

Poetic Sketches eBook

Poetic Sketches by Thomas Gent

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SONNET

Lines, written on the sixth of September

Sonnet—To Faith

Stanzas

Sonnet—To Hope

Thoughts on Peace

Sonnet—To Charity

Prologue to Public Readings

Sonnet—The Beggar

To ——. —Come, Jenny, let me sip the dew

* The Runaway

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O! Nymph with cheeks of roseate hue

On the Death of General Washington

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Stanzas, written Impromptu on the late Peace

Sonnet—To — on her Recovery from Illness



* A Fragment

Lines, to the Memory of a Lady

* The Recall of the Hero

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* Rosa's Grave

Lines, written in Hornsey Wood

Sonnet—To ——

The Complaint

SONNET

* Reflections of a Poet, on being invited to a great Dinner

Sonnet—On seeing a Young Lady confined in a Madhouse

To Thaddeus

Sonnet—To a Lyre

Address to Albion

Sonnet—On the Death of Toussaint L'Ouverture

Epitaph—On Matilda

Sonnet—To Peace

* Love

* *Sonnet*—In the Manner of the Moderns

* Lines, delivered at a Young Ladies' Boarding School

On the Death of Sir Ralph Abercrombie

To ——

Sonnet—To Melancholy

* Prometheus

To my Readers_ [This section may no longer exist.]



TO THE REVIEWERS.

Oh, ye! entron'd in presidential awe,
To give the song-smit generation law;
Who wield Apollo's delegated rod,
And shake Parnassus with your sovereign nod;
A pensive Pilgrim, worn with base turmoils,
Plebian cares, and mercenary toils,
Implores your pity, while with footsteps rude,
He dares within the mountain's pale intrude;
For, oh! enchantment through its empire dwells,
And rules the spirit with Lethean spells;
By hands unseen aerial harps are hung,
And Spring, like Hebe, ever fair and young,
On her broad bosom rears the laughing loves,
And breathes bland incense through the warbling groves;
Spontaneous, bids unfading blossoms blow.
And nectar'd streams mellifluously flow.
There, while the Muses, wanton, unconfin'd,
And wreaths resplendent round their temples bind,
'Tis yours, to strew their steps with votive



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flowers;
To watch them slumbering midst the blissful bowers;
To guard the shades that hide their sacred charms;
And shield their beauties from unhallow'd arms!
Oh! may their suppliant steal a passing kiss?
Alas! he pants not for superior bliss;
Thrice-bless'd, his virgin modesty shall be
To snatch an evanescent ecstasy!
The fierce extremes of superhuman love,
For his frail sense too exquisite might prove;
He turns, all blushing, from th'Aoenian shade
To humbler raptures, with a mortal maid.

I know 'tis yours, when unscholastic wights
Unloose their fancies in presumptuous flights,
Awak'd to vengeance, on such flights to frown.
Clip the wing'd horse, and roll his rider down.
But, if empower'd to strike th'immortal lyre.
The ardent vot'ry glows with genuine fire,
'Tis yours, while care recoils, and envy flies
Subdued by his resistless energies,
'Tis yours to bid Pierian fountains flow,
And toast his name in Wit's seraglio;
To bind his brows with amaranthine bays,
And bless, with beef and beer, his mundane days!
Alas! nor beef, nor beer, nor bays are mine,
If by your looks, my doom I may divine,
Ye frown so dreadful, and ye swell so big
Your fateful arms, the goosequill and the wig:
The wig, with wisdom's somb'rous seal impress'd,
Mysterious terrors, grim portents, invest;
And shame and honor on the goosequill perch,
Like doves and ravens on a country church.

As some raw 'Squire, by rustic nymphs admir'd,
Of vulgar charms, and easy conquests tir'd,
Resolves new scenes and nobler flights to dare,
Nor "waste his sweetness in the desert air",
To town repairs, some fam'd assembly seeks,
With red importance blust'ring in his cheeks;
But when, electric on th'astonish'd wight
Burst the full floods of music and of light,



While levell'd mirrors multiply the rows
Of radiant beauties, and accomplish'd beaus,
At once confounded into sober sense,
He feels his pristine insignificance;
And blinking, blund'ring, from the general *quiz*
Retreats, "to ponder on the thing he is."
By pride inflated, and by praise allur'd,
Small Authors thus strut forth, and thus get cur'd;
But, Critics, hear! an angel pleads for *me*,
That tongueless, ten-tongued cherub, *Modesty*.

Sirs! if you damn me, you'll resemble those
That flay'd the Travell'r, who had lost his clothes;
Are there not foes enough to *do* my books?
Relentless trunk-makers, and pastry-cooks?
Acknowledge not those barbarous allies,
The wooden box-men, and the men of pies:
For heav'n's sake, let it ne'er be understood
That you, great Censors! coalesce with *wood*;
Nor let your actions contradict your looks,
That tell the world you ne'er colleague with *cooks*.



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But, if the blithe muse will indulge a smile,
Why scowls thy brow, O Bookseller! the while?
Thy sunk eyes glisten through eclipsing fears,
Fill'd, like Cassandra's, with prophetic tears:
With such a visage, withering, woe-begone,
Shrinks the pale poet from the damning dun.
Come, let us teach each others tears to flow,
Like fasting bards, in fellowship of woe,
When the coy muse puts on coquettish airs,
Nor deigns one line to their voracious prayers;
Thy spirit, groaning like th'encumber'd block
Which bears my works, deplores them as *dead stock*,
Doom'd by these indiscriminating times
To endless sleep, with Della Cruscan rhymes;
Yes, Critics, whisper thee, litigious wretches!
Oblivion's hand shall *finish* all my *Sketches*.
But see, *my* soul such bug-bears has repell'd
With magnanimity unparallel'd!
Take up the volumes, every care dismiss,
And smile, gruff Gorgon! while I tell thee this:
Not one shall lie neglected on the shelf,
All shall be sold—I'll buy them in myself.

POETIC SKETCHES

ON THE DEATH OF LORD NELSON.

Swift through the land while Fame transported flies,
And shouts triumphant shake the illumin'd skies;
Britannia, bending o'er her dauntless prow,
With laurels thickening round her blazon'd brows,
In joy dejected, sees her triumph crost,
Exults in Victory won, but mourns the Victor lost.
Immortal Nelson! still with fond amaze,
Thy glorious deeds each British eye surveys,
Beholds thee still, on conquer'd floods afar:
Fate's flaming shaft! the thunderbolt of war!
Hurl'd from thy hands, Britannia's vengeance roars,
And bloody billows stain the hostile shores;
Thy sacred ire Confed'rate Kingdoms braves
And 'whelms their Navies in Sepulchral waves!



—Graced with each attribute which Heaven supplies
To Godlike Chiefs: humane, intrepid, wise;
His Nation's bulwark, and all Nature's pride,
The Hero liv'd, and as he liv'd—he died—
Transcendent Destiny! how blest the brave
Whose fall his Country's tears attend, shower'd on his
trophied grave!

SONNET.

MORNING.

Light as the breeze that hails the infant morn
The Milkmaid trips, as o'er her arm she slings
Her cleanly pail, some favorite lay she sings
As sweetly wild, and cheerful, as the horn.
O happy girl! may never faithless love,
Or fancied splendor, lead thy steps astray;
No cares becloud the sunshine of thy day,
Nor want e'er urge thee from thy cot to rove.
What tho' thy station dooms thee to be poor,
And by the hard-earn'd morsel thou art fed;
Yet sweet content bedecks thy lowly bed,
And health and peace sit smiling at thy door:
Of these possess'd—thou hast a gracious meed,
Which Heaven's high wisdom gives, to make thee rich indeed!



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TO.....

AN IMPROMTU.

O Sub! you certainly have been,
A little raking, roguish creature,
And in that face may still be seen,
Each laughing loves bewitching feature!

For thou hast stolen many a heart—
And robb'd the sweetness of the rose;
Plac'd on that cheek, it doth impart
More lovely tints, more fragrant blows!

Yes, thou art nature's favorite child,
Array'd in smiles, seducing, killing;
Did Joseph live, you'd drive him wild,
And set his very soul a thrilling!

A poet, much too poor to live,
Too poor, in this rich world to rove,
Too poor, for aught but verse to give,
But not, thank God, too poor to love!

