIO AT ROME.

I SAW far off the dark top of a Pine
 Look like a cloud, — a slender stem the tie
 That bound it to its native earth, — poised high
 'Mid evening hues, along the horizon line,
 Striving in peace each other to outshine.
 But when I learned the Tree was living there,
 Saved from the sordid axe by Beaumont's care,
 O what a gush of tenderness was mine !
 The rescued Pine-tree, with its sky so bright
 And cloud-like beauty, rich in thoughts of home,
 Death-parted friends, and days too swift in flight,
 Supplanted the whole majesty of Rome
 (Then first apparent from the Pincian Height)
 Crowned with St. Peter's everlasting Dome.†

* See Note.

† See Note.

III.

AT ROME.

Is this, ye Gods, the Capitolian Hill?
 Yon petty Steep in truth the fearful Rock,
 Tarpeian named of yore, and keeping still
 That name, a local Phantom proud to mock
 The Traveller's expectation? — Could our Will
 Destroy the ideal Power within, 't were done
 Through what men see and touch, — slaves wan-
 dering on,

Impelled by thirst of all but Heaven-taught skill.
 Full oft, our wish obtained, deeply we sigh;
 Yet not unrecompensed are they who learn,
 From that depression raised, to mount on high
 With stronger wing, more clearly to discern
 Eternal things; and, if need be, defy
 Change, with a brow not insolent, though stern.

IV.

AT ROME.—REGRETS.—IN ALLUSION TO NIEBUHR AND OTHER MODERN HISTORIANS.

THOSE old credulities, to nature dear,
 Shall they no longer bloom upon the stock
 Of History, stripped naked as a rock
 'Mid a dry desert? What is it we hear?
 The glory of Infant Rome must disappear,

Her morning splendors vanish, and their place
 Know them no more. If Truth, who veiled her face
 With those bright beams, yet hid it not, must steer
 Henceforth a humbler course perplexed and slow,
 One solace yet remains for us who came
 Into this world in days when story lacked
 Severe research, that in our hearts we know
 How, for exciting youth's heroic flame,
 Assent is power, belief the soul of fact.

V.

CONTINUED.

COMPLACENT Fictions were they, yet the same
 Involved a history of no doubtful sense,
 History that proves by inward evidence
 From what a precious source of truth it came.
 Ne'er could the boldest Eulogist have dared
 Such deeds to paint, such characters to frame,
 But for coeval sympathy prepared
 To greet with instant faith their loftiest claim.
 None but a noble people could have loved
 Flattery in Ancient Rome's pure-minded style:
 Not in like sort the Runic Scald was moved;
 He, nursed 'mid savage passions that defile
 Humanity, sang feats that well might call
 For the bloodthirsty mead of Odin's riotous Hall.

VI.

PLEA FOR THE HISTORIAN.

FORBEAR to deem the Chronicler unwise,
Ungentle, or untouched by seemly ruth,
Who, gathering up all that Time's envious tooth
Has spared of sound and grave realities,
Firmly rejects those dazzling flatteries,
Dear as they are to unsuspecting Youth,
That might have drawn down Clio from the skies
To vindicate the majesty of truth.
Such was her office while she walked with men,
A Muse, who, not unmindful of her Sire,
All-ruling Jove, whate'er the theme might be,
Revered her Mother, sage Mnemosyne,
And taught her faithful servants how the lyre
Should animate, but not mislead, the pen.*

VII.

AT ROME.

THEY who have seen the noble Roman's scorn
Break forth at thought of laying down his head,
When the blank day is over, garreted
In his ancestral palace, where, from morn
To night, the desecrated floors are worn

* Quem virum . . . lyra . . .
. . . sumes celebrare Clio?

By feet of purse-proud strangers; they who have
read

In one meek smile, beneath a peasant's shed,
How patiently the weight of wrong is borne;
They who have heard some learned Patriot treat
Of freedom, with mind grasping the whole theme,
From ancient Rome, downwards through that
bright dream
Of Commonwealths, each city a starlike seat
Of rival glory; — they, fallen Italy,
Nor must, nor will, nor can, despair of Thee!

