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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK POEMS: CONTAINING THE RESTROPECT, ODES, ELEGIES, SONNETS, &C ***

POEMS

BY
ROBERT LOVELL,
AND
ROBERT SOUTHEY.

Price 3s. 6d.

POEMS:

CONTAINING
THE RETROSPECT,
ODES, ELEGIES, SONNETS, &c.

BY
ROBERT LOVELL,
AND
ROBERT SOUTHEY,
OF BALIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD.

..... "Minuentur atræ
Carmine curæ." HOR.



BATH, PRINTED BY R. CRUTTWELL,
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PREFACE.

[Pg vii]

A quaint Author of the year 1633, in his pithy Proeme to a book, entitled

THE
PHILOSOPHERS BANQVET,

Newly Furnished and decked forth with much variety of many severall dishes,
aptly sayeth

"To the Iuditious Reader,

"*Him that will buy this Booke;* thus in the commendation and use thereof.

"Good Reader, many things hath beene written by many men, and the over-cloying humor of this age hath so overburdened the world with multiplicity of al kinds, that scarce there is one subject left upon the head whereof a hundred have not trampled over: amongst which impartial handling, it may bee possible that some one corner hath escaped this scrutenous search, and beene raked over with a lighter hand than other."

[Pg viii]

We feel the justice of this remark as applicable to modern poetry. Much novelty cannot be

expected. In submitting the following volume to the public, we attempt neither to prejudice them in its favour, or supplicate them in behalf of its faults.

The signature of *Bion* distinguishes the pieces of R. SOUTHEY;—*Moschus*, R. LOVELL.



THE RETROSPECT.

[Pg 1]

..... "On life's wide plain
Cast friendless, where unheard some sufferer cries
Hourly, and oft our road is lone and long,
Twere not a crime, should we awhile delay
Amid the sunny field; and happier they,
Who, as they wander, woo the charm of song
To cheer their path, 'till they forget to weep,
And the tired sense is husht and sinks to sleep."

BOWLES.

As on I journey through the vale of years,
Cheer'd by fond hopes, and chill'd by doubtful fears;
Allow me, Memory, in thy treasur'd store,
To view those days that will return no more:
Oh! let thy vivid pencil call to view
Each distant scene, each long-past hour anew,
Ere yet my bosom knew the touch of grief,
Ere yet my bosom lov'd the lyre's relief.

[Pg 3]

Yes, as thou dart'st thine intellectual ray,
The clouds of mental darkness melt away:
So when, at earliest day's awaking dawn,
The hovering mists obscure the dewy lawn,
O'er all the champain spread their influence chill,
Hang o'er the vale, and hide the lofty hill;
Anon, slow rising, beams the orb of day,
Slow melt the shadowy mists, and fade away;
The vapours vanish at the view of morn,
And hang in dew-drops on the glistening thorn;
The prospect opens on the pilgrim's sight,
And hills, and vales, and woods, reflect the beam of light.

[Pg 4]

O thou! the mistress of my future days,
Accept thy minstrel's retrospective lays;
To whom the minstrel and the lyre belong,
Accept, ARISTE, Memory's pensive song!
For Memory on thine image loves to hang,
Heave the sad sigh, and point the piercing pang.
Of long-past days I sing, ere yet I knew
Or grief and care, or happiness and you;
Ere yet my infant bosom learnt to prove
The pangs of absence, and the hopes of love.

So when the pilgrim, on his journey bent,
With upward toil creeps on the steep ascent;
Ere yet his feet the destin'd height attain,
Oft will he pause, and gaze the journey'd plain;
Oft pause again, the valley to survey,
Where food or slumber sooth'd his wand'ring way.

ALSTON! twelve years, in various business fled,
Have wing'd their restless flight o'er BION's head;
Twelve years have taught his opening mind to know
The smiles of pleasure, and the frowns of woe;

[Pg 5]

Since in thy vale, beneath the master's rule,
He roam'd an inmate of the village school:
Yet still will memory's busy eye retrace
Each well-known vestige of the oft-trod place;
Each wonted haunt, each scene of youthful joy,
Where merriment has cheer'd the careless boy:
Well pleas'd will memory still the spot survey,
Where once he triumph'd in the infant play,
Without one care where every morn he rose,
Where every evening sunk to calm repose.

Large was the mansion, fall'n by varying fate
From lordly grandeur and manorial state;
Where once the manor's lord supreme had rule,
Now reign'd the master of the village school:
No more was heard around, at earliest morn,
The echoing clangor of the huntsman's horn;
No more the eager hounds, with deep'ning cry,
Yell'd in the exulting hope of pastime nigh;
The squire no more obey'd the morning call,
Nor favourite spaniels fill'd the sportsman's hall;
For he, the last descendant of his race,
Slept with his fathers, and forgot the chace.

Fall'n was the mansion: o'er the village poor
The lordly landlord tyrannized no more;
For now, in petty greatness o'er the school,
The mighty master held despotic rule:
With trembling silence all his deeds we saw,
His look a mandate, and his word a law;
Severe his voice, severely grave his mien,
And wond'rous strict he was, and wond'rous wise, I ween.

[Pg 6]

Even now, thro' many a long long year, I trace
The hour when first in awe I view'd his face;
Even now recall my entrance at the dome,
'Twas the first day I ever left my home!
Years intervening have not worn away
The deep remembrance of that distant day;
Effac'd the vestige of my earliest fears,
A mother's fondness, and a mother's tears;
When close she prest me to her sorrowing heart,
As loath as even I myself to part.

But time to youthful sorrow yields relief,
Each various object weans the child from grief:
Like April showers the tears of youth descend,
Sudden they fall, and suddenly they end;
Serener pleasure gilds the following hour,
As brighter gleams the sun when past the April shower.

[Pg 7]

Methinks ev'n now the interview I see,
Recall the mistress' smile, the master's glee:
Much of my future happiness they said,
Much of the easy life the scholars led;
Of spacious play-ground, and of wholesome air,
The best instruction, and the tenderest care;
And when I follow'd from the garden door
My father, 'till with tears I saw no more,
How civilly they eas'd my parting pain,
And never spake so civilly again!

Why loves the soul on earlier years to dwell,
When memory spreads around her saddening spell;
When discontent, with sullen gloom o'er-cast,
Loaths at the present, and prefers the past?
Why calls reflection to my pensive view
Each trifling act of infancy anew—
Each trifling act with pleasure pondering o'er,
Even at the time when trifles please no more!
Day follows day, yet leaves no trace behind,
When one sole thought engrosses all the mind;
When anxious reason claims her painful sway,
And for to-morrow's prospect glooms to-day!
Ill fares the wanderer in this vale of life,
When each new stage affords succeeding strife;

In every stage he feels supremely curst,
Yet still the present evil seems the worst:
On as he goes the vision'd prospect flies,
And, grasping still at bliss, unblest at last he dies.

[Pg 8]

Yet is remembrance sweet; though well I know
The days of childhood are but days of woe;
Some rude restraint, some petty tyrant sours
The tranquil calm of childhood's easy hours;
Some trifling fault committed calls the tear,
Some trifling task neglected prompts to fear:
Yet is it sweet to call to mind the hour,
Ere searching reason gain'd her saddening power;
Ere future prospects could the soul distress,
When even ignorance was happiness.

Such was my state in those remember'd years,
When one small acre bounded all my fears:
And even now with pleasure I recall
The tapestry'd school, the bright-brown boarded hall;
The murmuring brook, that every morning saw
The due observance of the cleanly law;
The walnuts, where, when favour would allow,
Full oft I wont to search each well-stript bough;
The crab-tree, whence we hid the secret hoard,
With roasted crabs to deck the wintry board.

These trifling pastimes then my soul possest,
These trifling objects still remain imprest:
So when, with unskill'd hand, the rustic hind
Carves the rude legend on the growing rind,
In after years the peasant lives to see
The expanded legend grow as grows the tree.
Though every winter's desolating sway
Shake the hoarse grove, and sweep the leaves away;
Deep in its trunk the legend still will last,
Defy the storm, and brave the wintry blast.

[Pg 9]

Whilst letter'd travellers delight to roam
The time-torn temple and demolish'd dome;
Stray with the Arab o'er the wreck of time,
Where erst Palmyra's towers arose sublime;
Or mark the lazy Turk's lethargic pride,
And Grecian slavery on Ilyssus' side:
Oh! be it mine to flee from empire's strife,
And mark the changes of domestic life;
See the fall'n scenes where once I bore my part,
Where every change of fortune strikes the heart;
As when the merry bells' responsive sound
Proclaim the news of victory around;
When eager patriots fly the news to spread
Of glorious conquest, and of thousands dead;
All feel the mighty glow of victor joy,
Exult in blood, and triumph to destroy:
But if extended on the gory plain,
And, snatch'd in conquest, some lov'd friend be slain,
Affection's tears will dim the sorrowing eye,
And suffering nature grieve that one should die.

[Pg 10]

Oft have my footsteps roam'd the sacred spot,
Where heroes, kings, and minstrels, sleep forgot;
Oft traced the mouldering castle's ivy'd wall,
Or ruin'd convent tottering to its fall;
Whilst sad reflection lov'd the solemn gloom,
Paus'd o'er the pile, and ponder'd on the tomb:
Yet never had my bosom felt such pain
As, ALSTON, when I saw thy scenes again!
For every long-lost pleasure rush'd to view,
For every long-past sorrow rose anew;
Where whilome all were friends, I stood alone,
Unknowing all I saw, of all I saw unknown.

ALSTON! no pilgrim ever crept around
With more emotion Sion's sacred ground,
Than fill'd my heart as slow I saunter'd o'er
Those fields my infant steps had trod of yore;

Where I had loiter'd out the summer hour,
Chas'd the gay butterfly, and cull'd the flower;
Sought the swift arrow's erring course to trace,
Or with mine equals vied amid the chace.

Cold was the morn, and bleak the wintry blast
Howl'd o'er the meadow, when I view'd thee last;
My bosom bounded, as I wander'd round
Each well-known field, each long-remember'd ground.
I saw the church where I had slept away
The tedious service of the summer-day;
Or, listening sad to all the preacher told,
In winter wak'd, and shiver'd with the cold;
And, as I pass'd along the well-trod way,
Where whilome two by two we walk'd to pray,
I saw the garden ground as usual rail'd,
A fence, to fetch my ball, I oft had scal'd:
Oh! it recall'd a thousand scenes to view,
A thousand joys to which I long had bid adieu.

[Pg 11]

Silent and sad the scene: I heard no more
Mirth's honest cry, and childhood's cheerful roar,
No longer echo'd round the shout of glee—
It seem'd as tho' the world were chang'd, like me!
There, where my little hands were wont to rear
With pride the earliest sallad of the year;
Where never idle weed to grow was seen,
There the rank nettle rear'd its head obscene.
I too have felt the hand of fate severe—
In those calm days I never knew to fear;
No future views alarm'd my gloomy breast,
No anxious pangs my sickening soul possess;
No grief consum'd me, for I did not know
Increase of reason was increase of woe.

[Pg 12]

Silent and sad awhile I paus'd, to gaze
On the fall'n dwelling of my earlier days;
Long dwelt the eye on each remember'd spot,
Each long-left scene, long left, but not forgot:
Once more my soul delighted to survey
The brook that murmured on its wonted way;
Obedient to the master's dread commands,
Where every morn we wash'd our face and hands;
Where, when the tempest raged along the air,
I went to rear the dam with eager care;
And eft and aye return'd with joy to find
The neighbouring orchard's fruit shook down by warring wind.

How art thou chang'd! at first the stately pile,
Where pride, and pomp, and pleasure, wont to smile,
Lord of the manor, where the jovial squire
Call'd all his tenants round the crackling fire;
Where, whilst the glow of fame o'erspread his face,
He told his ancient exploits in the chace;
And, proud his rival sportsmen to surpass,
He lit again the pipe, and fill'd again the glass.

[Pg 13]

Past is thy day of glory: past the day
When here the man of learning held his sway:
No more, when howl the wintry storms around,
Within thy hall is heard the mirthful sound;
No more disport around the infant crew,
And high in health the mimic game pursue;
No more to strike the well-aim'd ball delight,
Or rear aloft with joy the buoyant kite.

True, thou art fallen: thy day of glory past,
Long may thy day of honest comfort last!
Long may the farmer from his toil retire
To joys domestic round thy evening fire;
Where boisterous riot once supreme has reign'd,
Where discipline his sway severe maintain'd;
May heaven the industrious farmer's labour bless,
And crown his honest toil with happiness.