Gives thee his little doggerel lay—
One truth I tell, in sorrow tell it,
I'm forc'd to give my verse away,
Because, alas! I cannot sell it.

And should you with a critic's eye,
Proclaim me 'gainst the Muse a sinner,
Reflect, dear girl! that such as I,
Six times a week don't get a dinner.

And want of comfort, food, and wine,
Will damp the genius, curb the spirit:
These wants I'll own are often mine;
But can't allow a want of merit.

For every stupid dog that drinks
At poet's pond, nicknam'd divine:
Say what he will, I know he thinks
That all he writes is devilish fine!



SONNET.

NIGHT.

Now when dun Night her shadowy veil has spread,
See want and infamy as forth they come,
Lead their wan daughter from her branded home,
To woo the stranger for unhallow'd bread.
Poor outcast! o'er thy sickly-tinted cheek
And half-clad form, what havock want hath made;
And the sweet lustre of thine eye doth fade,
And all thy soul's sad sorrow seems to speak.
O miserable state! compell'd to wear
The wooing smile, as on thy aching breast
Some wretch reclines, who feeling ne'er possess'd;
Thy poor heart bursting with the stifled tear!
Oh, GOD OF MERCY! bid her woes subside,
And be to her a friend, who hath no friend beside.

HENRY AND ELIZA

O'er the wide heath now moon-tide horrors hung,
And night's dark pencil dim'd the tints of spring;
The boding minstrel now harsh omens sung,
And the bat spread his dark, nocturnal wing.

At that still hour, pale Cynthia oft had seen
The fair Eliza, (joyous once and gay,)
With pensive step, and melancholy mien,
O'er the broad plain in love-born anguish stray.

Long had her heart with Henry's been entwined
And love's soft voice had wak'd the sacred blaze
Of Hymen's altar; while, with him combin'd,
His cherub train prepar'd the torch to raise:

When, lo! his standard raging war uprear'd,
And honor call'd her Henry from her charms.
He fought, but ah! torn, mangled, blood-besmeared,
Fell, nobly fell, amid his conquering arms!



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In her sad bosom, a tumultuous world
Of hopes and fears on his dear memory spread;
For fate had not the clouded roll unfurl'd,
Nor yet with baleful hemlock crown'd her head.

Reflection, oft to sad remembrance brought
The well-known spot, where they so oft had stray'd;
While fond affection ten-fold ardor caught.
And smiling innocence around them play'd.

But these were past! and now the distant bell
(For deep and pensive thought had held her there)
Toll'd midnight out, with long-resounding knell,
While dismal echoes quiver'd in the air.

Again 'twas silence—when from out the gloom,
She saw, with awe-struck eye, a phantom glide:
Twas Henry's form!—what pencil shall presume
To paint her horror!—HENRY AS HE DIED!

Enervate, long she stood—a sculptur'd dread,
'Till waking sense dissolv'd amazement's chain;
Then home, with timid haste, distracted fled,
And sunk in dreadful agony of pain.

Not the deep sigh, which madden'd Sappho gave,
When from Leucate's craggy height she sprung,
Could equal that which gave her to the grave,
The last sad sound that echoed from her tongue.

SONNET

ON THE DEATH OF MRS. CHARLOTTE SMITH.

Sweet songstress! whom the melancholy Muse
With more than fondness lov'd, for thee she strung
The lyre, on which herself enraptur'd hung,
And bade thee through the world its sweets diffuse.
Oft hath my childhood's tributary tear
Paid homage to the sad, harmonious strain,
That told, alas, too true, the grief and pain,
Which thy afflicted mind was doom'd to bear.
Rest, sainted spirit! from a life of woe,
And tho' no friendly hand on thee bestow



The stately marble, or emblazon'd name,
To tell a thoughtless world who sleeps below;
Yet o'er thy narrow bed a wreath shall blow,
Deriving vigour from the breath of fame.

TO A FLY,

ON THE BOSOM OF CHLOE, WHILE SLEEPING.

Come away, come away, little fly!
Don't disturb the sweet calm of love's nest:
If you do, I protest you shall die,
And your tomb be that beautiful breast.

Don't tickle the girl in her sleep,
Don't cause so much beauty to sigh;
If she frown, all the Graces will weep;
If she weep, half the Graces will die.

Pretty fly! do not tickle her so;
How delighted to tease her you seem;
Titillation is dangerous, I know,
And may cause the dear creature to dream.

She may dream of some horrible brute,
Of some genii, or fairy-built spot;
Or perhaps the prohibited fruit,
Or perhaps of—I cannot tell what.

Now she 'wakes! steal a kiss and begone;
Life is precious; away, little fly!
Should your rudeness provoke her to scorn,
You'll meet death from the glance of her eye.



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Were I ask'd by fair Chloe to say
How I felt, as the flutt'rer I chid;
I should own, as I drove it away,
I wish'd to be there in it's stead.

SONNET

When the rough storm roars round the peasant's cot,
And bursting thunders roll their awful din;
While shrieks the frightened night bird o'er the spot,
Oh! what serenity remains within!
For there Contentment, Health, and Peace abide,
And pillow'd age, with calm eye fix'd above;
Labor's bold son, his blithe and blooming bride,
And lisping innocence, and filial love.
To such a scene let proud Ambition turn,
Whose aching breast conceals it's secret woe;
Then shall his fireful spirit melt, and mourn
The mild enjoyments it can never know;
Then shall he feel the littleness of state,
And sigh that Fortune e'er had made him great.

LINES,

WRITTEN ON THE SIXTH OF SEPTEMBER.

Ill-Fated hour! oft as thy annual reign
Leads on th'autumnal tide, my pinion'd joys
Fade with the glories of the fading year;
"Remembrance 'wakes with all her busy train,"
And bids affection heave the heart-drawn sigh
O'er the cold tomb, rich with the spoils of death,
And wet with many a tributary tear!

Eight times has each successive season sway'd
The fruitful sceptre of our milder clime
Since My Loved ***** died! but why, ah! why
Should melancholy cloud my early years?
Religion spurns earth's visionary scene,
Philosophy revolts at misery's chain:
Just Heaven recall'd it's own, the pilgrim call'd
From human woes, from sorrow's rankling worm;
Shall frailty then prevail?



Oh! be it mine
To curb the sigh which bursts o'er Heaven's decree;
To tread the path of rectitude—that when
Life's dying ray shall glimmer in the frame,
That latest breath I may in peace resign,
“Firm in the faith of seeing thee and God.”

SONNET.

TO FAITH.

Hail! Holy FAITH, on life's wide ocean tost,
I see thee sit calm in thy beaten bark;
As NOAH sat, thron'd in his high-borne ark,
Secure and fearless, while a world was lost!
In vain, contending storms thy head enzone,
Thy bosom shrinks not from the bolt that falls:
The dreadful shaft plays harmless, nor appals
Thy steadfast eye, fixt on Jehovah's throne!
E'en tho' thou saw'st the mighty fabric nod,
Of system'd worlds, thou bears't a sacred charm,
Grav'd on thy heart, to shelter thee from harm:
And thus it speaks:—“Thou art my trust, O GOD!
And thou canst bid the jarring powers be still,
Each ponderous orb, like me, subservient to thy will!

STANZAS.

Say why is the stern eye averted with scorn,
Of the stoic, who passes along?
And why frowns the maid, else as mild as the morn,
On the victim of falshood and wrong?



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For the wretch sunk in sorrow, repentance, and shame,
The tear of compassion is won:
And alone, must she forfeit the wretch's sad claim,
Because she's deceiv'd and undone?

Oh! recall the stern look ere it reaches her heart,
To bid its wounds rankle anew,
Oh! smile, or embalm with a tear the sad smart,
And angels will smile upon you.

Time was, when she knew nor opprobrium nor pain,
And youth could its pleasures impart,
Till some serpent distill'd through her bosom the stain,
As he wound round the strings of her heart.

Poor girl! let thy tears through thy blandishments break,
Nor strive to restrain them within;
For mine would I mingle with those on thy cheek,
Nor think that such sorrow were sin.

When the low-trampled reed, and the pine in its pride,
Shall alike feel the hand of decay,
May your God grant that mercy the world has deny'd,
And wipe all your sorrows away.