VIII.

NEAR ROME, IN SIGHT OF ST. PETER'S.

LONG has the dew been dried on tree and lawn;
O'er man and beast a not unwelcome boon
Is shed, the languor of approaching noon;
To shady rest withdrawing or withdrawn,
Mute are all creatures, as this couchant fawn,
Save insect-swarms that hum in air afloat,
Save that the Cock is crowing, a shrill note,
Startling and shrill as that which roused the dawn.
— Heard in that hour, or when, as now, the nerve
Shrinks from the note as from a mistimed thing.
Oft for a holy warning may it serve,
Charged with remembrance of *his* sudden sting.
His bitter tears, whose name the Papal Chair
And yon resplendent Church are proud to bear.

IX.

AT ALBANO.

DAYS passed,— and Monte Calvo would not clear
 His head from mist; and, as the wind sobbed through
 Albano's dripping Ilex avenue,
 My dull forebodings in a Peasant's ear
 Found casual vent. She said, "Be of good cheer;
 Our yesterday's procession did not sue
 In vain; the sky will change to sunny blue,
 Thanks to our Lady's grace." I smiled to hear,
 But not in scorn: — the Matron's Faith may lack
 The heavenly sanction needed to insure
 Fulfilment; but, we trust, her upward track
 Stops not at this low point, nor wants the lure
 Of flowers the Virgin without fear may own,
 For by her Son's blest hand the seed was sown.

X.

NEAR Anio's stream, I spied a gentle Dove
 Perched on an olive branch, and heard her cooing
 'Mid new-born blossoms that soft airs were wooing,
 While all things present told of joy and love.
 But restless Fancy left that olive grove
 To hail the exploratory Bird renewing
 Hope for the few, who, at the world's undoing,
 On the great flood were spared to live and move.

O bounteous Heaven! signs true as dove and bough
 Brought to the ark are coming evermore,
 Given though we seek them not, but, while we plough
 This sea of life without a visible shore,
 Do neither promise ask nor grace implore
 In what alone is ours, the living Now.

XI.

FROM THE ALBAN HILLS, LOOKING TOWARDS ROME.

FORGIVE, illustrious Country! these deep sighs,
Heaved less for thy bright plains and hills bestrown
With monuments decayed or overthrown,
For all that tottering stands or prostrate lies,
Than for like scenes in moral vision shown,
Ruin perceived for keener sympathies;
 Faith crushed, yet proud of weeds, her gaudy crown;
 Virtues laid low, and mouldering energies.
 Yet why prolong this mournful strain? — Fallen
 Power,
 Thy fortunes, twice exalted, might provoke
 Verse to glad notes prophetic of the hour
 When thou, uprisen, shalt break thy double yoke,
 And enter, with prompt aid from the Most High,
 On the third stage of thy great destiny.

XII.

NEAR THE LAKE OF THRASYMENE.

WHEN here with Carthage Rome to conflict came,
 An earthquake, mingling with the battle's shock,
 Checked not its rage ; unfelt the ground did rock,
 Sword dropped not, javelin kept its deadly aim.—
 Now all is sun-bright peace. Of that day's shame,
 Or glory, not a vestige seems to endure,
 Save in this Rill that took from blood the name *
 Which yet it bears, sweet Stream ! as crystal pure.
 So may all trace and sign of deeds aloof
 From the true guidance of humanity,
 Through Time and Nature's influence, purify
 Their spirit ; or, unless they for reproof
 Or warning serve, thus let them ail, on ground
 That gave them being, vanish to a sound.

XIII.

NEAR THE SAME LAKE.

FOR action born, existing to be tried,
 Powers manifold we have that intervene
 To stir the heart that would too closely screen
 Her peace from images to pain allied.
 What wonder if at midnight, by the side

* Sanguinetto.