Seat of my earlier, happier years, farewell!

Thy memory still in Bion's breast shall dwell:
Still as he journeys life's rough road along,
Or sojourns sad, this college gloom among,
Will fond remembrance paint those careless days,
When all he wish'd was speedy holydays!

ALSTON, how many a pang has wrung my heart,
Since from thy scenes in youth I joy'd to part!
How often has my bosom shrunk to know
The sigh of sorrow, and the weight of woe
I knew not even the comfort of a tear
O'er a beloved father's timeless bier;
His clay-cold limbs I saw the grave inclose,
And blest that fate which snatch'd him from his woes.

[Pg 14]

Why wilt thou, Memory, still recall to view
Each long-past joy, each long-lost friend anew?
Paint not the scenes that pleas'd my soul of yore,
Those friends are gone, those long-past joys no more;
Cease to torment me, busy torturer, cease,
Let cold oblivion's touch benumb my soul to peace!

So when the morning smiles serene and mild,
The cheerful pilgrim wanders o'er the wild;
Soft through the bowring wood the breezes blow,
And bubbling fountains sparkle as they flow;
Sweet is to him the woodland's secret glade,
Sweet the deep shelter of the dingle's shade:
And oft he stops, delighted to survey
The high hill's top reflect the lucid ray;
Anon the face of heaven is overcast,
Hoarse groan the woods responsive to the blast;
The wild winds howl, the torrents thunder down,
With darker hues the sullen mountains frown;
All that the pilgrim, late with joy possest,
O'ercast by horror now, englooms his shrinking breast.

[Pg 15]

Yet, as the mariner, when tempest tost,
Aghast he stands, and gives up all for lost;
If at that moment, when with faltering breath
He calls to heaven, and waits the rushing death;
If then he sees the twin-born lights descend,
His bosom brightens, and his terrors end.
ARISTE! so when memory's painful sway
Recalls the sorrow of the distant day;
When the soft soother turns at length to thee,
The gloom disperses, and the shadows flee;
Grief's cankering pangs no more my bosom move,
That beating bosom only bounds to Love.

BION.



ROMANCE.

[Pg 17]

What wildly-beauteous form,
High on the summit of yon bicrown'd hill,
Lovely in horror, takes her dauntless stand?
Tho' speds the thunder there its deep'ning way,
Tho' round her head the lightnings play,
Undaunted she abides the storm;
She waves her magic wand,
The clouds retire, the storm is still;
Bright beams the sun unwonted light around,
And many a rising flower bedecks the enchanted ground.

ROMANCE! I know thee now,
I know the terrors of thy brow;
I know thine awful mien, thy beaming eye;
And lo! whilst mists arise around
Yon car that cleaves the pregnant ground!
Two fiery dragons whirl her through the sky;
Her milder sister loves to rove
Amid Parnassus' laurell'd grove,
On Helicon's harmonious side,
To mark the gurgling streamlet glide;
Meantime, thro' wilder scenes and sterner skies,
From clime to clime the ardent genius flies.

[Pg 18]

She speeds to yonder shore,^[1]
Where ruthless tempests roar,
Where sturdy winter holds his northern reign,
Nor vernal suns relax the ice-pil'd plain:
Dim shadows circle round her secret seat,
Where wandering, who approach shall hear
The wild wolf rend the air;
Thro' the cloudy-mantled sky
Shall see the imps of darkness fly,
And hear the sad scream from the grim retreat;
Around her throne
Ten thousand dangers lurk, most fearful, most unknown.

Yet lovelier oft in milder sway,
She wends abroad her magic way;
The holy prelate owns her power;
In soft'ning tale relates
The snowy Ethiop's matchless charms,
The outlaw's den, the clang of arms,
And love's too-varying fates;
The storms of persecution lower,
Austere devotion gives the stern command,
"Commit yon impious legend to the fires;"—
Calm in his conscious worth, the sage retires,
And saves the invalu'd work, and quits the thankless land;
High tow'rs his name the sacred list above,
And ev'n the priest^[2] is prais'd who wrote of blameless love.

[Pg 19]

Around the tower, whose wall infolds
Young THORA's blooming charms,
Romance's serpent winds his glittering folds;
The warrior clasps his shaggy arms,
The monster falls, the damsel is the spoil,
Matchless reward of REGNER'S^[3] matchless toil.

Around the patriot board,
The knights^[4] attend their lord;
The martial sieges hov'ring o'er,
Enrapt the genius views the dauntless band;
Still prompt for innocence to fight,
Or quell the pride of proud oppression's might,
They rush intrepid o'er the land;
She gives them to the minstrel lore,
Hands down her LAUNCELOT'S peerless name,
Repays her TRISTRAM'S woes with fame;
Borne on the breath of song,
To future times descends the memory of the throng.

[Pg 20]

Foremost mid the peers of France,^[5]
ORLANDO hurls the death-fraught lance;
Where DURLINDANA aims the blow,
To darkness sinks the faithless foe;
The horn with magic sound
Spreads deep dismay around;
Unborn to bleed, the chieftain goes,
And scatters wide his Paynim foes;
The genius hovers o'er the purple plain
Where OLIVERO tramples on the slain;
BAYARDO speeds his furious course,
High towers ROGERO in his matchless force.

Romance the heighten'd tale has caught,
Forth from the sad monastic cell,
Where fiction with devotion loves to dwell,
The sacred legend^[6] flies with many a wonder fraught;
Deep roll the papal^[7] thunders round,
And everlasting wrath to rebel reason sound.

[Pg 21]

Hark! Superstition sounds to war's alarms,
War stalks o'er Palestine with scorching breath,
And triumphs in the feast of death;
All Europe flies to arms:
Enthusiast courage spreads her piercing sound,
Devotion caught the cry, and woke the echo around.
Romance^[8] before the army flies,
New scenes await her wondering eyes;
Awhile she firms her GODFREY'S throne,
And makes Arabia's magic lore her own.

And hark! resound, in mingled sound,
The clang of arms, the shriek of death;
Each streaming gash bedews the ground,
And deep and hollow groans load the last struggling breath:
Wide thro' the air the arrows fly,
Darts, shields, and swords, commix'd appear;
Deep is the cry, when thousands die,
When COEUR DE LION'S arm constrains to fear:
Aloft the battle-axe in air
Whirls around confus'd despair;
Nor Acre's walls can check his course,
Nor Sarzin millions stay his force.

[Pg 22]

Indignant, firm the warrior stood,
The hungry lion gapes for food;
His fearless eye beheld him nigh,
Unarm'd, undaunted, saw the beast proceed:
Romance, o'erhovering, saw the monster die,
And scarce herself believ'd the more than wond'rous deed.

And now, with more terrific mien,
She quits the sad degenerate scene;
With many a talisman of mightiest pow'r,
Borne in a rubied car, sublime she flies,
Fire-breathing griffins waft her thro' the skies;
Around her head the innocuous tempest lowers,
To Gallia's favour'd realm she goes,
And quits her magic state, and plucks her lovely rose.^[9]
Imagination waves her wizard wand,
Dark shadows mantle o'er the land;
The lightnings flash, the thunders sound,
Convulsive throbs the labouring ground;^[10]
What fiends, what monsters, circling round, arise!
High towers of fire aloft aspire,
Deep yells resound amid the skies,
Yclad in arms, to Fame's alarms
Her magic warrior flies.

[Pg 23]

By Fiction's shield secure, for many a year
O'er cooler reason held the genius rule;
But lo! CERVANTES waves his pointed spear,
Nor Fiction's shield can stay the spear of ridicule.

The blameless warrior comes; he first to wield
His fateful weapon in the martial field;
By him created on the view,
ARCADIA'S vallies bloom anew,
And many a flock o'erspreads the plain,
And love, with innocence, assumes his reign:
Protected by a warrior's name,
The kindred warriors live to fame:
Sad is the scene, where oft from Pity's eye
Descends the sorrowing tear,
As high the unheeding chieftain lifts the spear,
And gives the deadly blow, and sees PARTHENIA die!
Where, where such virtues can we see,

[Pg 24]

Or where such valour, SIDNEY, but in thee?
O, cold of heart, shall pride assail thy shade,
Whom all Romance could fancy nature made?

Sound, Fame, thy loudest blast,
For SPENSER pours the tender strain,
And ^[11]shapes to glowing forms the motley train;
The elfin tribes around
Await his potent sound,
And o'er his head Romance her brightest splendors cast.
Deep thro' the air let sorrow's banner wave!
For penury o'er SPENSER's friendless head
Her chilling mantle spread;
For Genius cannot save!
Virtue bedews the blameless poet's dust;
But fame, exulting, clasps her favorite's laurel'd bust.

[Pg 25]

Fain would the grateful Muse, to thee, ROUSSEAU,
Pour forth the energetic thanks of gratitude;
Fain would the raptur'd lyre ecstatic glow,
To whom Romance and Nature form'd all good:
Guide of my life, too weak these lays,
To pour the unutterable praise;
Thine aid divine for ever lend,
Still as my guardian sprite attend;
Unmov'd by Fashion's flaunting throng,
Let my calm stream of life smooth its meek course along;
Let no weak vanity dispense
Her vapors o'er my better sense;
But let my bosom glow with fire,
Let me strike the soothing lyre,
Altho' by all unheard the melodies expire.

BION.

FOOTNOTES:

- [1] Fictions of Romance, popular in Scandinavia at an early period.
- [2] Heliodorus chose rather to be deprived of his see than burn his Ethiopics. The bishop's name would have slept with his fathers, the romancer is remembered.
- [3] First exploit of the celebrated Regner Lodbrog.
- [4] Knights of the round table.
- [5] The Paladines of France.
- [6] Instead of forging the life of a saint, Archbishop Turpin was better employed in falsifying the history of Charlemagne.
- [7] A bull was issued, commanding all good citizens to believe Ariosto's poem, founded upon Turpin's history.
- [8] Arabian fictions ingrafted on the Gothic romance.
- [9] Romance of the Rose, written soon after the Crusades.
- [10] Early prose Romances, originally Spanish.
- [11] Fictions of Romance, allegorized by Spenser.



TO URBAN.

[Pg 27]

Lo! where the livid lightning flies
With transient furious force,
A moment's splendour streaks the skies,
Where ruin marks its course:
Then see how mild the font of day
Expands the stream of light;
Whilst living by the genial ray,
All nature smiles delight.

So boisterous riot, on his course
 Uncurb'd by reason, flies;
And lightning, like its fatal force,
 Soon lightning-like it dies:
Whilst sober Temperance, still the same,
 Shall shun the scene of strife;
And, like the sun's enlivening flame,
 Shall beam the lamp of life.

[Pg 28]

Let noise and folly seek the reign
 Where senseless riot rules;
Let them enjoy the pleasures vain
 Enjoy'd alone by fools.
URBAN! those better joys be ours,
 Which virtuous science knows,
To pass in milder bliss the hours,
 Nor fear the future woes.

So when stern time their frames shall seize,
 When sorrow pays for sin;
When every nerve shall feel disease,
 And conscience shrink within;
Shall health's best blessings all be ours,
 The soul serene at ease,
Whilst science gilds the passing hours,
 And every hour shall please.

Even now from solitude they fly,
 To drown each thought in noise;
Even now they shun Reflection's eye,
 Depriv'd of man's best joys.
So, when Time's unrelenting doom
 Shall bring the seasons' course,
The busy monitor shall come
 With aggravated force.

[Pg 29]

Friendship is ours: best friend, who knows
 Each varied hour to employ;
To share the lighted load of woes,
 And double every joy:
And Science too shall lend her aid,
 The friend that never flies,
But shines amid misfortune's shade
 As stars in midnight skies.

Each joy domestic bliss can know
 Shall deck the future hour;
Or if we taste the cup of woe,
 The cup has lost its power:
Thus, may we live, 'till death's keen spear,
 Unwish'd, unfear'd, shall come;
Then sink, without one guilty fear,
 To slumber in the tomb.

BION.



THE MISER'S MANSION.

[Pg 31]

Thou mouldering mansion, whose embattled side
 Shakes as about to fall at every blast;
Once the gay pile of splendor, wealth, and pride,
 But now the monument of grandeur past.

Fall'n fabric! pondering o'er thy time-trac'd walls,
Thy mouldering, mighty, melancholy state;
Each object, to the musing mind, recalls
The sad vicissitudes of varying fate.