SONNET.

TO HOPE.

How droops the wretch whom adverse fates pursue,
While sad experience, from his aching sight,
Sweeps the fair prospects of unprov'd delight
Which flattering friends and flattering fancies drew.
When want assails his solitary shed,
When dire distraction's horrent eye-ball glares,
Seen 'mid the myriad of tumultuous cares
That shower their shafts on his devoted head.
Then, ere despair usurp his vanquish'd heart,
Is there a power, whose influence benign
Can bid his head in pillow'd peace recline,
And from his breast withdraw the barbed dart?
There is—sweet Hope! misfortune rests on thee—
Unswerving anchor of humanity!



THOUGHTS ON PEACE.

Still e'er that shrine defiance rears its head,
Which rolls in sullen murmurs o'er the dead,
That shrine which conquest, as it stems the flood.
Too often tinges deep with human blood;
Still o'er the land stern devastation reigns,
Its giant mountains, and its spreading plains,
Where the dark pines, their heads all gloomy, wave,
Or rushing cataracts, loud-sounding, lave
The precipice, whose brow with awful pride
Tow'rs high above, and scorns the foaming tide;
The village sweet, the forest stretching far,
Groan undistinguish'd, 'midst the shock of war.
There, the rack'd matron sees her son expire,
There, clasps the infant son his murder'd sire,
While the sad virgin on her lover's face,
Weeps, with the last farewell, the last embrace,
And the lone widow too, with frenzied cries,
Amid the common wreck, unheeded dies.
O Peace, bright Seraph, heaven-lov'd maid, return!
And bid distracted nature cease to mourn!
O, let the ensign drear of war be furl'd,
And pour thy blessings on a bleeding world;
Then social order shall again expand,
It's sovereign good again shall bless the land,

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Elate the simple villager shall see,
Contentment's inoffensive revelry;
Then, once again shall o'er the foaming tide,
The swelling sail of commerce fearless ride,
With bounteous hand shall plenty grace our shore,
And cheerless want's complaint be known no more.
Then hear a nation's pray'r, lov'd goddess, hear!
Wipe the wan cheek, deep-lav'd by many a tear;
Nature, the triumph foul of horror o'er,
Shall raise her frame to scenes of blood no more;
Pale recollection shall recall her woes,
Again shall paint her agonizing throes:
These, o'er the earth thine empire firm shall raise,
Unaw'd by war's destructive storms, the bliss of future
days.

SONNET

TO CHARITY.

Oh! best belov'd of heaven, on earth bestow'd
To raise the pilgrim, sunk with ghastly fears,
To cool his burning wounds, to wipe his tears,
And strew with amaranths his thorny road.
Alas! how long has superstition hurl'd
Thine altars down, thine attributes revil'd,
The hearts of men with witchcrafts foul beguil'd,
And spread his empire o'er the vassal world?
But truth returns! she spreads resistless day;
And mark, the monster's cloud-wrapt fabric falls—
He shrinks—he trembles 'mid his inmost halls,
And all his damn'd illusions melt away!
The charm dissolv'd—immortal, fair, and free,
Thy holy fanes shall rise, celestial Charity!

PROLOGUE,

TO PUBLIC READINGS AT A YOUNG GENTLEMEN'S ACADEMY.



Once more we venture here, to prove our worth,
And ask indulgence kind, to tempt us forth:
Seek not perfection from our essays green,
That, in man's noblest works, has never been,
Nor is, nor e'er will be; a work exempt
From fault to form, as well might man attempt
T'explore the vast infinity of space,
Or fix mechanic boundaries to grace.
Hard is the finish'd Speaker's task; what then
Must be our danger, to pursue the pen
Of the 'rapt Bard, through all his varied turns,
Where joy extatic smiles, or sorrow mourns?
Where Richard's soul, red in the murderous lave,
Shrinks from the night-yawn'd tenants of the grave,
While coward conscience still affrights his eye,
Still groans the dagger'd sound, "despair and die."
And hapless Juliet's unextinguish'd flame,
Gives to the tomb she mock'd, her beauteous frame;
Yet diff'rent far, where Claudio sees return'd
To life, and love, the maid too rashly spurn'd;
Or Falstaff, in his sympathetic scroll,
Forth to the Wives of Windsor pours his soul.
Again, forsaking mirth's fantastic rites,
The Muse to follow, through her nobler flights,
Where Milton paints angelic hosts in arms,
And Heaven's wide champaign rings with dire alarms,
Till 'vengeful justice wings its dreadful way,
And hurls the apostate from the face of day.
Immortal Bards! high o'er oblivion's shroud
Their names shall live, pre-eminent and proud,
Who snatch'd the keys of mystery from time,
This world too little for their Muse sublime!

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With Thomson, now, o'er sylvan scenes we stray,
Or seek the lone church-yard, with pensive Gray:
On Pope's refin'd, or Dryden's lofty strains,
Dwell, while their fire the lightest heart enchains.
Through these and all our Bards to whom belong
The pow'rs transcendent of immortal song,
How difficult to steer t'avoid the cant
Of polish'd phrase, and nerve-alarming rant;
Each period with true elegance to round,
And give the Poet's meaning in the sound.
But, wherefore should the Muse employ her verse,
The peril of our labors to rehearse?
Oft has your kind, your generous applause,
E're now, convinc'd us, you approve our cause:
Conscious it will again our task attend,
The Critic stern, we ask not to commend,
Who like inclement Winter's hostile frown
Would beat th'infantine shrubs of Genius down.

By your kind sanction, spur'd to nobler aims,
Our country, now, the Muses' tribute claims:
When o'er fair Albion war destructive lours,
Oh! be those Patriot feelings ever ours,
Which from the public mind spontaneous burst
On that infuriate foe, by crimes accurst,
Who'd o'er our envied isle his vassals send,
And all the land with dire convulsions rend.
Well! let their armies come, their locusts pour,
Each British heart shall welcome them on shore,
Each British hand is arm'd in Britain's cause,
To guard their birth-right, liberty, and laws,
Rise! Britons, rise! attend fair freedom's cry,
The wretch who meanly fears deserves to die.
His kind protection 'gainst each latent foe,
Still may that Pow'r Omnipotent bestow,
Which first Britannia's sov'reign flag unfurl'd
So high, it flames a beacon to the World!

THE BEGGAR.

Of late I saw him on his staff reclin'd,
Bow'd down beneath a weary weight of woes,
Without a roof to shelter from the wind



His head, all hoar with many a winter's snows.
All tremb'ling he approach'd, he strove to speak;
The voice of misery scarce my ear assail'd;
A flood of sorrow swept his furrow'd cheek,
Remembrance check'd him, and his utt'rance fail'd.
For he had known full many a better day;
And when the poor-man at his threshold bent,
He drove him not with aching heart away,
But freely shar'd what Providence had sent.
How hard for him, the stranger's boon to crave,
And live to want the mite his bounty gave!

TO

Come, Jenny, let me sip the dew,
That on those coral lips doth play,
One kiss would every care subdue,
And bid my weary soul be gay.

For surely, thou wert form'd by love
To bless the sufferer's parting sigh;
In pity then, my griefs remove,
And on that bosom let me die!

THE RUNAWAY.

Ah! who is he by Cynthia's gleam
Discern'd, the statue of distress:
Weeping beside the willow'd stream
That bathes the woodland wilderness?



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Why talks he to the idle air?

Why, listless, at his length reclin'd,
Heaves he the groan of deep despair,
Responsive to the midnight wind?

Speak, gentle shepherd! tell me why?

—Sir! he has lost his wife, they say—
Of what disorder did she die?

—Lord, sir! of none—she ran away.

SONG

THE BLUE-EYED MAID.

Sweet are the hours when roseate spring
With health and joy salutes the day,
When zephyr, borne on wanton wing,
Soft whispering 'wakes the blushing May:
Sweet are the hours, yet not so sweet
As when my blue-eyed maid I meet,
And hear her soul-entrancing tale,
Sequester'd in the shadowy vale.
The mellow horn's long-echoing notes
Startle the morn commingling strong;
At eve, the harp's wild music floats,
And ravish'd silence drinks the song;
Yet sweeter is the song of love,
When Emma's voice enchants the grove,
While listening sylphs repeat the tale,
Sequester'd in the silent vale.

