

The Complete Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley — Volume 3 eBook

The Complete Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley — Volume 3 by Percy Bysshe Shelley

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[Of the Translations that follow a few were published by Shelley himself, others by Mrs. Shelley in the "Posthumous Poems", 1824, or the "Poetical Works", 1839, and the remainder by Medwin (1834, 1847), Garnett (1862), Rossetti (1870), Forman (1876) and Locock (1903) from the manuscript originals. Shelley's "Translations" fall between the years 1818 and 1822.]

HYMN TO MERCURY.

Translated from the Greek of Homer.

[Published by Mrs. Shelley, "Posthumous Poems", 1824. This alone of the "Translations" is included in the Harvard manuscript book. 'Fragments of the drafts of this and the other Hymns of Homer exist among the Boscombe manuscripts' (Forman).]

1.
Sing, Muse, the son of Maia and of Jove,
The Herald-child, king of Arcadia
And all its pastoral hills, whom in sweet love
Having been interwoven, modest May
Bore Heaven's dread Supreme. An antique grove 5
Shadowed the cavern where the lovers lay
In the deep night, unseen by Gods or Men,
And white-armed Juno slumbered sweetly then.



Page 4

2.

Now, when the joy of Jove had its fulfilling,
And Heaven's tenth moon chronicled her relief, 10
*She gave to light a babe all babes excelling,
A schemer subtle beyond all belief;
A shepherd of thin dreams, a cow-stealing,
A night-watching, and door-waylaying thief,
Who 'mongst the Gods was soon about to thieve, 15*
And other glorious actions to achieve.

3.

The babe was born at the first peep of day;
He began playing on the lyre at noon,
And the same evening did he steal away
Apollo's herds;—the fourth day of the moon 20
*On which him bore the venerable May,
From her immortal limbs he leaped full soon,
Nor long could in the sacred cradle keep,
But out to seek Apollo's herds would creep.*

4.

Out of the lofty cavern wandering 25
*He found a tortoise, and cried out—'A treasure!'
(For Mercury first made the tortoise sing)
The beast before the portal at his leisure
The flowery herbage was depasturing,
Moving his feet in a deliberate measure 30*
Over the turf. Jove's profitable son
Eying him laughed, and laughing thus begun:—

5.

'A useful godsend are you to me now,
King of the dance, companion of the feast,
Lovely in all your nature! Welcome, you 35
*Excellent plaything! Where, sweet mountain-beast,
Got you that speckled shell? Thus much I know,
You must come home with me and be my guest;
You will give joy to me, and I will do
All that is in my power to honour you. 40*

6.

'Better to be at home than out of door,
So come with me; and though it has been said
That you alive defend from magic power,



I know you will sing sweetly when you're dead.'
Thus having spoken, the quaint infant bore, 45
Lifting it from the grass on which it fed
And grasping it in his delighted hold,
His treasured prize into the cavern old.

7.
Then scooping with a chisel of gray steel,
He bored the life and soul out of the beast.— 50
Not swifter a swift thought of woe or weal
Darts through the tumult of a human breast
Which thronging cares annoy—not swifter wheel
The flashes of its torture and unrest
Out of the dizzy eyes—than Maia's son 55
All that he did devise hath featly done.

8.
...
And through the tortoise's hard stony skin
At proper distances small holes he made,
And fastened the cut stems of reeds within,
And with a piece of leather overlaid 60
The open space and fixed the cubits in,
Fitting the bridge to both, and stretched o'er all
Symphonious cords of sheep-gut rhythmical.



Page 5

9.

When he had wrought the lovely instrument,
He tried the chords, and made division meet, 65
*Preluding with the plectrum, and there went
Up from beneath his hand a tumult sweet
Of mighty sounds, and from his lips he sent
A strain of unpremeditated wit
Joyous and wild and wanton—such you may 70
Hear among revellers on a holiday.*

10.

He sung how Jove and May of the bright sandal
Dallied in love not quite legitimate;
And his own birth, still scoffing at the scandal,
And naming his own name, did celebrate; 75
*His mother's cave and servant maids he planned all
In plastic verse, her household stuff and state,
Perennial pot, trippet, and brazen pan,—
But singing, he conceived another plan.*

11.

...

Seized with a sudden fancy for fresh meat, 80
*He in his sacred crib deposited
The hollow lyre, and from the cavern sweet
Rushed with great leaps up to the mountain's head,
Revolving in his mind some subtle feat
Of thievish craft, such as a swindler might 85
Devise in the lone season of dun night.*

12.

Lo! the great Sun under the ocean's bed has
Driven steeds and chariot—the child meanwhile strode
O'er the Pierian mountains clothed in shadows,
Where the immortal oxen of the God 90
*Are pastured in the flowering unmown meadows,
And safely stalled in a remote abode.—
The archer Argicide, elate and proud,
Drove fifty from the herd, lowing aloud.*

13.

He drove them wandering o'er the sandy way, 95
*But, being ever mindful of his craft,
Backward and forward drove he them astray,*



*So that the tracks which seemed before, were aft;
His sandals then he threw to the ocean spray,
And for each foot he wrought a kind of raft 100
Of tamarisk, and tamarisk-like sprigs,
And bound them in a lump with withy twigs.*

14.

*And on his feet he tied these sandals light,
The trail of whose wide leaves might not betray
His track; and then, a self-sufficing wight, 105
Like a man hastening on some distant way,
He from Pieria's mountain bent his flight;
But an old man perceived the infant pass
Down green Onchestus heaped like beds with grass.*

15.

*The old man stood dressing his sunny vine: 110
'Halloo! old fellow with the crooked shoulder!
You grub those stumps? before they will bear wine
Methinks even you must grow a little older:
Attend, I pray, to this advice of mine,
As you would 'scape what might appal a bolder— 115
Seeing, see not—and hearing, hear not—and—
If you have understanding—understand.'*



Page 6

16.

So saying, Hermes roused the oxen vast;
O'er shadowy mountain and resounding dell,
And flower-paven plains, great Hermes passed; *120*
Till the black night divine, which favouring fell
Around his steps, grew gray, and morning fast
Wakened the world to work, and from her cell
Sea-strewn, the Pallantean Moon sublime
Into her watch-tower just began to climb. 125

17.

Now to Alpheus he had driven all
The broad-foreheaded oxen of the Sun;
They came unwearied to the lofty stall
And to the water-troughs which ever run
Through the fresh fields—and when with rushgrass tall, *130*
Lotus and all sweet herbage, every one
Had pastured been, the great God made them move
Towards the stall in a collected drove.

18.

A mighty pile of wood the God then heaped,
And having soon conceived the mystery *135*
Of fire, from two smooth laurel branches stripped
The bark, and rubbed them in his palms;—on high
Suddenly forth the burning vapour leaped
And the divine child saw delightedly.—
Mercury first found out for human weal 140
Tinder-box, matches, fire-irons, flint and steel.

19.

And fine dry logs and roots innumerable
He gathered in a delve upon the ground—
And kindled them—and instantaneous
The strength of the fierce flame was breathed around: *145*
And whilst the might of glorious Vulcan thus
Wrapped the great pile with glare and roaring sound,
Hermes dragged forth two heifers, lowing loud,
Close to the fire—such might was in the God.

20.

And on the earth upon their backs he threw *150*
The panting beasts, and rolled them o'er and o'er,
And bored their lives out. Without more ado



*He cut up fat and flesh, and down before
The fire, on spits of wood he placed the two,
Toasting their flesh and ribs, and all the gore 155
Pursed in the bowels; and while this was done
He stretched their hides over a craggy stone.*

21.

*We mortals let an ox grow old, and then
Cut it up after long consideration,—
But joyous-minded Hermes from the glen 160
Drew the fat spoils to the more open station
Of a flat smooth space, and portioned them; and when
He had by lot assigned to each a ration
Of the twelve Gods, his mind became aware
Of all the joys which in religion are. 165*

22.

*For the sweet savour of the roasted meat
Tempted him though immortal. Natheless
He checked his haughty will and did not eat,
Though what it cost him words can scarce express,
And every wish to put such morsels sweet 170
Down his most sacred throat, he did repress;
But soon within the lofty portalled stall
He placed the fat and flesh and bones and all.*



Page 7

23.

And every trace of the fresh butchery
And cooking, the God soon made disappear, 175
*As if it all had vanished through the sky;
He burned the hoofs and horns and head and hair,—
The insatiate fire devoured them hungrily;—
And when he saw that everything was clear,
He quenched the coal, and trampled the black dust, 180*
And in the stream his bloody sandals tossed.

24.

All night he worked in the serene moonshine—
But when the light of day was spread abroad
He sought his natal mountain-peaks divine.
On his long wandering, neither Man nor God 185
*Had met him, since he killed Apollo's kine,
Nor house-dog had barked at him on his road;
Now he obliquely through the keyhole passed,
Like a thin mist, or an autumnal blast.*

25.

Right through the temple of the spacious cave 190
*He went with soft light feet—as if his tread
Fell not on earth; no sound their falling gave;
Then to his cradle he crept quick, and spread
The swaddling-clothes about him; and the knave
Lay playing with the covering of the bed 195*
With his left hand about his knees—the right
Held his beloved tortoise-lyre tight.

26.

There he lay innocent as a new-born child,
As gossips say; but though he was a God,
The Goddess, his fair mother, unbeguiled, 200
*Knew all that he had done being abroad:
'Whence come you, and from what adventure wild,
You cunning rogue, and where have you abode
All the long night, clothed in your impudence?
What have you done since you departed hence? 205*

27.

'Apollo soon will pass within this gate
And bind your tender body in a chain
Inextricably tight, and fast as fate,



Unless you can delude the God again,
Even when within his arms—ah, runagate! 210
A pretty torment both for Gods and Men
Your father made when he made you!—'Dear mother,'
Replied sly Hermes, 'wherefore scold and bother?

28.

'As if I were like other babes as old,
And understood nothing of what is what; 215
And cared at all to hear my mother scold.
I in my subtle brain a scheme have got,
Which whilst the sacred stars round Heaven are rolled
Will profit you and me—nor shall our lot
Be as you counsel, without gifts or food, 220
To spend our lives in this obscure abode.

29

'But we will leave this shadow-peopled cave
And live among the Gods, and pass each day
In high communion, sharing what they have
Of profuse wealth and unexhausted prey; 225
And from the portion which my father gave
To Phoebus, I will snatch my share away,
Which if my father will not—nathless I,
Who am the king of robbers, can but try.



Page 8

30.

'And, if Latona's son should find me out, 230
*I'll countermine him by a deeper plan;
I'll pierce the Pythian temple-walls, though stout,
And sack the fane of everything I can—
Caldrons and tripods of great worth no doubt,
Each golden cup and polished brazen pan, 235
All the wrought tapestries and garments gay.'*—
So they together talked;—meanwhile the Day

31.

Aethereal born arose out of the flood
Of flowing Ocean, bearing light to men.
Apollo passed toward the sacred wood, 240
*Which from the inmost depths of its green glen
Echoes the voice of Neptune,—and there stood
On the same spot in green Onchestus then
That same old animal, the vine-dresser,
Who was employed hedging his vineyard there. 245*

32.

Latona's glorious Son began:—'I pray
Tell, ancient hedger of Onchestus green,
Whether a drove of kine has passed this way,
All heifers with crooked horns? for they have been
Stolen from the herd in high Pieria, 250
*Where a black bull was fed apart, between
Two woody mountains in a neighbouring glen,
And four fierce dogs watched there, unanimous as men.*

33.

'And what is strange, the author of this theft
Has stolen the fatted heifers every one, 255
*But the four dogs and the black bull are left:—
Stolen they were last night at set of sun,
Of their soft beds and their sweet food bereft.—
Now tell me, man born ere the world begun,
Have you seen any one pass with the cows?'*— 260
To whom the man of overhanging brows:

34.

'My friend, it would require no common skill
Justly to speak of everything I see:
On various purposes of good or ill



Many pass by my vineyard,—and to me 265
'Tis difficult to know the invisible
Thoughts, which in all those many minds may be:—
Thus much alone I certainly can say,
I tilled these vines till the decline of day,

35.

'And then I thought I saw, but dare not speak 270
With certainty of such a wondrous thing,
A child, who could not have been born a week,
Those fair-horned cattle closely following,
And in his hand he held a polished stick:
And, as on purpose, he walked wavering 275
From one side to the other of the road,
And with his face opposed the steps he trod.'

36.

Apollo hearing this, passed quickly on—
No winged omen could have shown more clear
That the deceiver was his father's son. 280
So the God wraps a purple atmosphere
Around his shoulders, and like fire is gone
To famous Pylos, seeking his kine there,
And found their track and his, yet hardly cold,
And cried—'What wonder do mine eyes behold! 285



Page 9

37.

'Here are the footsteps of the horned herd
Turned back towards their fields of asphodel;—
But THESE are not the tracks of beast or bird,
Gray wolf, or bear, or lion of the dell,
Or maned Centaur—sand was never stirred 290
By man or woman thus! Inexplicable!
Who with unwearied feet could e'er impress
The sand with such enormous vestiges?

38.

'That was most strange—but this is stranger still!'
Thus having said, Phoebus impetuously 295
Sought high Cyllene's forest-cinctured hill,
And the deep cavern where dark shadows lie,
And where the ambrosial nymph with happy will
Bore the Saturnian's love-child, Mercury—
And a delightful odour from the dew 300
Of the hill pastures, at his coming, flew.

39.

And Phoebus stooped under the craggy roof
Arched over the dark cavern:—Maia's child
Perceived that he came angry, far aloof,
About the cows of which he had been beguiled; 305
And over him the fine and fragrant woof
Of his ambrosial swaddling-clothes he piled—
As among fire-brands lies a burning spark
Covered, beneath the ashes cold and dark.

40.

There, like an infant who had sucked his fill 310
And now was newly washed and put to bed,
Awake, but courting sleep with weary will,
And gathered in a lump, hands, feet, and head,
He lay, and his beloved tortoise still
He grasped and held under his shoulder-blade. 315
Phoebus the lovely mountain-goddess knew,
Not less her subtle, swindling baby, who

41.

Lay swathed in his sly wiles. Round every crook
Of the ample cavern, for his kine, Apollo
Looked sharp; and when he saw them not, he took 320



*The glittering key, and opened three great hollow
Recesses in the rock—where many a nook
Was filled with the sweet food immortals swallow,
And mighty heaps of silver and of gold
Were piled within—a wonder to behold! 325*

42.

And white and silver robes, all overwrought
With cunning workmanship of tracery sweet—
Except among the Gods there can be nought
In the wide world to be compared with it.
Latona's offspring, after having sought 330
*His herds in every corner, thus did greet
Great Hermes:—'Little cradled rogue, declare
Of my illustrious heifers, where they are!*

43.

'Speak quickly! or a quarrel between us
Must rise, and the event will be, that I 335
*Shall hurl you into dismal Tartarus,
In fiery gloom to dwell eternally;
Nor shall your father nor your mother loose
The bars of that black dungeon—utterly
You shall be cast out from the light of day, 340
To rule the ghosts of men, unblessed as they.*



Page 10

44.

To whom thus Hermes slyly answered:—'Son
Of great Latona, what a speech is this!
Why come you here to ask me what is done
With the wild oxen which it seems you miss? 345
*I have not seen them, nor from any one
Have heard a word of the whole business;
If you should promise an immense reward,
I could not tell more than you now have heard.*

45.

'An ox-stealer should be both tall and strong, 350
*And I am but a little new-born thing,
Who, yet at least, can think of nothing wrong:—
My business is to suck, and sleep, and fling
The cradle-clothes about me all day long,—
Or half asleep, hear my sweet mother sing, 355
And to be washed in water clean and warm,
And hushed and kissed and kept secure from harm.*

46.

'O, let not e'er this quarrel be averred!
The astounded Gods would laugh at you, if e'er
You should allege a story so absurd 360
*As that a new-born infant forth could fare
Out of his home after a savage herd.
I was born yesterday—my small feet are
Too tender for the roads so hard and rough:—
And if you think that this is not enough, 365*

47.

I swear a great oath, by my father's head,
That I stole not your cows, and that I know
Of no one else, who might, or could, or did.—
Whatever things cows are, I do not know,
For I have only heard the name.'—This said 370
*He winked as fast as could be, and his brow
Was wrinkled, and a whistle loud gave he,
Like one who hears some strange absurdity.*

48.

Apollo gently smiled and said:—'Ay, ay,—
You cunning little rascal, you will bore 375
Many a rich man's house, and your array



*Of thieves will lay their siege before his door,
Silent as night, in night; and many a day
In the wild glens rough shepherds will deplore
That you or yours, having an appetite, 380
Met with their cattle, comrade of the night!*

49.

*'And this among the Gods shall be your gift,
To be considered as the lord of those
Who swindle, house-break, sheep-steal, and shop-lift;—
But now if you would not your last sleep doze; 385
Crawl out!'—Thus saying, Phoebus did uplift
The subtle infant in his swaddling clothes,
And in his arms, according to his wont,
A scheme devised the illustrious Argiphont.*

50.

...
...

*And sneezed and shuddered—Phoebus on the grass 390
Him threw, and whilst all that he had designed
He did perform—eager although to pass,
Apollo darted from his mighty mind
Towards the subtle babe the following scoff:—
'Do not imagine this will get you off, 395*



Page 11

51.

'You little swaddled child of Jove and May!
And seized him:—'By this omen I shall trace
My noble herds, and you shall lead the way.'—
Cyllenian Hermes from the grassy place,
Like one in earnest haste to get away, 400
*Rose, and with hands lifted towards his face
Round both his ears up from his shoulders drew
His swaddling clothes, and—'What mean you to do*

52.

'With me, you unkind God?'—said Mercury:
'Is it about these cows you tease me so? 405
*I wish the race of cows were perished!—I
Stole not your cows—I do not even know
What things cows are. Alas! I well may sigh
That since I came into this world of woe,
I should have ever heard the name of one— 410
But I appeal to the Saturnian's throne.'*

53.

Thus Phoebus and the vagrant Mercury
Talked without coming to an explanation,
With adverse purpose. As for Phoebus, he
Sought not revenge, but only information, 415
*And Hermes tried with lies and roguery
To cheat Apollo.—But when no evasion
Served—for the cunning one his match had found—
He paced on first over the sandy ground.*

54.

...
He of the Silver Bow the child of Jove 420
*Followed behind, till to their heavenly Sire
Came both his children, beautiful as Love,
And from his equal balance did require
A judgement in the cause wherein they strove.
O'er odorous Olympus and its snows 425
A murmuring tumult as they came arose,—*

55.

And from the folded depths of the great Hill,
While Hermes and Apollo reverent stood
Before Jove's throne, the indestructible



Immortals rushed in mighty multitude; 430
*And whilst their seats in order due they fill,
The lofty Thunderer in a careless mood
To Phoebus said:—'Whence drive you this sweet prey,
This herald-baby, born but yesterday?—*

56.

'A most important subject, trifler, this 435
*To lay before the Gods!—'Nay, Father, nay,
When you have understood the business,
Say not that I alone am fond of prey.
I found this little boy in a recess
Under Cyllene's mountains far away— 440
A manifest and most apparent thief,
A scandalmonger beyond all belief.*

57.

'I never saw his like either in Heaven
Or upon earth for knavery or craft:—
Out of the field my cattle yester-even, 445
*By the low shore on which the loud sea laughed,
He right down to the river-ford had driven;
And mere astonishment would make you daft
To see the double kind of footsteps strange
He has impressed wherever he did range. 450*



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58.

'The cattle's track on the black dust, full well
Is evident, as if they went towards
The place from which they came—that asphodel
Meadow, in which I feed my many herds,—
HIS steps were most incomprehensible— 455
*I know not how I can describe in words
Those tracks—he could have gone along the sands
Neither upon his feet nor on his hands;—*

59.

'He must have had some other stranger mode
Of moving on: those vestiges immense, 460
*Far as I traced them on the sandy road,
Seemed like the trail of oak-toppings:—but thence
No mark nor track denoting where they trod
The hard ground gave:—but, working at his fence,
A mortal hedger saw him as he passed 465
To Pylos, with the cows, in fiery haste.*

60.

'I found that in the dark he quietly
Had sacrificed some cows, and before light
Had thrown the ashes all dispersedly
About the road—then, still as gloomy night, 470
*Had crept into his cradle, either eye
Rubbing, and cogitating some new sleight.
No eagle could have seen him as he lay
Hid in his cavern from the peering day.*

61.

'I taxed him with the fact, when he averred 475
*Most solemnly that he did neither see
Nor even had in any manner heard
Of my lost cows, whatever things cows be;
Nor could he tell, though offered a reward,
Not even who could tell of them to me.'* 480
So speaking, Phoebus sate; and Hermes then
Addressed the Supreme Lord of Gods and Men:—

62.

'Great Father, you know clearly beforehand
That all which I shall say to you is sooth;
I am a most veracious person, and 485



*Totally unacquainted with untruth.
At sunrise Phoebus came, but with no band
Of Gods to bear him witness, in great wrath,
To my abode, seeking his heifers there,
And saying that I must show him where they are, 490*

63.

*'Or he would hurl me down the dark abyss.
I know that every Apollonian limb
Is clothed with speed and might and manliness,
As a green bank with flowers—but unlike him
I was born yesterday, and you may guess 495
He well knew this when he indulged the whim
Of bullying a poor little new-born thing
That slept, and never thought of cow-driving.*

64.

*'Am I like a strong fellow who steals kine?
Believe me, dearest Father—such you are— 500
This driving of the herds is none of mine;
Across my threshold did I wander ne'er,
So may I thrive! I reverence the divine
Sun and the Gods, and I love you, and care
Even for this hard accuser—who must know 505
I am as innocent as they or you.*



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65.

'I swear by these most gloriously-wrought portals
(It is, you will allow, an oath of might)
Through which the multitude of the Immortals
Pass and repass forever, day and night, 510
*Devising schemes for the affairs of mortals—
I am guiltless; and I will requite,
Although mine enemy be great and strong,
His cruel threat—do thou defend the young!*'

66.

So speaking, the Cyllenian Argiphont 515
*Winked, as if now his adversary was fitted:—
And Jupiter, according to his wont,
Laughed heartily to hear the subtle-witted
Infant give such a plausible account,
And every word a lie. But he remitted 520
Judgement at present—and his exhortation
Was, to compose the affair by arbitration.*

67.

And they by mighty Jupiter were bidden
To go forth with a single purpose both,
Neither the other chiding nor yet chidden: 525
*And Mercury with innocence and truth
To lead the way, and show where he had hidden
The mighty heifers.—Hermes, nothing loth,
Obeyed the Aegis-bearer's will—for he
Is able to persuade all easily. 530*

68.

These lovely children of Heaven's highest Lord
Hastened to Pylos and the pastures wide
And lofty stalls by the Alphean ford,
Where wealth in the mute night is multiplied
With silent growth. Whilst Hermes drove the herd 535
*Out of the stony cavern, Phoebus spied
The hides of those the little babe had slain,
Stretched on the precipice above the plain.*

69.

'How was it possible,' then Phoebus said,
'That you, a little child, born yesterday, 540
A thing on mother's milk and kisses fed,



*Could two prodigious heifers ever flay?
Even I myself may well hereafter dread
Your prowess, offspring of Cyllenian May,
When you grow strong and tall.'—He spoke, and bound 545
Stiff withy bands the infant's wrists around.*

70.

*He might as well have bound the oxen wild;
The withy bands, though starkly interknit,
Fell at the feet of the immortal child,
Loosened by some device of his quick wit. 550
Phoebus perceived himself again beguiled,
And stared—while Hermes sought some hole or pit,
Looking askance and winking fast as thought,
Where he might hide himself and not be caught.*

71.

*Sudden he changed his plan, and with strange skill 555
Subdued the strong Latonian, by the might
Of winning music, to his mightier will;
His left hand held the lyre, and in his right
The plectrum struck the chords—unconquerable
Up from beneath his hand in circling flight 560
The gathering music rose—and sweet as Love
The penetrating notes did live and move*



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72.

Within the heart of great Apollo—he
Listened with all his soul, and laughed for pleasure.
Close to his side stood harping fearlessly 565
*The unabashed boy; and to the measure
Of the sweet lyre, there followed loud and free
His joyous voice; for he unlocked the treasure
Of his deep song, illustrating the birth
Of the bright Gods, and the dark desert Earth: 570*

73.

And how to the Immortals every one
A portion was assigned of all that is;
But chief Mnemosyne did Maia's son
Clothe in the light of his loud melodies;—
And, as each God was born or had begun, 575
*He in their order due and fit degrees
Sung of his birth and being—and did move
Apollo to unutterable love.*

74.

These words were winged with his swift delight:
'You heifer-stealing schemer, well do you 580
*Deserve that fifty oxen should requite
Such minstrelsies as I have heard even now.
Comrade of feasts, little contriving wight,
One of your secrets I would gladly know,
Whether the glorious power you now show forth 585
Was folded up within you at your birth,*

75.

'Or whether mortal taught or God inspired
The power of unpremeditated song?
Many divinest sounds have I admired,
The Olympian Gods and mortal men among; 590
*But such a strain of wondrous, strange, untired,
And soul-awakening music, sweet and strong,
Yet did I never hear except from thee,
Offspring of May, impostor Mercury!*

76.

'What Muse, what skill, what unimagined use, 595
*What exercise of subtlest art, has given
Thy songs such power?—for those who hear may choose*



*From three, the choicest of the gifts of Heaven,
Delight, and love, and sleep,—sweet sleep, whose dews
Are sweeter than the balmy tears of even:— 600*

And I, who speak this praise, am that Apollo
Whom the Olympian Muses ever follow:

77.

'And their delight is dance, and the blithe noise
Of song and overflowing poesy;
And sweet, even as desire, the liquid voice 605
*Of pipes, that fills the clear air thrillingly;
But never did my inmost soul rejoice
In this dear work of youthful revelry
As now. I wonder at thee, son of Jove;
Thy harpings and thy song are soft as love. 610*

78.

'Now since thou hast, although so very small,
Science of arts so glorious, thus I swear,—
And let this cornel javelin, keen and tall,
Witness between us what I promise here,—
That I will lead thee to the Olympian Hall, 615
*Honoured and mighty, with thy mother dear,
And many glorious gifts in joy will give thee,
And even at the end will ne'er deceive thee.'*



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79.

To whom thus Mercury with prudent speech:—
'Wisely hast thou inquired of my skill: 620
I envy thee no thing I know to teach
Even this day:—for both in word and will
I would be gentle with thee; thou canst reach
All things in thy wise spirit, and thy sill
Is highest in Heaven among the sons of Jove, 625
Who loves thee in the fulness of his love.

80.

'The Counsellor Supreme has given to thee
Divinest gifts, out of the amplitude
Of his profuse exhaustless treasury;
By thee, 'tis said, the depths are understood 630
Of his far voice; by thee the mystery
Of all oracular fates,—and the dread mood
Of the diviner is breathed up; even I—
A child—perceive thy might and majesty.

81.

'Thou canst seek out and compass all that wit 635
Can find or teach;—yet since thou wilt, come take
The lyre—be mine the glory giving it—
Strike the sweet chords, and sing aloud, and wake
Thy joyous pleasure out of many a fit
Of tranced sound—and with fleet fingers make 640
Thy liquid-voiced comrade talk with thee,—
It can talk measured music eloquently.

82.

'Then bear it boldly to the revel loud,
Love-wakening dance, or feast of solemn state,
A joy by night or day—for those endowed 645
With art and wisdom who interrogate
It teaches, babbling in delightful mood
All things which make the spirit most elate,
Soothing the mind with sweet familiar play,
Chasing the heavy shadows of dismay. 650

83.

'To those who are unskilled in its sweet tongue,
Though they should question most impetuously
Its hidden soul, it gossips something wrong—



Some senseless and impertinent reply.
But thou who art as wise as thou art strong 655
*Canst compass all that thou desirest. I
Present thee with this music-flowing shell,
Knowing thou canst interrogate it well.*

84.

'And let us two henceforth together feed,
On this green mountain-slope and pastoral plain, 660
*The herds in litigation—they will breed
Quickly enough to recompense our pain,
If to the bulls and cows we take good heed;—
And thou, though somewhat over fond of gain,
Grudge me not half the profit.'*—Having spoke, 665
The shell he proffered, and Apollo took;

85.

And gave him in return the glittering lash,
Installing him as herdsman;—from the look
Of Mercury then laughed a joyous flash.
And then Apollo with the plectrum strook 670
*The chords, and from beneath his hands a crash
Of mighty sounds rushed up, whose music shook
The soul with sweetness, and like an adept
His sweeter voice a just accordance kept.*



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86.

The herd went wandering o'er the divine mead, 675
Whilst these most beautiful Sons of Jupiter
Won their swift way up to the snowy head
Of white Olympus, with the joyous lyre
Soothing their journey; and their father dread
Gathered them both into familiar 680
Affection sweet,—and then, and now, and ever,
Hermes must love Him of the Golden Quiver,

87.

To whom he gave the lyre that sweetly sounded,
Which skilfully he held and played thereon.
He piped the while, and far and wide rebounded 685
The echo of his pipings; every one
Of the Olympians sat with joy astounded;
While he conceived another piece of fun,
One of his old tricks—which the God of Day
Perceiving, said:—'I fear thee, Son of May;— 690

88.

'I fear thee and thy sly chameleon spirit,
Lest thou should steal my lyre and crooked bow;
This glory and power thou dost from Jove inherit,
To teach all craft upon the earth below;
Thieves love and worship thee—it is thy merit 695
To make all mortal business ebb and flow
By roguery:—now, Hermes, if you dare
By sacred Styx a mighty oath to swear

89.

'That you will never rob me, you will do
A thing extremely pleasing to my heart.' 700
Then Mercury swore by the Stygian dew,
That he would never steal his bow or dart,
Or lay his hands on what to him was due,
Or ever would employ his powerful art
Against his Pythian fane. Then Phoebus swore 705
There was no God or Man whom he loved more.

90.

'And I will give thee as a good-will token,
The beautiful wand of wealth and happiness;
A perfect three-leaved rod of gold unbroken,



Whose magic will thy footsteps ever bless; 710
*And whatsoever by Jove's voice is spoken
Of earthly or divine from its recess,
It, like a loving soul, to thee will speak,
And more than this, do thou forbear to seek.*

91.

'For, dearest child, the divinations high 715
*Which thou requirest, 'tis unlawful ever
That thou, or any other deity
Should understand—and vain were the endeavour;
For they are hidden in Jove's mind, and I,
In trust of them, have sworn that I would never 720
Betray the counsels of Jove's inmost will
To any God—the oath was terrible.*

92.

'Then, golden-wanded brother, ask me not
To speak the fates by Jupiter designed;
But be it mine to tell their various lot 725
*To the unnumbered tribes of human-kind.
Let good to these, and ill to those be wrought
As I dispense—but he who comes consigned
By voice and wings of perfect augury
To my great shrine, shall find avail in me. 730*



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93.

'Him will I not deceive, but will assist;
But he who comes relying on such birds
As chatter vainly, who would strain and twist
The purpose of the Gods with idle words,
And deems their knowledge light, he shall have missed 735
*His road—whilst I among my other hoards
His gifts deposit. Yet, O son of May,
I have another wondrous thing to say.*

96.

'There are three Fates, three virgin Sisters, who
Rejoicing in their wind-outspeeding wings, 740
*Their heads with flour snowed over white and new,
Sit in a vale round which Parnassus flings
Its circling skirts—from these I have learned true
Vaticinations of remotest things.
My father cared not. Whilst they search out dooms, 745
They sit apart and feed on honeycombs.*

95.

'They, having eaten the fresh honey, grow
Drunk with divine enthusiasm, and utter
With earnest willingness the truth they know;
But if deprived of that sweet food, they mutter 750
*All plausible delusions;—these to you
I give;—if you inquire, they will not stutter;
Delight your own soul with them:—any man
You would instruct may profit if he can.*

96.

'Take these and the fierce oxen, Maia's child— 755
*O'er many a horse and toil-enduring mule,
O'er jagged-jawed lions, and the wild
White-tusked boars, o'er all, by field or pool,
Of cattle which the mighty Mother mild
Nourishes in her bosom, thou shalt rule— 760
Thou dost alone the veil from death uplift—
Thou givest not—yet this is a great gift.'*

97.

Thus King Apollo loved the child of May
In truth, and Jove covered their love with joy.
Hermes with Gods and Men even from that day 765



*Mingled, and wrought the latter much annoy,
And little profit, going far astray
Through the dun night. Farewell, delightful Boy,
Of Jove and Maia sprung,—never by me,
Nor thou, nor other songs, shall unremembered be. 770*

NOTES: 13 *cow-stealing*]qy. *cattle-stealing?* 57 stony Boscombe manuscript. Harvard manuscript; strong edition 1824. 252 *neighbouring*]neighbour Harvard manuscript. 336 hurl Harvard manuscript, editions 1839; haul edition 1824. 402 *Round*]Roused edition 1824 only. 488 *wrath*]ruth Harvard manuscript. 580 *heifer-stealing*]heifer-killing Harvard manuscript. 673 and like 1839, 1st edition; as of edition 1824, Harvard manuscript. 713 *loving*]living cj. Rossetti. 761 from Harvard manuscript; of editions 1824, 1839. 764 *their love with joy* Harvard manuscript; *them with love and joy*, editions 1824, 1839. 767 *going*]wandering Harvard manuscript.

HOMER'S HYMN TO CASTOR AND POLLUX.



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[Published by Mrs. Shelley, "Poetical Works", 1839, 2nd edition; dated 1818.]

Ye wild-eyed Muses, sing the Twins of Jove,
Whom the fair-ankled Leda, mixed in love
With mighty Saturn's Heaven-obscuring Child,
On Taygetus, that lofty mountain wild,
Brought forth in joy: mild Pollux, void of blame, 5
And steed-subduing Castor, heirs of fame.
These are the Powers who earth-born mortals save
And ships, whose flight is swift along the wave.
When wintry tempests o'er the savage sea
Are raging, and the sailors tremblingly 10
Call on the Twins of Jove with prayer and vow,
Gathered in fear upon the lofty prow,
And sacrifice with snow-white lambs,—the wind
And the huge billow bursting close behind,
Even then beneath the weltering waters bear 15
The staggering ship—they suddenly appear,
On yellow wings rushing athwart the sky,
And lull the blasts in mute tranquillity,
And strew the waves on the white Ocean's bed,
Fair omen of the voyage; from toil and dread 20
The sailors rest, rejoicing in the sight,
And plough the quiet sea in safe delight.

NOTE:

6 *steed-subduing emend. Rossetti; steel-subduing 1839, 2nd edition.*

HOMER'S HYMN TO THE MOON.

[Published by Mrs. Shelley, "Poetical Works", 1839, 2nd edition; dated 1818.]

Daughters of Jove, whose voice is melody,
Muses, who know and rule all minstrelsy
Sing the wide-winged Moon! Around the earth,
From her immortal head in Heaven shot forth,
Far light is scattered—boundless glory springs; 5
Where'er she spreads her many-beaming wings
The lampless air glows round her golden crown.



But when the Moon divine from Heaven is gone
Under the sea, her beams within abide,
Till, bathing her bright limbs in Ocean's tide, 10
Clothing her form in garments glittering far,
And having yoked to her immortal car
The beam-invested steeds whose necks on high
Curve back, she drives to a remoter sky
A western Crescent, borne impetuously. 15
Then is made full the circle of her light,
And as she grows, her beams more bright and bright
Are poured from Heaven, where she is hovering then,
A wonder and a sign to mortal men.

The Son of Saturn with this glorious Power 20
Mingled in love and sleep—to whom she bore
Pandeia, a bright maid of beauty rare
Among the Gods, whose lives eternal are.

Hail Queen, great Moon, white-armed Divinity,
Fair-haired and favourable! thus with thee 25
My song beginning, by its music sweet
Shall make immortal many a glorious feat
Of demigods, with lovely lips, so well
Which minstrels, servants of the Muses, tell.



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HOMER'S HYMN TO THE SUN.

[Published by Mrs. Shelley, "Poetical Works", 1839, 2nd edition; dated 1818.]

Offspring of Jove, Calliope, once more
To the bright Sun, thy hymn of music pour;
Whom to the child of star-clad Heaven and Earth
Euryphaessa, large-eyed nymph, brought forth;
Euryphaessa, the famed sister fair 5
Of great Hyperion, who to him did bear
A race of loveliest children; the young Morn,
Whose arms are like twin roses newly born,
The fair-haired Moon, and the immortal Sun,
Who borne by heavenly steeds his race doth run 10
Unconquerably, illuming the abodes
Of mortal Men and the eternal Gods.