Thy tall towers tremble to the touch of time,
The rank weeds rustle in thy spacious courts;
Fill'd are thy wide canals with loathly slime,
Where battening, undisturb'd, the foul toad sports.

Deep from her dismal dwelling yells the owl,
The shrill bat flits around her dark retreat;
And the hoarse daw, when loud the tempests howl,
Screams as the wild winds shake her secret seat.

[Pg 32]

'Twas here AVARO dwelt, who daily told
His useless heaps of wealth in selfish joy;
Who lov'd to ruminate o'er hoarded gold,
And hid those stores he dreaded to employ.

In vain to him benignant heaven bestow'd
The golden heaps to render thousands blest;
Smooth aged penury's laborious road,
And heal the sorrows of affliction's breast.

For, like the serpent of romance, he lay
Sleepless and stern to guard the golden sight;
With ceaseless care he watch'd his heaps by day,
With causeless fears he agoniz'd by night.

Ye honest rustics, whose diurnal toil
Enrich'd the ample fields this churl possess;
Say, ye who paid to him the annual spoil,
With all his riches, was AVARO blest?

Rose he, like you, at morn devoid of fear,
His anxious vigils o'er his gold to keep?
Or sunk he, when the noiseless night was near,
As calmly on his couch of down to sleep?

Thou wretch! thus curst with poverty of soul,
What boot to thee the blessings fortune gave?
What boots thy wealth above the world's controul,
If riches doom their churlish lord a slave?

[Pg 33]

Chill'd at thy presence grew the stately halls,
Nor longer echo'd to the song of mirth;
The hand of art no more adorn'd thy walls,
Nor blaz'd with hospitable fires the hearth.

On well-worn hinges turns the gate no more,
Nor social friendship hastes the friend to meet;
Nor when the accustom'd guest draws near the door,
Run the glad dogs, and gambol round his feet.

Sullen and stern AVARO sat alone
In anxious wealth amid the joyless hall,
Nor heeds the chilly hearth with moss o'ergrown,
Nor sees the green slime mark the mouldering wall.

For desolation o'er the fabric dwells,
And time, on restless pinion, hurried by;
Loud from her chimney'd seat the night-bird yells,
And thro' the shatter'd roof descends the sky.

Thou melancholy mansion! much mine eye
Delights to wander o'er thy sullen gloom,
And mark the daw from yonder turret fly,
And muse how man himself creates his doom.

For here had Justice reign'd, had Pity known
With genial power to sway AVARO's breast,
These treasur'd heaps which fortune made his own,
By aiding misery might himself have blest.

[Pg 34]

And Charity had oped her golden store
To work the gracious will of heaven intent,

Fed from her superflux the craving poor,
And paid adversity what heaven had lent.

Then had thy turrets stood in all their state,
Then had the hand of art adorn'd thy wall,
Swift on its well-worn hinges turn'd the gate,
And friendly converse cheer'd the echoing hall.

Then had the village youth at vernal hour
Hung round with flowery wreaths thy friendly gate,
And blest in gratitude that sovereign power
That made the man of mercy good as great.

The traveller then to view thy towers had stood,
Whilst babes had lispt their benefactor's name,
And call'd on heaven to give thee every good,
And told abroad thy hospitable fame.

In every joy of life the hours had fled,
Whilst time on downy pinions hurried by,
'Till age with silver hairs had grac'd thy head,
Wean'd from the world, and taught thee how to die.

And, as thy liberal hand had shower'd around
The ample wealth by lavish fortune given,
Thy parted spirit had that justice found,
And angels hymn'd the rich man's soul to heaven.

BION.



ELEGY. THE DECAYED FARM-HOUSE.

[Pg 35]

'Mid mighty ruins mould'ring to decay,
The letter'd traveller delights to roam;
The antique pile or column to survey,
And trace faint legends on the crumbling dome.

They court proud cities of historic name,
By desolation's giant arm subdu'd,
And meditate the spot once dear to fame,
Where Balbec flourish'd, or Palmyra stood.

The muse delights to court a lone retreat,
And far from these illustrious scenes to stray;
Uprear'd by folly for ambition's seat,
By vice and folly fall'n, now tottering to decay.

[Pg 36]

She loves to meditate the humbler spot,
Where untrick'd nature pours the rude sublime;
Where rural hands have rear'd the rural cot,
Decaying now beneath the touch of time.

"Yon farm-house totters, by the tempest beat,
The marks of age its antique chimnies bear;
Sure no sad master owns the cheerless seat,
Say, passing shepherd, who has sojourn'd there?"

'Forgive the sigh,' the rustic swain reply'd,
'These desert scenes my happier days recall;
Forgive the tears which down my cheeks yglide,
For when I view this spot, my tears will fall.

'Stranger!' said he, 'here late did GRATIO dwell,
Hast thou not heard of good old GRATIO'S fame?

Through all our village he was known full well,
And even lisping infants spoke his name.

'Twice twenty years I serv'd him as his hind,
Twice twenty years for him I till'd the soil;
I lov'd my master, for I found him kind,
My task was easy, and I blest my toil.

'He seem'd not master, but an equal friend;
He join'd our labours in the field by day,
And when the evening bade our labours end,
He mingled freely in our rustic play.

[Pg 37]

'Ah! well I knew him from his mother's arms,
No youth so fair, so innocent, as he;
His spring of life was deck'd with spring's best charms,
His opening mind was like the blossom'd tree.

'His riper years with riper fruits were crown'd,
His mellow autumn blest with genial skies;
His age, like winter's frost-ymantled ground,
Where vigour still beneath the hoary surface lies.

'For wealth or pow'r he breath'd no prayer to heav'n,
Life's every blessing industry supplied;
To him health, peace, and competence, were giv'n,
And say, can virtue form a wish beside?

'This once-lov'd spot recalls full many a joy,
What cheer'd in youth old age will ne'er forget;
But still must doat on memory's fond employ,
And what it lov'd the most, the most regret.

'The spreading elm that shadows o'er the yard,
Its parted master to my view can call;
And every object claims a soft regard,
Since GRATIO's memory sanctifies them all.

'The shady bower in yonder elmy meads,
The vocal thicket where the throstle sung,
The little gate that through the garden leads,
The fork now useless where the milk-pail hung.

[Pg 38]

'But GRATIO's dead, and desert is the scene,
GRATIO's no more, and every charm's decay'd;
Those joys are fled which gladden'd once the green;
But still fond fancy courts the fleeting shade,

'Still dwells tenacious on those happier hours,
When this lov'd spot with social joys was crown'd;
When health, content, and innocence were ours,
And pour'd the song of happiness around.

'Then the glad household his return would greet,
And winning welcome smil'd with accents bland;
The faithful house-dog gambol'd round his feet,
To court attention from his master's hand.

'To clasp his knees the prattling infants ran,
Proud from their sire to catch the earliest kiss;
Oh! I have seen the parent bless the man,
When only tears could speak his secret bliss.

'But now he's dead, the thought demands a tear,
I saw the good man yield his latest breath;
He fell full ripen'd as the autumnal ear,
Swept by the sickle of relentless death.'

"Shepherd," said he, "my day of life is flown;"
'Methinks ev'n now the faltering sound I hear:'
"Lay my cold corse beneath some humble stone,
And let no useless pomp attend my bier."

[Pg 39]

'We try'd each healing art, but could not save;
We bore his bier, the last sad debt to pay;
No plummy hearse bore GRATIO to the grave,
No pompous pile was rear'd around his clay.

'All the sad village followed in the train,
We laid his bones beneath yon yew-tree's shade;
Our village curate grav'd the elegiac strain,
And lo! the stone, the spot in which he's laid.'



EPITAPH.

Here GRATIO mingles with his kindred clay,
Who liv'd contented, and who died resign'd;
He let no slavish rules his actions sway,
But the warm impulse of an honest mind.

Of heav'n's free blessings he bestow'd a part,
And open'd wide his hospitable gate;
He fed the poor, for gen'rous was his heart;
He sooth'd the sad, for pity was his mate.

[Pg 40]

To him the boon of good old age was giv'n,
And now, when parted from this world of woe,
He rests in holy faith of God and heav'n,
To meet that mercy which he gave below.

MOSCHUS.



ELEGY.

THE DECAYED MONASTERY.

[Pg 41]

How loves the mind to muse o'er long-past hours,
While o'er the scene the swift ideas dance;
How sweet absorb'd in memory's pleasing pow'rs,
To wing the soul in retrospective glance!

But nought avails the retrospective view,
If calm reflection turn it not to good;
In vain shall thought the backward theme pursue,
If mind not profit by the theme pursu'd.

Thus o'er some antique ruin, time-defac'd,
The sons of science oft delight to stray,
To trace the inscription on the desert waste,
And pierce time's dark veil by its lucid ray.

[Pg 42]

But vain the labours of the enquiring sage,
If thence the mind no moral truth sublimes;
Nor learns from heroes of a distant age,
To love their virtues, and to shun their crimes.

Beneath yon hillock, by the embow'ring grove,
The once-fam'd convent's mouldering walls arise;
Come, pensive muse, that lov'st these scenes to rove,
Now rising vesper rules the evening skies!

Explore the gloom with silent step, and slow,
While musing melancholy hovers near;

Haply from hence some moral truth may flow,
And frame a song that virtue's self may hear.

This sacred pile, for solitude design'd,
To pious age might form a still retreat;
But bigot zeal here rankled in the mind,
And superstition fix'd her baneful seat.

Yon pending column, moss ygrown and rude,
Now torn by time, and faithless to its trust;
Once mark'd the proud spot where a temple stood,
And mystic rites made consecrate its dust.

'Twere impious thought these cloister'd shades to roam,
Or wake dull echo with one cheerful sound;
No stranger eye might meditate the dome,
No foot unhallow'd tread the sacred ground.

[Pg 43]

But now ev'n here the slimy serpent crawls,
And hence the gloom-born owl wheels her way;
Loud shrieks the hoarse bat from the hollow walls,
And the gaunt night-wolf meditates his prey.

As o'er the mind these varied visions steal,
They speak instruction to the musing bard;
From these vain efforts of religious zeal,
How clear the moral, yet how few regard.

In vain may priests their mystic rites repeat,
The dome still moulders with th' unhallow'd dust;
For virtue only consecrates her seat,
Her sacred temple is the heart that's just.

How dark the times when wily monks combin'd,
And shrouded truth in superstitious gloom;
Repress the noblest energies of mind,
Prescrib'd man's path, and fix'd his final doom.

If crimes untold some parting spirit felt,
Persuasive gold to holy friar was giv'n;
Low at the altar brib'd devotion knelt,
And mammon wing'd the venal pray'r to heav'n.

Succeeding ages saw their wealth increase,
While self-denying poverty they feign'd;
Secure they liv'd in luxury and ease,
Nor kept those vigils which themselves ordain'd.

[Pg 44]

Now the eighth Henry rul'd our rising isle,
He saw their treasure, and he burnt t' enjoy;
Destruction rag'd o'er each devoted pile,
And wealth, that rais'd them, serv'd but to destroy.

Thus burst one link of superstition's chain,
The mind unfetter'd dar'd a nobler flight;
Fair truth and reason reassum'd their reign,
And pour'd a flood of intellectual light.

How blest were man, had this diffusive beam
Spread o'er the general world its lambent ray;
Illum'd the shores where Volga pours its stream,
And where the classic Tiber rolls its way.

For there no gleam shot through th' impervious night,
And there their seat the monkish zealots made;
As the dull earth-worm shuns the realms of light,
And courts in gloom obscure its native shade.

Still in those regions superstition sways,
In cloister'd shades see youth and beauty shrin'd;
There unexcited energy decays,
And genius dies that might have blest mankind.

But soon ev'n here the illusive shade shall fail,
And truth omnipotent assert its power;
How joys the muse the coming dawn to hail,
Oh! might her line facilitate the hour.

[Pg 45]

Say, what is virtue, sages? Is it this?
To quit the public weal, and guard our own:
Is life's sole object individual bliss?
Does man exist to bless himself alone?

Have we no duties of a social kind?
Is self-regard creation's noblest end?
How then shall age its wonted succour find;
The blind a leader, and the poor a friend?

Say, ye recluse, who shun life's public road,
Have ye not powers to mitigate distress;
To ease affliction's bosom of its load,
And make the sum of human misery less?