BERTRAM AND ANNA.

Stranger! if thou e'er did'st love,
If nature in thy bosom glows,
A Minstrel, rude, may haply move,
Thine heart to sigh for Anna's woes.

Lo! beneath the humble tomb,
Obscure the luckless maiden sleeps;
Round it pity's flowerets bloom,
O'er it memory fondly weeps.



And ever be the tribute paid!
The warm heart's sympathetic flow:
Richer by far, ill-fated maid!
Than all the shadowy pomp of woe.

The shadowy pomp to thee denied.
While pity bade thy spirit rest:
While superstition scowl'd beside,
And vainly bade it not be blest.

Ah! could I with unerring truth,
Inspir'd by memory's magic power,
Pourtray thee, grac'd in ripening youth,
With new enchantment, every hour;

When fortune smil'd, and hope was young,
And hail'd thee like the bounteous May,
Renewing still thy steps among
The faded flowers of yesterday.

All plaintive, then my lute should sound,
While fancy sigh'd thy form to see;
The list'ning maids should weep around,
And swains lament thy fate with me.

And, Stranger, thou who hear'st the tale,
By soft infection taught to mourn,
Would'st wet with tears the primrose pale,
That blooms beside her sylvan urn.

For she was fair as forms of love,
Oft by the 'rapt enthusiast seen,
Who slumbers midst the myrtle grove,
With spring's unfolding blossoms green.

All eloquent, her eyes express'd
Her heart to each fine feeling true:
For in their orbs did pity rest,
Suffusing soft their beamy blue.

And silence, pleas'd, his reign resign'd.
Whene'er he heard her vocal tongue;
And grief in slumbers sweet reclin'd,
As on his ear its accents hung.



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But vain the charms that grac'd the maid,
The eye where pity lov'd to reign,
The form where fascination play'd,
The voice that breath'd enchantment, vain!

Unequal, all their syren power,
To win from fate it's frown away:
When Bertram came in luckless hour
To sigh, to flatter, to betray!

He came, inform'd in every art,
That makes th'incautious virgin weep:
Beguiles the unsuspecting heart,
And lulls mistrust to silken sleep.

His tale she heard, nor thought the while,
That falshood such a tale could tell:
That dark deceit could e'er defile,
The tongue that talk'd of truth so well.

He woo'd, he wept, 'till all was won,
Then, as the spring-born zephyrs fly,
He fled, he left her, lost! undone!
In penitential tears to die.

Oh! could she live, condemn'd to feel,
The insults of exulting scorn?
Relentless as the three-edg'd steel!
Illicit pleasure's eldest-born!

Who 'mid despair's impervious gloom,
Should bid her soul's sad wand'rings cease:
Th'extinguish'd spark of hope relume,
And sooth the penitent to peace?

She saw her aged mother bow,
Subdued by exquisite distress:
For every hope was faded now,
And life a weary wilderness.

She saw her in the cold earth laid,
And not a tear was seen to start,
And not a sigh the pangs allay'd,
That agoniz'd her bursting heart.



And when the mournful rite was done,
A sculptur'd woe, she seem'd to move:
As close she clasp'd her infant son,
The pledge of faithless Bertram's love.

While slow she pac'd the lone church-yard,
With pity's accents, soft and sad,
We strove to win her fix'd regard,
But vainly strove, for Ann was mad!

'Lorn, listless, like a wither'd flower,
Blown o'er the plain by every blast,
Impell'd by fancy's fitful power,
The lovely, luckless, victim past.

'Till, left alone, the wood she sought,
Where first her Bertram's vows she heard,
And first with soft affection fraught,
His vows return'd, to Heaven prefer'd.

Each scene she trac'd, to memory dear,
Tho' memory lent a feeble ray,
Reason's benighted bark to steer,
Thro' dark distraction's stormy way.

At length, where yon translucent tide,
Meanders slow the meads among:
Reclining on its sedgy side,
Thus to her sleeping babe she sung:

"Sweet cherub! on the green bank rest,
And balmy may thy slumbers be;
For tempests tear thy mother's breast,
Alas! it cannot pillow thee.

"I'll wander 'till thy sire I've found,
I'll lure his footsteps where you lie;
While mantling waters murmur round,
And wild-winds sing your lullaby.

"Haply, shalt thou, his scorn subdue,
Thy helpless innocence to save;
But if unmov'd, he turns from you,
I'll lead him to my mother's grave



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"Sure, waken'd there, remorse shall rise,
And bid his perjur'd bosom shed,
That tender tear, my heart denies,
Cold, icy cold, congeal'd, and dead."

Then, wildly through each well-known way
Again she fled, the youth to seek:
Nor paus'd, 'till Cynthia's mournful ray,
Play'd paly, on her paler cheek.

Once more she sought the river's side,
The goal of her accomplish'd way,
Where, 'whelm'd beneath the rising tide,
Her heart's dissever'd treasure lay!

Amaz'd! convuls'd! she shriek'd! she sprung!
She clasp'd it in its wat'ry bed!
The dirge of death the night-blasts sung;
The morn, in tears, beheld them dead.

Their pale remains with pious care,
Beneath the vernal turf we laid;
Remembrance loves to linger there,
And weep beneath the willow shade.

And oft, the fairest flowers of spring,
What time the hours of toil are spent,
The village youths and virgins bring,
To grace her moss-clad monument.

INVOCATION TO SLEEP.

Come, gentle sleep! thou soft restorer, come,
And close these wearied eyes, by grief oppress'd;
For one short hour, be this thy peaceful home,
And bid the sighs that rend my bosom rest.

Depriv'd of thee, at midnight's awful hour,
Oft have I listen'd to the angry wind;
While busy memory, with tyrant pow'r,
Would picture faded joys, or friends unkind.

Or tell of her who rear'd my helpless years,
But torn away, ere yet I knew her worth;



How oft, tho' nature still the thought endears,
Has my worn bosom heav'd its tribute forth.

Come, then, soft pow'r, whose balmy roses fall
As heavenly manna sweet, or morning dew;
Beneath thy wings, my troubled thoughts recall,
And, haply, lend them some serener hue.

SONNET.

TO MUSIC.

Hail! Heavenly Maid, my pensive mind,
Invokes thy woe-subduing strain;
For there a shield my soul can find,
Which subjugates each dagger'd pain.
When beauty spurns the lover's sighs,
'Tis thine soft pity to inspire;
And cold indifference vanquish'd lies,
Beneath thy myrtle-vested lyre.
Oh! could contention's demon hear
Thy seraph voice, his blood-lav'd spear
He'd drop, and own thy power;
That smiling o'er each hapless land,
Sweet peace might call her hallow'd band,
To crown the festive hour.

TO *****

O Nymph! with cheeks of roseate hue,
Whose eyes are violets bath'd in dew,
So liquid, languishing, and blue,
How they bewitch me!
Thy bosom hath a magic spell,
For when its full orbs heave and swell,
I feel—but, oh! I must not tell,
Lord! how they twitch me!

ON THE DEATH OF GENERAL WASHINGTON.



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Lamented Chief! at thy distinguish'd deeds
The world shall gaze with wonder and applause,
While, on fair hist'ry's page, the patriot reads
Thy matchless valor in thy country's cause.

Yes, it was thine amid destructive war,
To shield it nobly from oppression's chain;
By justice arm'd, to brave each threat'ning jar,
Assert its freedom, and its rights maintain.

Much-honor'd Statesman, Husband, Father, Friend,
A generous nation's grateful tears are thine;
E'en unborn ages shall thy worth commend,
And never-fading laurels deck thy shrine.

Illustrious Warrior! on the immortal base,
By Freedom rear'd, thy envied name shall stand;
And Fame, by Truth inspir'd, shall fondly trace
Thee, Pride and Guardian of thy Native Land!

SONG.

Oh! never will I leave my love,
My captive soul would sigh to stray,
Tho' seraph-songs its truth to prove,
Call it from earth to heaven to away.

For heaven has deign'd on earth to send
As rich a gift as it can give;
Alas! that mortal bliss must end,
For mortal man must cease to live.

Yet transient would my sorrows be
Should Delia first her breath resign;
Sweet Maid! my soul would follow thee,
For never can it part from thine.