Fiercely look forth his awe-inspiring eyes,
Beneath his golden helmet, whence arise
And are shot forth afar, clear beams of light; 15
His countenance, with radiant glory bright,
Beneath his graceful locks far shines around,
And the light vest with which his limbs are bound,
Of woof aethereal delicately twined,
Glows in the stream of the uplifting wind. 20
His rapid steeds soon bear him to the West;
Where their steep flight his hands divine arrest,
And the fleet car with yoke of gold, which he
Sends from bright Heaven beneath the shadowy sea.

HOMER'S HYMN TO THE EARTH: MOTHER OF ALL.

[Published by Mrs. Shelley, "Poetical Works", 1839, 2nd edition; dated 1818.]

O universal Mother, who dost keep
From everlasting thy foundations deep,
Eldest of things, Great Earth, I sing of thee!
All shapes that have their dwelling in the sea,



All things that fly, or on the ground divine 5
*Live, move, and there are nourished—these are thine;
These from thy wealth thou dost sustain; from thee
Fair babes are born, and fruits on every tree
Hang ripe and large, revered Divinity!*

The life of mortal men beneath thy sway 10
*Is held; thy power both gives and takes away!
Happy are they whom thy mild favours nourish;
All things unstinted round them grow and flourish.
For them, endures the life-sustaining field
Its load of harvest, and their cattle yield 15
Large increase, and their house with wealth is filled.
Such honoured dwell in cities fair and free,
The homes of lovely women, prosperously;
Their sons exult in youth's new budding gladness,
And their fresh daughters free from care or sadness, 20
With bloom-inwoven dance and happy song,
On the soft flowers the meadow-grass among,
Leap round them sporting—such delights by thee
Are given, rich Power, revered Divinity.*



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Mother of gods, thou Wife of starry Heaven, 25
Farewell! be thou propitious, and be given
A happy life for this brief melody,
Nor thou nor other songs shall unremembered be.

HOMER'S HYMN TO MINERVA.

[Published by Mrs. Shelley, "Poetical Works", 1839, 2nd edition; dated 1818.]

I sing the glorious Power with azure eyes,
Athenian Pallas! tameless, chaste, and wise,
Tritogenia, town-preserving Maid,
Revered and mighty; from his awful head
Whom Jove brought forth, in warlike armour dressed, 5
Golden, all radiant! wonder strange possessed
The everlasting Gods that Shape to see,
Shaking a javelin keen, impetuously
Rush from the crest of Aegis-bearing Jove;
Fearfully Heaven was shaken, and did move 10
Beneath the might of the Cerulean-eyed;
Earth dreadfully resounded, far and wide;
And, lifted from its depths, the sea swelled high
In purple billows, the tide suddenly
Stood still, and great Hyperion's son long time 15
Checked his swift steeds, till, where she stood sublime,
Pallas from her immortal shoulders threw
The arms divine; wise Jove rejoiced to view.
Child of the Aegis-bearer, hail to thee,
Nor thine nor others' praise shall unremembered be. 20

HOMER'S HYMN TO VENUS.

[Published by Garnett, "Relics of Shelley", 1862; dated 1818.]

[VERSES 1-55, WITH SOME OMISSIONS.]

Muse, sing the deeds of golden Aphrodite,
Who wakens with her smile the lulled delight
Of sweet desire, taming the eternal kings



Of Heaven, and men, and all the living things
That fleet along the air, or whom the sea, 5
*Or earth, with her maternal ministry,
Nourish innumerable, thy delight
All seek ... O crowned Aphrodite!
Three spirits canst thou not deceive or quell:—
Minerva, child of Jove, who loves too well 10
Fierce war and mingling combat, and the fame
Of glorious deeds, to heed thy gentle flame.
Diana ... golden-shafted queen,
Is tamed not by thy smiles; the shadows green
Of the wild woods, the bow, the... 15
And piercing cries amid the swift pursuit
Of beasts among waste mountains,—such delight
Is hers, and men who know and do the right.
Nor Saturn's first-born daughter, Vesta chaste,
Whom Neptune and Apollo wooed the last, 20
Such was the will of aegis-bearing Jove;
But sternly she refused the ills of Love,
And by her mighty Father's head she swore
An oath not unperformed, that evermore
A virgin she would live mid deities 25
*Divine: her father, for such gentle ties
Renounced, gave glorious gifts—thus in his hall
She sits and feeds luxuriously. O'er all
In every fane, her honours first arise
From men—the eldest of Divinities. 30**



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These spirits she persuades not, nor deceives,
But none beside escape, so well she weaves
Her unseen toils; nor mortal men, nor gods
Who live secure in their unseen abodes.
She won the soul of him whose fierce delight 35
Is thunder—first in glory and in might.
And, as she willed, his mighty mind deceiving,
With mortal limbs his deathless limbs inweaving,
Concealed him from his spouse and sister fair,
Whom to wise Saturn ancient Rhea bare. 40
but in return,
In Venus Jove did soft desire awaken,
That by her own enchantments overtaken,
She might, no more from human union free,
Burn for a nursling of mortality. 45
For once amid the assembled Deities,
The laughter-loving Venus from her eyes

Shot forth the light of a soft starlight smile,
And boasting said, that she, secure the while,
Could bring at Will to the assembled Gods 50
The mortal tenants of earth's dark abodes,
And mortal offspring from a deathless stem
She could produce in scorn and spite of them.
Therefore he poured desire into her breast
Of young Anchises, 55
Feeding his herds among the mossy fountains
Of the wide Ida's many-folded mountains,—
Whom Venus saw, and loved, and the love clung
Like wasting fire her senses wild among.

THE CYCLOPS.

A SATYRIC DRAMA TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK OF EURIPIDES.

[Published by Mrs. Shelley, "Posthumous Poems", 1824; dated 1819. Amongst the Shelley manuscripts at the Bodleian there is a copy, 'practically complete,' which has been collated by Mr. C.D. Locock. See "Examination", etc., 1903, pages 64-70. 'Though legible throughout, and comparatively free from corrections, it has the appearance of being a first draft' (Locock).]



SILENUS.
ULYSSES.
CHORUS OF SATYRS.
THE CYCLOPS.

SILENUS:

O Bacchus, what a world of toil, both now
And ere these limbs were overworn with age,
Have I endured for thee! First, when thou fled'st
The mountain-nymphs who nursed thee, driven afar
By the strange madness Juno sent upon thee; 5
Then in the battle of the Sons of Earth,
When I stood foot by foot close to thy side,
No unpropitious fellow-combatant,
And, driving through his shield my winged spear,
Slew vast Enceladus. Consider now, 10
Is it a dream of which I speak to thee?
By Jove it is not, for you have the trophies!
And now I suffer more than all before.
For when I heard that Juno had devised
A tedious voyage for you, I put to sea 15
With all my children quaint in search of you,



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*And I myself stood on the beaked prow
And fixed the naked mast; and all my boys
Leaning upon their oars, with splash and strain
Made white with foam the green and purple sea,— 20
And so we sought you, king. We were sailing
Near Malea, when an eastern wind arose,
And drove us to this waste Aetnean rock;
The one-eyed children of the Ocean God,
The man-destroying Cyclopes, inhabit, 25
On this wild shore, their solitary caves,
And one of these, named Polypheme. has caught us
To be his slaves; and so, for all delight
Of Bacchic sports, sweet dance and melody,
We keep this lawless giant's wandering flocks. 30
My sons indeed on far declivities,
Young things themselves, tend on the youngling sheep,
But I remain to fill the water-casks,
Or sweeping the hard floor, or ministering
Some impious and abominable meal 35
To the fell Cyclops. I am wearied of it!
And now I must scrape up the littered floor
With this great iron rake, so to receive
My absent master and his evening sheep
In a cave neat and clean. Even now I see 40
My children tending the flocks hitherward.
Ha! what is this? are your Sicinnian measures
Even now the same, as when with dance and song
You brought young Bacchus to Althaea's halls?*

NOTE:

*23 waste B.; wild 1824; 'cf. 26, where waste is cancelled for wild'
(Locock).*

CHORUS OF SATYRS:

STROPHE:

*Where has he of race divine 45
Wandered in the winding rocks?
Here the air is calm and fine
For the father of the flocks;—
Here the grass is soft and sweet,*



*And the river-eddies meet 50
In the trough beside the cave,
Bright as in their fountain wave.—
Neither here, nor on the dew
Of the lawny uplands feeding?
Oh, you come!—a stone at you 55
Will I throw to mend your breeding;—
Get along, you horned thing,
Wild, seditious, rambling!*

EPODE:

An iacchic melody
To the golden Aphrodite 60
*Will I lift, as erst did I
Seeking her and her delight
With the Maenads, whose white feet
To the music glance and fleet.
Bacchus, O beloved, where, 65
Shaking wide thy yellow hair,
Wanderest thou alone, afar?
To the one-eyed Cyclops, we,
Who by right thy servants are,
Minister in misery, 70
In these wretched goat-skins clad,
Far from thy delights and thee.*

SILENUS:

Be silent, sons; command the slaves to drive
The gathered flocks into the rock-roofed cave.



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CHORUS:

Go! But what needs this serious haste, O father? 75

SILENUS:

I see a Grecian vessel on the coast,
And thence the rowers with some general
Approaching to this cave.—About their necks
Hang empty vessels, as they wanted food,
And water-flasks.—Oh, miserable strangers! 80
*Whence come they, that they know not what and who
My master is, approaching in ill hour
The inhospitable roof of Polypheme,
And the Cyclopiian jaw-bone, man-destroying?
Be silent, Satyrs, while I ask and hear 85*
Whence coming, they arrive the Aetnean hill.

ULYSSES:

Friends, can you show me some clear water-spring,
The remedy of our thirst? Will any one
Furnish with food seamen in want of it?
Ha! what is this? We seem to be arrived 90
*At the blithe court of Bacchus. I observe
This sportive band of Satyrs near the caves.
First let me greet the elder.—Hail!*

SILENUS:

Hail thou,
O Stranger! tell thy country and thy race.

ULYSSES:

The Ithacan Ulysses and the king 95
Of Cephalonia.

SILENUS:

Oh! I know the man,
Wordy and shrewd, the son of Sisyphus.

ULYSSES:

I am the same, but do not rail upon me.—

SILENUS:

Whence sailing do you come to Sicily?



ULYSSES:
From Ilium, and from the Trojan toils. *100*

SILENUS:
How, touched you not at your paternal shore?

ULYSSES:
The strength of tempests bore me here by force.

SILENUS:
The self-same accident occurred to me.

ULYSSES:
Were you then driven here by stress of weather?

SILENUS:
Following the Pirates who had kidnapped Bacchus. *105*

ULYSSES:
What land is this, and who inhabit it?—

SILENUS:
Aetna, the loftiest peak in Sicily.

ULYSSES:
And are there walls, and tower-surrounded towns?

SILENUS:
There are not.—These lone rocks are bare of men.

ULYSSES:
And who possess the land? the race of beasts? *110*

SILENUS:
Cyclops, who live in caverns, not in houses.

ULYSSES:
Obeying whom? Or is the state popular?

SILENUS:
Shepherds: no one obeys any in aught.

ULYSSES:
How live they? do they sow the corn of Ceres?

SILENUS:
On milk and cheese, and on the flesh of sheep. *115*



ULYSSES:

Have they the Bromian drink from the vine's stream?

SILENUS:

Ah! no; they live in an ungracious land.

ULYSSES:

And are they just to strangers?—hospitable?

SILENUS:

They think the sweetest thing a stranger brings
Is his own flesh.



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ULYSSES:

What! do they eat man's flesh? *120*

SILENUS:

No one comes here who is not eaten up.

ULYSSES:

The Cyclops now—where is he? Not at home?

SILENUS:

Absent on Aetna, hunting with his dogs.

ULYSSES:

Know'st thou what thou must do to aid us hence?

SILENUS:

I know not: we will help you all we can. *125*

ULYSSES:

Provide us food, of which we are in want.

SILENUS:

Here is not anything, as I said, but meat.

ULYSSES:

But meat is a sweet remedy for hunger.

SILENUS:

Cow's milk there is, and store of curdled cheese.

ULYSSES:

Bring out:—I would see all before I bargain. *130*

SILENUS:

But how much gold will you engage to give?

ULYSSES:

I bring no gold, but Bacchic juice.

SILENUS:

Oh, joy!

Tis long since these dry lips were wet with wine.

ULYSSES:

Maron, the son of the God, gave it me.



SILENUS:

Whom I have nursed a baby in my arms. *135*

ULYSSES:

The son of Bacchus, for your clearer knowledge.

SILENUS:

Have you it now?—or is it in the ship?

ULYSSES:

Old man, this skin contains it, which you see.

SILENUS:

Why, this would hardly be a mouthful for me.

ULYSSES:

Nay, twice as much as you can draw from thence. *140*

SILENUS:

You speak of a fair fountain, sweet to me.

ULYSSES:

Would you first taste of the unmingled wine?

SILENUS:

'Tis just—tasting invites the purchaser.

ULYSSES:

Here is the cup, together with the skin.

SILENUS:

Pour: that the draught may fillip my remembrance.

ULYSSES:

See! *145*

SILENUS:

Papaiapax! what a sweet smell it has!

ULYSSES:

You see it then?—

SILENUS:

By Jove, no! but I smell it.

ULYSSES:

Taste, that you may not praise it in words only.



SILENUS:

Babai! Great Bacchus calls me forth to dance!
Joy! joy!

ULYSSES:

Did it flow sweetly down your throat? *150*

SILENUS:

So that it tingled to my very nails.

ULYSSES:

And in addition I will give you gold.

SILENUS:

Let gold alone! only unlock the cask.

ULYSSES:

Bring out some cheeses now, or a young goat.

SILENUS:

That will I do, despising any master. *155*
Yes, let me drink one cup, and I will give
All that the Cyclops feed upon their mountains.



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...

CHORUS:

Ye have taken Troy and laid your hands on Helen?

ULYSSES:

And utterly destroyed the race of Priam.

...

SILENUS:

The wanton wretch! she was bewitched to see *160*
The many-coloured anklets and the chain
Of woven gold which girt the neck of Paris,
And so she left that good man Menelaus.
There should be no more women in the world
But such as are reserved for me alone.— 165
See, here are sheep, and here are goats, Ulysses,
Here are unsparing cheeses of pressed milk;
Take them; depart with what good speed ye may;
First leaving my reward, the Bacchic dew
Of joy-inspiring grapes.

ULYSSES:

Ah me! Alas! *170*
What shall we do? the Cyclops is at hand!
Old man, we perish! whither can we fly?

SILENUS:

Hide yourselves quick within that hollow rock.

ULYSSES:

'Twere perilous to fly into the net.

SILENUS:

The cavern has recesses numberless; *175*
Hide yourselves quick.

ULYSSES:

That will I never do!
The mighty Troy would be indeed disgraced
If I should fly one man. How many times
Have I withstood, with shield immovable.
Ten thousand Phrygians!—if I needs must die, *180*



*Yet will I die with glory;—if I live,
The praise which I have gained will yet remain.*

SILENUS:

What, ho! assistance, comrades, haste, assistance!

[THE CYCLOPS, SILENUS, ULYSSES; CHORUS.]

CYCLOPS:

What is this tumult? Bacchus is not here,
Nor tympanies nor brazen castanets. 185
*How are my young lambs in the cavern? Milking
Their dams or playing by their sides? And is
The new cheese pressed into the bulrush baskets?
Speak! I'll beat some of you till you rain tears—
Look up, not downwards when I speak to you. 190*

SILENUS:

See! I now gape at Jupiter himself;
I stare upon Orion and the stars.

CYCLOPS:

Well, is the dinner fitly cooked and laid?

SILENUS:

All ready, if your throat is ready too.

CYCLOPS:

Are the bowls full of milk besides?

SILENUS:

O'er-brimming; 195
So you may drink a tunful if you will.

CYCLOPS:

Is it ewe's milk or cow's milk, or both mixed?—

SILENUS:

Both, either; only pray don't swallow me.

CYCLOPS:

By no means.—

...

What is this crowd I see beside the stalls? 200
*Outlaws or thieves? for near my cavern-home
I see my young lambs coupled two by two
With willow bands; mixed with my cheeses lie*

*Their implements; and this old fellow here
Has his bald head broken with stripes.*



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SILENUS:

Ah me! 205

I have been beaten till I burn with fever.

CYCLOPS:

By whom? Who laid his fist upon your head?

SILENUS:

Those men, because I would not suffer them
To steal your goods.

CYCLOPS:

Did not the rascals know

I am a God, sprung from the race of Heaven? 210

SILENUS:

I told them so, but they bore off your things,
And ate the cheese in spite of all I said,
And carried out the lambs—and said, moreover,
They'd pin you down with a three-cubit collar,
And pull your vitals out through your one eye, 215
*Furrow your back with stripes, then, binding you,
Throw you as ballast into the ship's hold,
And then deliver you, a slave, to move
Enormous rocks, or found a vestibule.*

NOTE:

216 Furrow B.; Torture (evidently misread for Furrow) 1824.

CYCLOPS:

In truth? Nay, haste, and place in order quickly
The cooking-knives, and heap upon the hearth, 221
*And kindle it, a great faggot of wood.—
As soon as they are slaughtered, they shall fill
My belly, broiling warm from the live coals,
Or boiled and seethed within the bubbling caldron. 225*
I am quite sick of the wild mountain game;
Of stags and lions I have gorged enough,
And I grow hungry for the flesh of men.

SILENUS:

Nay, master, something new is very pleasant
After one thing forever, and of late 230
Very few strangers have approached our cave.



ULYSSES:

Hear, Cyclops, a plain tale on the other side.
We, wanting to buy food, came from our ship
Into the neighbourhood of your cave, and here
This old Silenus gave us in exchange 235
*These lambs for wine, the which he took and drank,
And all by mutual compact, without force.
There is no word of truth in what he says,
For slyly he was selling all your store.*

SILENUS:

I? May you perish, wretch—

ULYSSES:

If I speak false! 240

SILENUS:

Cyclops, I swear by Neptune who begot thee,
By mighty Triton and by Nereus old,
Calypso and the glaucous Ocean Nymphs,
The sacred waves and all the race of fishes—
Be these the witnesses, my dear sweet master, 245
*My darling little Cyclops, that I never
Gave any of your stores to these false strangers;—
If I speak false may those whom most I love,
My children, perish wretchedly!*

CHORUS:

There stop!
I saw him giving these things to the strangers. 250
*If I speak false, then may my father perish,
But do not thou wrong hospitality.*



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CYCLOPS:

You lie! I swear that he is juster far
Than Rhadamanthus—I trust more in him.
But let me ask, whence have ye sailed, O strangers? 255
Who are you? And what city nourished ye?

ULYSSES:

Our race is Ithacan—having destroyed
The town of Troy, the tempests of the sea
Have driven us on thy land, O Polypheme.

CYCLOPS:

What, have ye shared in the unenvied spoil 260
Of the false Helen, near Scamander's stream?

ULYSSES:

The same, having endured a woful toil.

CYCLOPS:

Oh, basest expedition! sailed ye not
From Greece to Phrygia for one woman's sake?

ULYSSES:

'Twas the Gods' work—no mortal was in fault. 265
*But, O great Offspring of the Ocean-King,
We pray thee and admonish thee with freedom,
That thou dost spare thy friends who visit thee,
And place no impious food within thy jaws.
For in the depths of Greece we have upreared 270
Temples to thy great Father, which are all
His homes. The sacred bay of Taenarus
Remains inviolate, and each dim recess
Scooped high on the Malean promontory,
And aery Sunium's silver-veined crag, 275
Which divine Pallas keeps unprofaned ever,
The Gerastian asylums, and whate'er
Within wide Greece our enterprise has kept
From Phrygian contumely; and in which
You have a common care, for you inhabit 280
The skirts of Grecian land, under the roots
Of Aetna and its crags, spotted with fire.
Turn then to converse under human laws,
Receive us shipwrecked suppliants, and provide
Food, clothes, and fire, and hospitable gifts; 285*



*Nor fixing upon oxen-piercing spits
Our limbs, so fill your belly and your jaws.
Priam's wide land has widowed Greece enough;
And weapon-winged murder leaped together
Enough of dead, and wives are husbandless, 290
And ancient women and gray fathers wail
Their childless age;—if you should roast the rest—
And 'tis a bitter feast that you prepare—
Where then would any turn? Yet be persuaded;
Forgo the lust of your jaw-bone; prefer 295
Pious humanity to wicked will:
Many have bought too dear their evil joys.*

SILENUS:

Let me advise you, do not spare a morsel
Of all his flesh. If you should eat his tongue
You would become most eloquent, O Cyclops. 300



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CYCLOPS:

Wealth, my good fellow, is the wise man's God,
All other things are a pretence and boast.
What are my father's ocean promontories,
The sacred rocks whereon he dwells, to me?
Stranger, I laugh to scorn Jove's thunderbolt, 305
I know not that his strength is more than mine.
As to the rest I care not.—When he pours
Rain from above, I have a close pavilion
Under this rock, in which I lie supine,
Feasting on a roast calf or some wild beast, 310
And drinking pans of milk, and gloriously
Emulating the thunder of high Heaven.
And when the Thracian wind pours down the snow,
I wrap my body in the skins of beasts,
Kindle a fire, and bid the snow whirl on. 315
The earth, by force, whether it will or no,
Bringing forth grass, fattens my flocks and herds,
Which, to what other God but to myself
And this great belly, first of deities,
Should I be bound to sacrifice? I well know 320
The wise man's only Jupiter is this,
To eat and drink during his little day,
And give himself no care. And as for those
Who complicate with laws the life of man,
I freely give them tears for their reward. 325
I will not cheat my soul of its delight,
Or hesitate in dining upon you:—
And that I may be quit of all demands,
These are my hospitable gifts;—fierce fire
And yon ancestral caldron, which o'er-bubbling 330
Shall finely cook your miserable flesh.
Creep in!—

...

ULYSSES:

Ai! ai! I have escaped the Trojan toils,
I have escaped the sea, and now I fall
Under the cruel grasp of one impious man. 335
O Pallas, Mistress, Goddess, sprung from Jove,
Now, now, assist me! Mightier toils than Troy
Are these;—I totter on the chasms of peril;—
And thou who inhabitest the thrones



*Of the bright stars, look, hospitable Jove, 340
Upon this outrage of thy deity,
Otherwise be considered as no God!*

CHORUS (ALONE):

For your gaping gulf and your gullet wide,
The ravin is ready on every side,
The limbs of the strangers are cooked and done; 345
*There is boiled meat, and roast meat, and meat from the coal,
You may chop it, and tear it, and gnash it for fun,
An hairy goat's-skin contains the whole.
Let me but escape, and ferry me o'er
The stream of your wrath to a safer shore. 350*
The Cyclops Aetnean is cruel and bold,
He murders the strangers
That sit on his hearth,
And dreads no avengers
To rise from the earth. 355
*He roasts the men before they are cold,
He snatches them broiling from the coal,*



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*And from the caldron pulls them whole,
And minces their flesh and gnaws their bone
With his cursed teeth, till all be gone. 360
Farewell, foul pavilion:
Farewell, rites of dread!
The Cyclops vermilion,
With slaughter uncloying,
Now feasts on the dead, 365
In the flesh of strangers joying!*

NOTE:

344 ravin Rossetti; spelt ravine in B., editions 1824, 1839.

ULYSSES:

O Jupiter! I saw within the cave
Horrible things; deeds to be feigned in words,
But not to be believed as being done.

NOTE:

369 not to be believed B.; not believed 1824.

CHORUS:

What! sawest thou the impious Polypheme 370
Feasting upon your loved companions now?

ULYSSES:

Selecting two, the plumpest of the crowd,
He grasped them in his hands.—

CHORUS:

Unhappy man!

...

ULYSSES:

Soon as we came into this craggy place,
Kindling a fire, he cast on the broad hearth 375
*The knotty limbs of an enormous oak,
Three waggon-loads at least, and then he strewed
Upon the ground, beside the red firelight,
His couch of pine-leaves; and he milked the cows,
And pouring forth the white milk, filled a bowl 380*



Three cubits wide and four in depth, as much
As would contain ten amphorae, and bound it
With ivy wreaths; then placed upon the fire
A brazen pot to boil, and made red hot
The points of spits, not sharpened with the sickle 385
*But with a fruit tree bough, and with the jaws
Of axes for Aetnean slaughterings.
And when this God-abandoned Cook of Hell
Had made all ready, he seized two of us
And killed them in a kind of measured manner; 390
For he flung one against the brazen rivets
Of the huge caldron, and seized the other
By the foot's tendon, and knocked out his brains
Upon the sharp edge of the craggy stone:
Then peeled his flesh with a great cooking-knife 395
And put him down to roast. The other's limbs
He chopped into the caldron to be boiled.
And I, with the tears raining from my eyes,
Stood near the Cyclops, ministering to him;
The rest, in the recesses of the cave, 400
Clung to the rock like bats, bloodless with fear.
When he was filled with my companions' flesh,
He threw himself upon the ground and sent
A loathsome exhalation from his maw.
Then a divine thought came to me. I filled 405
The cup of Maron, and I offered him
To taste, and said:—'Child of the Ocean God,
Behold what drink the vines of Greece produce,
The exultation and the joy of Bacchus.'
He, satiated with his unnatural food,*



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410

Received it, and at one draught drank it off,
And taking my hand, praised me:—'Thou hast given
A sweet draught after a sweet meal, dear guest.'
And I, perceiving that it pleased him, filled
Another cup, well knowing that the wine 415
Would wound him soon and take a sure revenge.
And the charm fascinated him, and I
Plied him cup after cup, until the drink
Had warmed his entrails, and he sang aloud
In concert with my wailing fellow-seamen 420
A hideous discord—and the cavern rung.
I have stolen out, so that if you will
You may achieve my safety and your own.
But say, do you desire, or not, to fly
This uncompanionable man, and dwell 425
As was your wont among the Grecian Nymphs
Within the fanes of your beloved God?
Your father there within agrees to it,
But he is weak and overcome with wine,
And caught as if with bird-lime by the cup, 430
He claps his wings and crows in doting joy.
You who are young escape with me, and find
Bacchus your ancient friend; unsuited he
To this rude Cyclops.

NOTES: 382 *ten cj. Swinburne; four 1824; four cancelled for ten (possibly) B.* 387 I confess I do not understand this.—[SHELLEY'S NOTE.] 416 *take]grant (as alternative) B.*

CHORUS:

Oh my dearest friend,
That I could see that day, and leave for ever 435
The impious Cyclops.

...

ULYSSES:

Listen then what a punishment I have
For this fell monster, how secure a flight
From your hard servitude.



CHORUS:

O sweeter far
Than is the music of an Asian lyre 440
Would be the news of Polypheme destroyed.

ULYSSES:

Delighted with the Bacchic drink he goes
To call his brother Cyclops—who inhabit
A village upon Aetna not far off.

CHORUS:

I understand, catching him when alone 445
*You think by some measure to dispatch him,
Or thrust him from the precipice.*

NOTE:

446 by some measure 1824; with some measures B.

ULYSSES:

Oh no;
Nothing of that kind; my device is subtle.

CHORUS:

How then? I heard of old that thou wert wise.

ULYSSES:

I will dissuade him from this plan, by saying 450
*It were unwise to give the Cyclopes
This precious drink, which if enjoyed alone
Would make life sweeter for a longer time.
When, vanquished by the Bacchic power, he sleeps,
There is a trunk of olive wood within, 455
Whose point having made sharp with this good sword
I will conceal in fire, and when I see
It is alight, will fix it, burning yet,
Within the socket of the Cyclops' eye
And melt it out with fire—as when a man 460
Turns by its handle a great auger round,
Fitting the framework of a ship with beams,
So will I, in the Cyclops' fiery eye
Turn round the brand and dry the pupil up.*



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CHORUS:

Joy! I am mad with joy at your device. 465

ULYSSES:

And then with you, my friends, and the old man,
We'll load the hollow depth of our black ship,
And row with double strokes from this dread shore.

CHORUS:

May I, as in libations to a God,
Share in the blinding him with the red brand? 470
I would have some communion in his death.

ULYSSES:

Doubtless: the brand is a great brand to hold.

CHORUS:

Oh! I would lift an hundred waggon-loads,
If like a wasp's nest I could scoop the eye out
Of the detested Cyclops.

ULYSSES:

Silence now! 475
*Ye know the close device—and when I call,
Look ye obey the masters of the craft.
I will not save myself and leave behind
My comrades in the cave: I might escape,
Having got clear from that obscure recess, 480
But 'twere unjust to leave in jeopardy
The dear companions who sailed here with me.*

CHORUS:

Come! who is first, that with his hand
Will urge down the burning brand
Through the lids, and quench and pierce 485
The Cyclops' eye so fiery fierce?

SEMICHORUS 1 [SONG WITHIN]:

Listen! listen! he is coming,
A most hideous discord humming.
Drunken, museless, awkward, yelling,
Far along his rocky dwelling; 490
*Let us with some comic spell
Teach the yet unteachable.*



*By all means he must be blinded,
If my counsel be but minded.*

SEMICHORUS 2:

Happy thou made odorous 495
*With the dew which sweet grapes weep,
To the village hastening thus,
Seek the vines that soothe to sleep;
Having first embraced thy friend,
Thou in luxury without end, 500*
With the strings of yellow hair,
Of thy voluptuous leman fair,
Shalt sit playing on a bed!—
Speak! what door is opened?

NOTES:

495 *thou cj. Swinburne, Rossetti; those 1824;*
'the word is doubtful in B.' (Locock).
500 Thou B.; There 1824.

CYCLOPS:

Ha! ha! ha! I'm full of wine, 505
*Heavy with the joy divine,
With the young feast oversated;
Like a merchant's vessel freighted
To the water's edge, my crop
Is laden to the gullet's top. 510*
The fresh meadow grass of spring
Tempt me forth thus wandering
To my brothers on the mountains,
Who shall share the wine's sweet fountains.
Bring the cask, O stranger, bring! 515

NOTE:

508 *merchant's 1824; merchant B.*



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CHORUS:

One with eyes the fairest
Cometh from his dwelling;
Some one loves thee, rarest
Bright beyond my telling.
In thy grace thou shinest 520
*Like some nymph divinest
In her caverns dewy:—
All delights pursue thee,
Soon pied flowers, sweet-breathing,
Shall thy head be wreathing. 525*

ULYSSES:

Listen, O Cyclops, for I am well skilled
In Bacchus, whom I gave thee of to drink.

CYCLOPS:

What sort of God is Bacchus then accounted?

ULYSSES:

The greatest among men for joy of life.

CYCLOPS:

I gulped him down with very great delight. 530

ULYSSES:

This is a God who never injures men.

CYCLOPS:

How does the God like living in a skin?

ULYSSES:

He is content wherever he is put.

CYCLOPS:

Gods should not have their body in a skin.

ULYSSES:

If he gives joy, what is his skin to you? 535

CYCLOPS:

I hate the skin, but love the wine within.

ULYSSES:

Stay here now: drink, and make your spirit glad.



NOTE:

537 Stay here now, drink B.; stay here, now drink 1824.

CYCLOPS:

Should I not share this liquor with my brothers?

ULYSSES:

Keep it yourself, and be more honoured so.

CYCLOPS:

I were more useful, giving to my friends. *540*

ULYSSES:

But village mirth breeds contests, broils, and blows.

CYCLOPS:

When I am drunk none shall lay hands on me.—

ULYSSES:

A drunken man is better within doors.

CYCLOPS:

He is a fool, who drinking, loves not mirth.

ULYSSES:

But he is wise, who drunk, remains at home. *545*

CYCLOPS:

What shall I do, Silenus? Shall I stay?

SILENUS:

Stay—for what need have you of pot companions?

CYCLOPS:

Indeed this place is closely carpeted
With flowers and grass.

SILENUS:

And in the sun-warm noon
'Tis sweet to drink. Lie down beside me now, *550*
Placing your mighty sides upon the ground.

CYCLOPS:

What do you put the cup behind me for?

SILENUS:

That no one here may touch it.



CYCLOPS:

Thievish One!

You want to drink;—here place it in the midst.

And thou, O stranger, tell how art thou called? 555

ULYSSES:

My name is Nobody. What favour now

Shall I receive to praise you at your hands?

CYCLOPS:

I'll feast on you the last of your companions.

ULYSSES:

You grant your guest a fair reward, O Cyclops.

CYCLOPS:

Ha! what is this? Stealing the wine, you rogue! 560



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SILENUS:

It was this stranger kissing me because
I looked so beautiful.

CYCLOPS:

You shall repent
For kissing the coy wine that loves you not.

SILENUS:

By Jupiter! you said that I am fair.

CYCLOPS:

Pour out, and only give me the cup full. 565

SILENUS:

How is it mixed? let me observe.

CYCLOPS:

Curse you!
Give it me so.

SILENUS:

Not till I see you wear
That coronal, and taste the cup to you.

CYCLOPS:

Thou wily traitor!

SILENUS:

But the wine is sweet.
Ay, you will roar if you are caught in drinking. 570

CYCLOPS:

See now, my lip is clean and all my beard.

SILENUS:

Now put your elbow right and drink again.
As you see me drink—...

CYCLOPS:

How now?

SILENUS:

Ye Gods, what a delicious gulp!



CYCLOPS:

Guest, take it;—you pour out the wine for me. 575

ULYSSES:

The wine is well accustomed to my hand.

CYCLOPS:

Pour out the wine!

ULYSSES:

I pour; only be silent.

CYCLOPS:

Silence is a hard task to him who drinks.

ULYSSES:

Take it and drink it off; leave not a dreg.
Oh that the drinker died with his own draught! 580

CYCLOPS:

Papai! the vine must be a sapient plant.

ULYSSES:

If you drink much after a mighty feast,
Moistening your thirsty maw, you will sleep well;
If you leave aught, Bacchus will dry you up.

CYCLOPS:

Ho! ho! I can scarce rise. What pure delight! 585
*The heavens and earth appear to whirl about
Confusedly. I see the throne of Jove
And the clear congregation of the Gods.
Now if the Graces tempted me to kiss
I would not—for the loveliest of them all 590
I would not leave this Ganymede.*

SILENUS:

Polypheme,
I am the Ganymede of Jupiter.

CYCLOPS:

By Jove, you are; I bore you off from Dardanus.

...

[ULYSSES AND THE CHORUS.]



ULYSSES:

Come, boys of Bacchus, children of high race,
This man within is folded up in sleep, 595
*And soon will vomit flesh from his fell maw;
The brand under the shed thrusts out its smoke,
No preparation needs, but to burn out
The monster's eye;—but bear yourselves like men.*

CHORUS:

We will have courage like the adamant rock, 600
*All things are ready for you here; go in,
Before our father shall perceive the noise.*



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ULYSSES:

Vulcan, Aetnean king! burn out with fire
The shining eye of this thy neighbouring monster!
And thou, O Sleep, nursling of gloomy Night, 605
*Descend unmixed on this God-hated beast,
And suffer not Ulysses and his comrades,
Returning from their famous Trojan toils,
To perish by this man, who cares not either
For God or mortal; or I needs must think* 610
That Chance is a supreme divinity,
And things divine are subject to her power.

NOTE:

606 *God-hated* 1824; *God-hating* (as an alternative) B.

CHORUS:

Soon a crab the throat will seize
Of him who feeds upon his guest,
Fire will burn his lamp-like eyes 615
*In revenge of such a feast!
A great oak stump now is lying
In the ashes yet undying.
Come, Maron, come!
Raging let him fix the doom,* 620
Let him tear the eyelid up
Of the Cyclops—that his cup
May be evil!
Oh! I long to dance and revel
With sweet Bromian, long desired, 625
*In loved ivy wreaths attired;
Leaving this abandoned home—
Will the moment ever come?*

ULYSSES:

Be silent, ye wild things! Nay, hold your peace,
And keep your lips quite close; dare not to breathe, 630
*Or spit, or e'en wink, lest ye wake the monster,
Until his eye be tortured out with fire.*

CHORUS:

Nay, we are silent, and we chaw the air.



ULYSSES:

Come now, and lend a hand to the great stake
Within—it is delightfully red hot. 635

CHORUS:

You then command who first should seize the stake
To burn the Cyclops' eye, that all may share
In the great enterprise.

SEMICHORUS 1:

We are too far;
We cannot at this distance from the door
Thrust fire into his eye.

SEMICHORUS 2:

And we just now 640
Have become lame! cannot move hand or foot.

CHORUS:

The same thing has occurred to us,—our ankles
Are sprained with standing here, I know not how.

ULYSSES:

What, sprained with standing still?

CHORUS:

And there is dust
Or ashes in our eyes, I know not whence. 645

ULYSSES:

Cowardly dogs! ye will not aid me then?