This duty teaches to the human breast,
And virtue bids us still her fires relume;
Nor waste the flame, un blessing and unblest,
As lamps that glimmer in sepulchral gloom.

Who hides those talents bounteous heav'n bestow'd
In lone retreat, perverts great nature's plan,
The path of duty is the social road,
The sphere for action is the sphere for man.

MOSCHUS.



TO HYMEN.

[Pg 47]

God of the torch, whose soul-illuming flame
Beams brightest radiance o'er the human heart;
Of every woe the cure,
Of every joy the source;

To thee I sing: if haply may the muse
Pour forth the song unblam'd from these dull haunts,
Where never beams thy torch
To cheer the sullen scene;

From these dull haunts, where monkish science holds,
In sullen gloom her solitary reign;
And spurns the reign of love,
And spurns thy genial sway.

God of the ruddy cheek and beaming eye,
Whose soft sweet gaze thrills thro' the bounding heart,
With no unholy joy
I pour the lay to thee.

[Pg 48]

I pour the lay to thee, though haply doom'd
In solitary woe to waste my years;
Though doom'd perchance to die
Unlov'd and unbewail'd.

Yet will the lark, in iron cage inthrall'd,
Chaunt forth her hymn to greet the morning sun,
As wide his brilliant beam
Illumes the landskip round;

As distant 'mid the woodland haunts is heard
The feather'd quire, she chaunts her prison'd hymn,
And hails the beam of joy,
Of joy to her denied.

Friend to each noblest feeling of the soul,

To thee I hymn, for every joy is thine;
And every virtue comes
To join thy generous train.

Lur'd by the splendor of thy beamy torch,
Beacon of bliss, young love expands his plumes,
And leads his willing slaves
To wear thy flowery bands;

And then he yields the follies of his reign,
Throws down the torch that scorches up the soul,
And lights the purer flame
That glows serene with thee.

[Pg 49]

And chasten'd Friendship comes, whose mildest sway
Shall cheer the hour of age, when fainter beam
The fading flame of love,
The fading flame of life.

Parent of every bliss! the busy soul
Of Fancy oft will paint, in brightest hues,
How calm, how clear, thy torch
Illumes the wintry hour;

Will paint the wearied labourer, at that hour
When friendly darkness yields a pause to toil,
Returning blithely home
To each domestic joy;

Will paint the well-trimm'd fire, the frugal meal
Prepar'd by fond solicitude to please,
The ruddy children round
That climb the father's knee:

And oft will Fancy rise above the lot
Of honest poverty, oft paint the state
Where happiest man is blest
With mediocrity;

When toil, no longer irksome and constrain'd
By hard necessity, but comes to please,
To vary the still hour
Of tranquil happiness.

[Pg 50]

Why, Fancy, wilt thou, o'er the lovely scene
Pouring thy vivid hues, why, sorceress sweet!
Soothe sad reality
With visionary bliss?

Ah! rather gaze where science' hallow'd light
Resplendent shines: ah! rather lead thy son
Through all her mystic paths
To drink the sacred spring.

Let calm philosophy supply the void,
And fill the vacant heart; lead calmly on
Along the unvaried path,
To age's drear abode;

And teach how dreadful death to happiness,
What thousand horrors wait the last adieu,
When every tie is broke,
And every charm dissolv'd.

Then only dreadful; friendly to the wretch
Who wanes in solitary listlessness,
Nor knows the joys of life,
Nor knows the dread of death.

BION.



"Lay low yon impious trappings on the ground,
 Bend, superstition, bend thy haughty head,
 Be mine supremacy, and mine alone:"
 Thus from his firm-establish'd throne,
 Replete with vengeful fury, HENRY said.
 High Reformation lifts her iron rod,
 But lo! with stern and threatful mien,
 Fury and rancour desolate the scene,
 Beneath their rage the Gothic structures nod.
 Ah! hold awhile your angry hands;
 Ah! here delay your king's commands,
 For Hospitality will feel the wound!
 In vain the voice of reason cries,
 Whilst uncontroul'd the regal mandate flies.

Thou, AVALON! in whose polluted womb
 The patriot monarch found his narrow tomb;
 Where now thy solemn pile, whose antique head
 With niche-fraught turrets awe-inspiring spread,
 Stood the memorial of the pious age?
 Where wot the hospitable fire
 In cheering volumes to aspire,
 And with its genial warmth the pilgrim's woes assuage.
 Low lie thy turrets now,
 The desert ivy clasps the joyless hearth;
 The dome which luxury yrear'd,
 Though Hospitality was there rever'd,
 Now, from its shatter'd brow,
 With mouldering ruins loads the unfrequented earth.

[Pg 52]

Ye minstrel throng,
 In whose bold breasts once glow'd the tuneful fire,
 No longer struck by you shall breathe the plaintive lyre:
 The walls, whose trophied sides along
 Once rung the harp's energetic sound,
 Now damp and moss-ymantled load the ground;
 No more the bold romantic lore
 Shall spread from Thule's distant shore;
 No more intrepid Cambria's hills among,
 In hospitable hall, shall rest the child of song.

Ah, Hospitality! soft Pity's child,
 Where shall we seek thee now?
 Genius! no more thy influence mild
 Shall gild Affliction's clouded brow;
 No more thy cheering smiles impart
 One ray of joy to Sorrow's heart;
 No more within the lordly pile
 Wilt thou bestow the bosom-warming smile.

[Pg 53]

Whilst haughty pride his gallery displays,
 Where hangs the row in sullen show
 Of heroes and of chiefs of ancient days,
 The gaudy toil of Turkish loom
 Shall decorate the stately room;
 Yet there the traveller, with wistful eye,
 Beholds the guarded door, and sighs, and passes by.

Not so where o'er the desert waste of sand
 Speds the rude Arab wild his wandering way;
 Leads on to rapine his intrepid band,
 And claims the wealth of India for his prey;
 There, when the wilder'd traveller distress
 Holds to the robber forth the friendly hand,
 The generous Arab gives the tent of rest,
 Guards him as the fond mother guards her child,
 Relieves his every want, and guides him o'er the wild.

Not so amid those climes where rolls along
 The Oroonoko deep his mighty flood;
 Where rove amid their woods the savage throng,
 Nurs'd up in slaughter, and inur'd to blood;

[Pg 54]

Fierce as their torrents, wily as the snake
That sharps his venom'd tooth in every brake,
Aloft the dreadful tomahawk they rear;
Patient of hunger, and of pain,
Close in their haunts the chiefs remain,
And lift in secret stand the deadly spear.
Yet, should the unarm'd traveller draw near,
And proffering forth the friendly hand,
Claim their protection from the warrior band;
The savage Indians bid their anger cease,
Lay down the ponderous spear, and give the pipe of peace.

Such virtue Nature gives: when man withdraws
To fashion's circle, far from nature's laws,
How chang'd, how fall'n the human breast!
Cold Prudence comes, relentless foe!
Forbids the pitying tear to flow,
And steels the soul of apathy to rest;
Mounts in relentless state her stubborn throne,
And deems of other bosoms by her own.

BION.

[Pg 55]



SONNET I. *TO ARISTE.*

[Pg 57]

ARISTE! soon to sojourn with the crowd,
In soul abstracted must thy minstrel go;
Mix in the giddy, fond, fantastic show,
Mix with the gay, the envious, and the proud.
I go: but still my soul remains with thee,
Still will the eye of fancy paint thy charms,
Still, lovely Maid, thy imaged form I see,
And every pulse will vibrate with alarms.
When scandal spreads abroad her odious tale,
When envy at a rival's beauty sighs,
When rancour prompts the female tongue to rail,
And rage and malice fire the gamester's eyes,
I turn my wearied soul to her for ease,
Who only names to praise, who only speaks to please.

BION.



SONNET II.

[Pg 58]

Be his to court the Muse, whose humble breast
The glow of genius never could inspire;
Who never, by the future song possest,
Struck the bold strings, and waked the daring lyre.
Let him invoke the Muses from their grove,
Who never felt the inspiring touch of love.
If I would sing how beauty's beamy blaze
Thrills through the bosom at the lightning view,
Or harp the high-ton'd hymn to virtue's praise,
Where only from the minstrel praise is due,
I would not court the Muse to prompt my lays,

My Muse, ARISTE, would be found in you!
And need I court the goddess when I move
The warbling lute to sound the soul of love?

BION.



SONNET III.

[Pg 59]

Let ancient stories sound the painter's art,
Who stole from many a maid his Venus' charms,
'Till warm devotion fir'd each gazer's heart,
And every bosom bounded with alarms.
He cull'd the beauties of his native isle,
From some the blush of beauty's vermeil dyes,
From some the lovely look, the winning smile,
From some the languid lustre of the eyes.
Low to the finish'd form the nations round
In adoration bent the pious knee;
With myrtle wreaths the artist's brow they crown'd,
Whose skill, ARISTE, only imaged thee.
Ill-fated artist, doom'd so wide to seek
The charms that blossom on ARISTE's cheek!

BION.



SONNET IV.

[Pg 60]

I Praise thee not, ARISTE, that thine eye
Knows each emotion of the soul to speak;
That lillies with thy face might fear to vie,
And roses can but emulate thy cheek.
I praise thee not because thine auburn hair
In native tresses wantons on the wind;
Nor yet because that face, surpassing fair,
Bespeaks the inward excellence of mind:
'Tis that soft charm thy minstrel's heart has won,
That mild meek goodness that perfects the rest;
Soothing and soft it steals upon the breast,
As the soft radiance of the setting sun,
When varying through the purple hues of light,
The fading orbit smiles serenely bright.

BION.



SONNET V. *DUNNINGTON-CASTLE.*

[Pg 61]

Thou ruin'd relique of the ancient pile,
Rear'd by that hoary bard, whose tuneful lyre
First breath'd the voice of music on our isle;
Where, warn'd in life's calm evening to retire,
Old CHAUCER slowly sunk at last to night;
Still shall his forceful line, his varied strain,
A firmer, nobler monument remain,
When the high grass waves o'er thy lonely site;
And yet the cankering tooth of envious age
Has sapp'd the fabric of his lofty rhyme;
Though genius still shall ponder o'er the page,

And piercing through the shadowy mist of time,
The festive Bard of EDWARD's court recall,
As fancy paints the pomp that once adorn'd thy wall.

BION.



SONNET VI.

[Pg 62]

As slow and solemn yonder deepening knell
Tolls through the sullen evening's shadowy gloom,
Alone and pensive, in my silent room,
On man and on mortality I dwell.
And as the harbinger of death I hear
Frequent and full, much do I love to muse
On life's distemper'd scenes of hope and fear;
And passion varying her camelion hues,
And man pursuing pleasure's empty shade,
'Till death dissolves the vision. So the child
In youth's gay morn with wondering pleasure smil'd,
As with the shining ice well-pleas'd he play'd;
Nor, as he grasps the crystal in his play,
Heeds how the faithless bauble melts away.

BION.



SONNET VII. *WRITTEN ON A JOURNEY.*

[Pg 63]

As o'er the lengthen'd plain the traveller goes,
Weary and sad, his wayward fancy strays
To scenes which late he pass'd, haply to raise
The transient joy which memory bestows;
And oft, while hope dispels the gathering gloom,
He paints the approaching scene in colours gay:
So I, to cheer me in life's rugged way,
Or glance o'er pleasures past, or think of bliss to come.
But ah! reflection vainly we employ
On pleasures past, and fugitive the joy
When the mind rests on hope's delusive power;
Blest only they who present joys can taste,
Nor fear the future, nor regret the past,
But happy, as it flies, enjoy the present hour.

MOSCHUS.



SONNET VIII. *TO HAPPINESS.*

[Pg 64]

Say, lovely fugitive, where dost thou dwell?
Desir'd of all, and sought through every scene,
In pomp of courts, and in the rural green,
Life's public walk, and hermit's lonely cell.
Thee, goddess! sought of all, but found by few,
We seek in vain, bewilder'd as we go;
Tir'd of the chace, man ceases to pursue,
And sighing, says, thou dwellest not below.
Does he not after fairy shadows run?

Follows he not some wild illusive dream,
Like children who would catch the radiant sun,
Grasp at its image in the glittering stream?
If right he sought, then man would meet success,
For surely "Virtue leads to happiness."

MOSCHUS.



SONNET IX.