BURLESQUE SONNET.

TO A BEE.

Sweet Insect! that on two small wings doth fly,
And, flying, carry on those wings yourself;
Methinks I see you, looking from your eye,



As tho' you thought the world a wicked elf.
Offspring of summer! brimstone is thy foe;
And when it kills ye, soon you lose your breath:
They rob your honey; but don't let you go,
Thou harmless victim of ambitious death!
How sweet is honey! coming from the Bee;
Sweeter than sugar, in the lump or not:
And, as we get this honey all from thee,
Child of the hive! thou shalt not be forgot.
So when I catch, I'll take thee home with me,
And thou shall be my friend, oh! Bee! Bee! Bee!

MARY.

How oft have I seen her upon the sea-shore,
While tearful, her face, she would hide,
In sad silence the loss of the Sailor deplore
Who from infancy call'd her his bride,

The Sailor she lov'd was a Fisherman's son,
All dangers he triumph'd to meet;
Well repaid, if a smile from his Mary he won,
As he proffer'd his spoils at her feet.

But soon from her smiles was he summon'd away,
His fortunes at sea to pursue:
And grav'd on their hearts was the sorrowful day
That witness'd their final adieu.

They spoke not, ah, no; for they felt their hearts speak
A language their tongues could not tell;
As he kiss'd off the tears that fell fast on her cheek,
As she sigh'd on his bosom, farewell.



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Full oft, the sad season of absence to charm,
To the rock or the dale she retir'd;
Where he told her the story, impassion'd and warm
That faithful affection inspir'd.

And now on the eve of his promis'd return,
All anxious, she flies to the strand;
But the night-shades descend ere her eye can discern
The white-sail approaching the land.

With night comes the tempest, unaw'd by the blast
She stood hem'd by ruin around;
She saw a frail bark on the rugged rock cast,
And heard its lasts signals resound.

My lover is lost! we shall never meet more!
She shriek'd with prophetic dismay,
The morn seal'd her sorrows—the wreck on the shore
Was the vessel that bore him away.

Each hope her young bosom had cherish'd before,
Was consign'd with the youth to the grave:
She madden'd, she smil'd, as her ringlets she tore,
And buried her woes in the wave.

SONNET.

TO LYDIA, ON HER BIRTH-DAY.

Blest be the hour that gave my Lydia birth,
The day be sacred 'mid each varying year;
How oft the name recalls thy spotless worth,
And joys departed, still to memory dear!
If matchless friendship, constancy, and love,
Have power to charm, or one sad grief beguile.
'Tis thine the gloom of sorrow to remove,
And on that tearful cheek imprint a smile.
May every after season to thee bring
New joys; to cheer life's dark eventful way,
'Till time shall close thee in his pond'rous wing,
And angels waft thee to eternal day!
Lov'd maid, farewell! thy name this heart shall fill
'Till memory sinks, and all its griefs are still!

STANZAS,

WRITTEN IMPROMTU ON THE LATE PEACE.

“Why, there’s Peace, Jack, come damme let’s push
round the grog,
And awhile altogether in good humor jog,
For they say we shall soon go ashore;
Where the anchor of friendship may drift or be lost,
As on life’s troubled ocean at random we’re tost,
And, perhaps, we may never meet more.”

Thus spoke Tom; while each messmate approvingly heard
That the contest was ended, their courage ne’er fear’d,
And soon Peace would restore them to love;
And the hearts by wrongs rous’d, that no fear could assuage,
At Humanity’s shrine dropt the thunder of rage,
And the Lion resign’d to the Dove!

Heaven smil’d on the olive that Reason had rear’d,
With her rich pearly tribute sweet Pity appear’d,
And plac’d it on each brilliant eye;
’Twas the tear that Compassion had nurs’d in her breast,
To bestow on the friend, or the foe, if distress’d.
Like dew-drops distill’d from the sky!

Next on friends lost in battle they mournfully dwelt
’Twas a theme that together the heart and eye felt,
And a bumper to valor they gave;
While the liquor that flow’d in the bless’d circling bowl
Was enrich’d by a tribute that flow’d from the soul,
“A tear for the tomb of the brave!”



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SONNET.

TO

ON HER RECOVERY FROM ILLNESS.

Fair flower! that fall'n beneath the angry blast,
Which marks with wither'd sweets its fearful way,
I grieve to see thee on the low earth cast,
While beauty's trembling tints fade fast away.
But who is she, that from the mountain's head
Comes gaily on, cheering the child of earth;
The walks of woe bloom bright beneath her tread,
And nature smiles with renovated mirth?
'Tis Health! she comes, and hark! the vallies ring.
And hark! the echoing hills repeat the sound;
She sheds the new-blown blossoms of the spring,
And all their fragrance floats her footsteps round.
And hark! she whispers in the zephyr's voice,
Lift up thy head, fair flower! rejoice! rejoice!

A FRAGMENT

Oh, Youth! could dark futurity reveal
Her hidden worlds, unlock her cloud-hung gates,
Or snatch the keys of mystery from time,
Your souls would madden at the piercing sight
Of fortune, wielding high her woe-born arms
To crush aspiring genius, seize the wreath
Which fond imagination's hand had weav'd,
Strip its bright beams, and give the wreck to air.

Forth from Cimmeria's nest of vipers, lo!
Pale envy trails its cherish'd form, and views,
With eye of cockatrice, the little pile
Which youthful merit had essay'd to raise;
From shrouded night his blacker arm he draws,
Replete with vigor from each heavenly blast,
To cloud the glories of that infant sun,
And hurl the fabric headlong to the ground.
How oft, alas! through that envenom'd blow,



The youth is doom'd to leave his careful toils
To slacken and decay, which might, perchance,
Have borne him up on ardor's wing to fame.

And should we not, with equal pity, view
The fair frail wanderer, doom'd, through perjur'd vows,
To lurk beneath a rigid stoic's frown,
'Till that sweet moment comes, which her sad days
Of infamy, of want, and pain have wing'd.
But here the reach of human thought is lost!
What, what must be the parent's heart-felt pangs,
Who sees his child, perchance his only child!
Thus struggling in the abyss of despair,
To sin indebted for a life of woe.
Still worse, if worse can be! the thought must sting
(If e'er reflection calls it from the bed
Of low oblivion) that ignoble wretch,
The cruel instrument of all their woe;
Sure it must cut his adamant heart
More than ten thousand daggers onward plung'd,
With all death's tortures quivering on their points.

Oh! that we could but pierce the siren guise,
Spread out before the unsuspecting mind,
Which, conscious of its innocence within,
Treads on the rose-strew'd path, but finds, too late,
That ruin opes its ponderous jaws beneath.
Lo! frantic grief succeeds the bitter fall,
And pining anguish mourns the fatal step;
'Till that great Pow'r who, ever watchful stands,
Shall give us grace from his eternal throne
To feel the faithful tear of penitence,
The only recompense for ill-spent life.



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LINES,

TO THE MEMORY OF A LADY.

Bring the sad cypress wreath to grace the tomb,
Where rests the liberal friend of human kind,
Around its base let deathless flow'rets bloom,
Wet with the off'rings of the grateful mind.

Firm was thy friendship, ardent, and sincere;
Gen'rous thy soul, to ev'ry suff'rer prov'd:
Rest, sainted shade! blest with the heart-felt tear,
On earth lamented, and in heaven belov'd.

Now will the widow weep that thou art gone,
Who oft her unprotected babes hast fed:
While tottering age shall heave the sigh forlorn,
As slow they move to beg their bitter bread.

Long shall the memory of thy worth survive,
Grav'd on the heart, when sinks the trophied stone;
Oh! may the plenty-bless'd as freely give,
And from thy life of virtue form their own.

SONG.

THE RECALL OF THE HERO.

When discord blew her fell alarm
On Gallia's blood-stain'd ground;
When usurpation's giant arm
Enslav'd the nations round:
The thunders of avenging heaven
To Nelson's chosen hand were given;
By Nelson's chosen hand were hurl'd
To rescue the devoted world!

The tyrant pow'r, his vengeance dread,
To Egypt's shores pursued;
At Trafalgar its hydra-head
For ever sunk subdued.
The freedom of mankind was won!
The hero's glorious task was done!



When heaven, oppression's ensigns furl'd,
Recall'd him from the rescued world.