CHORUS:

With pitying my own back and my back-bone,
And with not wishing all my teeth knocked out,
This cowardice comes of itself—but stay,
I know a famous Orphic incantation 650
*To make the brand stick of its own accord
Into the skull of this one-eyed son of Earth.*

ULYSSES:

Of old I knew ye thus by nature; now
I know ye better.—I will use the aid
Of my own comrades. Yet though weak of hand 655
*Speak cheerfully, that so ye may awaken
The courage of my friends with your blithe words.*



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CHORUS:

This I will do with peril of my life,
And blind you with my exhortations, Cyclops.
Hasten and thrust, 660
*And parch up to dust,
The eye of the beast
Who feeds on his guest.
Burn and blind
The Aetnean hind! 665*
Scoop and draw,
But beware lest he claw
Your limbs near his maw.

CYCLOPS:

Ah me! my eyesight is parched up to cinders.

CHORUS:

What a sweet paean! sing me that again! 670

CYCLOPS:

Ah me! indeed, what woe has fallen upon me!
But, wretched nothings, think ye not to flee
Out of this rock; I, standing at the outlet,
Will bar the way and catch you as you pass.

CHORUS:

What are you roaring out, Cyclops?

CYCLOPS:

I perish! 675

CHORUS:

For you are wicked.

CYCLOPS:

And besides miserable.

CHORUS:

What, did you fall into the fire when drunk?

CYCLOPS:

'Twas Nobody destroyed me.



CHORUS:
Why then no one
Can be to blame.

CYCLOPS:
I say 'twas Nobody
Who blinded me.

CHORUS:
Why then you are not blind. 680

CYCLOPS:
I wish you were as blind as I am.

CHORUS:
Nay,
It cannot be that no one made you blind.

CYCLOPS:
You jeer me; where, I ask, is Nobody?

CHORUS:
Nowhere, O Cyclops.

CYCLOPS:
It was that stranger ruined me:—the wretch 685
*First gave me wine and then burned out my eye,
For wine is strong and hard to struggle with.
Have they escaped, or are they yet within?*

CHORUS:
They stand under the darkness of the rock
And cling to it.

CYCLOPS:
At my right hand or left? 690

CHORUS:
Close on your right.

CYCLOPS:
Where?

CHORUS:
Near the rock itself.
You have them.



CYCLOPS:

Oh, misfortune on misfortune!
I've cracked my skull.

CHORUS:

Now they escape you—there.

NOTE:

693 So B.; Now they escape you there 1824.

CYCLOPS:

Not there, although you say so.

CHORUS:

Not on that side.

CYCLOPS:

Where then?

CHORUS:

They creep about you on your left. 695

CYCLOPS:

Ah! I am mocked! They jeer me in my ills.

CHORUS:

Not there! he is a little there beyond you.

CYCLOPS:

Detested wretch! where are you?

ULYSSES:

Far from you
I keep with care this body of Ulysses.



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CYCLOPS:

What do you say? You proffer a new name. 700

ULYSSES:

My father named me so; and I have taken
A full revenge for your unnatural feast;
I should have done ill to have burned down Troy
And not revenged the murder of my comrades.

CYCLOPS:

Ai! ai! the ancient oracle is accomplished; 705
*It said that I should have my eyesight blinded
By your coming from Troy, yet it foretold
That you should pay the penalty for this
By wandering long over the homeless sea.*

ULYSSES:

I bid thee weep—consider what I say; 710
*I go towards the shore to drive my ship
To mine own land, o'er the Sicilian wave.*

CYCLOPS:

Not so, if, whelming you with this huge stone,
I can crush you and all your men together;
I will descend upon the shore, though blind, 715
Groping my way adown the steep ravine.

CHORUS:

And we, the shipmates of Ulysses now,
Will serve our Bacchus all our happy lives.

EPIGRAMS.

[These four Epigrams were published—numbers 2 and 4 without title—by Mrs. Shelley, “Poetical Works”, 1839, 1st edition.]

1.—TO STELLA.

FROM THE GREEK OF PLATO.

Thou wert the morning star among the living,
Ere thy fair light had fled;—



Now, having died, thou art as Hesperus, giving
New splendour to the dead.

2.—KISSING HELENA.

FROM THE GREEK OF PLATO.

Kissing Helena, together
With my kiss, my soul beside it
Came to my lips, and there I kept it,—
For the poor thing had wandered thither,
To follow where the kiss should guide it, 5
Oh, cruel I, to intercept it!

3.—SPIRIT OF PLATO.

FROM THE GREEK.

Eagle! why soarest thou above that tomb?
To what sublime and star-ypaven home
Floatest thou?—
I am the image of swift Plato's spirit,
Ascending heaven; Athens doth inherit 5
His corpse below.

NOTE:

5 doth Boscombe manuscript; does edition 1839.

4.—CIRCUMSTANCE.

FROM THE GREEK.

A man who was about to hang himself,
Finding a purse, then threw away his rope;
The owner, coming to reclaim his pelf,
The halter found; and used it. So is Hope
Changed for Despair—one laid upon the shelf, 5
*We take the other. Under Heaven's high cope
Fortune is God—all you endure and do
Depends on circumstance as much as you.*

FRAGMENT OF THE ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF ADONIS.

PROM THE GREEK OF BION.

[Published by Forman, "Poetical Works of P. B. S.", 1876.]



Page 37

I mourn Adonis dead—loveliest Adonis—
Dead, dead Adonis—and the Loves lament.
Sleep no more, Venus, wrapped in purple woof—
Wake violet-stoled queen, and weave the crown
Of Death,—’tis Misery calls,—for he is dead. 5

The lovely one lies wounded in the mountains,
His white thigh struck with the white tooth; he scarce
Yet breathes; and Venus hangs in agony there.
The dark blood wanders o’er his snowy limbs,
His eyes beneath their lids are lustreless, 10
*The rose has fled from his wan lips, and there
That kiss is dead, which Venus gathers yet.*

A deep, deep wound Adonis...
A deeper Venus bears upon her heart.
See, his beloved dogs are gathering round— 15
*The Oread nymphs are weeping—Aphrodite
With hair unbound is wandering through the woods,
’Wildered, ungirt, unsandalled—the thorns pierce
Her hastening feet and drink her sacred blood.
Bitterly screaming out, she is driven on 20
Through the long vales; and her Assyrian boy,
Her love, her husband, calls—the purple blood
From his struck thigh stains her white navel now,
Her bosom, and her neck before like snow.*

Alas for Cytherea—the Loves mourn— 25
*The lovely, the beloved is gone!—and now
Her sacred beauty vanishes away.
For Venus whilst Adonis lived was fair—
Alas! her loveliness is dead with him.
The oaks and mountains cry, Ai! ai! Adonis! 30
The springs their waters change to tears and weep—
The flowers are withered up with grief...*

Ai! ai! ... Adonis is dead
Echo resounds ... Adonis dead.
Who will weep not thy dreadful woe. O Venus? 35
*Soon as she saw and knew the mortal wound
Of her Adonis—saw the life-blood flow
From his fair thigh, now wasting,—wailing loud
She clasped him, and cried ... ’Stay, Adonis!
Stay, dearest one,... 40*



and mix my lips with thine—
Wake yet a while, Adonis—oh, but once,
That I may kiss thee now for the last time—
But for as long as one short kiss may live—
Oh, let thy breath flow from thy dying soul 45
*Even to my mouth and heart, that I may suck
That...'*

NOTE:

23 his Rossetti, Dowden, Woodberry; her Boscombe manuscript, Forman.

FRAGMENT OF THE ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF BION.

FROM THE GREEK OF MOSCHUS.

[Published from the Hunt manuscripts by Forman, "Poetical Works of P. B. S.", 1876.]



Page 38

Ye Dorian woods and waves, lament aloud,—
 Augment your tide, O streams, with fruitless tears,
 For the beloved Bion is no more.
 Let every tender herb and plant and flower,
 From each dejected bud and drooping bloom, 5
*Shed dew's of liquid sorrow, and with breath
 Of melancholy sweetness on the wind
 Diffuse its languid love; let roses blush,
 Anemones grow paler for the loss
 Their dells have known; and thou, O hyacinth, 10*
 Utter thy legend now—yet more, dumb flower,
 Than 'Ah! alas!'—thine is no common grief—
 Bion the [sweetest singer] is no more.

NOTE:

2 tears]sorrow (as alternative) Hunt manuscript.

FROM THE GREEK OF MOSCHUS.

[Published with "Alastor", 1816.]

Tan ala tan glaukan otan onemos atrema Balle—k.t.l.

When winds that move not its calm surface sweep
 The azure sea, I love the land no more;
 The smiles of the serene and tranquil deep
 Tempt my unquiet mind.—But when the roar
 Of Ocean's gray abyss resounds, and foam 5
*Gathers upon the sea, and vast waves burst,
 I turn from the drear aspect to the home
 Of Earth and its deep woods, where, interspersed,
 When winds blow loud, pines make sweet melody.
 Whose house is some lone bark, whose toil the sea, 10*
 Whose prey the wandering fish, an evil lot
 Has chosen.—But I my languid limbs will fling
 Beneath the plane, where the brook's murmuring
 Moves the calm spirit, but disturbs it not.



PAN, ECHO, AND THE SATYR.

FROM THE GREEK OF MOSCHUS.

[Published (without title) by Mrs. Shelley, "Posthumous Poems", 1824. There is a draft amongst the Hunt manuscripts.]

Pan loved his neighbour Echo—but that child
Of Earth and Air pined for the Satyr leaping;
The Satyr loved with wasting madness wild
The bright nymph Lyda,—and so three went weeping.
As Pan loved Echo, Echo loved the Satyr, 5
The Satyr, Lyda; and so love consumed them.—
And thus to each—which was a woful matter—
To bear what they inflicted Justice doomed them;
For, inasmuch as each might hate the lover,
Each, loving, so was hated.—Ye that love not 10
Be warned—in thought turn this example over,
That when ye love, the like return ye prove not.

NOTE:

6 so Hunt manuscript; thus 1824.

11 So 1824; This lesson timely in your thoughts turn over, The moral of this song in thought turn over (as alternatives) Hunt manuscript.

FROM VERGIL'S TENTH ECLOGUE.

[VERSES 1-26.]

[Published by Rossetti, "Complete Poetical Works of P. B. S.", 1870, from the Boscombe manuscripts now in the Bodleian. Mr. Locock ("Examination", etc., 1903, pages 47-50), as the result of his collation of the same manuscripts, gives a revised and expanded version which we print below.]



Page 39

Melodious Arethusa, o'er my verse
 Shed thou once more the spirit of thy stream:
 Who denies verse to Gallus? So, when thou
 Glidest beneath the green and purple gleam
 Of Syracusan waters, mayst thou flow 5
Unmingled with the bitter Doric dew!
Begin, and, whilst the goats are browsing now
The soft leaves, in our way let us pursue
The melancholy loves of Gallus. List!
We sing not to the dead: the wild woods knew 10
 His sufferings, and their echoes...
 Young Naiads,...in what far woodlands wild
 Wandered ye when unworthy love possessed
 Your Gallus? Not where Pindus is up-piled,
 Nor where Parnassus' sacred mount, nor where 15
Aonian Aganippe expands...
The laurels and the myrtle-copses dim.
The pine-encircled mountain, Maenalus,
The cold crags of Lycaeus, weep for him;
And Sylvan, crowned with rustic coronals, 20
 Came shaking in his speed the budding wands
 And heavy lilies which he bore: we knew
 Pan the Arcadian.

...

'What madness is this, Gallus? Thy heart's care
 With willing steps pursues another
 there.' 25

THE SAME.

(As revised by Mr. C.D. Locock.)

Melodious Arethusa, o'er my verse
 Shed thou once more the spirit of thy stream:

(Two lines missing.)

Who denies verse to Gallus? So, when thou
 Glidest beneath the green and purple gleam
 Of Syracusan waters, mayest thou flow 5



*Unmingled with the bitter Dorian dew!
Begin, and whilst the goats are browsing now
The soft leaves, in our song let us pursue
The melancholy loves of Gallus. List!
We sing not to the deaf: the wild woods knew 10
His sufferings, and their echoes answer...
Young Naiades, in what far woodlands wild
Wandered ye, when unworthy love possessed
Our Gallus? Nor where Pindus is up-piled,
Nor where Parnassus' sacred mount, nor where 15
Aonian Aganippe spreads its...*

(Three lines missing.)

The laurels and the myrtle-copses dim,
The pine-encircled mountain, Maenalus,
The cold crags of Lycaeus weep for him.

(Several lines missing.)

'What madness is this, Gallus? thy heart's care, 20
*Lycoris, mid rude camps and Alpine snow,
With willing step pursues another there.'*

(Some lines missing.)

And Sylvan, crowned with rustic coronals,
Came shaking in his speed the budding wands
And heavy lilies which he bore: we knew 25
*Pan the Arcadian with....
...and said,
'Wilt thou not ever cease? Love cares not.
The meadows with fresh streams, the bees with thyme,
The goats with the green leaves of budding spring 30
Are saturated not—nor Love with tears.'*



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FROM VERGIL'S FOURTH GEORGIC.

[VERSES 360 ET SEQ.]

[Published by Locock, "Examination", etc., 1903.]

And the cloven waters like a chasm of mountains
Stood, and received him in its mighty portal
And led him through the deep's untrampled fountains

He went in wonder through the path immortal
Of his great Mother and her humid reign 5
And groves profaned not by the step of mortal

Which sounded as he passed, and lakes which rain
Replenished not girt round by marble caves
'Wildered by the watery motion of the main

Half 'wildered he beheld the bursting waves 10
*Of every stream beneath the mighty earth
Phasis and Lycus which the ... sand paves,*

[And] The chasm where old Enipeus has its birth
And father Tyber and Anienas[?] glow
And whence Caicus, Mysian stream, comes forth 15

And rock-resounding Hypanis, and thou
Eridanus who bearest like empire's sign
Two golden horns upon thy taurine brow

Thou than whom none of the streams divine
Through garden-fields and meads with fiercer power, 20
Burst in their tumult on the purple brine

SONNET.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF DANTE.

[Published with "Alastor", 1816; reprinted, "Posthumous Poems", 1824.]



DANTE ALIGHIERI TO GUIDO CAVALCANTI:

Guido, I would that Lapo, thou, and I,
Led by some strong enchantment, might ascend
A magic ship, whose charmed sails should fly
With winds at will where'er our thoughts might wend,
So that no change, nor any evil chance 5
*Should mar our joyous voyage; but it might be,
That even satiety should still enhance
Between our hearts their strict community:
And that the bounteous wizard then would place
Vanna and Bice and my gentle love, 10*
Companions of our wandering, and would grace
With passionate talk, wherever we might rove,
Our time, and each were as content and free
As I believe that thou and I should be.

5 So 1824; And 1816.

THE FIRST CANZONE OF THE CONVITO.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF DANTE.

[Published by Garnett, "Relics of Shelley", 1862; dated 1820.]

1.

Ye who intelligent the Third Heaven move,
Hear the discourse which is within my heart,
Which cannot be declared, it seems so new.
The Heaven whose course follows your power and art,
Oh, gentle creatures that ye are! me drew, 5
*And therefore may I dare to speak to you,
Even of the life which now I live—and yet
I pray that ye will hear me when I cry,
And tell of mine own heart this novelty;
How the lamenting Spirit moans in it, 10*
And how a voice there murmurs against her
Who came on the refulgence of your sphere.



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2.

A sweet Thought, which was once the life within
This heavy heart, man a time and oft
Went up before our Father's feet, and there 15
*It saw a glorious Lady throned aloft;
And its sweet talk of her my soul did win,
So that I said, 'Thither I too will fare.'*
*That Thought is fled, and one doth now appear
Which tyrannizes me with such fierce stress, 20*
That my heart trembles—ye may see it leap—
And on another Lady bids me keep
Mine eyes, and says—Who would have blessedness
Let him but look upon that Lady's eyes,
Let him not fear the agony of sighs. 25

3.

This lowly Thought, which once would talk with me
Of a bright seraph sitting crowned on high,
Found such a cruel foe it died, and so
My Spirit wept, the grief is hot even now—
And said, Alas for me! how swift could flee 30
*That piteous Thought which did my life console!
And the afflicted one ... questioning
Mine eyes, if such a Lady saw they never,
And why they would...*
I said: 'Beneath those eyes might stand for ever 35
He whom ... regards must kill with...
To have known their power stood me in little stead,
Those eyes have looked on me, and I am dead.'

4.

'Thou art not dead, but thou hast wandered,
Thou Soul of ours, who thyself dost fret,' 40
*A Spirit of gentle Love beside me said;
For that fair Lady, whom thou dost regret,
Hath so transformed the life which thou hast led,
Thou scornest it, so worthless art thou made.
And see how meek, how pitiful, how staid, 45*
Yet courteous, in her majesty she is.
And still call thou her Woman in thy thought;
Her whom, if thou thyself deceivest not,
Thou wilt behold decked with such loveliness,
That thou wilt cry [Love] only Lord, lo! here 50
Thy handmaiden, do what thou wilt with her.



5.

My song, I fear that thou wilt find but few
Who fitly shall conceive thy reasoning
Of such hard matter dost thou entertain.
Whence, if by misadventure chance should bring 55
Thee to base company, as chance may do,
Quite unaware of what thou dost contain,
I prithee comfort thy sweet self again,
My last delight; tell them that they are dull,
And bid them own that thou art beautiful. 60

NOTE:

C5. Published with "Epispsychidion", 1821.—ED.

MATILDA GATHERING FLOWERS.

FROM THE PURGATORIO OF DANTE, CANTO 28, LINES 1-51.

[Published in part (lines 1-8, 22-51) by Medwin, "The Angler in Wales", 1834, "Life of Shelley", 1847; reprinted in full by Garnett, "Relics of Shelley", 1862.]



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And earnest to explore within—around—
The divine wood, whose thick green living woof
Tempered the young day to the sight—I wound

Up the green slope, beneath the forest's roof,
With slow, soft steps leaving the mountain's steep, 5
And sought those inmost labyrinths, motion-proof

Against the air, that in that stillness deep
And solemn, struck upon my forehead bare,
The slow, soft stroke of a continuous...

In which the ... leaves tremblingly were 10
*All bent towards that part where earliest
The sacred hill obscures the morning air.*

Yet were they not so shaken from the rest,
But that the birds, perched on the utmost spray,
Incessantly renewing their blithe quest, 15

With perfect joy received the early day,
Singing within the glancing leaves, whose sound
Kept a low burden to their roundelay,

Such as from bough to bough gathers around
The pine forest on bleak Chiassi's shore, 20
When Aeolus Sirocco has unbound.

My slow steps had already borne me o'er
Such space within the antique wood, that I
Perceived not where I entered any more,—

When, lo! a stream whose little waves went by, 25
*Bending towards the left through grass that grew
Upon its bank, impeded suddenly*

My going on. Water of purest hue
On earth, would appear turbid and impure
Compared with this, whose unconcealing dew, 30

Dark, dark, yet clear, moved under the obscure
Eternal shades, whose interwoven looms
The rays of moon or sunlight ne'er endure.



I moved not with my feet, but mid the glooms
Pierced with my charmed eye, contemplating 35
The mighty multitude of fresh May blooms

Which starred that night, when, even as a thing
That suddenly, for blank astonishment,
Charms every sense, and makes all thought take wing,—

A solitary woman! and she went 40
Singing and gathering flower after flower,
With which her way was painted and besprent.

'Bright lady, who, if looks had ever power
To bear true witness of the heart within,
Dost bask under the beams of love, come lower 45

Towards this bank. I prithee let me win
This much of thee, to come, that I may hear
Thy song: like Proserpine, in Enna's glen,

Thou seemest to my fancy, singing here
And gathering flowers, as that fair maiden when 50
She lost the Spring, and Ceres her, more dear.



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NOTES:

2 *The* 1862; *That* 1834.

4, 5 *So* 1862;

Up a green slope, beneath the starry roof,

With slow, slow steps— 1834.

6 *inmost* 1862; *leafy* 1834.

9 *So* 1862; *The slow, soft stroke of a continuous sleep* *cj. Rossetti, 1870.*

9-28 *So* 1862;

Like the sweet breathing of a child asleep:

Already I had lost myself so far

Amid that tangled wilderness that I

Perceived not where I ventured, but no fear

Of wandering from my way disturbed, when nigh

A little stream appeared; the grass that grew

Thick on its banks impeded suddenly

My going on. 1834.

13 *the* 1862; *their* *cj. Rossetti, 1870.*

26 *through]the* *cj. Rossetti.*

28 *hue* 1862; *dew* 1834.

30 *dew* 1862; *hue* 1834.

32 *Eternal shades* 1862; *Of the close boughs* 1834.

33 *So* 1862; *No ray of moon or sunshine would endure* 1834.

34, 35 *So* 1862;

My feet were motionless, but mid the glooms

*Darted my charmed eyes—*1834.

37 *Which* 1834; *That* 1862.

39 *So* 1834; *Dissolves all other thought...*1862.

40 *So* 1862; *Appeared a solitary maid—she went* 1834.

46 *Towards* 1862; *Unto* 1834.

47 *thee, to come* 1862; *thee O come* 1834.

FRAGMENT.

ADAPTED FROM THE VITA NUOVA OF DANTE.

[Published by Forman, "Poetical Works of P. B. S.", 1876.]

What Mary is when she a little smiles

I cannot even tell or call to mind,

It is a miracle so new, so rare.



UGOLINO.

(Published by Medwin, "Life of Shelley", 1847, with Shelley's corrections in italics ["]].—ED.)

INFERNO 33, 22-75.

[Translated by Medwin and corrected by Shelley.]

Now had the loophole of that dungeon, still
Which bears the name of Famine's Tower from me,
And where 'tis fit that many another will

Be doomed to linger in captivity,
Shown through its narrow opening in my cell 5
'Moon after moon slow waning', when a sleep,

'That of the future burst the veil, in dream
Visited me. It was a slumber deep
And evil; for I saw, or I did seem'

To see, 'that' tyrant Lord his revels keep 10
The leader of the cruel hunt to them,
Chasing the wolf and wolf-cubs up the steep

Ascent, that from 'the Pisan is the screen'
Of 'Lucca'; with him Gualandi came,
Sismondi, and Lanfranchi, 'bloodhounds lean, 15

Trained to the sport and eager for the game
Wide ranging in his front;' but soon were seen
Though by so short a course, with 'spirits tame,'

The father and 'his whelps' to flag at once,
And then the sharp fangs gored their bosoms deep. 20
Ere morn I roused myself, and heard my sons,



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For they were with me, moaning in their sleep,
And begging bread. Ah, for those darling ones!
Right cruel art thou, if thou dost not weep

In thinking of my soul's sad augury; 25
And if thou weapest not now, weep never more!
They were already waked, as wont drew nigh

The allotted hour for food, and in that hour
Each drew a presage from his dream. When I
'Heard locked beneath me of that horrible tower 30

The outlet; then into their eyes alone
I looked to read myself, without a sign
Or word. I wept not—turned within to stone.

They wept aloud, and little Anselm mine,
Said—'twas my youngest, dearest little one,— 35
"What ails thee, father? Why look so at thine?"

In all that day, and all the following night,
I wept not, nor replied; but when to shine
Upon the world, not us, came forth the light

Of the new sun, and thwart my prison thrown 40
Gleamed through its narrow chink, a doleful sight,
'Three faces, each the reflex of my own,

Were imaged by its faint and ghastly ray;'
Then I, of either hand unto the bone,
Gnawed, in my agony; and thinking they 45

'Twas done from sudden pangs, in their excess,
All of a sudden raise themselves, and say,
"Father! our woes, so great, were yet the less

Would you but eat of us,—twas 'you who clad
Our bodies in these weeds of wretchedness; 50
Despoil them'." *Not to make their hearts more sad,*

I 'hushed' myself. That day is at its close,—
Another—still we were all mute. Oh, had
The obdurate earth opened to end our woes!



The fourth day dawned, and when the new sun shone, 55
Outstretched himself before me as it rose
My Gaddo, saying, "Help, father! hast thou none

For thine own child—is there no help from thee?"
He died—there at my feet—and one by one,
I saw them fall, plainly as you see me. 60

Between the fifth and sixth day, ere twas dawn,
I found 'myself blind-groping o'er the three.'
Three days I called them after they were gone.

Famine of grief can get the mastery.

SONNET.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF CAVALCANTI.

GUIDO CAVALCANTI TO DANTE ALIGHIERI:

[Published by Forman (who assigns it to 1815), "Poetical Works of P. B. S.", 1876.]



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Returning from its daily quest, my Spirit
 Changed thoughts and vile in thee doth weep to find:
 It grieves me that thy mild and gentle mind
 Those ample virtues which it did inherit
 Has lost. Once thou didst loathe the multitude 5
*Of blind and madding men—I then loved thee—
 I loved thy lofty songs and that sweet mood
 When thou wert faithful to thyself and me
 I dare not now through thy degraded state
 Own the delight thy strains inspire—in vain 10*
 I seek what once thou wert—we cannot meet
 And we were wont. Again and yet again
 Ponder my words: so the false Spirit shall fly
 And leave to thee thy true integrity.

SCENES FROM THE MAGICO PRODIGIOSO.

FROM THE SPANISH OF CALDERON.

[Published by Mrs. Shelley, "Posthumous Poems", 1824; dated March, 1822. There is a transcript of Scene 1 among the Hunt manuscripts, which has been collated by Mr. Buxton Forman.]

SCENE 1:

ENTER CYPRIAN, DRESSED AS A STUDENT;
 CLARIN AND MOSCON AS POOR SCHOLARS, WITH BOOKS.

CYPRIAN:

In the sweet solitude of this calm place,
 This intricate wild wilderness of trees
 And flowers and undergrowth of odorous plants,
 Leave me; the books you brought out of the house
 To me are ever best society. 5
*And while with glorious festival and song,
 Antioch now celebrates the consecration
 Of a proud temple to great Jupiter,
 And bears his image in loud jubilee
 To its new shrine, I would consume what still 10*
 Lives of the dying day in studious thought,
 Far from the throng and turmoil. You, my friends,



Go, and enjoy the festival; it will
Be worth your pains. You may return for me
When the sun seeks its grave among the billows 15
*Which, among dim gray clouds on the horizon,
Dance like white plumes upon a hearse;— and here
I shall expect you.*

NOTES:

14 So transcr.; Be worth the labour, and return for me 1824.

16, 17 So 1824;

*Hid among dim gray clouds on the horizon
Which dance like plumes—transcr., Forman.*

MOSCON:

I cannot bring my mind,
Great as my haste to see the festival
Certainly is, to leave you, Sir, without 20
*Just saying some three or four thousand words.
How is it possible that on a day
Of such festivity, you can be content
To come forth to a solitary country
With three or four old books, and turn your back 25
On all this mirth?*

NOTES: *21 thousand transcr.; hundred 1824. 23 be content transcr.; bring your mind 1824.*

CLARIN:

My master's in the right;
There is not anything more tiresome
Than a procession day, with troops, and priests,
And dances, and all that.



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NOTE:

28 and priests transcr.; of men 1824.

MOSCON:

From first to last,
Clarín, you are a temporizing flatterer; 30
*You praise not what you feel but what he does;—
Toadeater!*

CLARIN:

You lie—under a mistake—
For this is the most civil sort of lie
That can be given to a man's face. I now
Say what I think.

CYPRIAN:

Enough, you foolish fellows! 35
*Puffed up with your own doting ignorance,
You always take the two sides of one question.
Now go; and as I said, return for me
When night falls, veiling in its shadows wide
This glorious fabric of the universe. 40*

NOTE:

36 doting ignorance transcr.; ignorance and pride 1824.

MOSCON:

How happens it, although you can maintain
The folly of enjoying festivals,
That yet you go there?

CLARIN:

Nay, the consequence
Is clear:—who ever did what he advises
Others to do?—

MOSCON:

Would that my feet were wings, 45
So would I fly to Livia.

[EXIT.]

CLARIN:

To speak truth,



Livia is she who has surprised my heart;
But he is more than half-way there.—Soho!
Livia, I come; good sport, Livia, soho!

[EXIT.]

CYPRIAN:

Now, since I am alone, let me examine 50
The question which has long disturbed my mind
With doubt, since first I read in Plinius
The words of mystic import and deep sense
In which he defines God. My intellect
Can find no God with whom these marks and signs 55
Fitly agree. It is a hidden truth
Which I must fathom.

[CYPRIAN READS; THE DAEMON, DRESSED IN A COURT DRESS, ENTERS.]

NOTE:

57 Stage Direction: So transcr. Reads. Enter the Devil as a fine gentleman 1824.

DAEMON:

Search even as thou wilt,
But thou shalt never find what I can hide.

CYPRIAN:

What noise is that among the boughs? Who moves?
What art thou?—

DAEMON:

'Tis a foreign gentleman. 60
Even from this morning I have lost my way
In this wild place; and my poor horse at last,
Quite overcome, has stretched himself upon
The enamelled tapestry of this mossy mountain,
And feeds and rests at the same time. I was 65
Upon my way to Antioch upon business
Of some importance, but wrapped up in cares
(Who is exempt from this inheritance?)
I parted from my company, and lost
My way, and lost my servants and my comrades. 70

CYPRIAN:

'Tis singular that even within the sight
Of the high towers of Antioch you could lose
Your way. Of all the avenues and green paths
Of this wild wood there is not one but leads,

As to its centre, to the walls of Antioch; 75
Take which you will, you cannot miss your road.



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DAEMON:

And such is ignorance! Even in the sight
Of knowledge, it can draw no profit from it.
But as it still is early, and as I
Have no acquaintances in Antioch, 80
Being a stranger there, I will even wait
The few surviving hours of the day,
Until the night shall conquer it. I see
Both by your dress and by the books in which
You find delight and company, that you 85
Are a great student;—for my part, I feel
Much sympathy in such pursuits.

NOTE:

87 in transcr.; with 1824.

CYPRIAN:

Have you
Studied much?

DAEMON:

No,—and yet I know enough
Not to be wholly ignorant.

CYPRIAN:

Pray, Sir,
What science may you know?—

DAEMON:

Many.

CYPRIAN:

Alas! 90
Much pains must we expend on one alone,
And even then attain it not;—but you
Have the presumption to assert that you
Know many without study.

DAEMON:

And with truth.
For in the country whence I come the sciences 95
Require no learning,—they are known.



NOTE:

95 come the sciences]come sciences 1824.

CYPRIAN:

Oh, would

I were of that bright country! for in this
The more we study, we the more discover
Our ignorance.

DAEMON:

It is so true, that I
Had so much arrogance as to oppose 100
The chair of the most high Professorship,
And obtained many votes, and, though I lost,
The attempt was still more glorious, than the failure
Could be dishonourable. If you believe not,
Let us refer it to dispute respecting 105
That which you know the best, and although I
Know not the opinion you maintain, and though
It be the true one, I will take the contrary.

NOTE:

106 the transcr.; wanting, 1824.

CYPRIAN:

The offer gives me pleasure. I am now
Debating with myself upon a passage 110
Of Plinius, and my mind is racked with doubt
To understand and know who is the God
Of whom he speaks.

DAEMON:

It is a passage, if
I recollect it right, couched in these words
'God is one supreme goodness, one pure essence, 115
One substance, and one sense, all sight, all hands.'

CYPRIAN:

'Tis true.

DAEMON:

What difficulty find you here?

CYPRIAN:

I do not recognize among the Gods
The God defined by Plinius; if he must
Be supreme goodness, even Jupiter 120
Is not supremely good; because we see



*His deeds are evil, and his attributes
Tainted with mortal weakness; in what manner
Can supreme goodness be consistent with
The passions of humanity?*



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DAEMON:

The wisdom 125

Of the old world masked with the names of Gods

The attributes of Nature and of Man;

A sort of popular philosophy.

CYPRIAN:

This reply will not satisfy me, for

Such awe is due to the high name of God 130

That ill should never be imputed. Then,

Examining the question with more care,

It follows, that the Gods would always will

That which is best, were they supremely good.

How then does one will one thing, one another? 135

And that you may not say that I allege

Poetical or philosophic learning:—

Consider the ambiguous responses

Of their oracular statues; from two shrines

Two armies shall obtain the assurance of 140

One victory. Is it not indisputable

That two contending wills can never lead

To the same end? And, being opposite,

If one be good, is not the other evil?

Evil in God is inconceivable; 145

But supreme goodness fails among the Gods

Without their union.

NOTE:

133 would transcr.; should 1824.

DAEMON:

I deny your major.

These responses are means towards some end

Unfathomed by our intellectual beam.

They are the work of Providence, and more 150

The battle's loss may profit those who lose,

Than victory advantage those who win.

CYPRIAN:

That I admit; and yet that God should not

(Falsehood is incompatible with deity)

Assure the victory; it would be enough 155

To have permitted the defeat. If God

Be all sight,—God, who had beheld the truth,



*Would not have given assurance of an end
Never to be accomplished: thus, although
The Deity may according to his attributes 160
Be well distinguished into persons, yet
Even in the minutest circumstance
His essence must be one.*

NOTE:

157 had transcr.; wanting, 1824.

DAEMON:

*To attain the end
The affections of the actors in the scene
Must have been thus influenced by his voice. 165*

CYPRIAN:

*But for a purpose thus subordinate
He might have employed Genii, good or evil,—
A sort of spirits called so by the learned,
Who roam about inspiring good or evil,
And from whose influence and existence we 170
May well infer our immortality.
Thus God might easily, without descent
To a gross falsehood in his proper person,
Have moved the affections by this mediation
To the just point.*

NOTE:

172 descent transcr.; descending 1824.

DAEMON:

*These trifling contradictions 175
Do not suffice to impugn the unity
Of the high Gods; in things of great importance
They still appear unanimous; consider
That glorious fabric, man,—his workmanship
Is stamped with one conception.*



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CYPRIAN:

Who made man 180

Must have, methinks, the advantage of the others.

If they are equal, might they not have risen

In opposition to the work, and being

All hands, according to our author here,

Have still destroyed even as the other made? 185

If equal in their power, unequal only

In opportunity, which of the two

Will remain conqueror?

NOTE:

186 unequal only transcr.; and only unequal 1824.

DAEMON:

On impossible

And false hypothesis there can be built

No argument. Say, what do you infer 190

From this?

CYPRIAN:

That there must be a mighty God

Of supreme goodness and of highest grace,

All sight, all hands, all truth, infallible,

Without an equal and without a rival,

The cause of all things and the effect of nothing, 195

One power, one will, one substance, and one essence.

And, in whatever persons, one or two,

His attributes may be distinguished, one

Sovereign power, one solitary essence,

One cause of all cause.

NOTE:

197 And]query, Ay?

[THEY RISE.]

DAEMON:

How can I impugn 200

So clear a consequence?

NOTE:

200 all cause 1824; all things transcr.



CYPRIAN:
Do you regret
My victory?

DAEMON:
Who but regrets a check
In rivalry of wit? I could reply
And urge new difficulties, but will now
Depart, for I hear steps of men approaching, 205
*And it is time that I should now pursue
My journey to the city.*

CYPRIAN:
Go in peace!

DAEMON:
Remain in peace!—Since thus it profits him
To study, I will wrap his senses up
In sweet oblivion of all thought but of 210
*A piece of excellent beauty; and, as I
Have power given me to wage enmity
Against Justina's soul, I will extract
From one effect two vengeance.*

[ASIDE AND EXIT.]

NOTE:
214 Stage direction So transcr.; Exit 1824.

CYPRIAN:
I never
Met a more learned person. Let me now 215
Revolve this doubt again with careful mind.

[HE READS.]

[FLORO AND LELIO ENTER.]

LELIO:
Here stop. These toppling rocks and tangled boughs,
Impenetrable by the noonday beam,
Shall be sole witnesses of what we—

FLORO:
Draw!
If there were words, here is the place for deeds. 220



LELIO:

Thou needest not instruct me; well I know
That in the field, the silent tongue of steel
Speaks thus,—

[THEY FIGHT.]



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CYPRIAN:

Ha! what is this? Lelio,—Floro,
Be it enough that Cyprian stands between you,
Although unarmed.

LELIO:

Whence comest thou, to stand 225
Between me and my vengeance?

FLORO:

From what rocks
And desert cells?

[ENTER MOSCON AND CLARIN.]

MOSCON:

Run! run! for where we left
My master. I now hear the clash of swords.

NOTES: 228 *I now hear transcr.; we hear 1824.* 227-229 *lines of otherwise arranged, 1824.*

CLARIN:

I never run to approach things of this sort
But only to avoid them. Sir! Cyprian! sir! 230

CYPRIAN:

Be silent, fellows! What! two friends who are
In blood and fame the eyes and hope of Antioch,
One of the noble race of the Colalti,
The other son o' the Governor, adventure
And cast away, on some slight cause no doubt, 235
Two lives, the honour of their country?

NOTE:

233 *race transcr.; men 1824.* *Colalti|Colatti 1824.*

LELIO:

Cyprian!
Although my high respect towards your person
Holds now my sword suspended, thou canst not
Restore it to the slumber of the scabbard:
Thou knowest more of science than the duel; 240
For when two men of honour take the field,



*No counsel nor respect can make them friends
But one must die in the dispute.*

NOTE:

239 of the transcr.; of its 1824.