Of Sanguinetto or broad Thrasymeye,
 The clang of arms is heard, and phantoms glide,
 Unhappy ghosts in troops by moonlight seen ;
 And singly thine, O vanquished chief ! whose corse,
 Unburied, lay hid under heaps of slain ?
 But who is he ?—the Conqueror. Would he force
 His way to Rome ? Ah, no ! round hill and plain
 Wandering, he haunts, at fancy's strong command,
 This spot,— his shadowy death-cup in his hand.

XIV.

THE CUCKOO AT LAVERNA.

MAY 25TH, 1837.

LIST !—'t was the Cuckoo.—O, with what delight
 Heard I that voice ! and catch it now, though faint,
 Far off and faint, and melting into air,
 Yet not to be mistaken. Hark again !
 Those louder cries give notice that the Bird,
 Although invisible as Echo's self,
 Is wheeling hitherward. Thanks, happy Creature,
 For this unthought-of greeting !

While allured
 From vale to hill, from hill to vale led on,
 We have pursued, through various lands, a long
 And pleasant course; flower after flower has blown,
 Embellishing the ground that gave them birth

With aspects novel to my sight ; but still
 Most fair, most welcome, when they drank the dew
 In a sweet fellowship with kinds beloved,
 For old remembrance' sake. And oft,— where
 Spring

Displayed her richest blossoms among files
 Of Orange-trees bedecked with glowing fruit
 Ripe for the hand, or under a thick shade
 Of Ilex, or, if better suited to the hour,
 The lightsome Olive's twinkling canopy,—
 Oft have I heard the Nightingale and Thrush
 Blending as in a common English grove
 Their love-songs ; but, where'er my feet might roam,
 Whate'er assemblages of new and old,
 Strange and familiar, might beguile the way,
 A gratulation from that vagrant Voice
 Was wanting ;— and most happily till now.

For see, Laverna ! mark the far-famed Pile,
 High on the brink of that precipitous rock,
 Implanted like a Fortress, as in truth
 It is, a Christian Fortress, garrisoned
 In faith and hope, and dutiful obedience,
 By a few Monks, a stern society,
 Dead to the world and scorning earth-born joys.
 Nay,— though the hopes that drew, the fears that
 drove,
 St. Francis, far from Man's resort, to abide
 Among these sterile heights of Apennine,
 Bound him, nor, since he raised yon House, have
 ceased

To bind his spiritual progeny with rules
 Stringent as flesh can tolerate and live,—
 His milder Genius (thanks to the good God
 That made us) over those severe restraints
 Of mind, that dread, heart-freezing discipline,
 Doth sometimes here predominate, and works
 By unsought means for gracious purposes ;
 For earth through heaven, for heaven, by change-
 ful earth

Illustrated, and mutually endeared.

Rapt though he were above the power of
 sense,
 Familiarly, yet out of the cleansed heart
 Of that once sinful Being overflowed
 On sun, moon, stars, the nether elements,
 And every shape of creature they sustain,
 Divine affections ; and with beast and bird
 (Stilled from afar — such marvel story tells —
 By casual outbreak of his passionate words,
 And from their own pursuits in field or grove
 Drawn to his side by look or act of love
 Humane, and virtue of his innocent life)
 He wont to hold companionship so free,
 So pure, so fraught with knowledge and delight,
 As to be likened in his Followers' minds
 To that which our first Parents, ere the fall
 From their high state darkened the Earth with
 fear,
 Held with all Kinds in Eden's blissful bowers.

Then question not that, 'mid the austere Band
Who breathe the air he breathed, tread where he
trod,

Some true partakers of his loving spirit
Do still survive, and, with those gentle hearts
Consorted, others, in the power, the faith,
Of a baptized imagination, prompt
To catch from Nature's humblest monitors
Whate'er they bring of impulses sublime.