[Pg 65]

Mark'st thou yon streamlet in its onward course?
Mark'st thou the reed that on its surface floats?
Lightly it drifts along, and well denotes
The light impression on the youthful breast,
Which, in life's summer, transiently imprest,
Glides o'er the mind, unfix'd by stable force:
But o'er the fading year, when winter reigns,
Chill sleeps the stream, its wonted current stay'd,
And on its bosom, where of late it play'd,
Frolic and light the reed infix'd remains.
Thus, when life's wintry season, cold and hoar,
Freezes the genial flow of mental power,
The mind, tenacious of its gather'd store,
Detains each thought belov'd, conceiv'd in vernal hour.

MOSCHUS.



SONNET X. *TO FAME.*

[Pg 66]

On the high summit of yon rocky hill,
Proud Fame! thy temple stands, and see around
What thronging thousands press; and hark! the sound
That fires ambition: 'tis thy clarion shrill.
Amid thy path the deadly thorn is strew'd,
And oft intwin'd around the wreath they claim;
And many spurn at justice' sacred name,
And "wade to glory through a sea of blood."
Be mine to leave thy path, thy motley crowd,
And, while to hear their names proclaim'd aloud
Upon the brazen trump, the throng rejoice,
I'll court fair virtue in her humbler sphere,
More pleas'd in calm reflection's hour to hear
The approving whispers of her still small voice.

MOSCHUS.



SONNET XI. *TO THE FIRE.*

[Pg 67]

My friendly fire, thou blazest clear and bright,
Nor smoke nor ashes soil thy grateful flame;
Thy temperate splendour cheers the gloom of night,
Thy genial heat enlivens the chill'd frame.
I love to muse me o'er the evening hearth,
I love to pause in meditation's sway;
And whilst each object gives reflection birth,

Mark thy brisk rise, and see thy slow decay:
And I would wish, like thee, to shine serene,
Like thee, within mine influence, all to cheer;
And wish at last, in life's declining scene,
As I had beam'd as bright, to fade as clear:
So might my children ponder o'er my shrine,
And o'er my ashes muse, as I will muse over thine.

BION.



SONNET XII.
THE FADED FLOWER.

[Pg 68]

Ungrateful he who pluckt thee from thy stalk,
Poor faded flow'ret! on his careless way,
Inhal'd awhile thine odours on his walk,
Then past along, and left thee to decay.
Thou melancholy emblem! had I seen
Thy modest beauties dew'd with evening's gem,
I had not rudely cropt thy parent stem,
But left thy blossom still to grace the green;
And now I bend me o'er thy wither'd bloom,
And drop the tear, as Fancy, at my side
Deep-sighing, points the fair frail EMMA's tomb;
"Like thine, sad flower! was that poor wanderer's pride!
O, lost to love and truth! whose selfish joy
Tasted her vernal sweets, but tasted to destroy."

BION.



SONNET XIII.
TO SENSIBILITY.

[Pg 69]

I'll court thy lone bow'r, Sensibility!
And mark thy lovely form, wild waving hair,
Thy loosely flowing robe, thy languid eye,
And all those charms which blend to make thee fair.
Far from the madding crowd thou lov'st to stray
Recluse, and listen at the silent hour,
When wildly warbling from her secret bow'r
The pensive night-bird pours her evening lay.
'Tis thine own minstrel's melody is heard,
And as her sad song, by the moon's still beam,
Dies softly on mine ear, more sweet I deem
Her mournful note than song of blither bird;
So more than beauty's cheek of vermeil dye
Charms thy soft downcast mein and tear-dew'd eye.

MOSCHUS.



SONNET XIV.
TO HEALTH.

[Pg 70]

Nymph of the splendent eye and rosy cheek,
Who erst from courts and luxury didst speed,
And with thine elder sister, Temperance, seek
The woodbin'd cottage on the daisied mead;

There will I woo thee, for thou dwellest there
 Amid the sons of industry; thy smile
 Soothes every sorrow, cheers the hour of toil,
 And, blest by thee, sweet is their frugal fare.
 When the woods echo with the early horn
 Thou trip'st the wild heath, clad in flowing vest,
 (While youthful zephyr wantons o'er thy breast)
 And, with blithe song, dost greet the blushing morn;
 The airy sprite, who o'er thy fair form roves,
 Thy beauty tastes, and, as he tastes, improves.

MOSCHUS.



**SONNET XV.
 TO THE NIGHTINGALE.**

[Pg 71]

Sad songstress of the night, no more I hear
 Thy soften'd warblings meet my pensive ear,
 As by thy wonted haunts again I rove;
 Why art thou silent? wherefore sleeps thy lay?
 For faintly fades the sinking orb of day,
 And yet thy music charms no more the grove.
 The shrill bat flutters by; from yon dark tower
 The shrieking owlet hails the shadowy hour;
 Hoarse hums the beetle as he drones along,
 The hour of love is flown! thy full-fledg'd brood
 No longer need thy care to cull their food,
 And nothing now remains to prompt the song:
 But drear and sullen seems the silent grove,
 No more responsive to the lay of love.

BION.



**SONNET XVI.
 TO REFLECTION.**

[Pg 72]

Hence, busy torturer, wherefore should mine eye
 Revert again to many a sorrow past?
 Hence, busy torturer, to the happy fly,
 Those who have never seen the sun o'er cast
 By one dark cloud, thy retrospective beam,
 Serene and soft, may on their bosoms gleam,
 As the last splendour of the summer sky.
 Let them look back on pleasure, ere they know
 To mourn its absence; let them contemplate
 The thorny windings of our mortal state,
 Ere unexpected bursts the cloud of woe;
 Stream not on me thy torch's baneful glow,
 Like the sepulchral lamp's funereal gloom,
 In darkness glimmering to disclose a tomb.

BION.



THE WISH. TO A FRIEND.

[Pg 73]

The Muse who struck to moral strains the lyre,
Now turns to court a visionary theme,
To frame the wish which flattering hopes inspire,
When fancy revels in her golden dream.

I ask no lone retreat, no shady grove,
Nor grove nor bower can boast a charm for me;
I muse on Justice, Liberty, and Love,
And, need I, ORSON! tell my wish to thee?

I bend, great Justice! at thine awful throne,
Eternal arbiter of good and ill,
The sons of soul shall make thy laws their own,
And form their dictates by thy sov'reign will.

[Pg 74]

But oft perverted is thy high behest,
And oft I'm doom'd oppression's rod to see;
I see wealth triumph, and the poor opprest,
And, need I, ORSON! tell my wish to thee?

How bounds the soul at freedom's sacred call?
How shrinks from slavery's heart-appalling train?
But still her victims avarice will intral,
Afric's sad sons still wear the accursed chain.

Still, power despotic, with ambition join'd,
Would crush the soul determin'd to be free;
I see debas'd man's dignity of mind,
And, need I, ORSON! tell my wish to thee?

Were justice follow'd, then would man be good,
Were freedom guarded, then would man be blest;
No generous impulse of the soul subdu'd,
But love, unfraught with anguish, fill the breast.

I felt the magic of LUCINDA's eye,
I thought her charms were of no mean degree;
LUCINDA's name inspir'd the secret sigh,
And, need I, ORSON! tell my wish to thee?

[Pg 75]

One only wish remain'd! oh! might I find,
Amid this scene of danger and of strife,
Some kindred spirit, some congenial mind,
To cheer my journey through the vale of life.

Indulgent heav'n vouchsafed the boon to send,
A youth I found, and just and mild was he;
My heart sprang mutual to embrace its friend,
And, need I, ORSON! name that friend to thee?

MOSCHUS.



TO LYCON.

[Pg 77]

On yon wild waste of ruin thron'd, what form
Beats her swoln breast, and tears her unkempt hair?
Why seems the spectre thus to court the storm?
Why glare her full-fix'd eyes in stern despair?
The deep dull groan I hear,
I see her rigid eye refuse the soothing tear.

Ah! fly her dreadful reign,
For desolation rules o'er all the lifeless plain;
For deadliest nightshade forms her secret bower,
For oft the ill-omen'd owl
Yells loud the dreadful howl,
And the night spectres shriek amid the midnight hour.

Pale spectre, Grief! thy dull abodes I know,
I know the horrors of thy barren plain,
I know the dreadful force of woe,
I know the weight of thy soul-binding chain;
But I have fled thy drear domains,
Have broke thy agonizing chains,
Drain'd deep the poison of thy bowl,
Yet wash'd in Science' stream the poison from my soul.

[Pg 78]

Fair smiles the morn along the azure sky,
Calm and serene the zephyrs whisper by,
And many a flow'ret gems the painted plain;
As down the dale, with perfumes sweet,
The cheerful pilgrim turns his feet,
His thirsty ear imbibes the throstle's strain;
And every bird that loves to sing
The choral song to coming spring,
Tunes the wild lay symphonious through the grove,
Heaven, earth, and nature, all incite to love.

Ah, pilgrim! stay thy heedless feet,
Distrust each soul-subduing sweet,
Dash down alluring pleasure's deadly bowl,
For thro' thy frame the venom'd juice will creep,
Lull reason's powers to sombrous sleep,
And stain with sable hue the spotless soul;
For soon the valley's charms decay,
In haggard griefs ill omen'd sway,
And barren rocks shall hide the cheering light of day:
Then reason strives in vain,
Extinguish'd hope's enchanting beam for aye,
And virtue sinks beneath the galling chain,
And sorrow deeply drains her lethal bowl,
And sullen fix'd despair benumbs the nerveless soul.

[Pg 79]

Yet on the summit of yon craggy steep
Stands Hope, surrounded with a blaze of light;
She bids the wretch no more despondent weep,
Or linger in the loathly realms of night;
And Science comes, celestial maid!
As mild as good she comes to aid,
To smooth the rugged steep with magic power,
And fill with many a wile the longly-lingering hour.

Fair smiles the morn, in all the hues of day
Array'd, the wide horizon streams with light;
Anon the dull mists blot the living ray,
And darksome clouds presage the stormy night:

Yet may the sun anew extend his ray,
Anew the heavens may shine in splendour bright;
Anew the sunshine gild the lucid plain,
And nature's frame reviv'd, may thank the genial rain.

And what, my friend, is life?
What but the many weather'd April day!
Now darkly dimm'd by clouds of strife,
Now glowing in propitious fortune's ray;
Let the reed yielding bend its weakly form,
For, firm in rooted strength, the oak defies the storm.

If thou hast plann'd the morrow's dawn to roam
O'er distant hill or plain,
Wilt thou despond in sadness at thy home,
Whilst heaven drops down the rain?
Or will thy hope expect the coming day,
When bright the sun may shine with unremitted ray?

Wilt thou float careless down the stream of time,
In sadness borne to dull oblivion's shore,
Or shake off grief, and "build the lofty rhyme,"
And live 'till time himself shall be no more?
If thy light bark have met the storm,
If threatening clouds the sky deform,
Let honest truth be vain; look back on me,
Have I been "sailing on a summer's sea?"
Have only zephyrs fill'd my swelling sails,
As smooth the gentle vessel glides along?
LYCON, I met unscar'd the wintry gales,
And sooth'd the dangers with the song:
So shall the vessel sail sublime,
And reach the port of fame adown the stream of time.

BION.



TO LYCON.

[Pg 81]

And does my friend again demand the strain,
Still seek to list the sorrow-soothing lay?
Still would he hear the woe-worn heart complain,
When melancholy loads the lingering day?
Shall partial friendship turn the favouring eye,
No fault behold, but every charm descry;
And shall the thankless bard his honour'd strain deny?

"No single pleasure shall your pen bestow:"
Ah, LYCON! 'tis that thought affords delight;
'Tis that can soothe the wearying weight of woe,
When memory reigns amid the gloom of night:
For fancy loves the distant scene to see,
Far from the gloom of solitude to flee,
And think that absent friends may sometimes think of me.

[Pg 82]

Oft when my steps have trac'd the secret glade,
What time the pale moon glimmering on the plain
Just mark'd where deeper darkness dyed the shade,
Has contemplation lov'd the night-bird's strain:
Still have I stood, or silent mov'd and slow,
Whilst o'er the copse the thrilling accents flow,
Nor deem'd the pensive bird might pour the notes of woe.

Yet sweet and lovely is the night-bird's lay,
The passing pilgrim loves her notes to hear,
When mirth's rude reign is sunk with parted day,
And silence sleeps upon the vacant ear;
For staid reflection loves the doubtful light,
When sleep and stillness lull the noiseless night,

And breathes the pensive song a soothing sad delight.