242 No counsel nor 1839, 1st edition;

No [...] or 1824; No reasoning or transcr.

243 dispute transcr. pursuit 1824.

FLORO:

I pray

That you depart hence with your people, and

Leave us to finish what we have begun 245

Without advantage.—

CYPRIAN:

Though you may imagine

That I know little of the laws of duel,

Which vanity and valour instituted,

You are in error. By my birth I am

Held no less than yourselves to know the limits 250

Of honour and of infamy, nor has study

Quenched the free spirit which first ordered them;

And thus to me, as one well experienced

In the false quicksands of the sea of honour,

You may refer the merits of the case; 255

And if I should perceive in your relation

That either has the right to satisfaction

From the other, I give you my word of honour

To leave you.

NOTE:

253 well omit, cj. Forman.

LELIO:

Under this condition then

I will relate the cause, and you will cede 260

And must confess the impossibility

Of compromise; for the same lady is

Beloved by Floro and myself.

FLORO:

It seems

Much to me that the light of day should look

Upon that idol of my heart—but he— 265

Leave us to fight, according to thy word.



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CYPRIAN:

Permit one question further: is the lady
Impossible to hope or not?

LELIO:

She is
So excellent, that if the light of day
Should excite Floro's jealousy, it were 270
*Without just cause, for even the light of day
Trembles to gaze on her.*

CYPRIAN:

Would you for your
Part, marry her?

FLORO:

Such is my confidence.

CYPRIAN:

And you?

LELIO:

Oh! would that I could lift my hope
So high, for though she is extremely poor, 275
Her virtue is her dowry.

CYPRIAN:

And if you both
Would marry her, is it not weak and vain,
Culpable and unworthy, thus beforehand
To slur her honour? What would the world say
If one should slay the other, and if she 280
Should afterwards espouse the murderer?

[THE RIVALS AGREE TO REFER THEIR QUARREL TO CYPRIAN; WHO IN
CONSEQUENCE VISITS JUSTINA, AND BECOMES ENAMOURED OF HER; SHE
DISDAINS HIM, AND HE RETIRES TO A SOLITARY SEA-SHORE.]

SCENE 2.

CYPRIAN:

O memory! permit it not
That the tyrant of my thought
Be another soul that still



Holds dominion o'er the will,
That would refuse, but can no more, 5
To bend, to tremble, and adore.
Vain idolatry!—I saw,
And gazing, became blind with error;
Weak ambition, which the awe
Of her presence bound to terror! 10
So beautiful she was—and I,
Between my love and jealousy,
Am so convulsed with hope and fear,
Unworthy as it may appear;—
So bitter is the life I live, 15
That, hear me, Hell! I now would give
To thy most detested spirit
My soul, for ever to inherit,
To suffer punishment and pine,
So this woman may be mine. 20
Hear'st thou, Hell! dost thou reject it?
My soul is offered!

DAEMON (UNSEEN):
I accept it.

[TEMPEST, WITH THUNDER AND LIGHTNING.]

CYPRIAN:
What is this? ye heavens for ever pure,
At once intensely radiant and obscure!
Athwart the aethereal halls 25
The lightning's arrow and the thunder-balls
The day affright,
As from the horizon round,
Burst with earthquake sound,
In mighty torrents the electric fountains;— 30
Clouds quench the sun, and thunder-smoke
Strangles the air, and fire eclipses Heaven.
Philosophy, thou canst not even
Compel their causes underneath thy yoke:
From yonder clouds even to the waves below 35
The fragments of a single ruin choke
Imagination's flight;



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*For, on flakes of surge, like feathers light,
The ashes of the desolation, cast
Upon the gloomy blast, 40
Tell of the footsteps of the storm;
And nearer, see, the melancholy form
Of a great ship, the outcast of the sea,
Drives miserably!
And it must fly the pity of the port, 45
Or perish, and its last and sole resort
Is its own raging enemy.
The terror of the thrilling cry
Was a fatal prophecy
Of coming death, who hovers now 50
Upon that shattered prow,
That they who die not may be dying still.
And not alone the insane elements
Are populous with wild portents,
But that sad ship is as a miracle 55
Of sudden ruin, for it drives so fast
It seems as if it had arrayed its form
With the headlong storm.
It strikes—I almost feel the shock,—
It stumbles on a jagged rock,— 60
Sparkles of blood on the white foam are cast.*

[A TEMPEST.]

ALL EXCLAIM [WITHIN]:
We are all lost!

DAEMON [WITHIN]:
Now from this plank will I
Pass to the land and thus fulfil my scheme.

CYPRIAN:
As in contempt of the elemental rage
A man comes forth in safety, while the ship's 65
*Great form is in a watery eclipse
Obliterated from the Oceans page,
And round its wreck the huge sea-monsters sit,*



*A horrid conclave, and the whistling wave
Is heaped over its carcase, like a grave. 70*

[THE DAEMON ENTERS, AS ESCAPED FROM THE SEA.]

DAEMON [ASIDE]:

It was essential to my purposes
To wake a tumult on the sapphire ocean,
That in this unknown form I might at length
Wipe out the blot of the discomfiture
Sustained upon the mountain, and assail 75
*With a new war the soul of Cyprian,
Forging the instruments of his destruction
Even from his love and from his wisdom.—O
Beloved earth, dear mother, in thy bosom
I seek a refuge from the monster who 80
Precipitates itself upon me.*

CYPRIAN:

Friend,
Collect thyself; and be the memory
Of thy late suffering, and thy greatest sorrow
But as a shadow of the past,—for nothing
Beneath the circle of the moon, but flows 85
And changes, and can never know repose.

DAEMON:

And who art thou, before whose feet my fate
Has prostrated me?

CYPRIAN:

One who, moved with pity,
Would soothe its stings.

DAEMON:

Oh, that can never be!
No solace can my lasting sorrows find. 90

CYPRIAN:

Wherefore?

DAEMON:

Because my happiness is lost.
Yet I lament what has long ceased to be
The object of desire or memory,
And my life is not life.



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CYPRIAN:

Now, since the fury
Of this earthquaking hurricane is still, 95
*And the crystalline Heaven has reassumed
Its windless calm so quickly, that it seems
As if its heavy wrath had been awakened
Only to overwhelm that vessel,—speak,
Who art thou, and whence comest thou?*

DAEMON:

Far more 100
*My coming hither cost, than thou hast seen
Or I can tell. Among my misadventures
This shipwreck is the least. Wilt thou hear?*

CYPRIAN:

Speak.

DAEMON:

Since thou desirest, I will then unveil
Myself to thee;—for in myself I am 105
*A world of happiness and misery;
This I have lost, and that I must lament
Forever. In my attributes I stood
So high and so heroically great,
In lineage so supreme, and with a genius 110
Which penetrated with a glance the world
Beneath my feet, that, won by my high merit,
A king—whom I may call the King of kings,
Because all others tremble in their pride
Before the terrors of His countenance, 115
In His high palace roofed with brightest gems
Of living light—call them the stars of Heaven—
Named me His counsellor. But the high praise
Stung me with pride and envy, and I rose
In mighty competition, to ascend 120
His seat and place my foot triumphantly
Upon His subject thrones. Chastised, I know
The depth to which ambition falls; too mad
Was the attempt, and yet more mad were now
Repentance of the irrevocable deed:— 125
*Therefore I chose this ruin, with the glory
Of not to be subdued, before the shame
Of reconciling me with Him who reigns**



*By coward cession.—Nor was I alone,
Nor am I now, nor shall I be alone; 130
And there was hope, and there may still be hope,
For many suffrages among His vassals
Hailed me their lord and king, and many still
Are mine, and many more, perchance shall be.
Thus vanquished, though in fact victorious, 135
I left His seat of empire, from mine eye
Shooting forth poisonous lightning, while my words
With inauspicious thunderings shook Heaven,
Proclaiming vengeance, public as my wrong,
And imprecating on His prostrate slaves 140
Rapine, and death, and outrage. Then I sailed
Over the mighty fabric of the world,—
A pirate ambushed in its pathless sands,
A lynx crouched watchfully among its caves
And craggy shores; and I have wandered over 145
The expanse of these wide wildernesses
In this great ship, whose bulk is now dissolved
In the light breathings of the invisible wind,*



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*And which the sea has made a dustless ruin,
Seeking ever a mountain, through whose forests 150
I seek a man, whom I must now compel
To keep his word with me. I came arrayed
In tempest, and although my power could well
Bridle the forest winds in their career,
For other causes I forbore to soothe 155
Their fury to Favonian gentleness;
I could and would not;
[ASIDE.]
(thus I wake in him
A love of magic art). Let not this tempest,
Nor the succeeding calm excite thy wonder;
For by my art the sun would turn as pale 160
As his weak sister with unwonted fear;
And in my wisdom are the orbs of Heaven
Written as in a record; I have pierced
The flaming circles of their wondrous spheres
And know them as thou knowest every corner 165
Of this dim spot. Let it not seem to thee
That I boast vainly; wouldst thou that I work
A charm over this waste and savage wood,
This Babylon of crags and aged trees,
Filling its leafy coverts with a horror 170
Thrilling and strange? I am the friendless guest
Of these wild oaks and pines—and as from thee
I have received the hospitality
Of this rude place, I offer thee the fruit
Of years of toil in recompense; whate'er 175
Thy wildest dream presented to thy thought
As object of desire, that shall be thine.*

...

*And thenceforth shall so firm an amity
'Twixt thee and me be, that neither Fortune,
The monstrous phantom which pursues success, 180
That careful miser, that free prodigal,
Who ever alternates, with changeful hand,
Evil and good, reproach and fame; nor Time,
That lodestar of the ages, to whose beam
The winged years speed o'er the intervals 185*



Of their unequal revolutions; nor
Heaven itself, whose beautiful bright stars
Rule and adorn the world, can ever make
The least division between thee and me,
Since now I find a refuge in thy favour. 190

NOTES: 146 *wide glassy wildernesses Rossetti.* 150 Seeking forever cj. Forman. 154
forest]fiercest cj. Rossetti.

SCENE 3.

THE DAEMON TEMPTS JUSTINA, WHO IS A CHRISTIAN.

DAEMON:

Abyss of Hell! I call on thee,
Thou wild misrule of thine own anarchy!
From thy prison-house set free
The spirits of voluptuous death,
That with their mighty breath 5
They may destroy a world of virgin thoughts;
Let her chaste mind with fancies thick as motes
Be peopled from thy shadowy deep,
Till her guiltless fantasy
Full to overflowing be!



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10

And with sweetest harmony,
Let birds, and flowers, and leaves, and all things move
To love, only to love.
Let nothing meet her eyes
But signs of Love's soft victories; 15
Let nothing meet her ear
But sounds of Love's sweet sorrow,
So that from faith no succour she may borrow,
But, guided by my spirit blind
And in a magic snare entwined, 20
She may now seek Cyprian.
Begin, while I in silence bind
My voice, when thy sweet song thou hast began.

NOTE:

18 she may]may she 1824.

A VOICE [WITHIN]:

What is the glory far above
All else in human life?

ALL:

Love! love! 25

[WHILE THESE WORDS ARE SUNG,
THE DAEMON GOES OUT AT ONE DOOR,
AND JUSTINA ENTERS AT ANOTHER.]

THE FIRST VOICE:

There is no form in which the fire
Of love its traces has impressed not.
Man lives far more in love's desire
Than by life's breath, soon possessed not.
If all that lives must love or die, 30
All shapes on earth, or sea, or sky,
With one consent to Heaven cry
That the glory far above
All else in life is—

ALL:

Love! oh, Love!



JUSTINA:

Thou melancholy Thought which art 35
So flattering and so sweet, to thee
When did I give the liberty
Thus to afflict my heart?
What is the cause of this new Power
Which doth my fevered being move, 40
Momently raging more and more?
What subtle Pain is kindled now
Which from my heart doth overflow
Into my senses?—

NOTE:

36 flattering Boscombe manuscript; fluttering 1824.

ALL:

Love! oh, Love!

JUSTINA:

'Tis that enamoured Nightingale 45
Who gives me the reply;
He ever tells the same soft tale
Of passion and of constancy
To his mate, who rapt and fond,
Listening sits, a bough beyond. 50

Be silent, Nightingale—no more
Make me think, in hearing thee
Thus tenderly thy love deplore,
If a bird can feel his so,
What a man would feel for me. 55
And, voluptuous Vine, O thou
Who seekest most when least pursuing,—
To the trunk thou interlacest
Art the verdure which embracest,
And the weight which is its ruin,— 60
No more, with green embraces, Vine,
Make me think on what thou lovest,—
For whilst thus thy boughs entwine
I fear lest thou shouldst teach me, sophist,
How arms might be entangled too. 65



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Light-enchanted Sunflower, thou
Who gazest ever true and tender
On the sun's revolving splendour!
Follow not his faithless glance
With thy faded countenance, 70
*Nor teach my beating heart to fear,
If leaves can mourn without a tear,
How eyes must weep! O Nightingale,
Cease from thy enamoured tale,—
Leafy Vine, unwreath thy bower, 75*
Restless Sunflower, cease to move,—
Or tell me all, what poisonous Power
Ye use against me—

NOTES: 58 *To/Who to cj. Rossetti.* 63 whilst thus Rossetti, Forman, Dowden; whilst thou thus 1824.

ALL:
Love! Love! Love!

JUSTINA:
It cannot be!—Whom have I ever loved?
Trophies of my oblivion and disdain, 80
*Floro and Lelio did I not reject?
And Cyprian?—*
[SHE BECOMES TROUBLED AT THE NAME OF CYPRIAN.]
*Did I not requite him
With such severity, that he has fled
Where none has ever heard of him again?—
Alas! I now begin to fear that this 85*
May be the occasion whence desire grows bold,
As if there were no danger. From the moment
That I pronounced to my own listening heart,
'Cyprian is absent!'—O me miserable!
I know not what I feel!
[MORE CALMLY.]
It must be pity 90
*To think that such a man, whom all the world
Admired, should be forgot by all the world,
And I the cause.*
[SHE AGAIN BECOMES TROUBLED.]
*And yet if it were pity,
Floro and Lelio might have equal share,
For they are both imprisoned for my sake. 95*



[CALMLY.]

Alas! what reasonings are these? it is
Enough I pity him, and that, in vain,
Without this ceremonious subtlety.
And, woe is me! I know not where to find him now,
Even should I seek him through this wide world. 100

NOTE:

89 me miserable]miserable me editions 1839.

[ENTER DAEMON.]

DAEMON:

Follow, and I will lead thee where he is.

JUSTINA:

And who art thou, who hast found entrance hither,
Into my chamber through the doors and locks?
Art thou a monstrous shadow which my madness
Has formed in the idle air?

DAEMON:

No. I am one 105
*Called by the Thought which tyrannizes thee
From his eternal dwelling; who this day
Is pledged to bear thee unto Cyprian.*

JUSTINA:

So shall thy promise fail. This agony
Of passion which afflicts my heart and soul 110
*May sweep imagination in its storm;
The will is firm.*

DAEMON:

Already half is done
In the imagination of an act.
The sin incurred, the pleasure then remains;
Let not the will stop half-way on the road. 115



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JUSTINA:

I will not be discouraged, nor despair,
Although I thought it, and although 'tis true
That thought is but a prelude to the deed:—
Thought is not in my power, but action is:
I will not move my foot to follow thee. 120

DAEMON:

But a far mightier wisdom than thine own
Exerts itself within thee, with such power
Compelling thee to that which it inclines
That it shall force thy step; how wilt thou then
Resist, Justina?

NOTE:

123 inclines]inclines to cj. Rossetti.

JUSTINA:

By my free-will.

DAEMON:

I 125
Must force thy will.

JUSTINA:

It is invincible;
It were not free if thou hadst power upon it.

[HE DRAWS, BUT CANNOT MOVE HER.]

DAEMON:

Come, where a pleasure waits thee.

JUSTINA:

It were bought
Too dear.

DAEMON:

'Twill soothe thy heart to softest peace.

JUSTINA:

'Tis dread captivity.

DAEMON:

'Tis joy, 'tis glory. 130



JUSTINA:

'Tis shame, 'tis torment, 'tis despair.

DAEMON:

But how

Canst thou defend thyself from that or me,

If my power drags thee onward?

JUSTINA:

My defence

Consists in God.

[HE VAINLY ENDEAVOURS TO FORCE HER, AND AT LAST RELEASES HER.]

DAEMON:

Woman, thou hast subdued me,

Only by not owning thyself subdued. 135

But since thou thus findest defence in God,

I will assume a feigned form, and thus

Make thee a victim of my baffled rage.

For I will mask a spirit in thy form

Who will betray thy name to infamy, 140

And doubly shall I triumph in thy loss,

First by dishonouring thee, and then by turning

False pleasure to true ignominy.

[EXIT.]

JUSTINA: I

Appeal to Heaven against thee; so that Heaven

May scatter thy delusions, and the blot 145

Upon my fame vanish in idle thought,

Even as flame dies in the envious air,

And as the floweret wanes at morning frost;

And thou shouldst never—But, alas! to whom

Do I still speak?—Did not a man but now 150

Stand here before me?—No, I am alone,

And yet I saw him. Is he gone so quickly?

Or can the heated mind engender shapes

From its own fear? Some terrible and strange

Peril is near. Lisander! father! lord! 155

Livia!—

[ENTER LISANDER AND LIVIA.]

LISANDER:

Oh, my daughter! What?



LIVIA:
What!

JUSTINA:
Saw you
A man go forth from my apartment now?—
I scarce contain myself!



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LISANDER:
A man here!

JUSTINA:
Have you not seen him?

LIVIA:
No, Lady.

JUSTINA: I saw him.

LISANDER: 'Tis impossible; the doors *160*
Which led to this apartment were all locked.

LIVIA [ASIDE]:
I daresay it was Moscon whom she saw,
For he was locked up in my room.

LISANDER:
It must
Have been some image of thy fantasy.
Such melancholy as thou feedest is *165*
Skilful in forming such in the vain air
Out of the motes and atoms of the day.

LIVIA:
My master's in the right.

JUSTINA:
Oh, would it were
Delusion; but I fear some greater ill.
I feel as if out of my bleeding bosom *170*
My heart was torn in fragments; ay,
Some mortal spell is wrought against my frame;
So potent was the charm that, had not God
Shielded my humble innocence from wrong,
I should have sought my sorrow and my shame 175
With willing steps.—Livia, quick, bring my cloak,
For I must seek refuge from these extremes
Even in the temple of the highest God
Where secretly the faithful worship.

LIVIA:
Here.



NOTE:

179 Where Rossetti; Which 1824.

JUSTINA [PUTTING ON HER CLOAK]:

In this, as in a shroud of snow, may I *180*
Quench the consuming fire in which I burn,
Wasting away!

LISANDER:

And I will go with thee.

LIVIA:

When I once see them safe out of the house
I shall breathe freely.

JUSTINA:

So do I confide
In thy just favour, Heaven!

LISANDER:

Let us go. *185*

JUSTINA:

Thine is the cause, great God! turn for my sake,
And for Thine own, mercifully to me!

STANZAS FROM CALDERON'S CISMA DE INGLATERRA.

TRANSLATED BY MEDWIN AND CORRECTED BY SHELLEY.

[Published by Medwin, "Life of Shelley", 1847, with Shelley's corrections in "."]

1.

Hast thou not seen, officious with delight,
Move through the illumined air about the flower
The Bee, that fears to drink its purple light,
Lest danger lurk within that Rose's bower?
Hast thou not marked the moth's enamoured flight *5*
About the Taper's flame at evening hour;
'Till kindle in that monumental fire
His sunflower wings their own funereal pyre?

2.

My heart, its wishes trembling to unfold.



Thus round the Rose and Taper hovering came, 10
*'And Passion's slave, Distrust, in ashes cold.
Smothered awhile, but could not quench the flame,'—*
*Till Love, that grows by disappointment bold,
And Opportunity, had conquered Shame;
And like the Bee and Moth, in act to close, 15*
'I burned my wings, and settled on the Rose.'



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SCENES FROM THE FAUST OF GOETHE.

[Published in part (Scene 2) in "The Liberal", No. 1, 1822; in full, by Mrs. Shelley, "Posthumous Poems", 1824.]

SCENE 1.—PROLOGUE IN HEAVEN.

THE LORD AND THE HOST OF HEAVEN.

ENTER THREE ARCHANGELS.

RAPHAEL:

The sun makes music as of old
Amid the rival spheres of Heaven,
On its predestined circle rolled
With thunder speed: the Angels even
Draw strength from gazing on its glance, 5
*Though none its meaning fathom may:—
The world's unwithered countenance
Is bright as at Creation's day.*

GABRIEL:

And swift and swift, with rapid lightness,
The adorned Earth spins silently, 10
*Alternating Elysian brightness
With deep and dreadful night; the sea
Foams in broad billows from the deep
Up to the rocks, and rocks and Ocean,
Onward, with spheres which never sleep, 15
Are hurried in eternal motion.*

MICHAEL:

And tempests in contention roar
From land to sea, from sea to land;
And, raging, weave a chain of power,
Which girds the earth, as with a band.— 20
*A flashing desolation there,
Flames before the thunder's way;
But Thy servants, Lord, revere
The gentle changes of Thy day.*



CHORUS OF THE THREE:

The Angels draw strength from Thy glance, 25
*Though no one comprehend Thee may;—
Thy world's unwithered countenance
Is bright as on Creation's day.*

NOTE:

28 (RAPHAEL):

*The sun sounds, according to ancient custom,
In the song of emulation of his brother-spheres.
And its fore-written circle
Fulfils with a step of thunder.
Its countenance gives the Angels strength
Though no one can fathom it.
The incredible high works
Are excellent as at the first day.*

GABRIEL:

And swift, and inconceivably swift
The adornment of earth winds itself round,
And exchanges Paradise-clearness
With deep dreadful night.
The sea foams in broad waves
From its deep bottom, up to the rocks,
And rocks and sea are torn on together
In the eternal swift course of the spheres.

MICHAEL:

And storms roar in emulation
From sea to land, from land to sea,
And make, raging, a chain
Of deepest operation round about.
There flames a flashing destruction
Before the path of the thunderbolt.
But Thy servants, Lord, revere
The gentle alternations of Thy day.

CHORUS:

Thy countenance gives the Angels strength,
Though none can comprehend Thee:
And all Thy lofty works
Are excellent as at the first day.

Such is a literal translation of this astonishing chorus; it is impossible to represent in another language the melody of the versification; even the volatile strength and delicacy of the ideas escape in the crucible of translation, and the reader is surprised to find a caput mortuum.—[SHELLEY'S NOTE.]



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[ENTER MEPHISTOPHELES.]

MEPHISTOPHELES:

As thou, O Lord, once more art kind enough
To interest Thyself in our affairs, 30
And ask, 'How goes it with you there below?'
And as indulgently at other times
Thou tookest not my visits in ill part,
Thou seest me here once more among Thy household.
Though I should scandalize this company, 35
You will excuse me if I do not talk
In the high style which they think fashionable;
My pathos certainly would make You laugh too,
Had You not long since given over laughing.
Nothing know I to say of suns and worlds; 40
I observe only how men plague themselves;—
The little god o' the world keeps the same stamp,
As wonderful as on creation's day:—
A little better would he live, hadst Thou
Not given him a glimpse of Heaven's light 45
Which he calls reason, and employs it only
To live more beastlily than any beast.
With reverence to Your Lordship be it spoken,
He's like one of those long-legged grasshoppers,
Who flits and jumps about, and sings for ever 50
The same old song i' the grass. There let him lie,
Burying his nose in every heap of dung.

NOTES: 38 *certainly would* editions 1839; *would certainly* 1824. 47 *beastlily* 1824; *beastily* editions 1839.

THE LORD:

Have you no more to say? Do you come here
Always to scold, and cavil, and complain?
Seems nothing ever right to you on earth? 55

MEPHISTOPHELES:

No, Lord! I find all there, as ever, bad at best.
Even I am sorry for man's days of sorrow;
I could myself almost give up the pleasure
Of plaguing the poor things.

THE LORD:

Knowest thou Faust?



MEPHISTOPHELES:
The Doctor?

THE LORD:
Ay; My servant Faust.

MEPHISTOPHELES:
In truth 60
*He serves You in a fashion quite his own;
And the fool's meat and drink are not of earth.
His aspirations bear him on so far
That he is half aware of his own folly,
For he demands from Heaven its fairest star, 65
And from the earth the highest joy it bears,
Yet all things far, and all things near, are vain
To calm the deep emotions of his breast.*

THE LORD:
Though he now serves Me in a cloud of error,
I will soon lead him forth to the clear day. 70
*When trees look green, full well the gardener knows
That fruits and blooms will deck the coming year.*

MEPHISTOPHELES:
What will You bet?—now am sure of winning—
Only, observe You give me full permission
To lead him softly on my path.

THE LORD:
As long 75
*As he shall live upon the earth, so long
Is nothing unto thee forbidden—Man
Must err till he has ceased to struggle.*



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MEPHISTOPHELES:

Thanks.

And that is all I ask; for willingly

I never make acquaintance with the dead. 80

The full fresh cheeks of youth are food for me,

And if a corpse knocks, I am not at home.

For I am like a cat—I like to play

A little with the mouse before I eat it.

THE LORD:

Well, well! it is permitted thee. Draw thou 85

His spirit from its springs; as thou find'st power

Seize him and lead him on thy downward path;

And stand ashamed when failure teaches thee

That a good man, even in his darkest longings,

Is well aware of the right way.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Well and good. 90

I am not in much doubt about my bet,

And if I lose, then 'tis Your turn to crow;

Enjoy Your triumph then with a full breast.

Ay; dust shall he devour, and that with pleasure,

Like my old paramour, the famous Snake. 95

THE LORD:

Pray come here when it suits you; for I never

Had much dislike for people of your sort.

And, among all the Spirits who rebelled,

The knave was ever the least tedious to Me.

The active spirit of man soon sleeps, and soon 100

He seeks unbroken quiet; therefore I

Have given him the Devil for a companion,

Who may provoke him to some sort of work,

And must create forever.—But ye, pure

Children of God, enjoy eternal beauty;— 105

Let that which ever operates and lives

Clasp you within the limits of its love;

And seize with sweet and melancholy thoughts

The floating phantoms of its loveliness.

[HEAVEN CLOSES; THE ARCHANGELS EXEUNT.]



MEPHISTOPHELES:

From time to time I visit the old fellow, *110*
And I take care to keep on good terms with Him.
Civil enough is the same God Almighty,
To talk so freely with the Devil himself.

SCENE 2.—MAY-DAY NIGHT.

THE HARTZ MOUNTAIN, A DESOLATE COUNTRY.

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Would you not like a broomstick? As for me
I wish I had a good stout ram to ride;
For we are still far from the appointed place.

FAUST:

This knotted staff is help enough for me,
Whilst I feel fresh upon my legs. What good 5
Is there in making short a pleasant way?
To creep along the labyrinths of the vales,
And climb those rocks, where ever-babbling springs,
Precipitate themselves in waterfalls,
Is the true sport that seasons such a path. 10
Already Spring kindles the birchen spray,
And the hoar pines already feel her breath:
Shall she not work also within our limbs?



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MEPHISTOPHELES:

Nothing of such an influence do I feel.
My body is all wintry, and I wish 15
The flowers upon our path were frost and snow.
But see how melancholy rises now,
Dimly uplifting her belated beam,
The blank unwelcome round of the red moon,
And gives so bad a light, that every step 20
One stumbles 'gainst some crag. With your permission,
I'll call on Ignis-fatuus to our aid:
I see one yonder burning jollily.
Halloo, my friend! may I request that you
Would favour us with your bright company? 25
Why should you blaze away there to no purpose?
Pray be so good as light us up this way.

IGNIS-FATUUS:

With reverence be it spoken, I will try
To overcome the lightness of my nature;
Our course, you know, is generally zigzag. 30

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Ha, ha! your worship thinks you have to deal
With men. Go straight on, in the Devil's name,
Or I shall puff your flickering life out.

NOTE:

33 shall puff 1824; will blow 1822.

IGNIS-FATUUS:

Well,
I see you are the master of the house;
I will accommodate myself to you. 35
Only consider that to-night this mountain
Is all enchanted, and if Jack-a-lantern
Shows you his way, though you should miss your own,
You ought not to be too exact with him.

FAUST, MEPHISTOPHELES, AND IGNIS-FATUUS, IN ALTERNATE CHORUS:

The limits of the sphere of dream, 40
The bounds of true and false, are past.
Lead us on, thou wandering Gleam,
Lead us onward, far and fast,
To the wide, the desert waste.



But see, how swift advance and shift 45
Trees behind trees, row by row,—
How, clift by clift, rocks bend and lift
Their frowning foreheads as we go.
The giant-snouted crags, ho! ho!
How they snort, and how they blow! 50

Through the mossy sods and stones,
Stream and streamlet hurry down—
A rushing throng! A sound of song
Beneath the vault of Heaven is blown!
Sweet notes of love, the speaking tones 55
Of this bright day, sent down to say
That Paradise on Earth is known,
Resound around, beneath, above.
All we hope and all we love
Finds a voice in this blithe strain, 60
Which wakens hill and wood and rill,
And vibrates far o'er field and vale,
And which Echo, like the tale
Of old times, repeats again.



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To-who! to-who! near, nearer now 65
The sound of song, the rushing throng!
Are the screech, the lapwing, and the jay,
All awake as if 'twere day?
See, with long legs and belly wide,
A salamander in the brake! 70
Every root is like a snake,
And along the loose hillside,
With strange contortions through the night,
Curls, to seize or to affright;
And, animated, strong, and many, 75
They dart forth polypus-antennae,
To blister with their poison spume
The wanderer. Through the dazzling gloom
The many-coloured mice, that thread
The dewy turf beneath our tread, 80
In troops each other's motions cross,
Through the heath and through the moss;
And, in legions intertangled,
The fire-flies flit, and swarm, and throng,
Till all the mountain depths are spangled. 85

Tell me, shall we go or stay?
Shall we onward? Come along!
Everything around is swept
Forward, onward, far away!
Trees and masses intercept 90
The sight, and wisps on every side
Are puffed up and multiplied.

NOTES: 48 *frowning*/*fawning* 1822. 70 brake 1824; lake 1822.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Now vigorously seize my skirt, and gain
This pinnacle of isolated crag.
One may observe with wonder from this point, 95
How Mammon glows among the mountains.

FAUST:

Ay—
And strangely through the solid depth below
A melancholy light, like the red dawn,
Shoots from the lowest gorge of the abyss
Of mountains, lightning hitherward: there rise 100



*Pillars of smoke, here clouds float gently by;
Here the light burns soft as the enkindled air,
Or the illumined dust of golden flowers;
And now it glides like tender colours spreading;
And now bursts forth in fountains from the earth; 105
And now it winds, one torrent of broad light,
Through the far valley with a hundred veins;
And now once more within that narrow corner
Masses itself into intensest splendour.
And near us, see, sparks spring out of the ground, 110
Like golden sand scattered upon the darkness;
The pinnacles of that black wall of mountains
That hems us in are kindled.*

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Rare: in faith!

Does not Sir Mammon gloriously illuminate
His palace for this festival?—it is 115
*A pleasure which you had not known before.
I spy the boisterous guests already.*

FAUST:

How

The children of the wind rage in the air!
With what fierce strokes they fall upon my neck!



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NOTE:

117 How 1824; Now 1822.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Cling tightly to the old ribs of the crag. 120
*Beware! for if with them thou warrest
In their fierce flight towards the wilderness,
Their breath will sweep thee into dust, and drag
Thy body to a grave in the abyss.
A cloud thickens the night. 125*
Hark! how the tempest crashes through the forest!
The owls fly out in strange affright;
The columns of the evergreen palaces
Are split and shattered;
The roots creak, and stretch, and groan; 130
*And ruinously overthrown,
The trunks are crushed and shattered
By the fierce blast's unconquerable stress.
Over each other crack and crash they all
In terrible and intertangled fall; 135*
And through the ruins of the shaken mountain
The airs hiss and howl—
It is not the voice of the fountain,
Nor the wolf in his midnight prowl.
Dost thou not hear? 140
*Strange accents are ringing
Aloft, afar, anear?
The witches are singing!
The torrent of a raging wizard song
Streams the whole mountain along. 145*

NOTE:

132 shattered]scattered Rossetti.

CHORUS OF WITCHES:

The stubble is yellow, the corn is green,
Now to the Brocken the witches go;
The mighty multitude here may be seen
Gathering, wizard and witch, below.
Sir Urian is sitting aloft in the air; 150
*Hey over stock! and hey over stone!
'Twixt witches and incubi, what shall be done?
Tell it who dare! tell it who dare!*



NOTE:

150 Urian]Urean editions 1824, 1839.

A VOICE:

Upon a sow-swine, whose farrows were nine,
Old Baubo rideth alone. 155

CHORUS:

Honour her, to whom honour is due,
Old mother Baubo, honour to you!
An able sow, with old Baubo upon her,
Is worthy of glory, and worthy of honour!
The legion of witches is coming behind, 160
Darkening the night, and outspeeding the wind—

A VOICE:

Which way comest thou?

A VOICE:

Over Ilsenstein;
The owl was awake in the white moonshine;
I saw her at rest in her downy nest,
And she stared at me with her broad, bright eyne. 165

NOTE:

165 eyne 1839, 2nd edition; eye 1822, 1824, 1839, 1st edition.

VOICES:

And you may now as well take your course on to Hell,
Since you ride by so fast on the headlong blast.

A VOICE:

She dropped poison upon me as I passed.
Here are the wounds—

CHORUS OF WITCHES:

Come away! come along!
The way is wide, the way is long, 170
*But what is that for a Bedlam throng?
Stick with the prong, and scratch with the broom.
The child in the cradle lies strangled at home,
And the mother is clapping her hands.—*



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SEMICHORUS OF WIZARDS 1:

We glide in

Like snails when the women are all away; 175

And from a house once given over to sin

Woman has a thousand steps to stray.

SEMICHORUS 2:

A thousand steps must a woman take,

Where a man but a single spring will make.

VOICES ABOVE:

Come with us, come with us, from Felsensee. 180

NOTE:

180 Felsensee 1862 ("Relics of Shelley", page 96);

Felumee 1822; Felunsee editions 1824, 1839.

VOICES BELOW:

With what joy would we fly through the upper sky!

We are washed, we are 'nointed, stark naked are we;

But our toil and our pain are forever in vain.

NOTE:

183 are editions 1839; is 1822, 1824.

BOTH CHORUSES:

The wind is still, the stars are fled, 185

The melancholy moon is dead;

The magic notes, like spark on spark,

Drizzle, whistling through the dark. Come away!

VOICES BELOW:

Stay, Oh, stay!

VOICES ABOVE:

Out of the crannies of the rocks 190

Who calls?

VOICES BELOW:

Oh, let me join your flocks!

I, three hundred years have striven

To catch your skirt and mount to Heaven,—

And still in vain. Oh, might I be

With company akin to me! 195



BOTH CHORUSES:

Some on a ram and some on a prong,
On poles and on broomsticks we flutter along;
Forlorn is the wight who can rise not to-night.

A HALF-WITCH BELOW:

I have been tripping this many an hour:
Are the others already so far before? 200
No quiet at home, and no peace abroad!
And less methinks is found by the road.

CHORUS OF WITCHES:

Come onward, away! aroint thee, aroint!
A witch to be strong must anoint—anoint—
Then every trough will be boat enough; 205
With a rag for a sail we can sweep through the sky,
Who flies not to-night, when means he to fly?

BOTH CHORUSES:

We cling to the skirt, and we strike on the ground;
Witch-legions thicken around and around;
Wizard-swarms cover the heath all over. 210

[THEY DESCEND.]

MEPHISTOPHELES:

What thronging, dashing, raging, rustling;
What whispering, babbling, hissing, bustling;
What glimmering, spurting, stinking, burning,
As Heaven and Earth were overturning.
There is a true witch element about us; 215
Take hold on me, or we shall be divided:—
Where are you?

NOTE:

217 *What! wanting, 1822.*

FAUST [FROM A DISTANCE]:

Here!



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MEPHISTOPHELES:

What!

I must exert my authority in the house.

Place for young Voland! pray make way, good people.

Take hold on me, doctor, an with one step 220

Let us escape from this unpleasant crowd:

They are too mad for people of my sort.

Just there shines a peculiar kind of light—

Something attracts me in those bushes. Come

This way: we shall slip down there in a minute. 225

FAUST:

Spirit of Contradiction! Well, lead on—

'Twere a wise feat indeed to wander out

Into the Brocken upon May-day night,

And then to isolate oneself in scorn,

Disgusted with the humours of the time. 230

MEPHISTOPHELES:

See yonder, round a many-coloured flame

A merry club is huddled altogether:

Even with such little people as sit there

One would not be alone.