Thus sensitive must be the Monk, though pale
With fasts, with vigils worn, depressed by years,
Whom in a sunny glade I chanced to see,
Upon a pine-tree's storm-uprooted trunk,
Seated alone, with forehead skyward raised,
Hands clasped above the crucifix he wore
Appended to his bosom, and lips closed
By the joint pressure of his musing mood
And habit of his vow. That ancient Man,—
Nor haply less the Brother whom I marked,
As we approached the Convent gate, aloft
Looking far forth from his aerial cell,
A young Ascetic, — Poet, Hero, Sage,
He might have been, Lover belike he was,—
If they received into a conscious ear
The notes whose first faint greeting startled me,
Whose sedulous iteration thrilled with joy
My heart, may have been moved like me to
think,
Ah! not like me who walk in the world's ways,

On the great Prophet, styled *the Voice of One
Crying amid the wilderness*, and given,
Now that their snows must melt, their herbs and
flowers

Revive, their obstinate winter pass away,
That awful name to thee, thee, simple Cuckoo,
Wandering in solitude, and evermore
Foretelling and proclaiming, ere thou leave
This thy last haunt beneath Italian skies
To carry thy glad tidings over heights
Still loftier, and to climes more near the Pole.

Voice of the desert, fare thee well; sweet Bird!
If that substantial title please thee more,
Farewell! — but go thy way; no need hast thou
Of a good wish sent after thee; from bower
To bower as green, from sky to sky as clear,
Thee gentle breezes waft, — or airs that meet
Thy course and sport around thee softly fan, —
Till Night, descending upon hill and vale,
Grants to thy mission a brief term of silence,
And folds thy pinions up in blest repose.

xv.

AT THE CONVENT OF CAMALDOLI.

GRIEVE for the Man who hither came bereft,
And seeking consolation from above;

Nor grieve the less that skill to him was left
 To paint this picture of his lady-love :
 Can she, a blessed saint, the work approve ?
 And O good Brethren of the cowl ! a thing
 So fair, to which with peril he must cling,
 Destroy in pity, or with care remove.
 That bloom,— those eyes,— can they assist to
 bind
 Thoughts that would stray from Heaven ? The
 dream must cease
 To be ; by Faith, not sight, his soul must live ;
 Else will the enamored Monk too surely find
 How wide a space can part from inward peace
 The most profound repose his cell can give.

XVI.

CONTINUED.

THE world forsaken, all its busy cares
 And stirring interests shunned with desperate flight,
 All trust abandoned in the healing might
 Of virtuous action,— all that courage dares,
 Labor accomplishes, or patience bears,—
 Those helps rejected, they whose minds perceive
 How subtly works man's weakness, sighs may
 heave
 For such a one beset with cloistral snares.
 Father of Mercy ! rectify his view,
 If with his vows this object ill agree ;

Shed over it thy grace, and thus subdue
 Imperious passion in a heart set free :—
 That earthly love may to herself be true,
 Give him a soul that cleaveth unto thee.*

XVII.

AT THE EREMITAGE OR UPPER CONVENT OF CAMALDOLL.

WHAT aim had they, the pair of Monks, in size
 Enormous, dragged, while side by side they sat,
 By panting steers up to this convent gate ?
 How, with empurpled cheeks and pampered eyes,
 Dare they confront the lean austerties
 Of Brethren who, here fixed, on Jesu wait
 In sackcloth, and God's anger deprecate
 Through all that humbles flesh and mortifies ?
 Strange contrast ! — verily the world of dreams,
 Where mingle, as for mockery combined,
 Things in their very essences at strife,
 Shows not a sight incongruous as the extremes
 That everywhere, before the thoughtful mind,
 Meet on the solid ground of waking life.*

* See Note.

XVIII.

AT VALLOMBROSA.

Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks
In Vallombrosa, where Etrurian shades
High over-arched embower.*

PARADISE LOST.

"VALLOMBROSA,— I longed in thy shadiest wood
To slumber, reclined on the moss-covered floor!"
Fond wish that was granted at last, and the Flood,
That lulled me asleep, bids me listen once more.
Its murmur how soft! as it falls down the steep,
Near that Cell — yon sequestered Retreat high
in air —

Where our Milton was wont lonely vigils to keep
For converse with God, sought through study and
prayer.