Fearful the blast, and loud the torrent's roar,
And sharp and piercing drove the pelting rain,
When wildly wandering on the Volga's shore,
The exil'd OVID pour'd his plaintive strain;
He mourn'd for ever lost the joys of Rome,
He mourn'd his widow'd wife, his distant home,
And all the weight of woe that load the exile's doom.

[Pg 83]

Oh! could my lays, like SULMO's minstrel, flow,
Eternity might love her BION's name;
The muse might give a dignity to woe,
And grief's steep path should prove the path to fame:
But I have pluck'd no bays from PHOEBUS' bower,
My fading garland, form'd of many a flower,
May haply smile and bloom to last one little hour.

To please that little hour is all I crave,
Lov'd by my friends, I spurn the love of fame;
High let the grass o'erspread my lonely grave,
Let cankering moss obscure the rough-hewn name:
There never may the pensive pilgrim go,
Nor future minstrel drop the tear of woe,
For all would fail to wake the slumbering earth below.

Be mine, whilst journeying life's rough road along
O'er hill and dale the wandering bard shall go,
To hail the hour of pleasure with the song,
Or soothe with sorrowing strains the hour of woe;
The song each passing moment shall beguile,
Perchance too, partial friendship deigns to smile,
Let fame reject the lay, I sleep secure the while.

[Pg 84]

Be mine to taste the humbler joys of life,
Lull'd in oblivion's lap to wear away,
And flee from grandeur's scenes of vice and strife,
And flee from fickle fashion's empty sway:
Be mine, in age's drooping hour, to see
The lipping children climb their grandsire's knee,
And train the future race to live and act like me.

Then, when the inexorable hour shall come
To tell my death, let no deep requiem toll,
No hireling sexton dig the venal tomb,
Nor priest be paid to hymn my parted soul;
But let my children, near their little cot,
Lay my old bones beneath the turfy spot:
So let me live unknown, so let me die forgot.

BION.



ROSAMUND TO HENRY.
WRITTEN AFTER SHE HAD TAKEN THE VEIL.

[Pg 85]

HENRY, 'tis past! each painful effort o'er,
Thy love, thy ROSAMUND, exists no more:
She lives, but lives no longer now for you;
She writes, but writes to bid the last adieu.

Why bursts the big tear from my guilty eye?
Why heaves my love-lorn breast the impious sigh?

Down, bosom! down, and learn to heave in prayer;
Flow, flow, my tears, and wash away despair:
Ah, no! still, still the lurking sin I see,
My heart will heave, my tears will fall for thee.
Yes, HENRY! through the vestal's guilty veins,
With burning sway the furious passion reigns;
For thee, seducer, still the tear will fall,
And Love torment in Godstow's hallow'd wall.

[Pg 86]

Yet virtue from her deathlike sleep awakes,
Remorse comes on, and rears her whip of snakes.
Ah, HENRY! fled are all those fatal charms
That led their victim to the monarch's arms;
No more responsive to the evening air
In wanton ringlets waves my golden hair;
No more amid the dance my footsteps move,
No more the languid eye dissolves with love;
Fades on the cheek of ROSAMUND the rose,
And penitence awakes from sin's repose.

Harlot! adultress! HENRY! can I bear
Such aggravated guilt, such full despair!
By me the marriage-bed defil'd, by me
The laws of heaven forsook, defied for thee!
Dishonour fix'd on CLIFFORD's ancient name,
A father sinking to the grave with shame;
These are the crimes that harrow up my heart,
These are the crimes that poison memory's dart;
For these each pang of penitence I prove,
Yet these, and more than these, are lost in love.

[Pg 87]

Yes, even here amid the sacred pile,
The echoing cloister, and the long-drawn aisle;
Even here, when pausing on the silent air,
The midnight bell awakes and calls to prayer;
As on the stone I bend my clay-cold knee,
Love heaves the sigh, and drops the tear for thee:
All day the penitent but wakes to weep,
'Till nature and the woman sink in sleep;
Nightly to thee the guilty dreams repair,
And morning wakes to sorrow and despair!
Lov'd of my heart, the conflict soon must cease,
Soon must this harrow'd bosom rest in peace;
Soon must it heave the last soul-rending breath,
And sink to slumber in the arms of death.

To slumber! oh, that I might slumber there!
Oh, that that dreadful thought might lull despair!
That death's chill dews might quench this vital flame,
And life lie mouldering with this lifeless frame!
Then would I strike with joy the friendly blow,
Then rush to mingle with the dead below.
Oh, agonizing hour! when round my head
Dark-brow'd despair his shadowing wings shall spread;
When conscience from herself shall seek to fly,
And, loathing life, still more shall loath to die!
Already vengeance lifts his iron rod,
Already conscience sees an angry God!
No virtue now to shield my soul I boast,
No hope protects, for innocence is lost!

[Pg 88]

Oh, I was cheerful as the lark, whose lay
Trills through the ether, and awakes the day!
Mine was the heartfelt smile, when earliest light
Shot through the fading curtain of the night;
Mine was the peaceful heart, the modest eye
That met the glance, or turn'd it knew not why.
At evening hour I struck the melting lyre,
Whilst partial wonder fill'd my doating sire,
'Till he would press me to his aged breast,
And cry, "My child, in thee my age is blest!
Oh! may kind heaven protract my span of life
To see my lovely ROSAMUND a wife;
To view her children climb their grandsire's knee,
To see her husband love, and love like me!

Then, gracious heaven, decree old CLIFFORD's end,
Let his grey hairs in peace to death descend."

The dreams of bliss are vanish'd from his view,
The buds of hope are blasted all by you;
Thy child, O CLIFFORD! bears a mother's name,
A mother's anguish, and a harlot's shame;
Even when her darling children climb her knee
Feels the full force of guilt and infamy!
Wretch, most unhappy! thus condemn'd to know,
Even in her dearest bliss, her keenest woe;
Curst be this form, accurst these fatal charms
That buried virtue in seduction's arms;
Or rather curst that sad, that fatal hour,
When HENRY first beheld and felt their power;
When my too-partial brother's doating tongue
On each perfection of a sister hung;
Told of the graceful form, the rose-red cheek,
The ruby lip, the eye that knew to speak,
The golden locks, that shadowing half the face
Display'd their charms, and gave and hid a grace:
'Twas at that hour when night's englooming sway
Steals on the fiercer glories of the day;
Sad all around, as silence stills the whole,
And pensive fancy melts the softening soul;
These hands upon the pictur'd arras wove
The mournful tale of EDWY's hapless love;
When the fierce priest, inflam'd with savage pride,
From the young monarch tore his blushing bride:
Loud rung the horn, I heard the coursers' feet,
My brothers came, o'erjoy'd I ran to meet;
But when my sovereign met my wandering eye,
I blush'd, and gaz'd, and fear'd, yet knew not why;
O'er all his form with wistful glance I ran,
Nor knew the monarch, 'till I lov'd the man:
Pleas'd with attention, overjoy'd I saw
Each look obey'd, and every word a law;
Too soon I felt the secret flame advance,
Drank deep the poison of the mutual glance;
And still I ply'd my pleasing task, nor knew
In shadowing EDWY I had pourtray'd you.

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[Pg 90]

Thine, HENRY, is the crime! 'tis thine to bear
The aggravated weight of full despair;
To wear the day in woe, the night in tears,
And pass in penitence the joyless years:
Guiltless in ignorance, my love-led eyes
Knew not the monarch in the knight's disguise;
Fraught with deceit th' insidious monarch came
To blast his faithful subject's spotless name;
To pay each service of old CLIFFORD's race
With all the keenest anguish of disgrace!
Of love he talk'd; abash'd my down-cast eye
Nor seem'd to seek, nor yet had power to fly;
Still, as he urg'd his suit, his wily art
Told not his rank 'till victor o'er my heart:
Ah, known too late! in vain my reason strove,
Fame, honour, reason, all were lost in love.

How heav'd thine artful breast the deep-drawn sigh?
How spoke thy looks? how glow'd thine ardent eye?
When skill'd in guile, that soft seductive tongue
Talk'd of its truth, and CLIFFORD was undone.
Oh, cursed hour of passion's maddening sway,
Guilt which a life of tears must wash away!
Gay as the morning lark no more I rose,
No more each evening sunk to calm repose;
No more in fearless innocence mine eye,
Or met the glance, or turn'd it knew not why;
No more my fingers struck the trembling lyre,
No more I ran with joy to meet my sire;
But guilt's deep poison ran through every vein,
But stern reflection claim'd his ruthless reign;
Still vainly seeking from myself to fly,
In anxious guilt I shunn'd each friendly eye;

[Pg 91]

A thousand torments still my steps pursue,
And guilt, still lovely, haunts my soul with you.
Harlot, adulteress, each detested name,
Stamps everlasting blots on CLIFFORD's fame!
How can this wretch prefer the prayer to heaven?
How, self-condemn'd, expect to be forgiven?

And yet, fond Hope, with self-deluding art,
Still sheds her opiate poison o'er my heart;
Paints thee most wretched in domestick strife,
Curst with a kingdom, and a royal wife;
And vainly whispers comfort to my breast—
"I curst myself that HENRY might be blest."
Too fond deluder! impotent thy power
To whisper comfort in the mournful hour;
Weak, vain seducer, Hope! thy balmy breath
To soothe Reflection on the bed of death;
To calm stern Conscience' self-afflicting care,
Or ease the raging pangs of wild Despair.

[Pg 92]

Why, nature, didst thou give this fatal face?
Why heap with charms to load me with disgrace?
Why bid mine eyes two stars of beauty move?
Why form the melting soul too apt for love?
Thy last best blessing meant, the feeling breast,
Gave way to guilt, and poison'd all the rest;
Now bound in sin's indissoluble chains,
Fled are the charms, the guilt alone remains!

Oh! had fate plac'd amidst Earl CLIFFORD's hall
Of menial vassals, me most mean of all;
Low in my hopes, and homely rude my face,
Nor form, nor wishes, rais'd above my place;
How happy, ROSAMUND, had been thy lot,
In peace to live unknown, and die forgot!
Guilt had not then infix'd her piercing sting,
Nor scorn revil'd the harlot of a king;
Contempt had not revil'd my fallen fame,
Nor infamy debas'd a CLIFFORD's name.

[Pg 93]

Oh, CLIFFORD! oh, my sire! thy honours now
Thy child has blasted on thine ancient brow;
Fallen is that darling child from virtue's name,
And thy grey hairs sink to the grave with shame!
Still busy fancy bids the scene arise,
Still paints the father to these wretched eyes;
Methinks I see him now, with folded arms,
Think of his child, and curse her fatal charms;
Those charms, her ruin! that in happier days,
With all a father's love, he lov'd to praise:
Unkempt his hoary locks, his head hung low
In all the silent energy of woe;
Yet still the same kind parent, still all mild,
He prays forgiveness for his sinful child.
And yet I live! if this be life, to know
The agonizing weight of hopeless woe:
Thus far, remote from every friendly eye,
To drop the tear, and heave the ceaseless sigh;
Each dreadful pang remorse inflicts to prove,
To weep and pray, yet still to weep and love:
Scorn'd by the virgins of this holy dome,
A living victim in the cloyster'd tomb,
To pray, though hopeless, justice should forgive,
Scorn'd by myself—if this be life—I live!

Oft will remembrance, in her painful hour,
Cast the keen glance to Woodstock's lovely bower:
Recal each sinful scene of bliss to view,
And give the soul again to guilt and you.
Oh! I have seen thee trace the bower around,
And heard the forest echo ROSAMUND;
Have seen thy frantick looks, thy wildering eye,
Heard the deep groan and bosom-rending sigh;
Vain are the searching glance, the love-lorn groan,
I live—but live to penitence alone;

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Depriv'd of every joy which life can give,
Most vile, most wretched, most despis'd, I live.

Too well thy deep regret, thy grief, are known,
Too true I judge thy sorrows by my own!
Oh! thou hast lost the dearest charm of life,
The fondest, tenderest, loveliest, more than wife;
One who, with every virtue, only knew
The fault, if fault it be, of loving you;
One whose soft bosom seem'd as made to share
Thine every joy, and solace every care;
For crimes like these secluded, doom'd to know
The aggravated weight of guilt and woe.