FAUST:

Would that I were

Up yonder in the glow and whirling smoke, 235

Where the blind million rush impetuously

To meet the evil ones; there might I solve

Many a riddle that torments me.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Yet

Many a riddle there is tied anew

Inextricably. Let the great world rage! 240

We will stay here safe in the quiet dwellings.

'Tis an old custom. Men have ever built

Their own small world in the great world of all.

I see young witches naked there, and old ones

Wisely attired with greater decency. 245

Be guided now by me, and you shall buy

A pound of pleasure with a dram of trouble.

I hear them tune their instruments—one must

Get used to this damned scraping. Come, I'll lead you



Among them; and what there you do and see, 250
As a fresh compact 'twixt us two shall be.
How say you now? this space is wide enough—
Look forth, you cannot see the end of it—
An hundred bonfires burn in rows, and they
Who throng around them seem innumerable: 255
Dancing and drinking, jabbering, making love,
And cooking, are at work. Now tell me, friend,
What is there better in the world than this?

NOTE:

254 An 1824; A editions 1839.

FAUST:

In introducing us, do you assume
The character of Wizard or of Devil? 260

MEPHISTOPHELES:

In truth, I generally go about
In strict incognito; and yet one likes
To wear one's orders upon gala days.
I have no ribbon at my knee; but here
At home, the cloven foot is honourable. 265
See you that snail there?—she comes creeping up,
And with her feeling eyes hath smelt out something.
I could not, if I would, mask myself here.
Come now, we'll go about from fire to fire:
I'll be the Pimp, and you shall be the Lover. 270
[TO SOME OLD WOMEN, WHO ARE SITTING ROUND A HEAP OF GLIMMERING
COALS.]
Old gentlewomen, what do you do out here?
You ought to be with the young rioters
Right in the thickest of the revelry—
But every one is best content at home.



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NOTE:

264 my wanting, 1822.

General.

Who dare confide in right or a just claim? 275
*So much as I had done for them! and now—
With women and the people 'tis the same,
Youth will stand foremost ever,—age may go
To the dark grave unhonoured.*

NOTE:

275 right editions 1824, 1839; night 1822.

MINISTER:

Nowadays

People assert their rights: they go too far; 280
*But as for me, the good old times I praise;
Then we were all in all—'twas something worth
One's while to be in place and wear a star;
That was indeed the golden age on earth.*

PARVENU:

We too are active, and we did and do 285
*What we ought not, perhaps; and yet we now
Will seize, whilst all things are whirled round and round,
A spoke of Fortune's wheel, and keep our ground.*

NOTE:

285 Parvenu: (Note) A sort of fundholder 1822, editions 1824, 1839.

AUTHOR:

Who now can taste a treatise of deep sense
And ponderous volume? 'tis impertinence 290
*To write what none will read, therefore will I
To please the young and thoughtless people try.*

NOTE:

290 ponderous 1824; wonderous 1822.

MEPHISTOPHELES [WHO AT ONCE APPEARS TO HAVE GROWN VERY OLD]:

I

find the people ripe for the last day,
Since I last came up to the wizard mountain;



And as my little cask runs turbid now, 295
So is the world drained to the dregs.

PEDLAR-WITCH:

Look here,
Gentlemen; do not hurry on so fast;
And lose the chance of a good pennyworth.
I have a pack full of the choicest wares
Of every sort, and yet in all my bundle 300
Is nothing like what may be found on earth;
Nothing that in a moment will make rich
Men and the world with fine malicious mischief—
There is no dagger drunk with blood; no bowl
From which consuming poison may be drained 305
By innocent and healthy lips; no jewel,
The price of an abandoned maiden's shame;
No sword which cuts the bond it cannot loose,
Or stabs the wearer's enemy in the back;
No—

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Gossip, you know little of these times. 310
What has been, has been; what is done, is past,
They shape themselves into the innovations
They breed, and innovation drags us with it.
The torrent of the crowd sweeps over us:
You think to impel, and are yourself impelled. 315

FAUST:

What is that yonder?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Mark her well. It is
Lilith.

FAUST:

Who?

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Lilith, the first wife of Adam.
Beware of her fair hair, for she excels
All women in the magic of her locks;
And when she winds them round a young man's neck, 320
She will not ever set him free again.



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FAUST:

There sit a girl and an old woman—they
Seem to be tired with pleasure and with play.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

There is no rest to-night for any one:
When one dance ends another is begun; 325
Come, let us to it. We shall have rare fun.

[FAUST DANCES AND SINGS WITH A GIRL, AND MEPHISTOPHELES WITH AN OLD WOMAN.]

FAUST:

I had once a lovely dream
In which I saw an apple-tree,
Where two fair apples with their gleam
To climb and taste attracted me. 330

NOTES:

327-334 So Boscombe manuscript ("Westminster Review", July, 1870);
wanting, 1822, 1824, 1839.

THE GIRL:

She with apples you desired
From Paradise came long ago:
With you I feel that if required,
Such still within my garden grow.

...

PROCTO-PHANTASMIST:

What is this cursed multitude about? 335
*Have we not long since proved to demonstration
That ghosts move not on ordinary feet?
But these are dancing just like men and women.*

NOTE:

335 Procto-Phantasmist]Brocto-Phantasmist editions 1824, 1839.

THE GIRL:

What does he want then at our ball?

FAUST:

Oh! he
Is far above us all in his conceit: 340



*Whilst we enjoy, he reasons of enjoyment;
And any step which in our dance we tread,
If it be left out of his reckoning,
Is not to be considered as a step.
There are few things that scandalize him not: 345
And when you whirl round in the circle now,
As he went round the wheel in his old mill,
He says that you go wrong in all respects,
Especially if you congratulate him
Upon the strength of the resemblance.*

PROCTO-PHANTASMIST:

Fly! 350

*Vanish! Unheard-of impudence! What, still there!
In this enlightened age too, since you have been
Proved not to exist!—But this infernal brood
Will hear no reason and endure no rule.
Are we so wise, and is the POND still haunted? 355
How long have I been sweeping out this rubbish
Of superstition, and the world will not
Come clean with all my pains!—it is a case
Unheard of!*

NOTE:

355 pond wanting in Boscombe manuscript.

THE GIRL:

Then leave off teasing us so.

PROCTO-PHANTASMIST:

*I tell you, spirits, to your faces now, 360
That I should not regret this despotism
Of spirits, but that mine can wield it not.
To-night I shall make poor work of it,
Yet I will take a round with you, and hope
Before my last step in the living dance 365
To beat the poet and the devil together.*



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MEPHISTOPHELES:

At last he will sit down in some foul puddle;
That is his way of solacing himself;
Until some leech, diverted with his gravity,
Cures him of spirits and the spirit together. 370
[TO FAUST, WHO HAS SECEDED FROM THE DANCE.]
Why do you let that fair girl pass from you,
Who sung so sweetly to you in the dance?

FAUST:

A red mouse in the middle of her singing
Sprung from her mouth.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

That was all right, my friend:
Be it enough that the mouse was not gray. 375
Do not disturb your hour of happiness
With close consideration of such trifles.

FAUST:

Then saw I—

MEPHISTOPHELES:

What?

FAUST:

Seest thou not a pale,
Fair girl, standing alone, far, far away?
She drags herself now forward with slow steps, 380
And seems as if she moved with shackled feet:
I cannot overcome the thought that she
Is like poor Margaret.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Let it be—pass on—
No good can come of it—it is not well
To meet it—it is an enchanted phantom, 385
A lifeless idol; with its numbing look,
It freezes up the blood of man; and they
Who meet its ghastly stare are turned to stone,
Like those who saw Medusa.

FAUST:

Oh, too true!



Her eyes are like the eyes of a fresh corpse 390
Which no beloved hand has closed, alas!
That is the breast which Margaret yielded to me—
Those are the lovely limbs which I enjoyed!

NOTE:

392 breast editions 1839; heart 1822, 1824.

MEPHISTOPHELES:

It is all magic, poor deluded fool!
She looks to every one like his first love. 395

FAUST:

Oh, what delight! what woe! I cannot turn
My looks from her sweet piteous countenance.
How strangely does a single blood-red line,
Not broader than the sharp edge of a knife,
Adorn her lovely neck!

MEPHISTOPHELES:

Ay, she can carry 400
Her head under her arm upon occasion;
Perseus has cut it off for her. These pleasures
End in delusion.—Gain this rising ground,
It is as airy here as in a...
And if I am not mightily deceived, 405
I see a theatre.—What may this mean?

ATTENDANT:

Quite a new piece, the last of seven, for 'tis
The custom now to represent that number.
'Tis written by a Dilettante, and
The actors who perform are Dilettanti; 410
Excuse me, gentlemen; but I must vanish.
I am a Dilettante curtain-lifter.

JUVENILIA.



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QUEEN MAB.

A PHILOSOPHICAL POEM, WITH NOTES.

[An edition (250 copies) of “Queen Mab” was printed at London in the summer of 1813 by Shelley himself, whose name, as author and printer, appears on the title-page (see “Bibliographical List”). Of this edition about seventy copies were privately distributed. Sections 1, 2, 8, and 9 were afterwards rehandled, and the intermediate sections here and there revised and altered; and of this new text sections 1 and 2 were published by Shelley in the “Alastor” volume of 1816, under the title, “The Daemon of the World”. The remainder lay unpublished till 1876, when sections 8 and 9 were printed by Mr. H. Buxton Forman, C.B., from a printed copy of “Queen Mab” with Shelley’s manuscript corrections. See “The Shelley Library”, pages 36-44, for a description of this copy, which is in Mr. Forman’s possession. Sources of the text are (1) the editio princeps of 1813; (2) text (with some omissions) in the “Poetical Works” of 1839, edited by Mrs. Shelley; (3) text (one line only wanting) in the 2nd edition of the “Poetical Works”, 1839 (same editor).

“Queen Mab” was probably written during the year 1812—it is first heard of at Lynmouth, August 18, 1812 (“Shelley Memorials”, page 39)—but the text may be assumed to include earlier material.]

ECRASEZ L'INFAME!—Correspondance de Voltaire.

Avia Pieridum peragro loca, nullius ante
Trita solo; juvat integros accedere fonteis;
Atque haurire: juvatque novos decerpere flores.

...

Unde prius nulli velarint tempora musae.
Primum quod magnis doceo de rebus; et arctis
Religionum animos nodis exsolvere pergo.—Lucret. lib. 4.

Dos pon sto, kai kosmon kineso.—Archimedes.

TO HARRIET *****.

Whose is the love that gleaming through the world,
Wards off the poisonous arrow of its scorn?
Whose is the warm and partial praise,
Virtue’s most sweet reward?



Beneath whose looks did my reviving soul 5
Riper in truth and virtuous daring grow?
Whose eyes have I gazed fondly on,
And loved mankind the more?

HARRIET! on thine:—thou wert my purer mind;
Thou wert the inspiration of my song; 10
Thine are these early wilding flowers,
Though garlanded by me.

Then press into thy breast this pledge of love;
And know, though time may change and years may roll,
Each floweret gathered in my heart 15
It consecrates to thine.

QUEEN MAB.

1.

How wonderful is Death,
Death and his brother Sleep!
One, pale as yonder waning moon
With lips of lurid blue;
The other, rosy as the morn 5
When throned on ocean's wave
It blushes o'er the world:
Yet both so passing wonderful!



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Hath then the gloomy Power
Whose reign is in the tainted sepulchres 10
Seized on her sinless soul?
Must then that peerless form
Which love and admiration cannot view
Without a beating heart, those azure veins
Which steal like streams along a field of snow, 15
That lovely outline, which is fair
As breathing marble, perish?
Must putrefaction's breath
Leave nothing of this heavenly sight
But loathsomeness and ruin? 20
Spare nothing but a gloomy theme,
On which the lightest heart might moralize?
Or is it only a sweet slumber
Stealing o'er sensation,
Which the breath of roseate morning 25
Chaseth into darkness?
Will Ianthe wake again,
And give that faithful bosom joy
Whose sleepless spirit waits to catch
Light, life and rapture from her smile? 30

Yes! she will wake again,
Although her glowing limbs are motionless,
And silent those sweet lips,
Once breathing eloquence,
That might have soothed a tiger's rage, 35
Or thawed the cold heart of a conqueror.
Her dewy eyes are closed,
And on their lids, whose texture fine
Scarce hides the dark blue orbs beneath,
The baby Sleep is pillowed: 40
Her golden tresses shade
The bosom's stainless pride,
Curling like tendrils of the parasite
Around a marble column.

Hark! whence that rushing sound? 45
'Tis like the wondrous strain
That round a lonely ruin swells,
Which, wandering on the echoing shore,
The enthusiast hears at evening:
'Tis softer than the west wind's sigh; 50



'Tis wilder than the unmeasured notes
Of that strange lyre whose strings
The genii of the breezes sweep:
Those lines of rainbow light
Are like the moonbeams when they fall 55
Through some cathedral window, but the tints
Are such as may not find
Comparison on earth.

Behold the chariot of the Fairy Queen!
Celestial coursers paw the unyielding air; 60
Their filmy pennons at her word they furl,
And stop obedient to the reins of light:
These the Queen of Spells drew in,
She spread a charm around the spot,
And leaning graceful from the aethereal car, 65
Long did she gaze, and silently,
Upon the slumbering maid.

Oh! not the visioned poet in his dreams,
When silvery clouds float through the 'wildered brain,
When every sight of lovely, wild and grand 70
Astonishes, enraptures, elevates,
When fancy at a glance combines
The wondrous and the beautiful,—
So bright, so fair, so wild a shape
Hath ever yet beheld, 75
As that which reined the coursers of the air,
And poured the magic of her gaze
Upon the maiden's sleep.



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The broad and yellow moon
Shone dimly through her form— 80
*That form of faultless symmetry;
The pearly and pellucid car
Moved not the moonlight's line:
'Twas not an earthly pageant:
Those who had looked upon the sight, 85
Passing all human glory,
Saw not the yellow moon,
Saw not the mortal scene,
Heard not the night-wind's rush,
Heard not an earthly sound, 90
Saw but the fairy pageant,
Heard but the heavenly strains
That filled the lonely dwelling.*

The Fairy's frame was slight, yon fibrous cloud,
That catches but the palest tinge of even, 95
*And which the straining eye can hardly seize
When melting into eastern twilight's shadow,
Were scarce so thin, so slight; but the fair star
That gems the glittering coronet of morn,
Sheds not a light so mild, so powerful, 100
As that which, bursting from the Fairy's form,
Spread a purpureal halo round the scene,
Yet with an undulating motion,
Swayed to her outline gracefully.*

From her celestial car 105
*The Fairy Queen descended,
And thrice she waved her wand
Circled with wreaths of amaranth:
Her thin and misty form
Moved with the moving air, 110
And the clear silver tones,
As thus she spoke, were such
As are unheard by all but gifted ear.*

FAIRY:
'Stars! your balmiest influence shed!
Elements! your wrath suspend! 115
*Sleep, Ocean, in the rocky bounds
That circle thy domain!
Let not a breath be seen to stir*



*Around yon grass-grown ruin's height,
Let even the restless gossamer 120
Sleep on the moveless air!
Soul of Ianthe! thou,
Judged alone worthy of the envied boon,
That waits the good and the sincere; that waits
Those who have struggled, and with resolute will 125
Vanquished earth's pride and meanness, burst the chains,
The icy chains of custom, and have shone
The day-stars of their age;—Soul of Ianthe!
Awake! arise!*

*Sudden arose 130
Ianthe's Soul; it stood
All beautiful in naked purity,
The perfect semblance of its bodily frame.
Instinct with inexpressible beauty and grace,
Each stain of earthliness 135
Had passed away, it reassumed
Its native dignity, and stood
Immortal amid ruin.*



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Upon the couch the body lay
Wrapped in the depth of slumber: 140
*Its features were fixed and meaningless,
Yet animal life was there,
And every organ yet performed
Its natural functions: 'twas a sight
Of wonder to behold the body and soul. 145*
The self-same lineaments, the same
Marks of identity were there:
Yet, oh, how different! One aspires to Heaven,
Pants for its sempiternal heritage,
And ever-changing, ever-rising still, 150
*Wantons in endless being.
The other, for a time the unwilling sport
Of circumstance and passion, struggles on;
Fleets through its sad duration rapidly:
Then, like an useless and worn-out machine, 155*
Rots, perishes, and passes.

FAIRY:

'Spirit! who hast dived so deep;
Spirit! who hast soared so high;
Thou the fearless, thou the mild,
Accept the boon thy worth hath earned, 160
Ascend the car with me.'

SPIRIT:

'Do I dream? Is this new feeling
But a visioned ghost of slumber?
If indeed I am a soul,
A free, a disembodied soul, 165
Speak again to me.'

FAIRY:

'I am the Fairy MAB: to me 'tis given
The wonders of the human world to keep:
The secrets of the immeasurable past,
In the unfailing consciences of men, 170
*Those stern, unflattering chroniclers, I find:
The future, from the causes which arise
In each event, I gather: not the sting
Which retributive memory implants
In the hard bosom of the selfish man; 175*
Nor that ecstatic and exulting throb



Which virtue's votary feels when he sums up
The thoughts and actions of a well-spent day,
Are unforeseen, unregistered by me:
And it is yet permitted me, to rend 180
*The veil of mortal frailty, that the spirit,
Clothed in its changeless purity, may know
How soonest to accomplish the great end
For which it hath its being, and may taste
That peace, which in the end all life will share. 185*
This is the meed of virtue; happy Soul,
Ascend the car with me!

The chains of earth's immurement
Fell from lanthe's spirit;
They shrank and brake like bandages of straw 190
*Beneath a wakened giant's strength.
She knew her glorious change,
And felt in apprehension uncontrolled
New raptures opening round:
Each day-dream of her mortal life, 195*
Each frenzied vision of the slumbers
That closed each well-spent day,
Seemed now to meet reality.

The Fairy and the Soul proceeded;
The silver clouds departed; 200
*And as the car of magic they ascended,
Again the speechless music swelled,
Again the coursers of the air
Unfurled their azure pennons, and the Queen
Shaking the beamy reins 205*
Bade them pursue their way.



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The magic car moved on.
The night was fair, and countless stars
Studded Heaven's dark blue vault,—
Just o'er the eastern wave 210
Peeped the first faint smile of morn:—
The magic car moved on—
From the celestial hoofs
The atmosphere in flaming sparkles flew,
And where the burning wheels 215
Eddied above the mountain's loftiest peak,
Was traced a line of lightning.
Now it flew far above a rock,
The utmost verge of earth,
The rival of the Andes, whose dark brow 220
Lowered o'er the silver sea.

Far, far below the chariot's path,
Calm as a slumbering babe,
Tremendous Ocean lay.
The mirror of its stillness showed 225
The pale and waning stars,
The chariot's fiery track,
And the gray light of morn
Tinging those fleecy clouds
That canopied the dawn. 230
Seemed it, that the chariot's way
Lay through the midst of an immense concave,
Radiant with million constellations, tinged
With shades of infinite colour,
And semicircled with a belt 235
Flashing incessant meteors.

The magic car moved on.
As they approached their goal
The coursers seemed to gather speed;
The sea no longer was distinguished; earth 240
Appeared a vast and shadowy sphere;
The sun's unclouded orb
Rolled through the black concave;
Its rays of rapid light
Parted around the chariot's swifter course, 245
And fell, like ocean's feathery spray
Dashed from the boiling surge
Before a vessel's prow.



The magic car moved on.
Earth's distant orb appeared 250
*The smallest light that twinkles in the heaven;
Whilst round the chariot's way
Innumerable systems rolled,
And countless spheres diffused
An ever-varying glory. 255*
It was a sight of wonder: some
Were horned like the crescent moon;
Some shed a mild and silver beam
Like Hesperus o'er the western sea;
Some dashed athwart with trains of flame, 260
*Like worlds to death and ruin driven;
Some shone like suns, and, as the chariot passed,
Eclipsed all other light.*

Spirit of Nature! here!
In this interminable wilderness 265
*Of worlds, at whose immensity
Even soaring fancy staggers,
Here is thy fitting temple.
Yet not the lightest leaf
That quivers to the passing breeze 270*
Is less instinct with thee:
Yet not the meanest worm
That lurks in graves and fattens on the dead
Less shares thy eternal breath.
Spirit of Nature! thou! 275
*Imperishable as this scene,
Here is thy fitting temple.*



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2.

If solitude hath ever led thy steps
To the wild Ocean's echoing shore,
And thou hast lingered there,
Until the sun's broad orb
Seemed resting on the burnished wave, 5
*Thou must have marked the lines
Of purple gold, that motionless
Hung o'er the sinking sphere:
Thou must have marked the billowy clouds
Edged with intolerable radiancy 10*
Towering like rocks of jet
Crowned with a diamond wreath.
And yet there is a moment,
When the sun's highest point
Peeps like a star o'er Ocean's western edge, 15
*When those far clouds of feathery gold,
Shaded with deepest purple, gleam
Like islands on a dark blue sea;
Then has thy fancy soared above the earth,
And furled its wearied wing 20*
Within the Fairy's fane.

Yet not the golden islands
Gleaming in yon flood of light,
Nor the feathery curtains
Stretching o'er the sun's bright couch, 25
*Nor the burnished Ocean waves
Paving that gorgeous dome,
So fair, so wonderful a sight
As Mab's aethereal palace could afford.
Yet likest evening's vault, that faery Hall! 30*
As Heaven, low resting on the wave, it spread
Its floors of flashing light,
Its vast and azure dome,
Its fertile golden islands
Floating on a silver sea; 35
*Whilst suns their mingling beamings darted
Through clouds of circumambient darkness,
And pearly battlements around
Looked o'er the immense of Heaven.*



The magic car no longer moved. 40
The Fairy and the Spirit
Entered the Hall of Spells:
Those golden clouds
That rolled in glittering billows
Beneath the azure canopy 45
With the aethereal footsteps trembled not:
The light and crimson mists,
Floating to strains of thrilling melody
Through that unearthly dwelling,
Yielded to every movement of the will. 50
Upon their passive swell the Spirit leaned,
And, for the varied bliss that pressed around,
Used not the glorious privilege
Of virtue and of wisdom.

'Spirit!' the Fairy said, 55
And pointed to the gorgeous dome,
'This is a wondrous sight
And mocks all human grandeur;
But, were it virtue's only meed, to dwell
In a celestial palace, all resigned 60
To pleasurable impulses, immured
Within the prison of itself, the will
Of changeless Nature would be unfulfilled.
Learn to make others happy. Spirit, come!
This is thine high reward:—the past shall rise; 65
Thou shalt behold the present; I will teach
The secrets of the future.'



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The Fairy and the Spirit
Approached the overhanging battlement.—
Below lay stretched the universe! 70
*There, far as the remotest line
That bounds imagination's flight,
Countless and unending orbs
In mazy motion intermingled,
Yet still fulfilled immutably 75*
Eternal Nature's law.
Above, below, around,
The circling systems formed
A wilderness of harmony;
Each with undeviating aim, 80
*In eloquent silence, through the depths of space
Pursued its wondrous way.*

There was a little light
That twinkled in the misty distance:
None but a spirit's eye 85
*Might ken that rolling orb;
None but a spirit's eye,
And in no other place
But that celestial dwelling, might behold
Each action of this earth's inhabitants. 90*
But matter, space and time
In those aerial mansions cease to act;
And all-prevailing wisdom, when it reaps
The harvest of its excellence, o'er-bounds
Those obstacles, of which an earthly soul 95
Fears to attempt the conquest.

The Fairy pointed to the earth.
The Spirit's intellectual eye
Its kindred beings recognized.
The thronging thousands, to a passing view, 100
*Seemed like an ant-hill's citizens.
How wonderful! that even
The passions, prejudices, interests,
That sway the meanest being, the weak touch
That moves the finest nerve, 105*
And in one human brain
Causes the faintest thought, becomes a link
In the great chain of Nature.



'Behold,' the Fairy cried,
'Palmyra's ruined palaces!— 110
Behold! where grandeur frowned;
Behold! where pleasure smiled;
What now remains?—the memory
Of senselessness and shame—
What is immortal there? 115
Nothing—it stands to tell
A melancholy tale, to give
An awful warning: soon
Oblivion will steal silently
The remnant of its fame. 120
Monarchs and conquerors there
Proud o'er prostrate millions trod—
The earthquakes of the human race;
Like them, forgotten when the ruin
That marks their shock is past. 125

'Beside the eternal Nile,
The Pyramids have risen.
Nile shall pursue his changeless way:
Those Pyramids shall fall;
Yea! not a stone shall stand to tell 130
The spot whereon they stood!
Their very site shall be forgotten,
As is their builder's name!



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'Behold yon sterile spot;
Where now the wandering Arab's tent 135
Flaps in the desert-blast.
There once old Salem's haughty fane
Reared high to Heaven its thousand golden domes,
And in the blushing face of day
Exposed its shameful glory. 140
Oh! many a widow, many an orphan cursed
The building of that fane; and many a father;
Worn out with toil and slavery, implored
The poor man's God to sweep it from the earth,
And spare his children the detested task 145
Of piling stone on stone, and poisoning
The choicest days of life,
To soothe a dotard's vanity.
There an inhuman and uncultured race
Howled hideous praises to their Demon-God; 150
They rushed to war, tore from the mother's womb
The unborn child,—old age and infancy
Promiscuous perished; their victorious arms
Left not a soul to breathe. Oh! they were fiends:
But what was he who taught them that the God 155
Of nature and benevolence hath given
A special sanction to the trade of blood?
His name and theirs are fading, and the tales
Of this barbarian nation, which imposture
Recites till terror credits, are pursuing 160
Itself into forgetfulness.

'Where Athens, Rome, and Sparta stood,
There is a moral desert now:
The mean and miserable huts,
The yet more wretched palaces, 165
Contrasted with those ancient fanes,
Now crumbling to oblivion;
The long and lonely colonnades,
Through which the ghost of Freedom stalks,
Seem like a well-known tune, 170
Which in some dear scene we have loved to hear,
Remembered now in sadness.
But, oh! how much more changed,
How gloomier is the contrast
Of human nature there! 175



*Where Socrates expired, a tyrant's slave,
A coward and a fool, spreads death around—
Then, shuddering, meets his own.
Where Cicero and Antoninus lived,
A coward and hypocritical monk 180
Prays, curses and deceives.*

*'Spirit, ten thousand years
Have scarcely passed away,
Since, in the waste where now the savage drinks
His enemy's blood, and aping Europe's sons, 185
Wakes the unholy song of war, Arose a stately city,
Metropolis of the western continent:
There, now, the mossy column-stone,
Indented by Time's unrelaxing grasp, 190
Which once appeared to brave
All, save its country's ruin;
There the wide forest scene,
Rude in the uncultivated loveliness
Of gardens long run wild, 195*



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*Seems, to the unwilling sojourner, whose steps
Chance in that desert has delayed,
Thus to have stood since earth was what it is.
Yet once it was the busiest haunt,
Whither, as to a common centre, flocked 200
Strangers, and ships, and merchandise:
Once peace and freedom blessed
The cultivated plain:
But wealth, that curse of man,
Blighted the bud of its prosperity: 205
Virtue and wisdom, truth and liberty,
Fled, to return not, until man shall know
That they alone can give the bliss
Worthy a soul that claims
Its kindred with eternity. 210*

'There's not one atom of yon earth
But once was living man;
Nor the minutest drop of rain,
That hangeth in its thinnest cloud,
But flowed in human veins: 215
*And from the burning plains
Where Libyan monsters yell,
From the most gloomy glens
Of Greenland's sunless clime,
To where the golden fields 220
Of fertile England spread
Their harvest to the day,
Thou canst not find one spot
Whereon no city stood.*

'How strange is human pride! 225
*I tell thee that those living things,
To whom the fragile blade of grass,
That springeth in the morn
And perisheth ere noon,
Is an unbounded world; 230
I tell thee that those viewless beings,
Whose mansion is the smallest particle
Of the impassive atmosphere,
Think, feel and live like man;*



That their affections and antipathies, 235
Like his, produce the laws
Ruling their moral state;
And the minutest throb
That through their frame diffuses
The slightest, faintest motion, 240
Is fixed and indispensable
As the majestic laws
That rule yon rolling orbs.'

The Fairy paused. The Spirit,
In ecstasy of admiration, felt 245
All knowledge of the past revived; the events
Of old and wondrous times,
Which dim tradition interruptedly
Teaches the credulous vulgar, were unfolded
In just perspective to the view; 250
Yet dim from their infinitude.
The Spirit seemed to stand
High on an isolated pinnacle;
The flood of ages combating below,
The depth of the unbounded universe 255
Above, and all around
Nature's unchanging harmony.

3.



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'Fairy!' the Spirit said,
And on the Queen of Spells
Fixed her aethereal eyes,
'I thank thee. Thou hast given
A boon which I will not resign, and taught 5
*A lesson not to be unlearned. I know
The past, and thence I will essay to glean
A warning for the future, so that man
May profit by his errors, and derive
Experience from his folly: 10*
For, when the power of imparting joy
Is equal to the will, the human soul
Requires no other Heaven.'

MAB:

'Turn thee, surpassing Spirit!
Much yet remains unscanned. 15
*Thou knowest how great is man,
Thou knowest his imbecility:
Yet learn thou what he is:
Yet learn the lofty destiny
Which restless time prepares 20*
For every living soul.

'Behold a gorgeous palace, that, amid
Yon populous city rears its thousand towers
And seems itself a city. Gloomy troops
Of sentinels, in stern and silent ranks, 25
*Encompass it around: the dweller there
Cannot be free and happy; hearest thou not
The curses of the fatherless, the groans
Of those who have no friend? He passes on:
The King, the wearer of a gilded chain 30*
That binds his soul to abjectness, the fool
Whom courtiers nickname monarch, whilst a slave
Even to the basest appetites—that man
Heeds not the shriek of penury; he smiles
At the deep curses which the destitute 35
*Mutter in secret, and a sullen joy
Pervades his bloodless heart when thousands groan
But for those morsels which his wantonness
Wastes in unjoyous revelry, to save
All that they love from famine: when he hears 40*
The tale of horror, to some ready-made face



Of hypocritical assent he turns,
Smothering the glow of shame, that, spite of him,
Flushes his bloated cheek.
Now to the meal
Of silence, grandeur, and excess, he drags 45
*His palled unwilling appetite. If gold,
Gleaming around, and numerous viands culled
From every clime, could force the loathing sense
To overcome satiety,—if wealth
The spring it draws from poisons not,—or vice, 50*
Unfeeling, stubborn vice, converteth not
Its food to deadliest venom; then that king
Is happy; and the peasant who fulfils
His unforced task, when he returns at even,
And by the blazing faggot meets again 55
*Her welcome for whom all his toil is sped,
Tastes not a sweeter meal.
Behold him now
Stretched on the gorgeous couch; his fevered brain
Reels dizzily awhile: but ah! too soon
The slumber of intemperance subsides, 60*
And conscience, that undying serpent, calls
Her venomous brood to their nocturnal task.
Listen! he speaks! oh! mark that frenzied eye—
Oh! mark that deadly visage.'



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KING:

'No cessation!

Oh! must this last for ever? Awful Death, 65
*I wish, yet fear to clasp thee!—Not one moment
Of dreamless sleep! O dear and blessed peace!
Why dost thou shroud thy vestal purity
In penury and dungeons? wherefore lurkest
With danger, death, and solitude; yet shunn'st 70
The palace I have built thee? Sacred peace!
Oh visit me but once, but pitying shed
One drop of balm upon my withered soul.'*

THE FAIRY:

'Vain man! that palace is the virtuous heart,
And Peace defileth not her snowy robes 75
*In such a shed as thine. Hark! yet he mutters;
His slumbers are but varied agonies,
They prey like scorpions on the springs of life.
There needeth not the hell that bigots frame
To punish those who err: earth in itself 80
Contains at once the evil and the cure;
And all-sufficing Nature can chastise
Those who transgress her law,—she only knows
How justly to proportion to the fault
The punishment it merits.
Is it strange 85
That this poor wretch should pride him in his woe?
Take pleasure in his abjectness, and hug
The scorpion that consumes him? Is it strange
That, placed on a conspicuous throne of thorns,
Grasping an iron sceptre, and immured 90
Within a splendid prison, whose stern bounds
Shut him from all that's good or dear on earth,
His soul asserts not its humanity?
That man's mild nature rises not in war
Against a king's employ? No—'tis not strange. 95
He, like the vulgar, thinks, feels, acts and lives
Just as his father did; the unconquered powers
Of precedent and custom interpose
Between a KING and virtue. Stranger yet,
To those who know not Nature, nor deduce 100
The future from the present, it may seem,
That not one slave, who suffers from the crimes*



Of this unnatural being; not one wretch,
Whose children famish, and whose nuptial bed
Is earth's unpitying bosom, rears an arm
To dash him from his throne! 105

Those gilded flies

That, basking in the sunshine of a court,

Fatten on its corruption!—what are they?

—The drones of the community; they feed

On the mechanic's labour: the starved hind 110

For them compels the stubborn glebe to yield

Its unshared harvests; and yon squalid form,

Leaner than fleshless misery, that wastes

A sunless life in the unwholesome mine,

Drags out in labour a protracted death, 115

To glut their grandeur; many faint with toil,

That few may know the cares and woe of sloth.



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'Whence, think'st thou, kings and parasites arose?
Whence that unnatural line of drones, who heap
Toil and unvanquishable penury 120
*On those who build their palaces, and bring
Their daily bread?—From vice, black loathsome vice;
From rapine, madness, treachery, and wrong;
From all that 'genders misery, and makes
Of earth this thorny wilderness; from lust, 125*
Revenge, and murder...And when Reason's voice,
Loud as the voice of Nature, shall have waked
The nations; and mankind perceive that vice
Is discord, war, and misery; that virtue
Is peace, and happiness and harmony; 130
*When man's maturer nature shall disdain
The playthings of its childhood;—kingly glare
Will lose its power to dazzle; its authority
Will silently pass by; the gorgeous throne
Shall stand unnoticed in the regal hall, 135*
Fast falling to decay; whilst falsehood's trade
Shall be as hateful and unprofitable
As that of truth is now.
Where is the fame
Which the vainglorious mighty of the earth
Seek to eternize? Oh! the faintest sound 140
*From Time's light footfall, the minutest wave
That swells the flood of ages, whelms in nothing
The unsubstantial bubble. Ay! today
Stern is the tyrant's mandate, red the gaze
That flashes desolation, strong the arm 145*
That scatters multitudes. To-morrow comes!
That mandate is a thunder-peal that died
In ages past; that gaze, a transient flash
On which the midnight closed, and on that arm
The worm has made his meal.
The virtuous man, 150
*Who, great in his humility, as kings
Are little in their grandeur; he who leads
Invincibly a life of resolute good,
And stands amid the silent dungeon depths
More free and fearless than the trembling judge, 155*
Who, clothed in venal power, vainly strove
To bind the impassive spirit;—when he falls,
His mild eye beams benevolence no more:



Withered the hand outstretched but to relieve;
Sunk Reason's simple eloquence, that rolled 160
But to appal the guilty. Yes! the grave
Hath quenched that eye, and Death's relentless frost
Withered that arm: but the unfading fame
Which Virtue hangs upon its votary's tomb;
The deathless memory of that man, whom kings 165
Call to their mind and tremble; the remembrance
With which the happy spirit contemplates
Its well-spent pilgrimage on earth,
Shall never pass away.