The Monks still repeat the tradition with pride,
And its truth who shall doubt? for his Spirit is
here;
In the cloud-piercing rocks doth her grandeur abide,
In the pines pointing heavenward her beauty
austere;
In the flower-besprent meadows his genius we trace
Turned to humbler delights, in which youth might
confide,

* See for the two first lines, "Stanzas composed in the Simplon Pass."

That would yield him fit help while prefiguring
that Place
Where, if Sin had not entered, Love never had
died.

When with life lengthened out came a desolate
time,
And darkness and danger had compassed him round,
With a thought he would flee to these haunts of
his prime,
And here once again a kind shelter be found.
And let me believe that when nightly the Muse
Did waft him to Sion, the glorified hill,
Here also, on some favored height, he would choose
To wander, and drink inspiration at will.

Vallombrosa! of thee I first heard in the page
Of that holiest of Bards, and the name for my mind
Had a musical charm, which the winter of age
And the changes it brings had no power to unbind.
And now, ye Miltonian shades! under you
I repose, nor am forced from sweet fancy to part,
While your leaves I behold and the brooks they
will strew,
And the realized vision is clasped to my heart.

Even so, and unblamed, we rejoice as we may
In Forms that must perish, frail objects of sense;
Unblamed, if the Soul be intent on the day
When the Being of Beings shall summon her hence.

For he and he only with wisdom is blest
 Who, gathering true pleasures wherever they grow,
 Looks up in all places, for joy or for rest,
 To the Fountain whence Time and Eternity flow.

XIX.

AT FLORENCE.

UNDER the shadow of a stately Pile,
 The Dome of Florence, pensive and alone,
 Nor giving heed to aught that passed the while,
 I stood, and gazed upon a marble stone,
 The laurelled Dante's favorite seat. A throne,
 In just esteem, it rivals; though no style
 Be there of decoration to beguile
 The mind, depressed by thought of greatness flown.
 As a true man, who long had served the lyre,
 I gazed with earnestness, and dared no more.
 But in his breast the mighty Poet bore
 A Patriot's heart, warm with undying fire.
 Bold with the thought, in reverence I sat down,
 And, for a moment, filled that empty Throne.

XX.

BEFORE THE PICTURE OF THE BAPTIST, BY RAPHAEL, IN
 THE GALLERY AT FLORENCE.

THE Baptist might have been ordained to cry
 Forth from the towers of that huge Pile, wherein

His father served Jehovah; but how win
 Due audience, how for aught but scorn defy
 The obstinate pride and wanton revelry
 Of the Jerusalem below, her sin
 And folly, if they with united din
 Drown not at once mandate and prophecy?
 Therefore the Voice spake from the Desert, thence
 To her, as to her opposite in peace,
 Silence, and holiness, and innocence,
 To her and to all lands its warning sent,
 Crying with earnestness that might not cease,
 "Make straight a highway for the Lord,—repent!"

XXI.

AT FLORENCE.—FROM MICHAEL ANGELO.

RAPTED above earth by power of one fair face,
 Hers in whose sway alone my heart delights,
 I mingle with the blest on those pure heights
 Where Man, yet mortal, rarely finds a place.
 With Him who made the Work that Work accords
 So well, that by its help and through his grace
 I raise my thoughts, inform my deeds and words,
 Clasping her beauty in my soul's embrace.
 Thus, if from two fair eyes mine cannot turn,
 I feel how in their presence doth abide
 Light which to God is both the way and guide;
 And, kindling at their lustre, if I burn,
 My noble fire emits the joyful ray
 That through the realms of glory shines for aye.

XXII.

AT FLORENCE.—FROM MICHAEL ANGELO.