Still dear, still lov'd, I learnt to sin of thee,
Learn, thou seducer, penitence from me!
Oh! that my soul this last pure joy may know,
Sometimes to soothe the dreadful hour of woe:
HENRY! by all the love my life has shown,
By all the sinful raptures we have known,
By all the parting pangs that rend my breast,
Hear, my lov'd lord, and grant my last request;
And, when the last tremendous hour shall come,
When all my woes are buried in the tomb,
Then grant the only boon this wretch shall crave—
Drop the sad tear to dew my humble grave;
Pause o'er the turf in fullness bent of woe,
And think who lies so cold and pale below!
Think from the grave she speaks the last decree,
"What I am now—soon, HENRY, thou must be!"
Then be this voice of wonted power possess,
To melt thy heart, and triumph in thy breast:
So should my prayers with just success be crown'd,
Should HENRY learn remorse from ROSAMUND;
Then shall thy sorrow and repentance prove,
That even death was weak to end our love.

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BION.



THE RACE OF ODIN.

[Pg 97]

Loud was the hostile clang of arms,
And hoarse the hollow sound,
When POMPEY scatter'd wild alarms
The ravag'd East around,
The crimson deluge dreadful dy'd the ground:
An iron forest of destructive spears
Rear'd their stern stems, where late
The bending harvest wav'd its rustling ears:
Rome, through the swarming gate,
Pour'd her ambitious hosts to slaughter forth:
Such was the will of fate!
From the cold regions of the North,
At length, on raven wings, shall vengeance come,
And justice pour the urn of bitterness on Rome.

[Pg 98]

"*Roman!* ('twas thus the chief of ASGARD cry'd)
Ambitious *Roman!* triumph for a while;
Trample on freedom in thy victor pride;
Yet, though now thy fortune smile,
Though MITHRIDATES fly forlorn,
Once thy dread, but now thy scorn,
ODIN will never live a shameful slave;
Some region will he yet explore,

Beyond the reach of Rome;
 Where, upon some colder shore,
 Freedom yet thy force shall brave,
 Freedom yet shall find a home:
 There, where the eagle dares not soar,
 Soon shall the raven find a safe retreat.
 ASGARD, farewell! farewell my native seat!
 Farewell for ever! yet, whilst life shall roll
 Her warm tide thro' thine injur'd chieftain's breast,
 Oft will he to thy memory drop the tear:
 Never more shall ODIN rest,
 Never quaff the sportive bowl,
 Or soothe in peace his slothful soul,
 Whilst Rome triumphant lords it here.
 Triumph in thy victor might,
 Mock the chief of ASGARD's flight;
 But soon the seeds of vengeance shall be sown,
 And ODIN's race hurl down thy blood-cemented throne."

[Pg 99]

Nurtur'd by Scandinavia's hardy soil,
 Strong grew the vigorous plant;
 Danger could ne'er the nation daunt,
 For war, to other realms a toil,
 Was but the pastime here;
 Skill'd the bold youth to hurl the unerring spear,
 To wield the falchion, to direct the dart,
 Firm was each warrior's frame, yet gentle was his heart.

Freedom, with joy, beheld the noble race,
 And fill'd each bosom with her vivid fire;
 Nor vice, nor luxury, debase
 The free-born offspring of the free-born sire;
 There genuine poesy, in freedom bright,
 Diffus'd o'er all her clear, her all-enlivening light.

From Helicon's meandering rills
 The inspiring goddess fled;
 Amid the Scandinavian hills
 In clouds she hid her head;
 There the bold, the daring muse,
 Every daring warrior wooes;
 The sacred lust of deathless fame
 Burnt in every warrior's soul:
 "Whilst future ages hymn my name,
 (The son of ODIN cries)
 I shall quaff the foaming bowl
 With my forefathers in yon azure skies;
 Methinks I see my foeman's skull
 With the mantling beverage full;
 I hear the shield-roof'd hall resound
 To martial music's echoing sound;
 I see the virgins, valour's meed,—
 Death is bliss—I rush to bleed."

[Pg 100]

See where the murderer EGILL stands,
 He grasps the harp with skilful hands,
 And pours the soul-moving tide of song;
 Mute admiration holds the listening throng:
 The royal sire forgets his murder'd son;
 ERIC forgives; a thousand years
 Their swift revolving course have run,
 Since thus the bard could check the father's tears,
 Could soothe his soul to peace,
 And never shall the fame of EGILL cease.

Dark was the dungeon, damp the ground,
 Beneath the reach of cheering day,
 Where REGNER dying lay;
 Poisonous adders all around
 On the expiring warrior hung,
 Yet the full stream of verse flow'd from his dauntless tongue:
 "We fought with swords," the warrior cry'd,
 "We fought with swords," he said—he dy'd.

[Pg 101]

Jomsburg lifts her lofty walls,
 Sparta revives on Scandinavia's shore;

Undismay'd each hero falls,
 And scorns his death in terror to deplore.
 "Strike, THORCHILL, strike! drive deep the blow,
 Jomsburg's sons shall not complain,
 Never shall the brave appear
 Bound in slavery's shameful chain,
 Freedom ev'n in death is dear.
 Strike, THORCHILL, strike! drive deep the blow,
 We joy to quit this world of woe;
 We rush to seize the seats above,
 And gain the warrior's meed of happiness and love."

The destin'd hour at length is come,
 And vengeful heaven decrees the queen of cities' doom;
 No longer heaven withholds the avenging blow
 From those proud domes whence BRUTUS fled;
 Where just CHEREA bow'd his head,
 And proud oppression laid the GRACCHI low:
 In vain the timid slaves oppose,
 For freedom led their sinewy foes,
 For valour fled with liberty:
 Rome bows her lofty walls,
 The imperial city falls,
 "She falls—and lo, the world again is free!"

[Pg 102]

BION.



THE DEATH OF ODIN.

[Pg 103]

Soul of my much-lov'd FREYA! yes, I come!
 No pale disease's slow-consuming power
 Has hasten'd on thy husband's hour;
 Nor pour'd by victor's thirsty hand
 Has ODIN's life bedew'd the land:
 I rush to meet thee by a self-will'd doom.
 No more my clattering iron car
 Shall rush amid the throng of war;
 No more, obedient to my heavenly cause,
 Shall crimson conquest stamp his ODIN's laws.
 I go—I go;
 Yet shall the nations own my sway
 Far as yon orb shall dart his all-enlivening ray:
 Big is the death-fraught cloud of woe
 That hangs, proud Rome, impending o'er thy wall,
 For ODIN shall avenge his ASGARD'S fall.

[Pg 104]

Thus burst from ODIN's lips the fated sound,
 As high in air he rear'd the gleaming blade;
 His faithful friends around
 In silent wonder saw the scene, affray'd:
 He, unappall'd, towards the skies
 Uplifts his death-denouncing eyes;
 "Ope wide VALHALLA'S shield-roof'd hall,
 Virgins of bliss! obey your master's call;
 From these injurious realms below
 The sire of nations hastes to go."

Say, falters now your chieftain's breath?
 Or chills pale terror now his death-like face?
 Then weep not, THOR, thy friend's approaching death,
 Let no unmanly tears disgrace
 The first of mortal's valiant race:
 Dauntless HEIMDAL, mourn not now,
 BALDER! clear thy cloudy brow;
 I go to happier realms above,
 To realms of friendship and of love.

This unmanly grief dispelling,
List to glory's rapturous call;
So with ODIN ever dwelling,
Meet him in the shield-roof'd hall:
Still shall ODIN's fateful lance
Before his daring friends advance;
When the bloody fight beginning,
Helms and shields, and hauberks ringing,
Streaming life each fatal wound
Pours its current on the ground;
Still in clouds portentous riding
O'er his comrade host presiding.
ODIN, from the stormy air,
O'er your affrighted foes shall scatter wild despair.

[Pg 105]

'Mid the mighty din of battle,
Whilst conflicting chariots rattle,
Floods of purple slaughter streaming,
Fate-fraught falchions widely gleaming;
When MISTA marks her destin'd prey,
When dread and death deform the day;
Happy he amid the strife,
Who pours the current of his life;
Every toil and trouble ending,
ODIN from his hall descending,
Shall bear him to his blest retreat,
Shall place him in the warrior's seat.

Not such the destin'd joys that wait
The wretched dastard's future fate:
Wild shrieks shall yell in every breath,—
The agonizing shrieks of death.
Adown his wan and livid face
Big drops their painful way shall trace;
Each limb in that tremendous hour
Shall quiver in disease's power.
Grim HELA o'er his couch shall hang,
Scoff at his groans, and point each pang;
No Virgin Goddess him shall call
To join you in the shield-roof'd hall;
No Valkery for him prepare
The smiling mead with lovely care:
Sad and scorn'd the wretch shall lie,
Despairing shriek—despairing die!
No Scald in never-dying lays
Shall rear the temple of his praise;
No Virgin in her vernal bloom
Bedew with tears his high-rear'd tomb;
No Soldier sound his honor'd name;
No song shall hand him down to fame;
But rank weeds o'er the inglorious grave
Shall to the blast their high heads wave;
And swept by time's strong stream away,
He soon shall sink—oblivion's prey;
And deep in Niflheim—dreary cell,
Aye shall his sprite tormented dwell,
Where grim Remorse for ever wakes,
Where Anguish feeds her torturing snakes,
Where Disappointment and Delay
For ever guard the doleful way;
Amid the joyless land of woe
Keen and bleak the chill blasts blow;
Drives the tempest, pours the rain,
Showers the hail with force amain;
Yell the night-birds as they fly
Flitting in the misty sky;
Glows the adder, swells the toad,
For sad is HELA's cold abode.

[Pg 106]

[Pg 107]

Spread then the Gothic banners to the sky,
Lift your sable banners high;
Yoke your coursers to the car,
Strike the sounding shield of war;
Go, my lov'd companions, go
Trample on the opposing foe;

Be like the raging torrent's force,
That, rushing from the hills, speds on its foaming course.

Haste, my sons, to war's alarms,
Triumph in the clang of arms;
Joy amid the warlike toil,
Feed the raven with your spoil;
Go, prepare the eagle's food,
Go, and drench the wolf with blood,
'Till ye shall hear dark HELA's call,
And virgins waft ye to my hall;
There, wrapt in clouds, the shadowy throng
To airy combat glide along;
'Till wearied with the friendly fight,
SERIMNER's flesh recruits their might;
There, whilst I grasp the Roman skull,
With hydromel sweet-smiling full,
The festive song shall echo round,
The Scald repeat the deathless sound:
Then, THOR, when thou from fight shall cease,
When death shall lay that arm in peace,
Still shall the nations fear thy nod,
The first of warriors now, and then their god;
But be each heart with rage possest,
Let vengeance glow in every breast;
Let conquest fell the Roman wall,
Revenge on Rome my ASGARD's fall.

[Pg 108]

The Druid throng shall fall away,
And sink beneath your victor sway;
No more shall nations bow the knee,
Vanquish'd TARANIS, to thee;
No more upon the sacred stone,
TENTATES, shall thy victims groan;
The vanquish'd ODIN, Rome, shall cause thy fall,
And his destruction shake thy proud imperial wall.

[Pg 109]

Yet, my faithful friends, beware
Luxury's enerving snare;
'Twas this that shook our ASGARD's dome,
That drove us from our native home;
'Twas this that smooth'd the way for victor Rome:
Gaul's fruitful plains invite your sway,
Conquest points the destin'd way;
Conquest shall attend your call,
And your success shall gild still more VALHALLA's hall.

So spake the dauntless chief, and pierc'd his breast,
Then rush'd to seize the seat of endless rest.

BION.



THE DEATH OF MOSES.

[Pg 113]

Israel, my hour is come!
Borne on the wings of time
Death marks his destin'd prey.
Now in the fullness of my age,
Ere faint my shrunken limbs wax weak,
Ere dim my rayless eye,
Of years and honours full, I seek the tomb.

Offspring of ABRAM, MOSES' guardian voice
No more shall breathe the will
Of your protecting God.
For not to me is given
On Canaan's promis'd land
At last to rest in peace:
For not to me is given
O'er Jordan's barrier flood
To reach the abundant clime:
On Moab's pathless plains
Must MOSES rest in peace.

[Pg 114]

When wandering o'er the desert wilds of Zin
Faint grew your parched frames,
Then Israel sinn'd against the GOD of Hosts.
Have ye forgot the hour
When murmuring Anger buzz'd
Along the busy tents?
Have ye forgot the hour
When, bold in secrecy,
Sedition's impious feet
Stole on from tent to tent?
Then Israel sinn'd against the GOD of Hosts:
On me his vengeance fell.
Twas there where MIRIAM died,
Where o'er a sister's corse
I rear'd in grief the monumental stone.