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'Nature rejects the monarch, not the man; 170
*The subject, not the citizen: for kings
And subjects, mutual foes, forever play
A losing game into each other's hands,
Whose stakes are vice and misery. The man
Of virtuous soul commands not, nor obeys.* 175
Power, like a desolating pestilence,
Pollutes whate'er it touches; and obedience,
Bane of all genius, virtue, freedom, truth,
Makes slaves of men, and, of the human frame,
A mechanized automaton.
When Nero, 180
*High over flaming Rome, with savage joy
Lowered like a fiend, drank with enraptured ear
The shrieks of agonizing death, beheld
The frightful desolation spread, and felt
A new-created sense within his soul* 185
Thrill to the sight, and vibrate to the sound;
Think'st thou his grandeur had not overcome
The force of human kindness? and, when Rome,
With one stern blow, hurled not the tyrant down,
Crushed not the arm red with her dearest blood 190
*Had not submissive abjectness destroyed
Nature's suggestions?
Look on yonder earth:
The golden harvests spring; the unfailing sun
Sheds light and life; the fruits, the flowers, the trees,
Arise in due succession; all things speak* 195
Peace, harmony, and love. The universe,
In Nature's silent eloquence, declares
That all fulfil the works of love and joy,—
All but the outcast, Man. He fabricates
The sword which stabs his peace; he cherisheth 200
*The snakes that gnaw his heart; he raiseth up
The tyrant, whose delight is in his woe,
Whose sport is in his agony. Yon sun,
Lights it the great alone? Yon silver beams,
Sleep they less sweetly on the cottage thatch* 205
Than on the dome of kings? Is mother Earth
A step-dame to her numerous sons, who earn
Her unshared gifts with unremitting toil;
A mother only to those puling babes
Who, nursed in ease and luxury, make men 210



*The playthings of their babyhood, and mar,
In self-important childishness, that peace
Which men alone appreciate?*

'Spirit of Nature! no.
The pure diffusion of thy essence throbs 215
Alike in every human heart.
Thou, aye, erectest there
Thy throne of power unappealable:
Thou art the judge beneath whose nod
Man's brief and frail authority 220
Is powerless as the wind
That passeth idly by.
Thine the tribunal which surpasseth
The show of human justice,
As God surpasses man. 225



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'Spirit of Nature! thou
Life of interminable multitudes;
Soul of those mighty spheres
Whose changeless paths through
Heaven's deep silence lie;
Soul of that smallest being, 230
*The dwelling of whose life
Is one faint April sun-gleam;—
Man, like these passive things,
Thy will unconsciously fulfillleth:
Like theirs, his age of endless peace, 235*
Which time is fast maturing,
Will swiftly, surely come;
And the unbounded frame, which thou pervadest,
Will be without a flaw
Marring its perfect symmetry. 240

4.

'How beautiful this night! the balmiest sigh,
Which vernal zephyrs breathe in evening's ear,
Were discord to the speaking quietude
That wraps this moveless scene. Heaven's ebon vault,
Studded with stars unutterably bright, 5
*Through which the moon's unclouded grandeur rolls,
Seems like a canopy which love had spread
To curtain her sleeping world. Yon gentle hills,
Robed in a garment of untrodden snow;
Yon darksome rocks, whence icicles depend, 10*
So stainless, that their white and glittering spires
Tinge not the moon's pure beam; yon castled steep,
Whose banner hangeth o'er the time-worn tower
So idly, that rapt fancy deemeth it
A metaphor of peace;—all form a scene 15
*Where musing Solitude might love to lift
Her soul above this sphere of earthliness;
Where Silence undisturbed might watch alone,
So cold, so bright, so still.
The orb of day,
In southern climes, o'er ocean's waveless field 20*
Sinks sweetly smiling: not the faintest breath
Steals o'er the unruffled deep; the clouds of eve
Reflect unmoved the lingering beam of day;
And vesper's image on the western main



Is beautifully still. To-morrow comes: 25
*Cloud upon cloud, in dark and deepening mass,
Roll o'er the blackened waters; the deep roar
Of distant thunder mutters awfully;
Tempest unfolds its pinion o'er the gloom
That shrouds the boiling surge; the pitiless fiend, 30*
With all his winds and lightnings, tracks his prey;
The torn deep yawns,—the vessel finds a grave
Beneath its jagged gulf.
Ah! whence yon glare
That fires the arch of Heaven!—that dark red smoke
Blotting the silver moon? The stars are quenched 35
*In darkness, and the pure and spangling snow
Gleams faintly through the gloom that gathers round!
Hark to that roar, whose swift and deaf'ning peals
In countless echoes through the mountains ring,
Startling pale Midnight on her starry throne! 40*
Now swells the intermingling din; the jar



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Frequent and frightful of the bursting bomb;
The falling beam, the shriek, the groan, the shout,
The ceaseless clangour, and the rush of men
Inebriate with rage:—loud, and more loud 45
*The discord grows; till pale Death shuts the scene,
And o'er the conqueror and the conquered draws
His cold and bloody shroud.—Of all the men
Whom day's departing beam saw blooming there,
In proud and vigorous health; of all the hearts 50
That beat with anxious life at sunset there;
How few survive, how few are beating now!
All is deep silence, like the fearful calm
That slumbers in the storm's portentous pause;
Save when the frantic wail of widowed love 55
Comes shuddering on the blast, or the faint moan
With which some soul bursts from the frame of clay
Wrapped round its struggling powers.
The gray morn
Dawns on the mournful scene; the sulphurous smoke
Before the icy wind slow rolls away, 60
And the bright beams of frosty morning dance
Along the spangling snow. There tracks of blood
Even to the forest's depth, and scattered arms,
And lifeless warriors, whose hard lineaments 65
Death's self could change not, mark the dreadful path
Of the outsallying victors: far behind,
Black ashes note where their proud city stood.
Within yon forest is a gloomy glen—
Each tree which guards its darkness from the day,
Waves o'er a warrior's tomb.
I see thee shrink, 70
Surpassing Spirit!—wert thou human else?
I see a shade of doubt and horror fleet
Across thy stainless features: yet fear not;
This is no unconnected misery,
Nor stands uncaused, and irretrievable. 75
*Man's evil nature, that apology
Which kings who rule, and cowards who crouch, set up
For their unnumbered crimes, sheds not the blood
Which desolates the discord-wasted land.**



From kings, and priests, and statesmen, war arose, 80
Whose safety is man's deep unbettered woe,
Whose grandeur his debasement. Let the axe
Strike at the root, the poison-tree will fall;
And where its venom'd exhalations spread
Ruin, and death, and woe, where millions lay 85
Quenching the serpent's famine, and their bones
Bleaching unburied in the putrid blast,
A garden shall arise, in loveliness
Surpassing fabled Eden.
Hath Nature's soul,
That formed this world so beautiful, that spread 90
Earth's lap with plenty, and life's smallest chord
Strung to unchanging unison, that gave
The happy birds their dwelling in the grove,
That yielded to the wanderers of the deep
The lovely silence of the unfathomed main, 95



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*And filled the meanest worm that crawls in dust
With spirit, thought, and love; on Man alone,
Partial in causeless malice, wantonly
Heaped ruin, vice, and slavery; his soul
Blasted with withering curses; placed afar 100*
The meteor-happiness, that shuns his grasp,
But serving on the frightful gulf to glare,
Rent wide beneath his footsteps?
Nature!—no!
Kings, priests, and statesmen, blast the human flower
Even in its tender bud; their influence darts 105
*Like subtle poison through the bloodless veins
Of desolate society. The child,
Ere he can lisp his mother's sacred name,
Swells with the unnatural pride of crime, and lifts
His baby-sword even in a hero's mood. 110*
This infant-arm becomes the bloodiest scourge
Of devastated earth; whilst specious names,
Learned in soft childhood's unsuspecting hour,
Serve as the sophisms with which manhood dims
Bright Reason's ray, and sanctifies the sword 115
*Upraised to shed a brother's innocent blood.
Let priest-led slaves cease to proclaim that man
Inherits vice and misery, when Force
And Falsehood hang even o'er the cradled babe
Stifling with rudest grasp all natural good. 120*
'Ah! to the stranger-soul, when first it peeps
From its new tenement, and looks abroad
For happiness and sympathy, how stern
And desolate a tract is this wide world!
How withered all the buds of natural good! 125
*No shade, no shelter from the sweeping storms
Of pitiless power! On its wretched frame,
Poisoned, perchance, by the disease and woe
Heaped on the wretched parent whence it sprung
By morals, law, and custom, the pure winds 130*
Of Heaven, that renovate the insect tribes,
May breathe not. The untainting light of day
May visit not its longings. It is bound
Ere it has life: yea, all the chains are forged
Long ere its being: all liberty and love 135



*And peace is torn from its defencelessness;
Cursed from its birth, even from its cradle doomed
To abjectness and bondage!*

'Throughout this varied and eternal world
Soul is the only element: the block 140
*That for uncounted ages has remained
The moveless pillar of a mountain's weight
Is active, living spirit. Every grain
Is sentient both in unity and part,
And the minutest atom comprehends* 145
A world of loves and hatreds; these beget
Evil and good: hence truth and falsehood spring;
Hence will and thought and action, all the germs
Of pain or pleasure, sympathy or hate,
That variegate the eternal universe. 150
*Soul is not more polluted than the beams
Of Heaven's pure orb, ere round their rapid lines
The taint of earth-born atmospheres arise.*



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'Man is of soul and body, formed for deeds
Of high resolve, on fancy's boldest wing 155
*To soar unwearied, fearlessly to turn
The keenest pangs to peacefulness, and taste
The joys which mingled sense and spirit yield.
Or he is formed for abjectness and woe,
To grovel on the dunghill of his fears, 160
To shrink at every sound, to quench the flame
Of natural love in sensualism, to know
That hour as blessed when on his worthless days
The frozen hand of Death shall set its seal,
Yet fear the cure, though hating the disease. 165
The one is man that shall hereafter be;
The other, man as vice has made him now.*

'War is the statesman's game, the priest's delight,
The lawyer's jest, the hired assassin's trade,
And, to those royal murderers, whose mean thrones 170
*Are bought by crimes of treachery and gore,
The bread they eat, the staff on which they lean.
Guards, garbed in blood-red livery, surround
Their palaces, participate the crimes
That force defends, and from a nation's rage 175
Secure the crown, which all the curses reach
That famine, frenzy, woe and penury breathe.
These are the hired bravos who defend
The tyrant's throne—the bullies of his fear:
These are the sinks and channels of worst vice, 180
The refuse of society, the dregs
Of all that is most vile: their cold hearts blend
Deceit with sternness, ignorance with pride,
All that is mean and villanous, with rage
Which hopelessness of good, and self-contempt, 185
Alone might kindle; they are decked in wealth,
Honour and power, then are sent abroad
To do their work. The pestilence that stalks
In gloomy triumph through some eastern land
Is less destroying. They cajole with gold, 190
And promises of fame, the thoughtless youth
Already crushed with servitude: he knows
His wretchedness too late, and cherishes
Repentance for his ruin, when his doom
Is sealed in gold and blood! 195*



Those too the tyrant serve, who, skilled to snare
The feet of Justice in the toils of law,
Stand, ready to oppress the weaker still;
And right or wrong will vindicate for gold,
Sneering at public virtue, which beneath 200
*Their pitiless tread lies torn and trampled, where
Honour sits smiling at the sale of truth.*



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'Then grave and hoary-headed hypocrites,
Without a hope, a passion, or a love,
Who, through a life of luxury and lies, 205
*Have crept by flattery to the seats of power,
Support the system whence their honours flow...*
*They have three words:—well tyrants know their use,
Well pay them for the loan, with usury
Torn from a bleeding world!—God, Hell, and Heaven. 210*
A vengeful, pitiless, and almighty fiend,
Whose mercy is a nickname for the rage
Of tameless tigers hungering for blood.
Hell, a red gulf of everlasting fire,
Where poisonous and undying worms prolong 215
*Eternal misery to those hapless slaves
Whose life has been a penance for its crimes.
And Heaven, a meed for those who dare belie
Their human nature, quake, believe, and cringe
Before the mockeries of earthly power. 220*

'These tools the tyrant tempers to his work,
Wields in his wrath, and as he wills destroys,
Omnipotent in wickedness: the while
Youth springs, age moulders, manhood tamely does
His bidding, bribed by short-lived joys to lend 225
Force to the weakness of his trembling arm.

'They rise, they fall; one generation comes
Yielding its harvest to destruction's scythe.
It fades, another blossoms: yet behold!
Red glows the tyrant's stamp-mark on its bloom, 230
*Withering and cankering deep its passive prime.
He has invented lying words and modes,
Empty and vain as his own coreless heart;
Evasive meanings, nothings of much sound,
To lure the heedless victim to the toils 235*
Spread round the valley of its paradise.

'Look to thyself, priest, conqueror, or prince!
Whether thy trade is falsehood, and thy lusts
Deep wallow in the earnings of the poor,
With whom thy Master was:—or thou delight'st 240
*In numbering o'er the myriads of thy slain,
All misery weighing nothing in the scale
Against thy short-lived fame: or thou dost load*



*With cowardice and crime the groaning land,
A pomp-fed king. Look to thy wretched self! 245
Ay, art thou not the veriest slave that e'er
Crawled on the loathing earth? Are not thy days
Days of unsatisfying listlessness?
Dost thou not cry, ere night's long rack is o'er,
"When will the morning come?" Is not thy youth 250
A vain and feverish dream of sensualism?
Thy manhood blighted with unripe disease?
Are not thy views of unregretted death
Drear, comfortless, and horrible? Thy mind,
Is it not morbid as thy nerveless frame, 255
Incapable of judgement, hope, or love?
And dost thou wish the errors to survive*



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That bar thee from all sympathies of good,
After the miserable interest
Thou hold'st in their protraction? When the grave 260
Has swallowed up thy memory and thyself,
Dost thou desire the bane that poisons earth
To twine its roots around thy confined clay,
Spring from thy bones, and blossom on thy tomb,
That of its fruit thy babes may eat and die? 265

NOTE:

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5.

'Thus do the generations of the earth
Go to the grave, and issue from the womb,
Surviving still the imperishable change
That renovates the world; even as the leaves
Which the keen frost-wind of the waning year 5
Has scattered on the forest soil, and heaped
For many seasons there—though long they choke,
Loading with loathsome rottenness the land,
All germs of promise, yet when the tall trees
From which they fell, shorn of their lovely shapes, 10
Lie level with the earth to moulder there,
They fertilize the land they long deformed,
Till from the breathing lawn a forest springs
Of youth, integrity, and loveliness,
Like that which gave it life, to spring and die. 15
Thus suicidal selfishness, that blights
The fairest feelings of the opening heart,
Is destined to decay, whilst from the soil
Shall spring all virtue, all delight, all love,
And judgement cease to wage unnatural war 20
With passion's unsubduable array.
Twin-sister of religion, selfishness!
Rival in crime and falsehood, aping all
The wanton horrors of her bloody play;
Yet frozen, unimpassioned, spiritless, 25
Shunning the light, and owning not its name,



*Compelled, by its deformity, to screen,
With flimsy veil of justice and of right,
Its unattractive lineaments, that scare
All, save the brood of ignorance: at once 30
The cause and the effect of tyranny;
Unblushing, hardened, sensual, and vile;
Dead to all love but of its abjectness,
With heart impassive by more noble powers
Than unshared pleasure, sordid gain, or fame; 35
Despising its own miserable being,
Which still it longs, yet fears to disenthral.*

*'Hence commerce springs, the venal interchange
Of all that human art or nature yield;
Which wealth should purchase not, but want demand, 40
And natural kindness hasten to supply
From the full fountain of its boundless love,
For ever stifled, drained, and tainted now.
Commerce! beneath whose poison-breathing shade
No solitary virtue dares to spring, 45
But Poverty and Wealth with equal hand
Scatter their withering curses, and unfold
The doors of premature and violent death,
To pining famine and full-fed disease,
To all that shares the lot of human life, 50
Which poisoned, body and soul, scarce drags the chain,
That lengthens as it goes and clanks behind.*



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'Commerce has set the mark of selfishness,
The signet of its all-enslaving power
Upon a shining ore, and called it gold: 55
*Before whose image bow the vulgar great,
The vainly rich, the miserable proud,
The mob of peasants, nobles, priests, and kings,
And with blind feelings reverence the power
That grinds them to the dust of misery.* 60
But in the temple of their hireling hearts
Gold is a living god, and rules in scorn
All earthly things but virtue.

'Since tyrants, by the sale of human life,
Heap luxuries to their sensualism, and fame 65
*To their wide-wasting and insatiate pride,
Success has sanctioned to a credulous world
The ruin, the disgrace, the woe of war.
His hosts of blind and unresisting dupes
The despot numbers; from his cabinet* 70
These puppets of his schemes he moves at will,
Even as the slaves by force or famine driven,
Beneath a vulgar master, to perform
A task of cold and brutal drudgery;—
Hardened to hope, insensible to fear, 75
*Scarce living pulleys of a dead machine,
Mere wheels of work and articles of trade,
That grace the proud and noisy pomp of wealth!*

'The harmony and happiness of man
Yields to the wealth of nations; that which lifts 80
*His nature to the heaven of its pride,
Is bartered for the poison of his soul;
The weight that drags to earth his towering hopes,
Blighting all prospect but of selfish gain,
Withering all passion but of slavish fear,* 85
Extinguishing all free and generous love
Of enterprise and daring, even the pulse
That fancy kindles in the beating heart
To mingle with sensation, it destroys,—
Leaves nothing but the sordid lust of self, 90
*The grovelling hope of interest and gold,
Unqualified, unmingled, unredeemed
Even by hypocrisy.
And statesmen boast*



*Of wealth! The wordy eloquence, that lives
After the ruin of their hearts, can gild 95
The bitter poison of a nation's woe,
Can turn the worship of the servile mob
To their corrupt and glaring idol, Fame,
From Virtue, trampled by its iron tread,
Although its dazzling pedestal be raised 100
Amid the horrors of a limb-strewn field,
With desolated dwellings smoking round.
The man of ease, who, by his warm fireside,
To deeds of charitable intercourse,
And bare fulfilment of the common laws 105
Of decency and prejudice, confines
The struggling nature of his human heart,
Is duped by their cold sophistry; he sheds
A passing tear perchance upon the wreck
Of earthly peace, when near his dwelling's door*



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*The frightful waves are driven,—when his son
Is murdered by the tyrant, or religion
Drives his wife raving mad. But the poor man,
Whose life is misery, and fear, and care;
Whom the morn wakens but to fruitless toil; 115
Who ever hears his famished offspring's scream,
Whom their pale mother's uncomplaining gaze
For ever meets, and the proud rich man's eye
Flashing command, and the heart-breaking scene
Of thousands like himself;—he little heeds 120
The rhetoric of tyranny; his hate
Is quenchless as his wrongs; he laughs to scorn
The vain and bitter mockery of words,
Feeling the horror of the tyrant's deeds,
And unrestrained but by the arm of power, 125
That knows and dreads his enmity.*

'The iron rod of Penury still compels
Her wretched slave to bow the knee to wealth,
And poison, with unprofitable toil,
A life too void of solace to confirm 130
*The very chains that bind him to his doom.
Nature, impartial in munificence,
Has gifted man with all-subduing will.
Matter, with all its transitory shapes,
Lies subjected and plastic at his feet, 135
That, weak from bondage, tremble as they tread.
How many a rustic Milton has passed by,
Stifling the speechless longings of his heart,
In unremitting drudgery and care!
How many a vulgar Cato has compelled 140
His energies, no longer tameless then,
To mould a pin, or fabricate a nail!
How many a Newton, to whose passive ken
Those mighty spheres that gem infinity
Were only specks of tinsel, fixed in Heaven 145
To light the midnights of his native town!*

'Yet every heart contains perfection's germ:
The wisest of the sages of the earth,
That ever from the stores of reason drew
Science and truth, and virtue's dreadless tone, 150



*Were but a weak and inexperienced boy,
Proud, sensual, unimpassioned, unimbued
With pure desire and universal love,
Compared to that high being, of cloudless brain,
Untainted passion, elevated will, 155*
Which Death (who even would linger long in awe
Within his noble presence, and beneath
His changeless eyebeam) might alone subdue.
Him, every slave now dragging through the filth
Of some corrupted city his sad life, 160
*Pining with famine, swoln with luxury,
Blunting the keenness of his spiritual sense
With narrow schemings and unworthy cares,
Or madly rushing through all violent crime,
To move the deep stagnation of his soul,— 165*
Might imitate and equal.
But mean lust
Has bound its chains so tight around the earth,



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That all within it but the virtuous man
Is venal: gold or fame will surely reach
The price prefixed by selfishness, to all 170
But him of resolute and unchanging will;
Whom, nor the plaudits of a servile crowd,
Nor the vile joys of tainting luxury,
Can bribe to yield his elevated soul
To Tyranny or Falsehood, though they wield 175
With blood-red hand the sceptre of the world.

'All things are sold: the very light of Heaven
Is venal; earth's unsparing gifts of love,
The smallest and most despicable things
That lurk in the abysses of the deep, 180
All objects of our life, even life itself,
And the poor pittance which the laws allow
Of liberty, the fellowship of man,
Those duties which his heart of human love
Should urge him to perform instinctively, 185
Are bought and sold as in a public mart
Of undisguising selfishness, that sets
On each its price, the stamp-mark of her reign.
Even love is sold; the solace of all woe
Is turned to deadliest agony, old age 190
Shivers in selfish beauty's loathing arms,
And youth's corrupted impulses prepare
A life of horror from the blighting bane
Of commerce; whilst the pestilence that springs
From unenjoying sensualism, has filled 195
All human life with hydra-headed woes.

'Falsehood demands but gold to pay the pangs
Of outraged conscience; for the slavish priest
Sets no great value on his hireling faith:
A little passing pomp, some servile souls, 200
Whom cowardice itself might safely chain,
Or the spare mite of avarice could bribe
To deck the triumph of their languid zeal,
Can make him minister to tyranny.
More daring crime requires a loftier meed: 205



Without a shudder, the slave-soldier lends
His arm to murderous deeds, and steels his heart,
When the dread eloquence of dying men,
Low mingling on the lonely field of fame,
Assails that nature, whose applause he sells 210
*For the gross blessings of a patriot mob,
For the vile gratitude of heartless kings,
And for a cold world's good word,—viler still!*

'There is a nobler glory, which survives
Until our being fades, and, solacing 215
*All human care, accompanies its change;
Deserts not virtue in the dungeon's gloom,
And, in the precincts of the palace, guides
Its footsteps through that labyrinth of crime;
Imbues his lineaments with dauntlessness, 220*
Even when, from Power's avenging hand, he takes
Its sweetest, last and noblest title—death;
—The consciousness of good, which neither



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gold,
Nor sordid fame, nor hope of heavenly bliss
Can purchase; but a life of resolute good,— 225
Unalterable will, quenchless desire
Of universal happiness, the heart
That beats with it in unison, the brain,
Whose ever wakeful wisdom toils to change
Reason's rich stores for its eternal weal. 230

'This commerce of sincerest virtue needs
No mediative signs of selfishness,
No jealous intercourse of wretched gain,
No balancings of prudence, cold and long;
In just and equal measure all is weighed, 235
One scale contains the sum of human weal,
And one, the good man's heart.
How vainly seek
The selfish for that happiness denied
To aught but virtue! Blind and hardened, they,
Who hope for peace amid the storms of care, 240
Who covet power they know not how to use,
And sigh for pleasure they refuse to give,—
Madly they frustrate still their own designs;
And, where they hope that quiet to enjoy
Which virtue pictures, bitterness of soul, 245
Pining regrets, and vain repentances,
Disease, disgust, and lassitude, pervade
Their valueless and miserable lives.

'But hoary-headed Selfishness has felt
Its death-blow, and is tottering to the grave: 250
A brighter morn awaits the human day,
When every transfer of earth's natural gifts
Shall be a commerce of good words and works;
When poverty and wealth, the thirst of fame,
The fear of infamy, disease and woe, 255
War with its million horrors, and fierce hell
Shall live but in the memory of Time,
Who, like a penitent libertine, shall start,
Look back, and shudder at his younger years.'

6.



All touch, all eye, all ear,
The Spirit felt the Fairy's burning speech.
O'er the thin texture of its frame,
The varying periods painted changing glows,
As on a summer even, 5
*When soul-enfolding music floats around,
The stainless mirror of the lake
Re-images the eastern gloom,
Mingling convulsively its purple hues
With sunset's burnished gold. 10*

Then thus the Spirit spoke:
'It is a wild and miserable world!
Thorny, and full of care,
Which every fiend can make his prey at will.
O Fairy! in the lapse of years, 15
*Is there no hope in store?
Will yon vast suns roll on
Interminably, still illuming
The night of so many wretched souls,
And see no hope for them? 20*
Will not the universal Spirit e'er
Revivify this withered limb of Heaven?'



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The Fairy calmly smiled
In comfort, and a kindling gleam of hope
Suffused the Spirit's lineaments. 25
*'Oh! rest thee tranquil; chase those fearful doubts,
Which ne'er could rack an everlasting soul,
That sees the chains which bind it to its doom.
Yes! crime and misery are in yonder earth,
Falsehood, mistake, and lust; 30*
But the eternal world
Contains at once the evil and the cure.
Some eminent in virtue shall start up,
Even in perversest time:
The truths of their pure lips, that never die, 35
*Shall bind the scorpion falsehood with a wreath
Of ever-living flame,
Until the monster sting itself to death.*

*'How sweet a scene will earth become!
Of purest spirits a pure dwelling-place, 40
Symphonious with the planetary spheres;
When man, with changeless Nature coalescing,
Will undertake regeneration's work,
When its ungenial poles no longer point
To the red and baleful sun 45*
That faintly twinkles there.

*'Spirit! on yonder earth,
Falsehood now triumphs; deadly power
Has fixed its seal upon the lip of truth!
Madness and misery are there! 50
The happiest is most wretched! Yet confide,
Until pure health-drops, from the cup of joy,
Fall like a dew of balm upon the world.
Now, to the scene I show, in silence turn,
And read the blood-stained charter of all woe, 55*
Which Nature soon, with re-creating hand,
Will blot in mercy from the book of earth.
How bold the flight of Passion's wandering wing,
How swift the step of Reason's firmer tread,
How calm and sweet the victories of life, 60
*How terrorless the triumph of the grave!
How powerless were the mightiest monarch's arm,
Vain his loud threat, and impotent his frown!
How ludicrous the priest's dogmatic roar!*



The weight of his exterminating curse 65
How light! and his affected charity,
To suit the pressure of the changing times,
What palpable deceit!—but for thy aid,
Religion! but for thee, prolific fiend,
Who peoplest earth with demons, Hell with men, 70
And Heaven with slaves!

'Thou taintest all thou look'st upon!—the stars,
Which on thy cradle beamed so brightly sweet,
Were gods to the distempered playfulness
Of thy untutored infancy: the trees, 75
The grass, the clouds, the mountains, and the sea,
All living things that walk, swim, creep, or fly,
Were gods: the sun had homage, and the moon
Her worshipper. Then thou becam'st, a boy,
More daring in thy frenzies: every shape,



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80

Monstrous or vast, or beautifully wild,
Which, from sensation's relics, fancy culls
The spirits of the air, the shuddering ghost,
The genii of the elements, the powers
That give a shape to Nature's varied works, 85
*Had life and place in the corrupt belief
Of thy blind heart: yet still thy youthful hands
Were pure of human blood. Then manhood gave
Its strength and ardour to thy frenzied brain;
Thine eager gaze scanned the stupendous scene, 90*
Whose wonders mocked the knowledge of thy pride:
Their everlasting and unchanging laws
Reproached thine ignorance. Awhile thou stoodst
Baffled and gloomy; then thou didst sum up
The elements of all that thou didst know; 95
*The changing seasons, winter's leafless reign,
The budding of the Heaven-breathing trees,
The eternal orbs that beautify the night,
The sunrise, and the setting of the moon,
Earthquakes and wars, and poisons and disease, 100*
And all their causes, to an abstract point
Converging, thou didst bend and called it God!
The self-sufficing, the omnipotent,
The merciful, and the avenging God!
Who, prototype of human misrule, sits 105
*High in Heaven's realm, upon a golden throne,
Even like an earthly king; and whose dread work,
Hell, gapes for ever for the unhappy slaves
Of fate, whom He created, in his sport,
To triumph in their torments when they fell! 110*
Earth heard the name; Earth trembled, as the smoke
Of His revenge ascended up to Heaven,
Blotting the constellations; and the cries
Of millions, butchered in sweet confidence
And unsuspecting peace, even when the bonds 115
*Of safety were confirmed by wordy oaths
Sworn in His dreadful name, rung through the land;
Whilst innocent babes writhed on thy stubborn spear,
And thou didst laugh to hear the mother's shriek
Of maniac gladness, as the sacred steel 120*



Felt cold in her torn entrails!

'Religion! thou wert then in manhood's prime:
But age crept on: one God would not suffice
For senile puerility; thou framedst
A tale to suit thy dotage, and to glut 125
Thy misery-thirsting soul, that the mad fiend
Thy wickedness had pictured might afford
A plea for sating the unnatural thirst
For murder, rapine, violence, and crime,
That still consumed thy being, even when 130
Thou heardst the step of Fate;—that flames might light
Thy funeral scene, and the shrill horrent shrieks
Of parents dying on the pile that burned
To light their children to thy paths, the roar
Of the encircling flames, the exulting cries 135
Of thine apostles, loud commingling there,
Might sate thine hungry ear
Even on the bed of death!



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'But now contempt is mocking thy gray hairs;
Thou art descending to the darksome grave, 140
*Unhonoured and unpitied, but by those
Whose pride is passing by like thine, and sheds,
Like thine, a glare that fades before the sun
Of truth, and shines but in the dreadful night
That long has lowered above the ruined world. 145*

'Throughout these infinite orbs of mingling light,
Of which yon earth is one, is wide diffused
A Spirit of activity and life,
That knows no term, cessation, or decay;
That fades not when the lamp of earthly life, 150
*Extinguished in the dampness of the grave,
Awhile there slumbers, more than when the babe
In the dim newness of its being feels
The impulses of sublunary things,
And all is wonder to unpractised sense: 155*
But, active, steadfast, and eternal, still
Guides the fierce whirlwind, in the tempest roars,
Cheers in the day, breathes in the balmy groves,
Strengthens in health, and poisons in disease;
And in the storm of change, that ceaselessly 160
*Rolls round the eternal universe, and shakes
Its undecaying battlement, presides,
Apportioning with irresistible law
The place each spring of its machine shall fill;
So that when waves on waves tumultuous heap 165*
Confusion to the clouds, and fiercely driven
Heaven's lightnings scorch the uprooted ocean-fords,
Whilst, to the eye of shipwrecked mariner,
Lone sitting on the bare and shuddering rock,
All seems unlinked contingency and chance: 170
*No atom of this turbulence fulfils
A vague and unnecessitated task,
Or acts but as it must and ought to act.
Even the minutest molecule of light,
That in an April sunbeam's fleeting glow 175*
Fulfils its destined, though invisible work,
The universal Spirit guides; nor less,
When merciless ambition, or mad zeal,
Has led two hosts of dupes to battlefield,
That, blind, they there may dig each other's graves, 180



*And call the sad work glory, does it rule
All passions: not a thought, a will, an act,
No working of the tyrant's moody mind,
Nor one misgiving of the slaves who boast
Their servitude, to hide the shame they feel, 185
Nor the events enchaining every will,
That from the depths of unrecorded time
Have drawn all-influencing virtue, pass
Unrecognized, or unforeseen by thee,
Soul of the Universe! eternal spring 190
Of life and death, of happiness and woe,
Of all that chequers the phantasmal scene
That floats before our eyes in wavering light,
Which gleams but on the darkness of our prison,
Whose chains and massy walls 195
We feel, but cannot see.*



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'Spirit of Nature! all-sufficing Power,
Necessity! thou mother of the world!
Unlike the God of human error, thou
Requir'st no prayers or praises; the caprice 200
*Of man's weak will belongs no more to thee
Than do the changeful passions of his breast
To thy unvarying harmony: the slave,
Whose horrible lusts spread misery o'er the world,
And the good man, who lifts, with virtuous pride, 205*
His being, in the sight of happiness,
That springs from his own works; the poison-tree
Beneath whose shade all life is withered up,
And the fair oak, whose leafy dome affords
A temple where the vows of happy love 210
*Are registered, are equal in thy sight:
No love, no hate thou cherishest; revenge
And favouritism, and worst desire of fame
Thou know'st not: all that the wide world contains
Are but thy passive instruments, and thou 215*
Regard'st them all with an impartial eye,
Whose joy or pain thy nature cannot feel,
Because thou hast not human sense,
Because thou art not human mind.

'Yes! when the sweeping storm of time 220
*Has sung its death-dirge o'er the ruined fanes
And broken altars of the almighty Fiend
Whose name usurps thy honours, and the blood
Through centuries clotted there, has floated down
The tainted flood of ages, shalt thou live 225*
Unchangeable! A shrine is raised to thee,
Which, nor the tempest-breath of time,
Nor the interminable flood,
Over earth's slight pageant rolling,
Availeth to destroy,—. 230
*The sensitive extension of the world.
That wondrous and eternal fane,
Where pain and pleasure, good and evil join,
To do the will of strong necessity,
And life, in multitudinous shapes, 235*
Still pressing forward where no term can be,
Like hungry and unresting flame
Curls round the eternal columns of its strength.'



7.

SPIRIT:

'I was an infant when my mother went
To see an atheist burned. She took me there:
The dark-robed priests were met around the pile;
The multitude was gazing silently;
And as the culprit passed with dauntless mien, 5
Tempered disdain in his unaltering eye,
Mixed with a quiet smile, shone calmly forth:
The thirsty fire crept round his manly limbs;
His resolute eyes were scorched to blindness soon;
His death-pang rent my heart! the insensate mob 10
Uttered a cry of triumph, and I wept.
"Weep not, child!" cried my mother, "for that man
Has said, There is no God."



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FAIRY:

'There is no God!

Nature confirms the faith his death-groan sealed:
Let heaven and earth, let man's revolving race, 15
His ceaseless generations tell their tale;

*Let every part depending on the chain
That links it to the whole, point to the hand
That grasps its term! let every seed that falls
In silent eloquence unfold its store 20*

Of argument; infinity within,
Infinity without, belie creation;
The exterminable spirit it contains
Is nature's only God; but human pride
Is skilful to invent most serious names 25
To hide its ignorance.

*The name of God
Has fenced about all crime with holiness,
Himself the creature of His worshippers,
Whose names and attributes and passions change,
Seeva, Buddh, Foh, Jehovah, God, or Lord, 30*

Even with the human dupes who build His shrines,
Still serving o'er the war-polluted world
For desolation's watchword; whether hosts
Stain His death-blushing chariot-wheels, as on
Triumphantly they roll, whilst Brahmins raise 35
*A sacred hymn to mingle with the groans;
Or countless partners of His power divide
His tyranny to weakness; or the smoke
Of burning towns, the cries of female helplessness,
Unarmed old age, and youth, and infancy, 40*

Horribly massacred, ascend to Heaven
In honour of His name; or, last and worst,
Earth groans beneath religion's iron age,
And priests dare babble of a God of peace,
Even whilst their hands are red with guiltless blood, 45
*Murdering the while, uprooting every germ
Of truth, exterminating, spoiling all,
Making the earth a slaughter-house!*

'O Spirit! through the sense
By which thy inner nature was apprised 50
*Of outward shows, vague dreams have rolled,
And varied reminiscences have waked*



*Tablets that never fade;
All things have been imprinted there,
The stars, the sea, the earth, the sky, 55
Even the unshapeliest lineaments
Of wild and fleeting visions
Have left a record there
To testify of earth.*

*'These are my empire, for to me is given 60
The wonders of the human world to keep,
And Fancy's thin creations to endow
With manner, being, and reality;
Therefore a wondrous phantom, from the dreams
Of human error's dense and purblind faith, 65
I will evoke, to meet thy questioning.
Ahasuerus, rise!'*



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A strange and woe-worn wight
Arose beside the battlement,
And stood unmoving there. 70
*His inessential figure cast no shade
Upon the golden floor;
His port and mien bore mark of many years,
And chronicles of untold ancientness
Were legible within his beamless eye: 75*
Yet his cheek bore the mark of youth;
Freshness and vigour knit his manly frame;
The wisdom of old age was mingled there
With youth's primaeval dauntlessness;
And inexpressible woe, 80
*Chastened by fearless resignation, gave
An awful grace to his all-speaking brow.*

SPIRIT:

'Is there a God?'

AHASUERUS:

'Is there a God!—ay, an almighty God,
And vengeful as almighty! Once His voice 85
*Was heard on earth: earth shuddered at the sound;
The fiery-visaged firmament expressed
Abhorrence, and the grave of Nature yawned
To swallow all the dauntless and the good
That dared to hurl defiance at His throne, 90*
Girt as it was with power. None but slaves
Survived,—cold-blooded slaves, who did the work
Of tyrannous omnipotence; whose souls
No honest indignation ever urged
To elevated daring, to one deed 95
*Which gross and sensual self did not pollute.
These slaves built temples for the omnipotent Fiend,
Gorgeous and vast: the costly altars smoked
With human blood, and hideous paeans rung
Through all the long-drawn aisles. A murderer heard 100*
His voice in Egypt, one whose gifts and arts
Had raised him to his eminence in power,
Accomplice of omnipotence in crime,
And confidant of the all-knowing one.
These were Jehovah's words:— 105



'From an eternity of idleness
I, God, awoke; in seven days' toil made earth
From nothing; rested, and created man:
I placed him in a Paradise, and there
Planted the tree of evil, so that he *110*
Might eat and perish, and My soul procure
Wherewith to sate its malice, and to turn,
Even like a heartless conqueror of the earth,
All misery to My fame. The race of men
Chosen to My honour, with impunity 115
May sate the lusts I planted in their heart.
Here I command thee hence to lead them on,
Until, with hardened feet, their conquering troops
Wade on the promised soil through woman's blood,
And make My name be dreaded through the land. *120*
Yet ever-burning flame and ceaseless woe
Shall be the doom of their eternal souls,
With every soul on this ungrateful earth,
Virtuous or vicious, weak or strong,—even all
Shall perish, to fulfil the blind revenge 125
(Which you, to men, call justice) of their God.'