LINES,

WRITTEN ON SEEING THE CHILDREN OF THE NAVAL ASYLUM.[*]

Sons of Renown! ye heirs of matchless fame,
Whose Sires in Glory's path victorious fell;
Adding new honors to the British name,
That future ages shall with transport tell.

Yet not unpity'd nor forgot they die,
For gen'rous Britons to their mem'ry raise;
A tribute will their children's wants supply,
A living monument of grateful praise.

To the sad mother, who, in speechless grief,
Mourn'd o'er her infant's unprotected state,
Benignant charity affords relief,
And bids her bosom glow, with joy elate.

Great your reward who thus impassion'd move,
By nature taught the heart's persuasive play;
Such deeds your God with pleasure shall approve,
And endless blessings cheer your parting day.

What better boon can feeling hearts bestow,
What nobler ornament can deck our isle;
Than one that robs the wretched of their woe,
And makes the widow and the orphan smile?

[Footnote: A Society, established by Voluntary Contributions, for the Support and Education of the Children of the Sailors and Marines, who have fallen during the War.]

ROSA'S GRAVE.



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Oh! lay me where my Rosa lies,
And love shall o'er the moss-crown'd bed,
When dew-drops leave the weeping skies,
His tenderest tear of pity shed.

And sacred shall the willow be,
That shades the spot where virtue sleeps;
And mournful memory weep to see
The hallow'd watch affection keeps.

Yes, soul of love! this bleeding heart
Scarce beating, soon its griefs shall cease;
Soon from his woes the suff'rer part,
And hail thee at the Throne of Peace!

LINES,

WRITTEN IN HORNSEY WOOD.

Oh, ye! who pine, in London smoke immur'd,
With spirits wearied, and with pains uncur'd,
With all the catalogue of city evils,
Colds, asthmas, rheumatisms, coughs, blue-devils!
Who bid each bold empiric roll in wealth,
Who drains your fortunes while he saps your health,
So well ye love your dirty streets and lanes,
Ye court your ailments and embrace your pains.

And scarce ye know, so little have ye seen,
If corn be yellow, or if grass be green;
Why leave ye not your smoke-obstructed holes
With wholesome air to cheer your sickly souls?
In scenes where health's bright goddess 'wakes the breeze,
Floats on the stream, and fans the whisp'ring trees,
Soon would the brighten'd eye her influence speak,
And her full roses flush the faded cheek.

Then, where romantic Hornsey courts the eye
With all the charms of sylvan scenery.
Let the pale sons of diligence repair,
And pause, like me, from sedentary care;
Here, the rich landscape spreads profusely wide,
And here, embowering shades the prospect hide;



Each mazy walk in wild meanders moves,
And infant oaks, luxuriant, grace the groves:
Oaks! that by time matur'd, remov'd afar,
Shall ride triumphant, 'midst the wat'ry war;
Shall blast the bulwarks of Britannia's foes,
And claim her empire, wide as ocean flows!

O'er all the scene, mellifluous and bland,
The blissful powers of harmony expand;
Soft sigh the zephyrs 'mid the still retreats,
And steal from Flora's lips ambrosial sweets;
Their notes of love the feather'd songsters sing,
And Cupid peeps behind the vest of Spring.

Ye swains! who ne'er obtain'd with all your sighs,
One tender look from Chloe's sparkling eyes,
In shades like these her cruelty assail,
Here, whisper soft your amatory tale;
The scene to sympathy the maid shall move,
And smiles propitious, crown your slighted love.

While the fresh air with fragrance, Summer fills,
And lifts her voice, heard jocund o'er the hills
All jubilant, the waving woods display
Her gorgeous gifts, magnificently gay!
The wond'ring eye beholds these waving woods
Reflected bright in artificial floods,
And still, the tufts of clust'ring shrubs between,
Like passing sprites, the nymphs and swains are seen;
'Till fancy triumphs in th'exulting breast,
And care shrinks back, astonish'd! dispossess'd!
For all breathes rapture, all enchantment seems,
Like fairy visions, and poetic dreams!



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Tho' on such scenes the fancy loves to dwell,
The stomach oft a different tale will tell;
Then, leave the wood, and seek the shelt'ring roof,
And put the pantry's vital strength to proof;
The aerial banquets of the tuneful nine,
May suit some appetites, but faith! not mine;
For my coarse palate, coarser food must please,
Substantial beef, pies, puddings, ducks, and pease;
Such food, the fangs of keen disease defies,
And such rare feeding Hornsey House supplies:
Nor these alone, the joys that court us here,
Wine! generous wine! that drowns corroding care,
Asserts its empire in the glittering bowl,
And pours promethean vigor o'er the soul.
Here, too, *that* bluff John Bull, whose blood boils high
At such base wares of foreign luxury;
Who scorns to revel in imported cheer,
Who prides in perry, and exults in beer:
On these his surly virtue shall regale,
With quickening cyder, and with fattening ale.

Nor think, ye Fair! our Hornsey has denied,
The elegant repasts where you preside:
Here, may the heart rejoice, expanding free
In all the social luxury of Tea!
Whose essence pure, inspires such charming chat,
With nods, and winks, and whispers, and *all that*.
Here, then, while 'rapt, inspir'd, like Horace old,
We chaunt convivial hymns to Bacchus bold;
Or heave the incense of unconscious sighs,
To catch the grace that beams from beauty's eyes;
Or, in the winding wilds sequester'd deep,
Th'unwilling Muse invoking, fall asleep;
Or cursing her, and her ungranted smiles,
Chase butterflies along the echoing aisles:
Howe'er employ'd, *here* be the town forgot,
Where fogs, and smokes, and jostling crowds *are not*.

SONNET.

TO



Thou bud of early promise, may the rose
Which time, methinks, will rear in envied bloom,
By friendship nurs'd, its grateful sweets disclose,
Nor e'er be nipt in life's disast'rous gloom.
For much thou ow'st to him whose studious mind
Rear'd thy young years, and all thy wants supplied;
Whose every precept breath'd affection kind,
And to the friend's, a father's love allied.
Oh! how 'twill glad him in life's evening day,
To see that mind, parental care adorn'd,
With grateful love the debt immense repay,
And realize each hope affection form'd.
The deed be thine—'twill many a care assuage,
Exalt thy worth, and blunt the thorns of age.

THE COMPLAINT

Ah! this wild desolated spot,
Calls forth the plaintive tear;
Remembrance paints my little cot,
Which once did flourish here.

No more the early lark and thrush
Shall hail the rising day,
Nor warble on their native bush,
Nor charm me with their lay.

No more the foliage of the oak
Shall spread its wonted shade;
Now fell'd beneath the hostile stroke
Of red destruction's blade.



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Beneath its bloom when summer smil'd,
How oft the rural train
The lingering hours with tales beguil'd,
Or danc'd to Colin's strain.

And, when Aurora with the dawn
Dispell'd the midnight shade,
Her flocks to the accustom'd lawn
Would lovely Phillis lead.

Delusive grandeur never wreath'd
Around Contentment's head,
'Till war its flaming sword unsheath'd,
And wide destruction spread.

The daemon, rising from afar,
His thunders loudly roll:
And, dreadful in his blazing car,
He shakes the shrinking soul.

His foaming coursers onward bend,
And falling empires moan;
One piercing cry the heavens ascend,
One universal groan!

At length, my cottage (memory's tear
Must here its tribute pay)
Was crush'd beneath the victor's spear,
And war's oppressive sway.

And what avail'd the tears, the woe
Of peace—the hamlet's pride:
She fell beneath the monster's blow,
And in oblivion died!

Adieu! ye shades, adieu! ye groves,
Now buried in your fall:
Where'er my eye bewilder'd roves,
Tis desolation all!

SONNET.

Ye fates! who sternly point on sorrow's chart
The line of pain a wretch must still pursue,



To end the struggles of a bleeding heart,
And grace the triumph misery owes to you
How poor your pow'r!—where fortitude, serene,
But smiling views the glimmering taper shine;
Time soon shall dim, and close the wearied scene,
Bestowing solace e'en on woes like mine.
Ah! stop your course—too long I've felt your chain,
Too long the feeble influence of its pow'r;
The heir of grief may fall in love with pain,
And worst-misfortune feel the tranquil hour.
Hail, fortitude! blest friend life's ills to brave,
All misery boasts, shall wither in the grave!