ETERNAL Lord! eased of a cumbrous load,
 And loosened from the world, I turn to thee ;
 Shun, like a shattered bark, the storm, and flee
 To thy protection for a safe abode.
 The crown of thorns, hands pierced upon the tree,
 The meek, benign, and lacerated face,
 To a sincere repentance promise grace,
 To the sad soul give hope of pardon free.
 With justice mark not Thou, O Light divine,
 My fault, nor hear it with thy sacred ear ;
 Neither put forth that way thy arm severe ;
 Wash with thy blood my sins ; thereto incline
 More readily the more my years require
 Help, and forgiveness speedy and entire.

XXIII.

AMONG THE RUINS OF A CONVENT IN
THE APENNINES.

YE Trees ! whose slender roots entwine
Altars that piety neglects ;
 Whose infant arms enclasp the shrine
 Which no devotion now respects ;

If not a straggler from the herd
 Here ruminate, nor shrouded bird,
 Chanting her low-voiced hymn, take pride
 In aught that ye would grace or hide,—
 How sadly is your love misplaced,
 Fair Trees, your bounty run to waste !
 Ye, too, wild Flowers ! that no one heeds,
 And ye — full often spurned as weeds,—
 In beauty clothed, or breathing sweetness
 From fractured arch and mouldering wall —
 Do but more touchingly recall
 Man's headstrong violence and Time's fleetness,
 Making the precincts ye adorn
 Appear to sight still more forlorn.

XXIV.

IN LOMBARDY.

SEE, where his difficult way that Old Man wins,
 Bent by a load of Mulberry leaves ! — most hard
 Appears his lot, to the small Worm's compared,
 For whom his toil with early day begins.
 Acknowledging no task-master, at will
 (As if her labor and her ease were twins)
 She seems to work, at pleasure to lie still ; —
 And softly sleeps within the thread she spins.
 So fare they, — the Man serving as her Slave.
 Erelong their fates do each to each conform :

Both pass into new being ; — but the Worm,
Transfigured, sinks into a hopeless grave ;
His volant Spirit will, he trusts, ascend
To bliss unbounded, glory without end.

xxv.

AFTER LEAVING ITALY.

FAIR Land ! Thee all men greet with joy ; how few,
Whose souls take pride in freedom, virtue, fame,
Part from thee without pity dyed in shame :
I could not, — while from Venice we withdrew,
Led on till an Alpine strait confined our view
Within its depths, and to the shore we came
Of Lago Morto, dreary sight and name,
Which o'er sad thoughts a sadder coloring threw.
Italia ! on the surface of thy spirit,
(Too aptly emblemed by that torpid lake.)
Shall a few partial breezes only creep ? —
Be its depths quickened ; what thou dost inherit
Of the world's hopes, dare to fulfil ; awake,
Mother of Heroes, from thy death-like sleep !

xxvi.

CONTINUED.

As indignation mastered grief, my tongue
Spake bitter words ; words that did ill agree
With those rich stores of Nature's imagery,

And divine Art, that fast to memory clung, —
Thy gifts, magnificent Region, ever young
In the sun's eye, and in his sister's sight
How beautiful ! how worthy to be sung
In strains of rapture, or subdued delight !
I feign not ; witness that unwelcome shock
That followed the first sound of German speech,
Caught the far-winding barrier Alps among.
In that announcement, greeting seemed to mock
Parting ; the casual word had power to reach
My heart, and filled that heart with conflict strong.

xxvii.

COMPOSED AT RYDAL ON MAY MORNING, 1838.

IF with old love of you, dear Hills ! I share
New love of many a rival image brought
From far, forgive the wanderings of my thought :
Nor art thou wronged, sweet May ! when I compare
Thy present birth-morn with thy last, so fair,
So rich to me in favors. For my lot
Then was, within the famed Egerian Grot
To sit and muse, fanned by its dewy air
Mingling with thy soft breath ! That morning, too,
Warblers I heard their joy unbosoming
Amid the sunny, shadowy Coliseum ;
Heard them, unchecked by aught of saddening hue,
For victories there won by flower-crowned Spring,
Chant in full choir their innocent Te Deum.

XXVIII.

THE PILLAR OF TRAJAN.