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The murderer's brow
Quivered with horror.
'God omnipotent,
Is there no mercy? must our punishment
Be endless? will long ages roll away, 130
*And see no term? Oh! wherefore hast Thou made
In mockery and wrath this evil earth?
Mercy becomes the powerful—be but just:
O God! repent and save.'*

'One way remains:
I will beget a Son, and He shall bear 135
*The sins of all the world; He shall arise
In an unnoticed corner of the earth,
And there shall die upon a cross, and purge
The universal crime; so that the few
On whom My grace descends, those who are marked 140
As vessels to the honour of their God,
May credit this strange sacrifice, and save
Their souls alive: millions shall live and die,
Who ne'er shall call upon their Saviour's name,
But, unredeemed, go to the gaping grave. 145
Thousands shall deem it an old woman's tale,
Such as the nurses frighten babes withal:
These in a gulf of anguish and of flame
Shall curse their reprobation endlessly,
Yet tenfold pangs shall force them to avow, 150
Even on their beds of torment, where they howl,
My honour, and the justice of their doom.
What then avail their virtuous deeds, their thoughts
Of purity, with radiant genius bright,
Or lit with human reason's earthly ray? 155
*Many are called, but few will I elect.
Do thou My bidding, Moses!
Even the murderer's cheek
Was blanched with horror, and his quivering lips
Scarce faintly uttered—'O almighty One,
I tremble and obey!'* 160*

'O Spirit! centuries have set their seal
On this heart of many wounds, and loaded brain,
Since the Incarnate came: humbly He came,
Veiling His horrible Godhead in the shape
Of man, scorned by the world, His name unheard, 165



*Save by the rabble of His native town,
Even as a parish demagogue. He led
The crowd; He taught them justice, truth, and peace,
In semblance; but He lit within their souls
The quenchless flames of zeal, and blessed the sword 170*
He brought on earth to satiate with the blood
Of truth and freedom His malignant soul.
At length His mortal frame was led to death.
I stood beside Him: on the torturing cross
No pain assailed His unterrestrial sense; 175
*And yet He groaned. Indignantly I summed
The massacres and miseries which His name
Had sanctioned in my country, and I cried,
"Go! Go!" in mockery.*
A smile of godlike malice reillumed 180
His fading lineaments.—"I go," He cried,
"But thou shalt wander o'er the unquiet



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earth

Eternally.”—The dampness of the grave
Bathed my imperishable front. I fell,
And long lay tranced upon the charmed soil. 185

*When I awoke Hell burned within my brain,
Which staggered on its seat; for all around
The mouldering relics of my kindred lay,
Even as the Almighty's ire arrested them,
And in their various attitudes of death* 190

My murdered children's mute and eyeless skulls
Glared ghastly upon me.

But my soul,

From sight and sense of the polluting woe
Of tyranny, had long learned to prefer
Hell's freedom to the servitude of Heaven. 195

*Therefore I rose, and dauntlessly began
My lonely and unending pilgrimage,
Resolved to wage unweariable war
With my almighty Tyrant, and to hurl
Defiance at His impotence to harm* 200

Beyond the curse I bore. The very hand
That barred my passage to the peaceful grave
Has crushed the earth to misery, and given
Its empire to the chosen of His slaves.

These have I seen, even from the earliest dawn 205
Of weak, unstable and precarious power,

*Then preaching peace, as now they practise war;
So, when they turned but from the massacre
Of unoffending infidels, to quench*

Their thirst for ruin in the very blood 210

That flowed in their own veins, and pitiless zeal
Froze every human feeling, as the wife

Sheathed in her husband's heart the sacred steel,
Even whilst its hopes were dreaming of her love;

And friends to friends, brothers to brothers stood 215
Opposed in bloodiest battle-field, and war,

*Scarce satiable by fate's last death-draught, waged,
Drunk from the winepress of the Almighty's wrath;*

*Whilst the red cross, in mockery of peace,
Pointed to victory! When the fray was done,* 220

No remnant of the exterminated faith
Survived to tell its ruin, but the flesh,



With putrid smoke poisoning the atmosphere,
That rotted on the half-extinguished pile.

'Yes! I have seen God's worshippers unsheathe 225
The sword of His revenge, when grace descended,
Confirming all unnatural impulses,
To sanctify their desolating deeds;
And frantic priests waved the ill-omened cross
O'er the unhappy earth: then shone the sun 230
On showers of gore from the upflashing steel
Of safe assassination, and all crime
Made stingless by the Spirits of the Lord,
And blood-red rainbows canopied the land.
'Spirit, no year of my eventful being 235
Has passed unstained by crime and misery,
Which flows from God's own faith. I've marked His slaves
With tongues whose lies are venomous, beguile



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*The insensate mob, and, whilst one hand was red
With murder, feign to stretch the other out 240
For brotherhood and peace; and that they now
Babble of love and mercy, whilst their deeds
Are marked with all the narrowness and crime
That Freedom's young arm dare not yet chastise,
Reason may claim our gratitude, who now 245
Establishing the imperishable throne
Of truth, and stubborn virtue, maketh vain
The unprevailing malice of my Foe,
Whose bootless rage heaps torments for the brave,
Adds impotent eternities to pain, 250
Whilst keenest disappointment racks His breast
To see the smiles of peace around them play,
To frustrate or to sanctify their doom.*

*'Thus have I stood,—through a wild waste of years
Struggling with whirlwinds of mad agony, 255
Yet peaceful, and serene, and self-enshrined,
Mocking my powerless Tyrant's horrible curse
With stubborn and unalterable will,
Even as a giant oak, which Heaven's fierce flame
Had scathed in the wilderness, to stand 260
A monument of fadeless ruin there;
Yet peacefully and movelessly it braves
The midnight conflict of the wintry storm,
As in the sunlight's calm it spreads
Its worn and withered arms on high 265
To meet the quiet of a summer's noon.'*

The Fairy waved her wand:
Ahasuerus fled
Fast as the shapes of mingled shade and mist,
That lurk in the glens of a twilight grove, 270
*Flee from the morning beam:
The matter of which dreams are made
Not more endowed with actual life
Than this phantasmal portraiture
Of wandering human thought. 275*



NOTE:

180 reilluminated edition 1813.

8.

THE FAIRY:

'The Present and the Past thou hast beheld:

It was a desolate sight. Now, Spirit, learn

The secrets of the Future.—Time!

Unfold the brooding pinion of thy gloom,

Render thou up thy half-devoured babes, 5

And from the cradles of eternity,

Where millions lie lulled to their portioned sleep

By the deep murmuring stream of passing things,

Tear thou that gloomy shroud.—Spirit, behold

Thy glorious destiny!' 10

Joy to the Spirit came.

Through the wide rent in Time's eternal veil,

Hope was seen beaming through the mists of fear:

Earth was no longer Hell;

Love, freedom, health, had given 15

Their ripeness to the manhood of its prime,

And all its pulses beat

Symphonious to the planetary spheres:

Then dulcet music swelled

Concordant with the life-strings of the soul;



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20

It throbbed in sweet and languid beatings there,
Catching new life from transitory death,—
Like the vague sighings of a wind at even,
That wakes the wavelets of the slumbering sea
And dies on the creation of its breath, 25
*And sinks and rises, fails and swells by fits:
Was the pure stream of feeling
That sprung from these sweet notes,
And o'er the Spirit's human sympathies
With mild and gentle motion calmly flowed. 30*

Joy to the Spirit came,—
Such joy as when a lover sees
The chosen of his soul in happiness,
And witnesses her peace
Whose woe to him were bitterer than death, 35
*Sees her unfaded cheek
Glow mantling in first luxury of health,
Thrills with her lovely eyes,
Which like two stars amid the heaving main
Sparkle through liquid bliss. 40*

Then in her triumph spoke the Fairy Queen:
'I will not call the ghost of ages gone
To unfold the frightful secrets of its lore;
The present now is past,
And those events that desolate the earth 45
*Have faded from the memory of Time,
Who dares not give reality to that
Whose being I annul. To me is given
The wonders of the human world to keep,
Space, matter, time, and mind. Futurity 50*
Exposes now its treasure; let the sight
Renew and strengthen all thy failing hope.
O human Spirit! spur thee to the goal
Where virtue fixes universal peace,
And midst the ebb and flow of human things, 55
*Show somewhat stable, somewhat certain still,
A lighthouse o'er the wild of dreary waves.*



'The habitable earth is full of bliss;
Those wastes of frozen billows that were hurled
By everlasting snowstorms round the poles, 60
*Where matter dared not vegetate or live,
But ceaseless frost round the vast solitude
Bound its broad zone of stillness, are unloosed;
And fragrant zephyrs there from spicy isles
Ruffle the placid ocean-deep, that rolls 65*
Its broad, bright surges to the sloping sand,
Whose roar is wakened into echoings sweet
To murmur through the Heaven-breathing groves
And melodize with man's blest nature there.

'Those deserts of immeasurable sand, 70
*Whose age-collected fervours scarce allowed
A bird to live, a blade of grass to spring,
Where the shrill chirp of the green lizard's love
Broke on the sultry silentness alone,
Now teem with countless rills and shady woods, 75*
Cornfields and pastures and white cottages;
And where the startled wilderness beheld
A savage conqueror stained in kindred blood,



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A tigress sating with the flesh of lambs
The unnatural famine of her toothless cubs, 80
*Whilst shouts and howlings through the desert rang,
Sloping and smooth the daisy-spangled lawn,
Offering sweet incense to the sunrise, smiles
To see a babe before his mother's door,
Sharing his morning's meal* 85
With the green and golden basilisk
That comes to lick his feet.

'Those trackless deeps, where many a weary sail
Has seen above the illimitable plain,
Morning on night, and night on morning rise, 90
*Whilst still no land to greet the wanderer spread
Its shadowy mountains on the sun-bright sea,
Where the loud roarings of the tempest-waves
So long have mingled with the gusty wind
In melancholy loneliness, and swept* 95
The desert of those ocean solitudes,
But vocal to the sea-bird's harrowing shriek,
The bellowing monster, and the rushing storm,
Now to the sweet and many-mingling sounds
Of kindest human impulses respond. 100
*Those lonely realms bright garden-isles begem,
With lightsome clouds and shining seas between,
And fertile valleys, resonant with bliss,
Whilst green woods overcanopy the wave,
Which like a toil-worn labourer leaps to shore,* 105
To meet the kisses of the flow'rets there.

'All things are recreated, and the flame
Of consentaneous love inspires all life:
The fertile bosom of the earth gives suck
To myriads, who still grow beneath her care, 110
*Rewarding her with their pure perfectness:
The balmy breathings of the wind inhale
Her virtues, and diffuse them all abroad:
Health floats amid the gentle atmosphere,
Glows in the fruits, and mantles on the stream:* 115
No storms deform the beaming brow of Heaven,



Nor scatter in the freshness of its pride
The foliage of the ever-verdant trees;
But fruits are ever ripe, flowers ever fair,
And Autumn proudly bears her matron grace, 120
*Kindling a flush on the fair cheek of Spring,
Whose virgin bloom beneath the ruddy fruit
Reflects its tint, and blushes into love.*

'The lion now forgets to thirst for blood:
There might you see him sporting in the sun 125
*Beside the dreadless kid; his claws are sheathed,
His teeth are harmless, custom's force has made
His nature as the nature of a lamb.
Like passion's fruit, the nightshade's tempting bane
Poisons no more the pleasure it bestows: 130*
All bitterness is past; the cup of joy
Unmingled mantles to the goblet's brim,
And courts the thirsty lips it fled before.



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'But chief, ambiguous Man, he that can know
More misery, and dream more joy than all; 135
*Whose keen sensations thrill within his breast
To mingle with a loftier instinct there,
Lending their power to pleasure and to pain,
Yet raising, sharpening, and refining each;
Who stands amid the ever-varying world, 140*
The burthen or the glory of the earth;
He chief perceives the change, his being notes
The gradual renovation, and defines
Each movement of its progress on his mind.

'Man, where the gloom of the long polar night 145
*Lowers o'er the snow-clad rocks and frozen soil,
Where scarce the hardiest herb that braves the frost
Basks in the moonlight's ineffectual glow,
Shrank with the plants, and darkened with the night;
His chilled and narrow energies, his heart, 150*
Insensible to courage, truth, or love,
His stunted stature and imbecile frame,
Marked him for some abortion of the earth,
Fit compeer of the bears that roamed around,
Whose habits and enjoyments were his own: 155
*His life a feverish dream of stagnant woe,
Whose meagre wants, but scantily fulfilled,
Apprised him ever of the joyless length
Which his short being's wretchedness had reached;
His death a pang which famine, cold and toil 160*
Long on the mind, whilst yet the vital spark
Clung to the body stubbornly, had brought:
All was inflicted here that Earth's revenge
Could wreak on the infringers of her law;
One curse alone was spared—the name of God. 165

'Nor where the tropics bound the realms of day
With a broad belt of mingling cloud and flame,
Where blue mists through the unmoving atmosphere
Scattered the seeds of pestilence, and fed
Unnatural vegetation, where the land 170
*Teemed with all earthquake, tempest and disease,
Was Man a nobler being; slavery
Had crushed him to his country's bloodstained dust;
Or he was bartered for the fame of power,
Which all internal impulses destroying, 175*



Makes human will an article of trade;
Or he was changed with Christians for their gold,
And dragged to distant isles, where to the sound
Of the flesh-mangling scourge, he does the work
Of all-polluting luxury and wealth, 180
*Which doubly visits on the tyrants' heads
The long-protracted fulness of their woe;
Or he was led to legal butchery,
To turn to worms beneath that burning sun,
Where kings first leagued against the rights of men, 185
And priests first traded with the name of God.*



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'Even where the milder zone afforded Man
A seeming shelter, yet contagion there,
Blighting his being with unnumbered ills,
Spread like a quenchless fire; nor truth till late 190
*Availed to arrest its progress, or create
That peace which first in bloodless victory waved
Her snowy standard o'er this favoured clime:
There man was long the train-bearer of slaves,
The mimic of surrounding misery, 195*
The jackal of ambition's lion-rage,
The bloodhound of religion's hungry zeal.
'Here now the human being stands adorning
This loveliest earth with taintless body and mind;
Blessed from his birth with all bland impulses, 200
*Which gently in his noble bosom wake
All kindly passions and all pure desires.
Him, still from hope to hope the bliss pursuing
Which from the exhaustless lore of human weal
Dawns on the virtuous mind, the thoughts that rise 205*
In time-destroying infiniteness, gift
With self-enshrined eternity, that mocks
The unprevailing hoariness of age,
And man, once fleeting o'er the transient scene
Swift as an unremembered vision, stands 210
*Immortal upon earth: no longer now
He slays the lamb that looks him in the face,
And horribly devours his mangled flesh,
Which, still avenging Nature's broken law,
Kindled all putrid humours in his frame, 215*
All evil passions, and all vain belief,
Hatred, despair, and loathing in his mind,
The germs of misery, death, disease, and crime.
No longer now the winged habitants,
That in the woods their sweet lives sing away,— 220
*Flee from the form of man; but gather round,
And prune their sunny feathers on the hands
Which little children stretch in friendly sport
Towards these dreadless partners of their play.
All things are void of terror: Man has lost 225*
His terrible prerogative, and stands
An equal amidst equals: happiness
And science dawn though late upon the earth;
Peace cheers the mind, health renovates the frame;



Disease and pleasure cease to mingle here, 230
Reason and passion cease to combat there;
Whilst each unfettered o'er the earth extend
Their all-subduing energies, and wield
The sceptre of a vast dominion there;
Whilst every shape and mode of matter lends 235
Its force to the omnipotence of mind,
Which from its dark mine drags the gem of truth
To decorate its Paradise of peace.'

NOTES: 204 *exhaustless store edition 1813*. 205 *Draws edition 1813*. See Editor's Note.

9.



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'O happy Earth! reality of Heaven!
To which those restless souls that ceaselessly
Throng through the human universe, aspire;
Thou consummation of all mortal hope!
Thou glorious prize of blindly-working will! 5
*Whose rays, diffused throughout all space and time,
Verge to one point and blend for ever there:
Of purest spirits thou pure dwelling-place!
Where care and sorrow, impotence and crime,
Languor, disease, and ignorance dare not come: 10*
O happy Earth, reality of Heaven!

'Genius has seen thee in her passionate dreams,
And dim forebodings of thy loveliness
Haunting the human heart, have there entwined
Those rooted hopes of some sweet place of bliss 15
*Where friends and lovers meet to part no more.
Thou art the end of all desire and will,
The product of all action; and the souls
That by the paths of an aspiring change
Have reached thy haven of perpetual peace, 20*
There rest from the eternity of toil
That framed the fabric of thy perfectness.

'Even Time, the conqueror, fled thee in his fear;
That hoary giant, who, in lonely pride,
So long had ruled the world, that nations fell 25
*Beneath his silent footstep. Pyramids,
That for millenniums had withstood the tide
Of human things, his storm-breath drove in sand
Across that desert where their stones survived
The name of him whose pride had heaped them there. 30*
Yon monarch, in his solitary pomp,
Was but the mushroom of a summer day,
That his light-winged footstep pressed to dust:
Time was the king of earth: all things gave way
Before him, but the fixed and virtuous will, 35
*The sacred sympathies of soul and sense,
That mocked his fury and prepared his fall.*

'Yet slow and gradual dawned the morn of love;
Long lay the clouds of darkness o'er the scene,
Till from its native Heaven they rolled away: 40
First, Crime triumphant o'er all hope careered



*Unblushing, undisguising, bold and strong;
Whilst Falsehood, tricked in Virtue's attributes,
Long sanctified all deeds of vice and woe,
Till done by her own venomous sting to death, 45*
She left the moral world without a law,
No longer fettering Passion's fearless wing,—
Nor searing Reason with the brand of God.
Then steadily the happy ferment worked;
Reason was free; and wild though Passion went 50
*Through tangled glens and wood-embosomed meads,
Gathering a garland of the strangest flowers,
Yet like the bee returning to her queen,
She bound the sweetest on her sister's brow,
Who meek and sober kissed the sportive child, 55*
No longer trembling at the broken rod.



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'Mild was the slow necessity of death:
The tranquil spirit failed beneath its grasp,
Without a groan, almost without a fear,
Calm as a voyager to some distant land, 60
And full of wonder, full of hope as he.
The deadly germs of languor and disease
Died in the human frame, and Purity
Blessed with all gifts her earthly worshippers.
How vigorous then the athletic form of age! 65
How clear its open and unwrinkled brow!
Where neither avarice, cunning, pride, nor care,
Had stamped the seal of gray deformity
On all the mingling lineaments of time.
How lovely the intrepid front of youth! 70
Which meek-eyed courage decked with freshest grace;—
Courage of soul, that dreaded not a name,
And elevated will, that journeyed on
Through life's phantasmal scene in fearlessness,
With virtue, love, and pleasure, hand in hand. 75

'Then, that sweet bondage which is Freedom's self,
And rivets with sensation's softest tie
The kindred sympathies of human souls,
Needed no fetters of tyrannic law:
Those delicate and timid impulses 80
In Nature's primal modesty arose,
And with undoubted confidence disclosed
The growing longings of its dawning love,
Unchecked by dull and selfish chastity,
That virtue of the cheaply virtuous, 85
Who pride themselves in senselessness and frost.
No longer prostitution's venom'd bane
Poisoned the springs of happiness and life;
Woman and man, in confidence and love,
Equal and free and pure together trod 90
The mountain-paths of virtue, which no more
Were stained with blood from many a pilgrim's feet.

'Then, where, through distant ages, long in pride
The palace of the monarch-slave had mocked
Famine's faint groan, and Penury's silent tear, 95
A heap of crumbling ruins stood, and threw
Year after year their stones upon the field,
Wakening a lonely echo; and the leaves



*Of the old thorn, that on the topmost tower
Usurped the royal ensign's grandeur, shook 100
In the stern storm that swayed the topmost tower
And whispered strange tales in the Whirlwind's ear.
'Low through the lone cathedral's roofless aisles
The melancholy winds a death-dirge sung:
It were a sight of awfulness to see 105
The works of faith and slavery, so vast,
So sumptuous, yet so perishing withal!
Even as the corpse that rests beneath its wall.
A thousand mourners deck the pomp of death
To-day, the breathing marble glows above 110
To decorate its memory, and tongues
Are busy of its life: to-morrow, worms
In silence and in darkness seize their prey.*



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'Within the massy prison's mouldering courts,
Fearless and free the ruddy children played, 115
Weaving gay chaplets for their innocent brows
With the green ivy and the red wallflower,
That mock the dungeon's unavailing gloom;
The ponderous chains, and gratings of strong iron,
There rusted amid heaps of broken stone 120
That mingled slowly with their native earth:
There the broad beam of day, which feebly once
Lighted the cheek of lean Captivity
With a pale and sickly glare, then freely shone
On the pure smiles of infant playfulness: 125
No more the shuddering voice of hoarse Despair
Pealed through the echoing vaults, but soothing notes
Of ivy-fingered winds and gladsome birds
And merriment were resonant around.

'These ruins soon left not a wreck behind: 130
Their elements, wide scattered o'er the globe,
To happier shapes were moulded, and became
Ministrant to all blissful impulses:
Thus human things were perfected, and earth,
Even as a child beneath its mother's love, 135
Was strengthened in all excellence, and grew
Fairer and nobler with each passing year.

'Now Time his dusky pennons o'er the scene
Closes in steadfast darkness, and the past
Fades from our charmed sight. My task is done: 140
Thy lore is learned. Earth's wonders are thine own,
With all the fear and all the hope they bring.
My spells are passed: the present now recurs.
Ah me! a pathless wilderness remains
Yet unsubdued by man's reclaiming hand. 145

'Yet, human Spirit, bravely hold thy course,
Let virtue teach thee firmly to pursue
The gradual paths of an aspiring change:
For birth and life and death, and that strange state
Before the naked soul has found its home, 150
All tend to perfect happiness, and urge
The restless wheels of being on their way,
Whose flashing spokes, instinct with infinite life,
Bicker and burn to gain their destined goal:



For birth but wakes the spirit to the sense 155
Of outward shows, whose unexperienced shape
New modes of passion to its frame may lend;
Life is its state of action, and the store
Of all events is aggregated there
That variegate the eternal universe; 160
Death is a gate of dreariness and gloom,
That leads to azure isles and beaming skies
And happy regions of eternal hope.
Therefore, O Spirit! fearlessly bear on:
Though storms may break the primrose on its stalk, 165
Though frosts may blight the freshness of its bloom,
Yet Spring's awakening breath will woo the earth,
To feed with kindest dews its favourite flower,
That blooms in mossy banks and darksome glens,
Lighting the greenwood with its sunny smile. 170



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'Fear not then, Spirit, Death's disrobing hand,
So welcome when the tyrant is awake,
So welcome when the bigot's hell-torch burns;
'Tis but the voyage of a darksome hour,
The transient gulf-dream of a startling sleep. 175
*Death is no foe to Virtue: earth has seen
Love's brightest roses on the scaffold bloom,
Mingling with Freedom's fadeless laurels there,
And presaging the truth of visioned bliss.
Are there not hopes within thee, which this scene* 180
Of linked and gradual being has confirmed?
Whose stings bade thy heart look further still,
When, to the moonlight walk by Henry led,
Sweetly and sadly thou didst talk of death?
And wilt thou rudely tear them from thy breast, 185
*Listening supinely to a bigot's creed,
Or tamely crouching to the tyrant's rod,
Whose iron thongs are red with human gore?
Never: but bravely bearing on, thy will
Is destined an eternal war to wage* 190
With tyranny and falsehood, and uproot
The germs of misery from the human heart.
Thine is the hand whose piety would soothe
The thorny pillow of unhappy crime,
Whose impotence an easy pardon gains, 195
*Watching its wanderings as a friend's disease:
Thine is the brow whose mildness would defy
Its fiercest rage, and brave its sternest will,
When fenced by power and master of the world.
Thou art sincere and good; of resolute mind,* 200
Free from heart-withering custom's cold control,
Of passion lofty, pure and unsubdued.
Earth's pride and meanness could not vanquish thee,
And therefore art thou worthy of the boon
Which thou hast now received: Virtue shall keep 205
*Thy footsteps in the path that thou hast trod,
And many days of beaming hope shall bless
Thy spotless life of sweet and sacred love.
Go, happy one, and give that bosom joy
Whose sleepless spirit waits to catch* 210
Light, life and rapture from thy smile.'



The Fairy waves her wand of charm.
Speechless with bliss the Spirit mounts the car,
That rolled beside the battlement,
Bending her beamy eyes in thankful ness. 215
*Again the enchanted steeds were yoked,
Again the burning wheels inflame
The steep descent of Heaven's untrodden way.
Fast and far the chariot flew:
The vast and fiery globes that rolled 220
Around the Fairy's palace-gate
Lessened by slow degrees and soon appeared
Such tiny twinklers as the planet orbs
That there attendant on the solar power
With borrowed light pursued their narrower way. 225*

Earth floated then below:
The chariot paused a moment there;
The Spirit then descended:
The restless coursers pawed the ungenial soil,
Snuffed the gross air, and then, their errand done, 230
Unfurled their pinions to the winds of Heaven.



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The Body and the Soul united then,
A gentle start convulsed Ianthe's frame:
Her veiny eyelids quietly unclosed;
Moveless awhile the dark blue orbs remained: 235
She looked around in wonder and beheld
Henry, who kneeled in silence by her couch,
Watching her sleep with looks of speechless love,
And the bright beaming stars
That through the casement shone. 240

NOTES ON QUEEN MAB.

SHELLEY'S NOTES.

1. 242, 243:—

The sun's unclouded orb
Rrolled through the black concave.

Beyond our atmosphere the sun would appear a rayless orb of fire in the midst of a black concave. The equal diffusion of its light on earth is owing to the refraction of the rays by the atmosphere, and their reflection from other bodies. Light consists either of vibrations propagated through a subtle medium, or of numerous minute particles repelled in all directions from the luminous body. Its velocity greatly exceeds that of any substance with which we are acquainted: observations on the eclipses of Jupiter's satellites have demonstrated that light takes up no more than 8 minutes 7 seconds in passing from the sun to the earth, a distance of 95,000,000 miles.—Some idea may be gained of the immense distance of the fixed stars when it is computed that many years would elapse before light could reach this earth from the nearest of them; yet in one year light travels 5,422,400,000,000 miles, which is a distance 5,707,600 times greater than that of the sun from the earth.

1. 252, 253:—

Whilst round the chariot's way
Innumerable systems rolled.

The plurality of worlds,—the indefinite immensity of the universe, is a most awful subject of contemplation. He who rightly feels its mystery and grandeur is in no danger of seduction from the falsehoods of religious systems, or of deifying the principle of the universe. It is impossible to believe that the Spirit that pervades this infinite machine begat a son upon the body of a Jewish woman; or is angered at the consequences of



that necessity, which is a synonym of itself. All that miserable tale of the Devil, and Eve, and an Intercessor, with the childish mummeries of the God of the Jews, is irreconcilable with the knowledge of the stars. The works of His fingers have borne witness against Him.

The nearest of the fixed stars is inconceivably distant from the earth, and they are probably proportionably distant from each other. By a calculation of the velocity of light, Sirius is supposed to be at least 54,224,000,000,000 miles from the earth. (See Nicholson's "Encyclopedia", article Light.) That which appears only like a thin and silvery cloud streaking the heaven is in effect composed of innumerable clusters of suns, each shining with its own light, and illuminating numbers of planets that revolve around them. Millions and millions of suns are ranged around us, all attended by innumerable worlds, yet calm, regular, and harmonious, all keeping the paths of immutable necessity.



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4. 178, 179:—

These are the hired bravos who defend
The tyrant's throne.

To employ murder as a means of justice is an idea which a man of an enlightened mind will not dwell upon with pleasure. To march forth in rank and file, and all the pomp of streamers and trumpets, for the purpose of shooting at our fellow-men as a mark; to inflict upon them all the variety of wound and anguish; to leave them weltering in their blood; to wander over the field of desolation, and count the number of the dying and the dead,—are employments which in thesis we may maintain to be necessary, but which no good man will contemplate with gratulation and delight. A battle we suppose is won:—thus truth is established, thus the cause of justice is confirmed! It surely requires no common sagacity to discern the connexion between this immense heap of calamities and the assertion of truth or the maintenance of justice.

'Kings, and ministers of state, the real authors of the calamity, sit unmolested in their cabinet, while those against whom the fury of the storm is directed are, for the most part, persons who have been trepanned into the service, or who are dragged unwillingly from their peaceful homes into the field of battle. A soldier is a man whose business it is to kill those who never offended him, and who are the innocent martyrs of other men's iniquities. Whatever may become of the abstract question of the justifiableness of war, it seems impossible that the soldier should not be a depraved and unnatural being.

To these more serious and momentous considerations it may be proper to add a recollection of the ridiculousness of the military character. Its first constituent is obedience: a soldier is, of all descriptions of men, the most completely a machine; yet his profession inevitably teaches him something of dogmatism, swaggering, and self-consequence: he is like the puppet of a showman, who, at the very time he is made to strut and swell and display the most farcical airs, we perfectly know cannot assume the most insignificant gesture, advance either to the right or the left, but as he is moved by his exhibitor.'—Godwin's "Enquirer", Essay 5.

I will here subjoin a little poem, so strongly expressive of my abhorrence of despotism and falsehood, that I fear lest it never again may be depicted so vividly. This opportunity is perhaps the only one that ever will occur of rescuing it from oblivion.

FALSEHOOD AND VICE.

A DIALOGUE.

Whilst monarchs laughed upon their thrones
To hear a famished nation's groans,
And hugged the wealth wrung from the woe



That makes its eyes and veins o'erflow,—
Those thrones, high built upon the heaps
Of bones where frenzied Famine sleeps,
Where Slavery wields her scourge of iron,
Red with mankind's unheeded gore,
And War's mad fiends the scene environ,
Mingling with shrieks a drunken roar,
There Vice and Falsehood took their stand,
High raised above the unhappy land.



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FALSEHOOD:

Brother! arise from the dainty fare,
Which thousands have toiled and bled to bestow;
A finer feast for thy hungry ear
Is the news that I bring of human woe.

VICE:

And, secret one, what hast thou done,
To compare, in thy tumid pride, with me?
I, whose career, through the blasted year,
Has been tracked by despair and agony.

FALSEHOOD:

What have I done!—I have torn the robe
From baby Truth's unsheltered form,
And round the desolated globe
Borne safely the bewildering charm:
My tyrant-slaves to a dungeon-floor
Have bound the fearless innocent,
And streams of fertilizing gore
Flow from her bosom's hideous rent,
Which this unfailing dagger gave...
I dread that blood!—no more—this day
Is ours, though her eternal ray
Must shine upon our grave.
Yet know, proud Vice, had I not given
To thee the robe I stole from Heaven,
Thy shape of ugliness and fear
Had never gained admission here.

VICE:

And know, that had I disdained to toil,
But sate in my loathsome cave the while,
And ne'er to these hateful sons of Heaven,
GOLD, MONARCHY, and MURDER, given;
Hadst thou with all thine art essayed
One of thy games then to have played,
With all thine overweening boast,
Falsehood! I tell thee thou hadst lost!—
Yet wherefore this dispute?—we tend,
Fraternal, to one common end;
In this cold grave beneath my feet,
Will our hopes, our fears, and our labours, meet.



FALSEHOOD:

I brought my daughter, RELIGION, on earth:
She smothered Reason's babes in their birth;
But dreaded their mother's eye severe,—
So the crocodile slunk off slyly in fear,
And loosed her bloodhounds from the den....
They started from dreams of slaughtered men,
And, by the light of her poison eye,
Did her work o'er the wide earth frightfully:
The dreadful stench of her torches' flare,
Fed with human fat, polluted the air:
The curses, the shrieks, the ceaseless cries
Of the many-mingling miseries,
As on she trod, ascended high
And trumpeted my victory!—
Brother, tell what thou hast done.

VICE:

I have extinguished the noonday sun,
In the carnage-smoke of battles won:
Famine, Murder, Hell and Power
Were glutted in that glorious hour
Which searchless fate had stamped for me
With the seal of her security..
For the bloated wretch on yonder throne
Commanded the bloody fray to rise.
Like me he joyed at the stifled moan
Wrung from a nation's miseries;
While the snakes, whose slime even him DEFILED,
In ecstasies of malice smiled:
They thought 'twas theirs,—but mine the deed!
Theirs is the toil, but mine the meed—
Ten thousand victims madly bleed.
They dream that tyrants goad them there
With poisonous war to taint the air:
These tyrants, on their beds of thorn,
Swell with the thoughts of murderous fame,
And with their gains to lift my name
Restless they plan from night to morn:
I—I do all; without my aid
Thy daughter, that relentless maid,
Could never o'er a death-bed urge
The fury of her venom'd scourge.



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FALSEHOOD:

Brother, well:—the world is ours;
And whether thou or I have won,
The pestilence expectant lowers
On all beneath yon blasted sun.
Our joys, our toils, our honours meet
In the milk-white and wormy winding-sheet:
A short-lived hope, unceasing care,
Some heartless scraps of godly prayer,
A moody curse, and a frenzied sleep
Ere gapes the grave's unclosing deep,
A tyrant's dream, a coward's start,
The ice that clings to a priestly heart,
A judge's frown, a courtier's smile,
Make the great whole for which we toil;
And, brother, whether thou or I
Have done the work of misery,
It little boots: thy toil and pain,
Without my aid, were more than vain;
And but for thee I ne'er had sate
The guardian of Heaven's palace gate.

5. 1, 2:—

Thus do the generations of the earth
Go to the grave, and issue from the womb.

'One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth for ever. The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose. The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirlleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits. All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.'—Ecclesiastes, chapter 1 verses 4-7.

5. 4-6.

Even as the leaves
Which the keen frost-wind of the waning year
Has scattered on the forest soil.

Oin per phullon genee, toiede kai andron.
Phulla ta men t' anemos chamadis cheei, alla de th' ule
Telethoosa phuei, earos d' epigignetai ore.
Os andron genee, e men phuei, e d' apolegei.



Iliad Z, line 146.

5. 58:— The mob of peasants, nobles, priests, and kings.

Suave mari magno turbantibus aequora ventis
E terra magnum alterius spectare laborem;
Non quia vexari quemquam est iucunda voluptas,
Sed quibus ipse malis careas quia cernere suave est.
Suave etiam belli certamina magna tueri
Per campos instructa, tua sine parte pericli;
Sed nil dulcius est bene quam munita tenere
Edita doctrina sapientum templa serena,
Despicere undo queas alios, passimque videre
Errare atque viam palantis quaerere vitae;
Certare ingenio; contendere nobilitate;
Noctes atque dies niti praestante labore
Ad summas emergere opes, rerumque potiri.
O miseras hominum mentes! O pectora caeca!

Lucret. lib. 2.

5. 93, 94.

And statesmen boast
Of wealth!



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There is no real wealth but the labour of man. Were the mountains of gold and the valleys of silver, the world would not be one grain of corn the richer; no one comfort would be added to the human race. In consequence of our consideration for the precious metals, one man is enabled to heap to himself luxuries at the expense of the necessaries of his neighbour; a system admirably fitted to produce all the varieties of disease and crime, which never fail to characterize the two extremes of opulence and penury. A speculator takes pride to himself as the promoter of his country's prosperity, who employs a number of hands in the manufacture of articles avowedly destitute of use, or subservient only to the unhallowed cravings of luxury and ostentation. The nobleman, who employs the peasants of his neighbourhood in building his palaces, until 'jam pauca aratro jugera regiae moles relinquunt,' flatters himself that he has gained the title of a patriot by yielding to the impulses of vanity. The show and pomp of courts adduce the same apology for its continuance; and many a fete has been given, many a woman has eclipsed her beauty by her dress, to benefit the labouring poor and to encourage trade. Who does not see that this is a remedy which aggravates whilst it palliates the countless diseases of society? The poor are set to labour,—for what? Not the food for which they famish: not the blankets for want of which their babes are frozen by the cold of their miserable hovels: not those comforts of civilization without which civilized man is far more miserable than the meanest savage; oppressed as he is by all its insidious evils, within the daily and taunting prospect of its innumerable benefits assiduously exhibited before him:—no; for the pride of power, for the miserable isolation of pride, for the false pleasures of the hundredth part of society. No greater evidence is afforded of the wide extended and radical mistakes of civilized man than this fact: those arts which are essential to his very being are held in the greatest contempt; employments are lucrative in an inverse ratio to their usefulness (See Rousseau, "De l'Inegalite parmi les Hommes", note 7.): the jeweller, the toyman, the actor gains fame and wealth by the exercise of his useless and ridiculous art; whilst the cultivator of the earth, he without whom society must cease to subsist, struggles through contempt and penury, and perishes by that famine which but for his unceasing exertions would annihilate the rest of mankind.