REFLECTIONS OF A POET,

ON BEING INVITED TO A GREAT DINNER.

Great epoch in the history of bards!
Important day to those who woo the nine;
Better than fame, are visitation cards,
And heaven on earth, at a great house to dine.

O cruel memory! do not conjure up
The ghost of Sally Dab, the famous cook;
Who gave me solid food, the cheering cup,
And on her virtues, begg'd I'd write a book.

Rest, goddess, from all broils! I bless thy name
Dear kitchen-nymph, as ever eyes did glut on!
I'd give thee all I have, my slice of fame,
If thou, dear shade! could'st give one slice of mutton.

Yet hold—ten minutes more, and I am blest;
Fly quick, ye seconds; quick ye moments, fly:
Soon shall I put my hunger to the test,
And all the host of miseries defy.

Thrice is he arm'd, who hath his dinner first,
For well-fed valor always fights the best;
And tho' he may of over-eating burst,
His life is happy, and his death is blest.



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To-day I dine—not on my usual fare;
Not near the sacred mount with skinny nine;
Not in the park upon a dish of air:
But on real eatables, and rosy wine.

Delightful task! to cram the hungry maw,
To teach the empty stomach how to fill,
To pour red port adown the parched craw;
Without one dread dessert—to pay the bill.

I'm off—methinks I smell the long-lost savor;
Hail, platter sound! to poet, music sweet:
Now grant me, Jove, if not too great a favor,
Once in my life, as much as I can eat!

SONNET.

ON SEEING A YOUNG LADY,
I HAD PREVIOUSLY KNOWN, CONFINED IN A MADHOUSE.

Sweet wreck of loveliness! alas, how soon
The sad brief summer of thy joys hath fled;
How sorrow's friendship for thy hapless doom,
Thy beauty faded, and thy hopes all dead.
Oh! 'twas that beauty's pow'r which first destroy'd
Thy mind's serenity; its charms but led
The faithless friend, that thy pure love enjoy'd,
To tear the blooming blossom from its bed.
How reason shudders at thy frenzied air!
To see thee smile, with fancy's dreams possess'd;
Or shrink, the frozen image of despair,
Or love-enraptur'd, chaunt thy griefs to rest,
Oh! cease that mournful voice, poor suff'ring child!
My heart but bleeds to hear thy musings wild.

TO THADDEUS.[*]

Farewell! lov'd youth, for still I hold thee dear,
Though thou hast left me friendless and alone;
Still, still thy name recalls the heartfelt tear,
That hastes Matilda to her wish'd-for home.



Why leave the wretch thy perfidy hath made.
To journey cheerless through the world's wide waste?
Say, why so soon does all thy kindness fade.
And doom me, thus, affliction's cup to taste?

Ungen'rous deed! to fly the faithful maid
Who, for thy arms, abandoned every friend;
Oh! cruel thought, that virtue, thus betray'd,
Should feel a pang that death alone can end.

Yet, I'll not chide thee—and when hence you roam,
Should my sad fate one tear of pity move,
Ah! then return; this bosom's still thy home,
And all thy failings I'll repay with love.

Believe me, dear, at midnight or at morn,
In vain exhausted nature strives to rest,
Thy absence plants my pillow with a thorn,
And bids me hope no more, on earth, for rest.

But, if unkindly you refuse to hear,
And from despair thy poor Matilda save;
Ah! don't deny one tributary tear,
To glisten sweetly o'er my early grave.

MATILDA.

[Footnote *: The above lines were written at the request of a Lady, and meant to describe the feelings of one, "who loved not wisely, but too well."]

SONNET.

TO A LYRE.



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Friend of the lonely hour, from thy lov'd strain
The magic pow'r of pleasure have I known:
Awhile I lose remembrance of my pain,
And seem to taste of joys that long had flown.
When o'er my suffering soul reflection casts
The gloom of sorrow's sable-shadowing veil,
Recalling sad misfortunes chilling blasts—
How sweet to thee to tell the mournful tale!
And tho' denied to me the strings to move
Like heavenly-gifted bards, to whom belong
The power to melt the yielding soul to love,
Or wake to war, with energetic song.
Yet thou, my Lyre, canst cheer the gloomy hour,
When sullen grief asserts her tyrant pow'r.

ADDRESS TO ALBION.

To thee, O Albion! be the tribute paid
Which sympathy demands, the patriot tear;
While echo'd forth to thy remotest shade,
Rebellion's menace sounds in every ear.

Though Gallia's vaunts should fill the trembling skies,
'Till nature's undiscover'd regions start
At the rude clamor;—yet, shouldst thou despise,
While thy brave subjects own a common heart.

But lo! fresh streaming from the Hibernian[*] height
Her own red torrent wild-eyed faction pours;
While, 'mid her falling ranks, ignobly great,
Loud vengeance raves, and desperation scours.

Denouncing murderous strife, the rebel train
Wave their red ensigns of inhuman hate
O'er every hamlet, every peaceful plain;
Rejecting reason, and despising fate.

Oh! that again our raptur'd eyes could see
Their ripening crops bloom yellow o'er the land;
Their happy shepherds, like their pasture, free—
No more a factious race, a ruffian band.



That albion, once again with concord blest,
May still support that great, that glorious name,
Which ardent glows in every patriot's breast,
And crowns her hoary cliffs with matchless fame.

Then, then, might foreign foes, around our shores,
Pour the big tempest of their arms in vain;
Then, might they learn that freedom still is ours,
That Britons still control the subject main.

Oh! all ye kindred pow'rs, awake, arise!
On boundless glory's giant pinions soar;
Let Gallia tremble! while the sounding skies
Proclaim us free—'till time shall be no more!

[Footnote*: This piece was written when Ireland was in a most distracted state.]

SONNET.

ON THE DEATH OF
TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE.

His weary warfare done, his woes forgot,
Freedom! thy son, oppress'd so long, is free:
He seeks the realms where tyranny is not,
And those shall hail him who have died for thee!
Immortal TELL! receive a soul like thine,
Who scorn'd obedience to usurp'd command:
Who rose a giant from a sphere indign,
To tear the rod from proud oppression's

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hand.

Alas! no victor-wreaths enzon'd his brow,
But freedom long his hapless fate shall mourn;
Her holy tears shall nurse the laurel bough,
Whose green leaves grace his consecrated urn.
Nurs'd by these tears, that bough shall rise sublime,
And bloom triumphant 'mid the wrecks of time!

EPITAPH

ON MATILDA.

SACRED to pity! is uprais'd this stone,
The humble tribute of a friend unknown;
To grant the beauteous wreck its hallow'd claim,
And add to misery's scroll another name.
Poor, lost Matilda! now in silence laid
Within the early grave thy sorrows made,
Sleep on!—his heart still holds thy image dear,
Who view'd, thro' life, thy errors with a tear;
Who ne'er, with stoic apathy, repress'd
The heart-felt sigh for loveliness distress'd.
That sigh for thee shall ne'er forget to heave;
'Tis all he now can give, or thou receive.
When last I saw thee in thy envied bloom,
That promis'd health and joy for years to come,
Methought the lily, nature proudly gave,
Would never wither in th'untimely grave.
Ah, sad reverse! too soon the fated hour
Saw the dire tempest 'whelm th'expanding flow'r?
Then from thy tongue its music ceas'd to flow;
Thine eye forgot to gleam with aught but woe;
Peace fled thy breast; invincible despair
Usurp'd her seat, and struck his daggers there.
Did not the unpitying world thy sorrows fly?
And ah, what then was left thee—but to die!
Yet not a friend beheld thy parting breath,
Or mingled solace with the pangs of death:
No priest proclaim'd the erring hour forgiv'n,
Or sooth'd thy spirit to its native heav'n:
But Heaven, more bounteous, bade the pilgrim come,



And hovering angels hail'd their sister home.
I, where the marble swells not, to rehearse
Thy hapless fate; inscribe my simple verse.
Thy tale, dear shade, my heart essays to tell;
Accept its offering, while it heaves—farewell!

SONNET.

TO PEACE.