WHERE towers are crushed, and unforbidden weeds
O'er mutilated arches shed their seeds :
And temples, doomed to milder change, unfold
A new magnificence that vies with old ;
Firm in its pristine majesty hath stood
A votive Column, spared by fire and flood : —
And, though the passions of man's fretful race
Have never ceased to eddy round its base,
Not injured more by touch of meddling hands
Than a lone obelisk, 'mid Nubian sands,
Or aught in Syrian deserts left to save
From death the memory of the good and brave.
Historic figures round the shaft embost
Ascend, with lineaments in air not lost :
Still as he turns, the charmed spectator sees
Group winding after group, with dream-like ease ;
Triumphs in sun-bright gratitude displayed,
Or softly stealing into modest shade.
— So, pleased with purple clusters to entwine
Some lofty elm-tree, mounts the daring vine ;
The woodbine so, with spiral grace, and breathes
Wide-spreading odors from her flowery wreaths.

Borne by the Muse from rills in shepherds' ears
Murmuring but one smooth story for all years,
I gladly commune with the mind and heart

Of him who thus survives by classic art,
His actions witness, venerate his mien,
And study Trajan as by Pliny seen ;
Behold how fought the Chief whose conquering
sword

Stretched far as earth might own a single lord ;
In the delight of moral prudence schooled,
How feelingly at home the sovereign ruled ;
Best of the good, — in pagan faith allied
To more than Man, by virtue deified.

Memorial Pillar ! 'mid the wrecks of Time
Preserve thy charge with confidence sublime, —
The exultations, pomps, and cares of Rome,
Whence half the breathing world received its doom ;
Things that recoil from language ; that, if shown
By apter pencil, from the light had flown.
A Pontiff, Trajan *here* the Gods implores,
There greets an Embassy from Indian shores ;
Lo ! he harangues his cohorts, — *there* the storm
Of battle meets him in authentic form !
Unharnessed, naked troops of Moorish horse
Sweep to the charge ; more high, the Dacian force,
To hoof and finger mailed ; — yet, high or low,
None bleed, and none lie prostrate but the foe ;
In every Roman, through all turns of fate,
Is Roman dignity inviolate ;

Spirit in him preëminent, who guides,
Supports, adorns, and over all presides ;
Distinguished only by inherent state

From honored Instruments that round him wait ;
 Rise as he may, his grandeur scorns the test
 Of outward symbol, nor will deign to rest
 On aught by which another is deprest.
 — Alas ! that One thus disciplined could toil
 To enslave whole nations on their native soil ;
 So emulous of Macedonian fame,
 That, when his age was measured with his aim,
 He drooped, 'mid else unclouded victories,
 And turned his eagles back with deep-drawn sighs.
 O weakness of the Great ! O folly of the wise !

Where now the haughty Empire that was spread
 With such fond hope ? her very speech is dead :
 Yet glorious Art the power of Time defies,
 And Trajan still, through various enterprise,
 Mounts, in this fine illusion, toward the skies :
 Still are we present with the imperial Chief,
 Nor cease to gaze upon the bold Relief,
 Till Rome, to silent marble unconfined,
 Becomes with all her years a vision of the Mind.

THE EGYPTIAN MAID:

OR, THE ROMANCE OF THE WATER-LILY.

[For the names and persons in the following poem, see the "History of the Renowned Prince Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table"; for the rest, the Author is answerable; only it may be proper to add, that the Lotus, with the bust of the Goddess appearing to rise out of the full-blown flower, was suggested by the beautiful work of ancient art once included among the Townley Marbles, and now in the British Museum.]

WHILE Merlin paced the Cornish sands,
 Forth-looking toward the rocks of Scilly,
 The pleased Enchanter was aware
 Of a bright Ship that seemed to hang in air ;
 Yet was she work of mortal hands,
 And took from men her name, — THE WATER-
 LILY.

Soft was the wind, that landward blew ;
 And, as the Moon, o'er some dark hill ascendant,
 Grows from a little edge of light
 To a full orb, this Pinnace bright