'Twas then, the prophet's ardour lost,
I felt the brother's grief:
For Memory's painful gratitude recall'd
The succour MIRIAM gave,
The succour MIRIAM gave
When haven'd on the sedgy banks of Nile
Repos'd my infant ark.
I call'd to mind her care;
I call'd to mind her love;
How sweetly soft she touch'd the lute,
How graceful moved amid the dance.
Sedition's impious feet
Stole on from tent to tent,
Till, boldened by success,
Aloud the Fury lifts her daring voice.

[Pg 115]

"Why, MOSES, did thy treach'rous art
Lead us from Egypt's fertile clime,
Amid these pathless wilds
To sink, wan Famine's prey?
Amid these pathless wilds,
Where even nature dies!
For here no seeds enrich the earth,
No fig-tree spreads its grateful shade,
No vine depends its cluster'd boughs,
Nor frigid fountain winds
Its murmuring course along.
Our parch'd frames sink—
We die for thirst."

'Twas thus, blaspheming Heaven, ye spake:—
Heaven burst in twain by me the rock;
The spring rush'd forth.
"But never, MOSES, shall thy feet
Possess the promis'd land:"
For Israel sinn'd against the GOD of Hosts:
On me his vengeance fell.
From Nebo's mountain top
I view'd the promis'd land;
O'er Palestine's luxuriant soil
I cast the eagle ken.
Far as the distant ocean's shore,
O'er Gilead's fertile soil I gaz'd:
The southward plains I saw,
And Jericho's rich plain,
Where, bower'd in palm trees, rise her lofty towers.

[Pg 116]

Blest are ABRAM's favour'd race,
Blest above the sons of men;
For their's are Canaan's fertile lands,
For their's the aid of Heav'n.
From stern Oppression's tyrant sway,
From ignominy, bonds, and death,
Heaven led the people forth.
Thro' pathless deserts wild and waste,
Thro' the wide wilderness of dearth,
Where desolation blasted all around,
Heaven led the people forth.
E'en as the eagle's parent care
Hangs o'er the lofty nest;
And flutters fondly o'er her young,
And spreads her guardian wings,
And leads them from the eyry forth,
And bids them face the sun.

[Pg 117]

Offspring of Israel! have your thankless hearts
Forgot the bounteous gifts of Heaven?
When frighted ocean stopt his waves,
And rushing seas stood still?
Have ye forgot the fires
That led your nightly march?
Forgot the heavenly food
That fell like evening dew,
For Israel's chosen race?
Oh! write his mercies on your hearts,
Treasure his bounties in your soul;
Obey the will of Heaven.

Sons of my care! to you, from highest heaven,
JESHURUN'S GOD has spoke.
By me JEHOVAH gave the words of life:
Observe his sacred laws,
And fly the snares which superstition spreads.
Fly MOLOCH's horrid rites,
ASTARTE's orgies lewd,
And THAMMUZ' annual dirge,
And CHEMOS' wanton wiles.

Is SITTIM's field forgot?
Forgot the fatal hour when thousands fell;
And Heaven's avenging arm
Hurl'd down the shafts of death?

[Pg 118]

For then in CHEMOS' wanton rites
The sons of Israel join'd;
And caught the harlot's melting eye,
And gave the soul to love.
Then, subdued by syren pleasure,
Captive reason bow'd to beauty;
Forgot the laws of God!
Forgot avenging Heaven:—
For woman's mildly-melting eye
Thrill'd through the soften'd soul.

Then ZIMRI died:
Then COZBI's voice,
That stole resistless o'er the Hebrew's heart,
In vain for pity pray'd.
The zealous priest arose;
E'en thro' her lover's breast
He pierc'd the lovely fair idolater.

Blest, PHINEAS, be thy name;
Blest be thy heart of adamant faith,
That spurn'd the woman's prayer.

Israel, be thine to shun
Alluring beauty's wiles,
To fly the melting glance
The loosely-languid look.
'Tis thine to wreak the wrath of Heaven;
'Tis thine to lift aloft the sword,
Lay low the despot chiefs,

[Pg 119]

Lay low the lofty tow'r's.

Let the despots assemble their hosts,
Let them marshall their thousands in pride;
Let the offspring of ANAK arise
From Jericho's palm-bower'd throne,
And Ai and Solyma's towers.
Let them rush from their mountains to war,
Let them cover the valley with arms,
For JEHOVAH will war for his sons.

Low Ai's walls shall lie;
Devouring flames shall waste
Huge Hazor's strength to dust.
Of Jericho's tall towers
No relics shall remain.

There shall the pilgrim, tempest-torn,
When on the light'ning flash Destruction rides,
In vain for shelter seek.
O'er ruin'd palaces the fox shall roam;
Amid the desert halls,
Where once was spread the feast,
Where once was heard the song,
Now shall the wild wolf's howl resound;
Now build the bird obscene her secret nest.

[Pg 120]

Yet, from the storm of war reserv'd,
With added strength Jerusalem shall rise,
The city of your God!
To guard her favour'd tow'rs
Shall Heaven protecting spread th' immortal shield:
Her trees with honey ooze,
Her rivers flow with milk.
There, Israel, shall the fig-tree bend
To you its laden boughs;
There shall the cluster'd vine expand
Its wildly-wanton arms.

O'er MOSES' clayey corse
Drop ye the grateful tear,
And hide his relics in the narrow house.
O'er Jordan then rush for the prize;
Spread terror o'er Canaan afar,
And triumphantly fight for the LORD.



THE DEATH OF MATTATHIAS.

[Pg 123]

Sons of my age, attend;
Come round the bed of death,
Ere yet his cold damp dews
Extinguish life's weak flame.

For MATTATHIAS' arm no more
Shall scatter terror o'er the host
Of Israel's foes.
Now triumphant Pride disdainful
Lifts elate his royal head;
Lawless Might and ruffian Rapine
Stalk o'er Israel uncontroul'd.
JEHOVAH hides his face,
And stern Destruction shakes the spear;
Wide-wasting Vengeance pours the show'r of death—
JEHOVAH hides his face.

[Pg 124]

Now, then, my sons be firm;
Be like the mighty rock,
Against whose foot the waves
For ever dash in vain.
Now, then, in your God confiding,
Lift the sword, and break the shield:
Look upon your great forefathers,
Call each long-past deed to view;
Let remembrance fire your souls—
Lift the sword, and break the shield.

On Moriah mount is laid
The father's only child!
Down ABRAHAM'S aged cheek
Roll'd the paternal tear;
The big sob spoke his grief,
And nature rived his heart, but rived in vain—
For faith prevail'd.
He rear'd the pile,
He bound the silent child;
The child whose silence spoke
Most moving eloquence.
Nor did not ABRAHAM feel
The father's mighty grief,
Nor paint the wretched mother's woe-fraught cries;
Nor did he not perceive
The deadly blow more deep would rive his heart:
Yet faith prevail'd—
He lifts the knife of sacrifice!
JEHOVAH saw and saved.

[Pg 125]

O'er JOSEPH'S robe, bedied with guileful blood,
The aged patriarch wept:
He rear'd the fancied tomb,
And tore his hoary locks,
Yet bow'd resign'd to Heaven's high will.
Meantime, in foreign land,
JOSEPH forgot not God.
Vice, her tinsel charms displaying,
Vainly sought to melt his mind;
Vainly plann'd the wile deceitful,
Seeking soft to sooth the soul,
To sooth the soul to sin.
He saw the languid eye,
The breast that heav'd with love;
White as the new-fall'n snow,
Unchill'd by modesty.
Her hot grasp seiz'd his arms:
He fled—
And when seducing pleasure to his lips
Held forth the honey'd draught,
He dash'd the poison down.
Nor Heaven, all-just, withheld relief:
He mark'd the father's woe,
He lov'd the virtuous child;
And JOSEPH clos'd in peace the patriarch's eyes.

[Pg 126]

Hark! the hurtling din of battle!
Clanging shields and biting falchions
Rend the air with fearful terror.
JOSHUA leads the war:
His voice controuls the orbs of heaven!
The sun stood still,
The moon obedient held her chariot back;
Then fell the royal power.
To Makkedah's dark cave the monarchs fled;
Upon the fatal tree
They wave with every wind.
Round Jericho was borne the mystick ark,
Was blown the blairing blast;
Proud on the blairing blast
Triumphant ruin rode.
From their foundations hurl'd,
The mighty bulwarks load the ground.

By prodigies announc'd, ere yet
Rank'd in existence roll,
MANOAH's offspring tow'rs in giant strength:
His crisp locks wave amid the wind,
His crisped hair of strength.
On rushes Philistia's host,
They environ the warrior unarm'd;
He grasps the jaw-bone in his hand,
He levels their thousands in death.
Fatigued with deeds of death,
The victor's limbs relax,
His parch'd mouth gapes with thirst;
Heaven saw and sent relief,
And from the wondrous weapon flow'd the spring.

[Pg 127]

By Cherith's hidden stream recluse,
The faithful prophet lay;
He drank the running brook,
The ravens brought the due supply.
Firm in the path of faith
Through life ELIJAH trod.
Nor through the narrow portals of the grave
He past to realms of bliss;
For ravish'd in the car of flames,
He fled the gate of death;
Thus mortal rapt to immortality.

High from his lofty throne
The impious tyrant cries,
"Fall down, ye men of earth,
Revere the image of your King and God."
Faith stood firm.
"Heap the fierce furnace high,"
(The angry despot cries)
"Fan the red flames till the hot furnace pales,
Sick'ning itself with heat."
The fire flames fierce!
Amid the pallid flames
The faithful friends are hurl'd!
But blasted fall the slaves,
The slaves of tyranny:
GOD stretch'd the robe of preservation forth,
And mantled o'er his sons.

[Pg 128]

Amid the lions hurl'd,
In conscious faith serene the prophet lay.
Nor DANIEL knew to fear,
Nor did his pale limbs quiver with affright;
He dar'd for GOD to die,
And Heaven, for ever good, preserv'd the seer:
The gaunt beasts, famine-fall'n,
Creep at his feet, and suppliant lick his hand.

Sons of my age, look back;
Call up the shadowy scenes
Of ages now no more:
For never, since yon font of light
First shed the new-born stream,
For never, since the breath of life
Breath'd through the realms of space,
Has Virtue trusted in her god in vain.
Amid the storm serene she goes,
Nor heeds black Malice' sharpest shafts,
Nor Envy's venom'd tooth;
The warring winds roar round her head,
Nor knows the constant maid to fear,
But lifts her looks to GOD.
Not 'till the sun, for ever quench'd,
In darkness cease to shine;
'Till nature feel no more the breath
Of life pervade her frame;
'Till Time himself expir'd
Sink in eternity,
Shall Faith be firm in vain.

[Pg 129]

Now then, indeed, be men,
Grasp firm the shield of Faith,
Lift high the sword of Hope,
Nor fear yon haughty tyrant's impious vaunts;
To-day elate he stalks,
Lifts his tiared brows,
Self-deem'd a more than man:
To-morrow, fall'n in dust,
Food for the worm corrupt,
Sunk to primeval nothing, low he lies.

[Pg 130]

And, sometimes, when your lips repeat the deeds
Your forefathers achiev'd,
Of me the meanest think, not wholly mean:
Let MATTATHIAS' name
Full-fill your souls with fire,
Recal that hour to view
When this indignant hand
Drench'd deep my dagger in apostate blood.
Even at the altar's foot
The tyrant chief I stabb'd,
I hurl'd the altar down.

Nor then, in sacred sloth subdued,
Upon the sabbath fell we unreveng'd.
We serv'd our God in fight,
We sacrific'd his foes,
We pray'd amid the war.
Then through these limbs burnt high
Indignant valour's flame;
Then glow'd the lamp of life,
Now pale and wavering as the dews of death,
Slow quench its fading light.

GOD of my fathers, thou hast seen my life
Worn in defence of thee;
Thou hast beheld me firm in danger's face,
Maintain thy holy cause,
Amid embattled hosts
Defend thy mystic rites.
Now to the unknown world,
Unchill'd by fear, I sink;
And whilst my chilly limbs grow faint,
Whilst Death's dull mists bedim my eye,
Hope lifts my soul to thee.

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