Come long-lost blessing! heaven-lov'd seraph, haste,
On pity's wings upborne, a world's wide woes
Invoke thy smiles extatic, long effac'd,
Beneath the tear which all corrosive flows;
While reason shudders, let ambition weep,
When wounding truth records what it has done:
Records the hosts consign'd to death's cold sleep,
Conspicuous 'mid the pomp of conflicts won!
Shall not the fiend relent, while groaning age
Pours its deep sorrows o'er its offspring slain;
While sire-robb'd infants mourn the deathful rage,
In many a penury enfeebled strain?
Sweet maid, return! behold affliction's tear,
And in my theme accept a nation's prayer.

LOVE.

Love! what is love? a mere machine, a spring
For freaks fantastic, a convenient thing,
A point to which each scribbling wight must steer,
Or vainly hope for food or favor here,
A summer's sigh, a winter's wistful tale,
A sound at which th'untutor'd maid turns pale,
Her soft eyes languish and her bosom heaves,
And hope delights as fancy's dream deceives.

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Thus speaks the heart, which cold disgust invades,
When time instructs and hope's enchantment fades;
Through life's wide stage, from sages down to kings,
The puppets move, as art directs the strings;
Imperious beauty bows to sordid gold,
Her smiles, whence heaven flows emanent, are sold;
And affectation swells the entrancing tones,
Which nature subjugates, and truth disowns.

I love th'ingenuous maiden, practis'd not
To pierce the heart with ambush'd glances, shot
From eyelashes, whose shadowy length she knows
To a hair's point, their high arch when to close
Half o'er the swimming orb, and when to raise,
Disclosing all the artificial blaze
Of unfelt passion, which alone can move
Him, whom the genuine eloquence of love
Affected never, won with wanton wiles,
With soulless sighs and meretricious smiles,
By nature unimpress'd, uncharm'd by thee.
Sweet goddess of my heart, Simplicity!

SONNET.

IN THE MANNER OF THE MODERNS.

Meek Maid! that sitting on yon lofty tower,
View'st the calm floods that wildly beat below,
Be off!—yon sunbeam veils a heavy shower,
Which sets my heart with joy a aching, oh!
For why, O maid, with locks of jetty flax,
Should grief convulse my heart with joyful knocks?
It is but reasonable you should ax,
Because it soundeth like a paradox.
Hear, then, bright virgin! if the rain comes down,
'Twill wet the roads, and spoil my morning ride;
But it will also spoil thy bran-new gown,
And therefore cure thee of thy cursed pride.
Moral—this sonnet, if well understood,
Shows the same thing may bring both harm and good.



LINES,

DELIVERED AFTER THE REPRESENTATION OF A PLAY AT
A YOUNG LADIES' BOARDING SCHOOL.

When first the infant bird attempts to fly,
And cautious spreads its pinions to the sky,
Each happy breeze the timid trav'ler cheers,
Assists its efforts, and allays its fears;
Return'd—how pleas'd it views the shelt'ring nest
From which it rose, with doubt and fear oppress'd.

Like this, is ours; this night we ventur'd out
On juv'nile wing, appall'd by many a doubt,
Cheer'd by your sanction, every peril o'er,
With joy we hail this welcome, friendly shore:
Our little band, ambitious now to raise
A pleasing off'ring for your wreath of praise
On them bestow'd, depute me here to tell
The lively feelings that their bosoms swell;
For your indulgent and parental part,
They feel the triumph of a grateful heart:
That, each revolving year shall truly prove,
How much they honor, how sincere they love;
And for your fostering care will make return
By filial duty, and desire to learn.

ON THE DEATH OF

GENERAL SIR RALPH ABERCROMBIE.



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Mute, memory stands, at valor's awful shrine,
In tears Britannia mourns her hero dead;
A world's regret, brave Abercrombie's thine.
For nature sorrow'd as thy spirit fled!

For, not the tear that matchless courage claims
To honest zeal, and soft compassion due,
Alone is thine—o'er thy ador'd remains
Each virtue weeps, for all once liv'd in you.

Yes, on thy deeds exulting I could dwell,
To speak the merits of thy honor'd name;
But, ah! what need my humble muse to tell,
When rapture's self has echo'd forth thy fame?

Yet, still thy name its energies shall deal,
When wild-storms gather round thy country's sun;
Her glowing youth shall grasp the gleamy steel,
Rank'd round the glorious wreaths which thou hast won!

TO

In vain, sweet Maid! for me you bring
The first-blown blossoms of the spring;
My tearful cheek you wipe in vain,
And bid its pale rose bloom again.

In vain! unconscious, did I say?
Oh! you alone these tears can stay:
Alone, the pale rose can renew,
Whose sunshine is a smile for you.

Yet not in friendship's smile it lives;
Too cold the gifts that friendship gives:
The beam that warms a winter's day,
Plays coldly in the lap of may.

You bid my sad heart cease to swell;
But will you, if its tale I tell,
Nor turn away, nor frown the while,
But smile, as you were wont to smile?



Then bring me not the blossoms young,
That erst on Flora's forehead hung;
But round thy radiant temples twine,
The flowers whose flaunting mocks at mine.

Give me—nor pinks, nor pansies gay,
Nor violets, fading fast away,
Nor myrtle, rue, nor rosemary,
But give, oh give, thyself to me!

SONNET.

TO MELANCHOLY.

To thy unhappy courts a lonely guest
I come, corroding Melancholy, where,
Sequester'd from the world, this woe-worn breast
May yet indulge a solitary tear!
For what should cheer the wretch's struggling heart;
What lead him thro' misfortunes gloomy shades;
When retrospection wings her keenest dart,
And hope's dim land in misery's ocean fades?
Adieu, for ever! visionary joys,
Delusive shadows of a short-liv'd hour;
The rod of woe invincible, destroys
The light, the fairy fabric of your pow'r!
How short of bliss the sublunary reign,
How long the clouded days of misery and pain!

PROMETHEUS.

What sov'reign good shall satiate man's desires,
Propell'd by hope's unconquerable fires?
Vain, each bright bauble by ambition priz'd;
Unwon, 'tis worshipp'd—but possess'd, despis'd:
Yet, all defect with virtue shines allied,
His mightiest impulse, Genius owes to pride;
From conquer'd science grac'd with glorious spoils,
He still dares on, demands sublimer toils,
And, had not nature check'd his vent'rous wing,
His eye had pierc'd her at her primal spring.

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Thus, when enwrap't, Prometheus strove to trace
Inspir'd perceptions of celestial grace,
Th' ideal spirit, fugitive as wind,
Art's forceful spells in adamant confin'd;
Curv'd with nice chisel, floats the obsequious line,
From stone unconscious, beauty beams divine,
On magic pois'd, th' exulting structure swims,
And spurns attraction with elastic limbs.
While ravish'd fancy vivifies the form,
While judgment toils to analyze its charm,
While admiration spreads her speaking hands,
The lofty artist undelighted stands;
He longs to ravish, from the blest abodes,
The seal of heaven, the attribute of gods,
To give his labor's more than man can give,
Breathe Jove's own breath, and bid the marble live!

Won from her woof, embellishing the skies,
Descending Pallas soothes her votry's sighs;
Where, 'mid the twilight of o'er-arching groves,
By waking visions led, th' enthusiast roves,
Like summer suns, by showery clouds conceal'd,
With sudden blaze the goddess shines reveal'd;
Behold, she cries, in thy distinguish'd cause,
I challenge Jove's inexorable laws!
With life's stol'n essence let the awaken'd stone
A superhuman generation own:
Defrauded nature shall admire the deed,
And time recoil at thy immortal meed.

Impregn'd with action, and convok'd to breathe,
Sighs the still form his ardent hands beneath;
Electric lustres flash from either eye,
O'er its pale cheeks suffusing flushes fly,
And glossy damps its clust'ring curls adorn,
Like dew-drops brightening on the brows of morn;
Thro' nerves that vibrates in unfolding chains
Foams the warm life-blood, excavating veins,
'Till all infus'd, and organiz'd the whole,
The finish'd fabric hails the breathing soul!
Then, wak'd tumultuous in th' alarmed breast,
Contending passions claim th' etherial guest,
And still, as each alternate empire proves,
She hopes, she fears, she envies, and she loves,

Owens all sensations that divide the span,
And eternize the little life of man.