I will not insult common sense by insisting on the doctrine of the natural equality of man. The question is not concerning its desirableness, but its practicability: so far as it is practicable, it is desirable. That state of human society which approaches nearer to an equal partition of its benefits and evils should, caeteris paribus, be preferred: but so long as we conceive that a wanton expenditure of human labour, not for the necessities, not even for the luxuries of the mass of society, but for the egotism and ostentation of a few of its members, is defensible on the ground of public justice, so long we neglect to approximate to the redemption of the human race.



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Labour is required for physical, and leisure for moral improvement: from the former of these advantages the rich, and from the latter the poor, by the inevitable conditions of their respective situations, are precluded. A state which should combine the advantages of both would be subjected to the evils of neither. He that is deficient in firm health, or vigorous intellect, is but half a man: hence it follows that to subject the labouring classes to unnecessary labour is wantonly depriving them of any opportunities of intellectual improvement; and that the rich are heaping up for their own mischief the disease, lassitude, and ennui by which their existence is rendered an intolerable burthen.

English reformers exclaim against sinecures,—but the true pension list is the rent-roll of the landed proprietors: wealth is a power usurped by the few, to compel the many to labour for their benefit. The laws which support this system derive their force from the ignorance and credulity of its victims: they are the result of a conspiracy of the few against the many, who are themselves obliged to purchase this pre-eminence by the loss of all real comfort.

'The commodities that substantially contribute to the subsistence of the human species form a very short catalogue: they demand from us but a slender portion of industry. If these only were produced, and sufficiently produced, the species of man would be continued. If the labour necessarily required to produce them were equitably divided among the poor, and, still more, if it were equitably divided among all, each man's share of labour would be light, and his portion of leisure would be ample. There was a time when this leisure would have been of small comparative value: it is to be hoped that the time will come when it will be applied to the most important purposes. Those hours which are not required for the production of the necessaries of life may be devoted to the cultivation of the understanding, the enlarging our stock of knowledge, the refining our taste, and thus opening to us new and more exquisite sources of enjoyment.

...

'It was perhaps necessary that a period of monopoly and oppression should subsist, before a period of cultivated equality could subsist. Savages perhaps would never have been excited to the discovery of truth and the invention of art but by the narrow motives which such a period affords. But surely, after the savage state has ceased, and men have set out in the glorious career of discovery and invention, monopoly and oppression cannot be necessary to prevent them from returning to a state of barbarism.'—Godwin's "Enquirer", Essay 2. See also "Pol. Jus.", book 8, chapter 2.

It is a calculation of this admirable author, that all the conveniences of civilized life might be produced, if society would divide the labour equally among its members, by each individual being employed in labour two hours during the day.



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5. 112, 113:—

or religion Drives his wife raving mad.

I am acquainted with a lady of considerable accomplishments, and the mother of a numerous family, whom the Christian religion has goaded to incurable insanity. A parallel case is, I believe, within the experience of every physician.

Nam iam saepe homines patriam, carosquo parentes
Prodiderunt, vitare Acherusia templa petentes.—Lucretius.

5. 189:—

Even love is sold.

Not even the intercourse of the sexes is exempt from the despotism of positive institution. Law pretends even to govern the indisciplineable wanderings of passion, to put fetters on the clearest deductions of reason, and, by appeals to the will, to subdue the involuntary affections of our nature. Love is inevitably consequent upon the perception of loveliness. Love withers under constraint: its very essence is liberty: it is compatible neither with obedience, jealousy, nor fear: it is there most pure, perfect, and unlimited, where its votaries live in confidence, equality, and unreserve.

How long then ought the sexual connection to last? what law ought to specify the extent of the grievances which should limit its duration? A husband and wife ought to continue so long united as they love each other: any law which should bind them to cohabitation for one moment after the decay of their affection would be a most intolerable tyranny, and the most unworthy of toleration. How odious an usurpation of the right of private judgement should that law be considered which should make the ties of friendship indissoluble, in spite of the caprices, the inconstancy, the fallibility, and capacity for improvement of the human mind. And by so much would the fetters of love be heavier and more unendurable than those of friendship, as love is more vehement and capricious, more dependent on those delicate peculiarities of imagination, and less capable of reduction to the ostensible merits of the object.

The state of society in which we exist is a mixture of feudal savageness and imperfect civilization. The narrow and unenlightened morality of the Christian religion is an aggravation of these evils. It is not even until lately that mankind have admitted that happiness is the sole end of the science of ethics, as of all other sciences; and that the fanatical idea of mortifying the flesh for the love of God has been discarded. I have heard, indeed, an ignorant collegian adduce, in favour of Christianity, its hostility to every worldly feeling! (The first Christian emperor made a law by which seduction was punished with death; if the female pleaded her own consent, she also was punished with death; if the parents endeavoured to screen the criminals, they were banished and



their estates were confiscated; the slaves who might be accessory were burned alive, or forced to swallow melted lead. The very offspring of an illegal love were involved in the consequences of the sentence.—Gibbon’s “Decline and Fall”, *etc.*, volume 2, page 210. See also, for the hatred of the primitive Christians to love and even marriage, page 269.)



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But if happiness be the object of morality, of all human unions and disunions; if the worthiness of every action is to be estimated by the quantity of pleasurable sensation it is calculated to produce, then the connection of the sexes is so long sacred as it contributes to the comfort of the parties, and is naturally dissolved when its evils are greater than its benefits. There is nothing immoral in this separation. Constancy has nothing virtuous in itself, independently of the pleasure it confers, and partakes of the temporizing spirit of vice in proportion as it endures tamely moral defects of magnitude in the object of its indiscreet choice. Love is free: to promise for ever to love the same woman is not less absurd than to promise to believe the same creed: such a vow, in both cases, excludes us from all inquiry. The language of the votarist is this: The woman I now love may be infinitely inferior to many others; the creed I now profess may be a mass of errors and absurdities; but I exclude myself from all future information as to the amiability of the one and the truth of the other, resolving blindly, and in spite of conviction, to adhere to them. Is this the language of delicacy and reason? Is the love of such a frigid heart of more worth than its belief?

The present system of constraint does no more, in the majority of instances, than make hypocrites or open enemies. Persons of delicacy and virtue, unhappily united to one whom they find it impossible to love, spend the loveliest season of their life in unproductive efforts to appear otherwise than they are, for the sake of the feelings of their partner or the welfare of their mutual offspring: those of less generosity and refinement openly avow their disappointment, and linger out the remnant of that union, which only death can dissolve, in a state of incurable bickering and hostility. The early education of their children takes its colour from the squabbles of the parents; they are nursed in a systematic school of ill-humour, violence, and falsehood. Had they been suffered to part at the moment when indifference rendered their union irksome, they would have been spared many years of misery: they would have connected themselves more suitably, and would have found that happiness in the society of more congenial partners which is for ever denied them by the despotism of marriage. They would have been separately useful and happy members of society, who, whilst united, were miserable and rendered misanthropical by misery. The conviction that wedlock is indissoluble holds out the strongest of all temptations to the perverse: they indulge without restraint in acrimony, and all the little tyrannies of domestic life, when they know that their victim is without appeal. If this connection were put on a rational basis, each would be assured that habitual ill-temper would terminate in separation, and would check this vicious and dangerous propensity.



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Prostitution is the legitimate offspring of marriage and its accompanying errors. Women, for no other crime than having followed the dictates of a natural appetite, are driven with fury from the comforts and sympathies of society. It is less venial than murder; and the punishment which is inflicted on her who destroys her child to escape reproach is lighter than the life of agony and disease to which the prostitute is irrecoverably doomed. Has a woman obeyed the impulse of unerring nature;—society declares war against her, pitiless and eternal war: she must be the tame slave, she must make no reprisals; theirs is the right of persecution, hers the duty of endurance. She lives a life of infamy: the loud and bitter laugh of scorn scares her from all return. She dies of long and lingering disease: yet SHE is in fault, SHE is the criminal, SHE the froward and untamable child,—and society, forsooth, the pure and virtuous matron, who casts her as an abortion from her undefiled bosom! Society avenges herself on the criminals of her own creation; she is employed in anathematizing the vice to-day, which yesterday she was the most zealous to teach. Thus is formed one-tenth of the population of London: meanwhile the evil is twofold. Young men, excluded by the fanatical idea of chastity from the society of modest and accomplished women, associate with these vicious and miserable beings, destroying thereby all those exquisite and delicate sensibilities whose existence cold-hearted worldlings have denied; annihilating all genuine passion, and debasing that to a selfish feeling which is the excess of generosity and devotedness. Their body and mind alike crumble into a hideous wreck of humanity; idiocy and disease become perpetuated in their miserable offspring, and distant generations suffer for the bigoted morality of their forefathers. Chastity is a monkish and evangelical superstition, a greater foe to natural temperance even than unintellectual sensuality; it strikes at the root of all domestic happiness, and consigns more than half of the human race to misery, that some few may monopolize according to law. A system could not well have been devised more studiously hostile to human happiness than marriage.

I conceive that from the abolition of marriage, the fit and natural arrangement of sexual connection would result. I by no means assert that the intercourse would be promiscuous: on the contrary, it appears, from the relation of parent to child, that this union is generally of long duration, and marked above all others with generosity and self-devotion. But this is a subject which it is perhaps premature to discuss. That which will result from the abolition of marriage will be natural and right; because choice and change will be exempted from restraint.

In fact, religion and morality, as they now stand, compose a practical code of misery and servitude: the genius of human happiness must tear every leaf from the accursed book of God ere man can read the inscription on his heart. How would morality, dressed up in stiff stays and finery, start from her own disgusting image should she look in the mirror of nature!—



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6. 45, 46:—

To the red and baleful sun
That faintly twinkles there.

The north polar star, to which the axis of the earth, in its present state of obliquity, points. It is exceedingly probable, from many considerations, that this obliquity will gradually diminish, until the equator coincides with the ecliptic: the nights and days will then become equal on the earth throughout the year, and probably the seasons also. There is no great extravagance in presuming that the progress of the perpendicularity of the poles may be as rapid as the progress of intellect; or that there should be a perfect identity between the moral and physical improvement of the human species. It is certain that wisdom is not compatible with disease, and that, in the present state of the climates of the earth, health, in the true and comprehensive sense of the word, is out of the reach of civilized man. Astronomy teaches us that the earth is now in its progress, and that the poles are every year becoming more and more perpendicular to the ecliptic. The strong evidence afforded by the history of mythology, and geological researches, that some event of this nature has taken place already, affords a strong presumption that this progress is not merely an oscillation, as has been surmised by some late astronomers. (Laplace, "Systeme du Monde".)

Bones of animals peculiar to the torrid zone have been found in the north of Siberia, and on the banks of the river Ohio. Plants have been found in the fossil state in the interior of Germany, which demand the present climate of Hindostan for their production. (Cabanis, "Rapports du Physique et du Moral de l'Homme", volume 2 page 406.) The researches of M. Bailly establish the existence of a people who inhabited a tract in Tartary 49 degrees north latitude, of greater antiquity than either the Indians, the Chinese, or the Chaldeans, from whom these nations derived their sciences and theology. (Bailly, "Lettres sur les Sciences, a Voltaire".) We find, from the testimony of ancient writers, that Britain, Germany, and France were much colder than at present, and that their great rivers were annually frozen over. Astronomy teaches us also that since this period the obliquity of the earth's position has been considerably diminished.

6. 171-173:—

No atom of this turbulence fulfils
A vague and unnecessitated task,
Or acts but as it must and ought to act.

'Deux exemples serviront a nous rendre plus sensible le principe qui vient d'etre pose; nous emprunterons l'un du physique at l'autre du moral. Dans un tourbillon de poussiere qu'eleve un vent impetueux, quelque confus qu'il paraisse a nos yeux; dans la plus affreuse tempete excitee par des vents opposes qui soulevent les flots,—il n'y a pas une seule molecule de poussiere ou d'eau qui soit placee au HASARD, qui n'ait sa

cause suffisante pour occuper le lieu ou elle se trouve, et qui n'agisse rigoureusement de la maniere dont ella doit agir. Un geometre qui connaitrait exactement les differentes forces qui agissent dans ces deux cas, at las proprietes des molecules qui sent mues, demontrerait que d'apres des causes donnees, chaque molecule agit precisement comme ella doit agir, et ne peut agir autrement qu'elle ne fait.



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'Dans les convulsions terribles qui agitent quelquefois les sociétés politiques, et qui produisent souvent le renversement d'un empire, il n'y a pas une seule action, une seule parole, une seule pensée, une seule volonté, une seule passion dans les agents qui concourent à la révolution comme destructeurs ou comme victimes, qui ne soit nécessaire, qui n'agisse comme elle doit agir, qui n'opère infailliblement les effets qu'elle doit opérer, suivant la place qu'occupent ces agents dans ce tourbillon moral. Cela paraîtrait évident pour une intelligence qui sera en état de saisir et d'apprécier toutes les actions et réactions des esprits et des corps de ceux qui contribuent à cette révolution.'—"Système de la Nature", volume 1, page 44.

6. 198:—

Necessity! thou mother of the world!

He who asserts the doctrine of Necessity means that, contemplating the events which compose the moral and material universe, he beholds only an immense and uninterrupted chain of causes and effects, no one of which could occupy any other place than it does occupy, or act in any other place than it does act. The idea of necessity is obtained by our experience of the connection between objects, the uniformity of the operations of nature, the constant conjunction of similar events, and the consequent inference of one from the other. Mankind are therefore agreed in the admission of necessity, if they admit that these two circumstances take place in voluntary action. Motive is to voluntary action in the human mind what cause is to effect in the material universe. The word liberty, as applied to mind, is analogous to the word chance as applied to matter: they spring from an ignorance of the certainty of the conjunction of antecedents and consequents.

Every human being is irresistibly impelled to act precisely as he does act: in the eternity which preceded his birth a chain of causes was generated, which, operating under the name of motives, make it impossible that any thought of his mind, or any action of his life, should be otherwise than it is. Were the doctrine of Necessity false, the human mind would no longer be a legitimate object of science; from like causes it would be in vain that we should expect like effects; the strongest motive would no longer be paramount over the conduct; all knowledge would be vague and undeterminate; we could not predict with any certainty that we might not meet as an enemy to-morrow him with whom we have parted in friendship to-night; the most probable inducements and the clearest reasonings would lose the invariable influence they possess. The contrary of this is demonstrably the fact. Similar circumstances produce the same unvariable effects. The precise character and motives of any man on any occasion being given, the moral philosopher could predict his actions with as much certainty as the natural philosopher could predict the effects of the mixture of any particular chemical substances. Why is the aged husbandman more experienced



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than the young beginner? Because there is a uniform, undeniable necessity in the operations of the material universe. Why is the old statesman more skilful than the raw politician) Because, relying on the necessary conjunction of motive and action, he proceeds to produce moral effects, by the application of those moral causes which experience has shown to be effectual. Some actions may be found to which we can attach no motives, but these are the effects of causes with which we are unacquainted. Hence the relation which motive bears to voluntary action is that of cause to effect; nor, placed in this point of view, is it, or ever has it been, the subject of popular or philosophical dispute. None but the few fanatics who are engaged in the herculean task of reconciling the justice of their God with the misery of man, will longer outrage common sense by the supposition of an event without a cause, a voluntary action without a motive. History, politics, morals, criticism, all grounds of reasonings, all principles of science, alike assume the truth of the doctrine of Necessity. No farmer carrying his corn to market doubts the sale of it at the market price. The master of a manufactory no more doubts that he can purchase the human labour necessary for his purposes than that his machinery will act as they have been accustomed to act.

But, whilst none have scrupled to admit necessity as influencing matter, many have disputed its dominion over mind. Independently of its militating with the received ideas of the justice of God, it is by no means obvious to a superficial inquiry. When the mind observes its own operations, it feels no connection of motive and action: but as we know 'nothing more of causation than the constant conjunction of objects and the consequent inference of one from the other, as we find that these two circumstances are universally allowed to have place in voluntary action, we may be easily led to own that they are subjected to the necessity common to all causes.' The actions of the will have a regular conjunction with circumstances and characters; motive is to voluntary action what cause is to effect. But the only idea we can form of causation is a constant conjunction of similar objects, and the consequent inference of one from the other: wherever this is the case necessity is clearly established.

The idea of liberty, applied metaphorically to the will, has sprung from a misconception of the meaning of the word power. What is power?—*id quod potest*, that which can produce any given effect. To deny power is to say that nothing can or has the power to be or act. In the only true sense of the word power, it applies with equal force to the lodestone as to the human will. Do you think these motives, which I shall present, are powerful enough to rouse him? is a question just as common as, Do you think this lever has the power of raising this weight? The advocates of free-will assert that the will has the power of refusing to be determined by the strongest motive; but the strongest motive is that which, overcoming all others, ultimately prevails; this assertion therefore amounts to a denial of the will being ultimately determined by that motive which does determine it, which is absurd. But it is equally certain that a man cannot resist the strongest motive as that he cannot overcome a physical impossibility.



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The doctrine of Necessity tends to introduce a great change into the established notions of morality, and utterly to destroy religion. Reward and punishment must be considered, by the Necessarian, merely as motives which he would employ in order to procure the adoption or abandonment of any given line of conduct. Desert, in the present sense of the word, would no longer have any meaning; and he who should inflict pain upon another for no better reason than that he deserved it, would only gratify his revenge under pretence of satisfying justice? It is not enough, says the advocate of free-will, that a criminal should be prevented from a repetition of his crime: he should feel pain, and his torments, when justly inflicted, ought precisely to be proportioned to his fault. But utility is morality; that which is incapable of producing happiness is useless; and though the crime of Damians must be condemned, yet the frightful torments which revenge, under the name of justice, inflicted on this unhappy man cannot be supposed to have augmented, even at the long run, the stock of pleasurable sensation in the world. At the same time, the doctrine of Necessity does not in the least diminish our disapprobation of vice. The conviction which all feel that a viper is a poisonous animal, and that a tiger is constrained, by the inevitable condition of his existence, to devour men, does not induce us to avoid them less sedulously, or, even more, to hesitate in destroying them: but he would surely be of a hard heart who, meeting with a serpent on a desert island, or in a situation where it was incapable of injury, should wantonly deprive it of existence. A Necessarian is inconsequent to his own principles if he indulges in hatred or contempt; the compassion which he feels for the criminal is unmixed with a desire of injuring him: he looks with an elevated and dreadless composure upon the links of the universal chain as they pass before his eyes; whilst cowardice, curiosity, and inconsistency only assail him in proportion to the feebleness and indistinctness with which he has perceived and rejected the delusions of free-will.

Religion is the perception of the relation in which we stand to the principle of the universe. But if the principle of the universe be not an organic being, the model and prototype of man, the relation between it and human beings is absolutely none. Without some insight into its will respecting our actions religion is nugatory and vain. But will is only a mode of animal mind; moral qualities also are such as only a human being can possess; to attribute them to the principle of the universe is to annex to it properties incompatible with any possible definition of its nature. It is probable that the word God was originally only an expression denoting the unknown cause of the known events which men perceived in the universe. By the vulgar mistake of a metaphor for a real being, of a word for a thing, it became a man, endowed with human qualities and governing the universe as an earthly monarch governs his kingdom. Their addresses to this imaginary being, indeed, are much in the same style as those of subjects to a king. They acknowledge his benevolence, deprecate his anger, and supplicate his favour.



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But the doctrine of Necessity teaches us that in no case could any event have happened otherwise than it did happen, and that, if God is the author of good, He is also the author of evil; that, if He is entitled to our gratitude for the one, He is entitled to our hatred for the other; that, admitting the existence of this hypothetic being, He is also subjected to the dominion of an immutable necessity. It is plain that the same arguments which prove that God is the author of food, light, and life, prove Him also to be the author of poison, darkness, and death. The wide-wasting earthquake, the storm, the battle, and the tyranny, are attributable to this hypothetic being in the same degree as the fairest forms of nature, sunshine, liberty, and peace.

But we are taught, by the doctrine of Necessity, that there is neither good nor evil in the universe, otherwise than as the events to which we apply these epithets have relation to our own peculiar mode of being. Still less than with the hypothesis of a God will the doctrine of Necessity accord with the belief of a future state of punishment. God made man such as he is, and than damned him for being so: for to say that God was the author of all good, and man the author of all evil, is to say that one man made a straight line and a crooked one, and another man made the incongruity.

A Mahometan story, much to the present purpose, is recorded, wherein Adam and Moses are introduced disputing before God in the following manner. Thou, says Moses, art Adam, whom God created, and animated with the breath of life, and caused to be worshipped by the angels, and placed in Paradise, from whence mankind have been expelled for thy fault. Whereto Adam answered, Thou art Moses, whom God chose for His apostle, and entrusted with His word, by giving thee the tables of the law, and whom He vouchsafed to admit to discourse with Himself. How many years dost thou find the law was written before I was created? Says Moses, Forty. And dost thou not find, replied Adam, these words therein, And Adam rebelled against his Lord and transgressed? Which Moses confessing, Dost thou therefore blame me, continued he, for doing that which God wrote of me that I should do, forty years before I was created, nay, for what was decreed concerning me fifty thousand years before the creation of heaven and earth?—Sale's "Prelim. Disc. to the Koran", page 164.

7. 13:—

There is no God.

This negation must be understood solely to affect a creative Deity. The hypothesis of a pervading Spirit co-eternal with the universe remains unshaken.

A close examination of the validity of the proofs adduced to support any proposition is the only secure way of attaining truth, on the advantages of which it is unnecessary to descant: our knowledge of the existence of a Deity is a subject of such importance that it cannot be too minutely investigated; in consequence of this conviction we proceed

briefly and impartially to examine the proofs which have been adduced. It is necessary first to consider the nature of belief.



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When a proposition is offered to the mind, it perceives the agreement or disagreement of the ideas of which it is composed. A perception of their agreement is termed BELIEF. Many obstacles frequently prevent this perception from being immediate; these the mind attempts to remove in order that the perception may be distinct. The mind is active in the investigation in order to perfect the state of perception of the relation which the component ideas of the proposition bear to each, which is passive: the investigation being confused with the perception has induced many falsely to imagine that the mind is active in belief,—that belief is an act of volition,—in consequence of which it may be regulated by the mind. Pursuing, continuing this mistake, they have attached a degree of criminality to disbelief; of which, in its nature, it is incapable: it is equally incapable of merit.

Belief, then, is a passion, the strength of which, like every other passion, is in precise proportion to the degrees of excitement.

The degrees of excitement are three.

The senses are the sources of all knowledge to the mind; consequently their evidence claims the strongest assent.

The decision of the mind, founded upon our own experience, derived from these sources, claims the next degree.

The experience of others, which addresses itself to the former one, occupies the lowest degree.

(A graduated scale, on which should be marked the capabilities of propositions to approach to the test of the senses, would be a just barometer of the belief which ought to be attached to them.)

Consequently no testimony can be admitted which is contrary to reason; reason is founded on the evidence of our senses.

Every proof may be referred to one of these three divisions: it is to be considered what arguments we receive from each of them, which should convince us of the existence of a Deity.

1st, The evidence of the senses. If the Deity should appear to us, if He should convince our senses of His existence, this revelation would necessarily command belief. Those to whom the Deity has thus appeared have the strongest possible conviction of His existence. But the God of Theologians is incapable of local visibility.

2d, Reason. It is urged that man knows that whatever is must either have had a beginning, or have existed from all eternity: he also knows that whatever is not eternal must have had a cause. When this reasoning is applied to the universe, it is necessary



to prove that it was created: until that is clearly demonstrated we may reasonably suppose that it has endured from all eternity. We must prove design before we can infer a designer. The only idea which we can form of causation is derivable from the constant conjunction of objects, and the consequent inference of one from the other. In a case where two propositions are diametrically opposite, the mind believes that which is least incomprehensible;—it is easier to suppose that the universe has existed from all eternity than to conceive a being beyond its limits capable of creating it: if the mind sinks beneath the weight of one, is it an alleviation to increase the intolerability of the burthen?

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The other argument, which is founded on a man's knowledge of his own existence, stands thus. A man knows not only that he now is, but that once he was not; consequently there must have been a cause. But our idea of causation is alone derivable from the constant conjunction of objects and the consequent inference of one from the other; and, reasoning experimentally, we can only infer from effects causes exactly adequate to those effects. But there certainly is a generative power which is effected by certain instruments: we cannot prove that it is inherent in these instruments; nor is the contrary hypothesis capable of demonstration: we admit that the generative power is incomprehensible; but to suppose that the same effect is produced by an eternal, omniscient, omnipotent being leaves the cause in the same obscurity, but renders it more incomprehensible.

3d, Testimony. It is required that testimony should not be contrary to reason. The testimony that the Deity convinces the senses of men of His existence can only be admitted by us if our mind considers it less probable that these men should have been deceived than that the Deity should have appeared to them. Our reason can never admit the testimony of men, who not only declare that they were eye-witnesses of miracles, but that the Deity was irrational; for He commanded that He should be believed, He proposed the highest rewards for faith, eternal punishments for disbelief. We can only command voluntary actions; belief is not an act of volition; the mind is even passive, or involuntarily active; from this it is evident that we have no sufficient testimony, or rather that testimony is insufficient to prove the being of a God. It has been before shown that it cannot be deduced from reason. They alone, then, who have been convinced by the evidence of the senses can believe it.

Hence it is evident that, having no proofs from either of the three sources of conviction, the mind CANNOT believe the existence of a creative God: it is also evident that, as belief is a passion of the mind, no degree of criminality is attachable to disbelief; and that they only are reprehensible who neglect to remove the false medium through which their mind views any subject of discussion. Every reflecting mind must acknowledge that there is no proof of the existence of a Deity.

God is an hypothesis, and, as such, stands in need of proof: the onus probandi rests on the theist. Sir Isaac Newton says: *Hypotheses non fingo, quicquid enim ex phaenomenis non deducitur hypothesis vocanda est, et hypothesis vel metaphysicae, vel physicae, vel qualitatum occultarum, seu mechanicae, in philosophia locum non habent.* To all proofs of the existence of a creative God apply this valuable rule. We see a variety of bodies possessing a variety of powers: we merely know their effects; we are in a state of ignorance with respect to their essences and causes. These Newton calls the phenomena of things; but the



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pride of philosophy is unwilling to admit its ignorance of their causes. From the phenomena, which are the objects of our senses, we attempt to infer a cause, which we call God, and gratuitously endow it with all negative and contradictory qualities. From this hypothesis we invent this general name, to conceal our ignorance of causes and essences. The being called God by no means answers with the conditions prescribed by Newton; it bears every mark of a veil woven by philosophical conceit, to hide the ignorance of philosophers even from themselves. They borrow the threads of its texture from the anthropomorphism of the vulgar. Words have been used by sophists for the same purposes, from the occult qualities of the peripatetics to the effluvium of Boyle and the crinities or nebulae of Herschel. God is represented as infinite, eternal, incomprehensible; He is contained under every predicate in non that the logic of ignorance could fabricate. Even His worshippers allow that it is impossible to form any idea of Him: they exclaim with the French poet,

Pour dire ce qu'il est, il faut être lui-même.

Lord Bacon says that atheism leaves to man reason, philosophy, natural piety, laws, reputation, and everything that can serve to conduct him to virtue; but superstition destroys all these, and erects itself into a tyranny over the understandings of men: hence atheism never disturbs the government, but renders man more clear-sighted, since he sees nothing beyond the boundaries of the present life.—Bacon's "Moral Essays".

La première théologie de l'homme lui fit d'abord craindre et adorer les éléments même, des objets matériels et grossiers; il rendit ensuite ses hommages à des agents présidant aux éléments, à des génies inférieurs, à des héros, ou à des hommes doués de grandes qualités. À force de réfléchir il crut simplifier les choses en soumettant la nature entière à un seul agent, à un esprit, à une âme universelle, qui mettait cette nature et ses parties en mouvement. En remontant de causes en causes, les mortels ont fini par ne rien voir; et c'est dans cette obscurité qu'ils ont placé leur Dieu; c'est dans cet abîme ténébreux que leur imagination inquiète travaille toujours à se fabriquer des chimères, qui les affligeront jusqu'à ce que la connaissance de la nature les détrompe des fantômes qu'ils ont toujours si vainement adorés.

Si nous voulons nous rendre compte de nos idées sur la Divinité, nous serons obligés de convenir que, par le mot "Dieu", les hommes n'ont jamais pu désigner que la cause la plus cachée, la plus éloignée, la plus inconnue des effets qu'ils voyaient: ils ne font usage de ce mot, que lorsque le jeu des causes naturelles et connues cesse d'être visible pour eux; dès qu'ils perdent le fil de ces causes, ou dès que leur esprit ne peut plus en suivre la chaîne, ils tranchent leur difficulté, et terminent leurs recherches en appelant Dieu la dernière des causes, c'est-à-dire celle qui



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est au-delà de toutes les causes qu'ils connaissent; ainsi ils ne font qu'assigner une denomination vague a une cause ignoree, a laquelle leur paresse ou les bornes de leurs connaissances les forcent de s'arreter. Toutes les fois qu'on nous dit que Dieu est l'auteur de quelque phenomene, cela signifie qu'on ignore comment un tel phenomene a pu s'operer par le secours des forces ou des causes que nous connaissons dans la nature. C'est ainsi que le commun des hommes, dont l'ignorance est la partage, attribue a la Divinite non seulement les effets inusites qui las frappent, mais encore les evenemens les plus simples, dont les causes sont les plus faciles a connaitre pour quiconque a pu les mediter. En un mot, l'homme a toujours respecte les causes inconnues des effets surprénans, que son ignorance l'empéchait de demeler. Ce fut sur les debris de la nature que les hommes eleverent le colosse imaginaire de la Divinite.

Si l'ignorance de la nature donna la naissance aux dieux, la connaissance de la nature est faite pour les detruire. A mesure que l'homme s'instruit, ses forces at ses ressources augmentent avec ses lumieres; les sciences, les arts conservateurs, l'industrie, lui fournissent des secours; l'experience le rassure ou lui procure des moyens de resister aux efforts de bien des causes qui cessent de l'alarmer des qu'il les a connues. En un mot, ses terreurs se dissipent dans la meme proportion que son esprit s'eclaire. L'homme instruit cesse d'etre superstitieux.

Ce n'est jamais que sur parole que des peuples entiers adorent le Dieu de leurs peres at de leurs pretres: l'autorite, la confiance, la soumission, et l'habitude leur tiennent lieu de conviction et de preuves; ils se prosternent et prient, parce que leurs peres leur out appris a se prosterner at prier: mais pourquoi ceux-ci se sont-ils mis a genoux? C'est que dans les temps eloignes leurs legislateurs et leurs guides leur en ont fait un devoir. 'Adorez at croyez,' ont-ils dit, 'des dieux que vous ne pouvez comprendre; rapportez-vous-en a notre sagesse profonde; nous en savons plus que vous sur la divinite.' Mais pourquoi m'en rapporterais-je a vous? C'est que Dieu le veut ainsi, c'est que Dieu vous punira si vous osez resister. Mais ce Dieu n'est-il donc pas la chose en question? Cependant las hommes se sont toujours payes de ce cercle vicieux; la paresse de leur esprit leur fit trouver plus court de s'en rapporter au jugement des autres. Toutes las notions religieuses sent fondees uniquement sur l'autorite; toutes les religions du monde defendent l'examen et ne veulent pas que l'on raisonne; c'est l'autorite qui veut qu'on croie en Dieu; ce Dieu n'est lui-meme fonde que sur l'autorite de quelques hommes qui pretendent le connaitre, et venir de sa part pour l'annoncer a la terre. Un Dieu fait par les hommes a sans doute bosom des hommes pour se faire connaitre aux hommes.



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Ne serait-ce donc que pour des pretres, des inspires, des metaphysiciens que serait reservee la conviction de l'existence d'un Dieu, que l'on dit neanmoins si necessaire a tout le genre humain? Mais trouvons-nous de l'harmonie entre les opinions theologiques des differens inspires, ou des penseurs repandus sur la terre? Ceux meme qui font profession d'adorer le meme Dieu, sent-ils d'accord sur son compte? Sont-ils contents des preuves que leurs collegues apportent de son existence? Souscrivent-ils unanimement aux idees qu'ils presentent sur sa nature, sur sa conduite, sur la facon d'entendre ses pretendus oracles? Est-il une centree sur la terre ou la science de Dieu se soit reellement perfectionnee? A-t-elle pris quelqne part la consistance et l'uniformite que nous voyons prendre aux connaissances humaines, aux arts les plus futiles, aux metiers les plus meprises? Ces mots d'esprit, d'immaterialite, de creation, de predestination, de grace; cette foule de distinctions subtiles dont la theologie s'est partout remplie dans quelques pays, ces inventions si ingenieuses, imaginees par des penseurs qui se sont succedes depuis taut de siecles, n'ont fait, helas! qu'embrouiller les choses, et jamais la science la plus necassaire aux hommes n'a jusqu'ici pu acquerir la moindre fixite. Depuis des milliers d'annees ces reveurs oisifs se sont perpetuellement relays pour mediter la Divinite, pour deviner ses voies cachees, pour inventer des hypotheses propres a developper cette enigme importante. Leur peu de succes n'a point decourage la vanite theologique; toujours on a parle de Dieu: on s'est egorge pour lui, et cet etre sublime demeure toujours le plus ignore et le plus discute.

Les hommes auraient ete trop heureux, si, se bornant aux objets visibles qui les interessent, ils eussent employe a perfectionner leurs sciences reelles, leurs lois, leur morale, leur education, la moitie des efforts qu'ils ont mis dans leurs recherches sur la Divinite. Ils auraient ete bien plus sages encore, et plus fortunes, s'ils eussent pu consentir a laisser leurs guides desoeuvres se quereller entre eux, et sonder des profondeurs capables de les etourdir, sans se meler de leurs disputes insensees. Mais il est de l'essence de l'ignorance d'attacher de l'importance a ce qu'elle ne comprend pas. La vanite humaine fait que l'esprit se roidit contra des difficultes. Plus un objet se derobe a nos yeux, plus nous faisons d'efforts pour le saisir, parce que des-lors il aiguillonne notre orgueil, il excite notre curiosite, il nous parait interessant. En combattant pour son Dieu chacun ne combattit en effet que pour les interets de sa propra vanite, qui de toutes les passions produites par la mal-organisation de la societe est la plus prompte a s'alarmer, et la plus propre a produire de tres grandes folies.



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Si écartant pour un moment les idées facheuses que la théologie nous donne d'un Dieu capricieux, dont les décrets partiels et despotiques décident du sort des humains, nous ne voulons fixer nos yeux que sur la bonté prétendue, que tous les hommes, même en trébuchant devant ce Dieu, s'accordent à lui donner; si nous lui supposons le projet qu'on lui prête de n'avoir travaillé que pour sa propre gloire, d'exiger les hommages des êtres intelligents; de ne chercher dans ses œuvres que le bien-être du genre humain: comment concilier ces vues et ces dispositions avec l'ignorance vraiment invincible dans laquelle ce Dieu, si glorieux et si bon, laisse la plupart des hommes sur son compte? Si Dieu veut être connu, cheri, remercié, que ne se montre-t-il sous des traits favorables à tous ces êtres intelligents dont il veut être aimé et adoré? Pourquoi ne point se manifester à toute la terre d'une façon non équivoque, bien plus capable de nous convaincre que ces révélations particulières qui semblent accuser la Divinité d'une partialité facheuse pour quelques-unes de ses créatures? Le tout-puissant n'aurait-il donc pas des moyens plus convainquants de se montrer aux hommes que ces métamorphoses ridicules, ces incarnations prétendues, qui nous sont attestées par des écrivains si peu d'accord entre eux dans les récits qu'ils en font? Au lieu de tant de miracles, inventés pour prouver la mission divine de tant de législateurs rêvés par les différents peuples du monde, le souverain des esprits ne pouvait-il pas convaincre tout d'un coup l'esprit humain des choses qu'il a voulu lui faire connaître? Au lieu de suspendre un soleil dans la voûte du firmament; au lieu de répandre sans ordre les étoiles et les constellations qui remplissent l'espace, n'eût-il pas été plus conforme aux vues d'un Dieu si jaloux de sa gloire et si bien-intentionné pour l'homme d'écrire, d'une façon non sujette à dispute, son nom, ses attributs, ses volontés permanentes en caractères ineffaçables, et lisibles également pour tous les habitants de la terre? Personne alors n'aurait pu douter de l'existence d'un Dieu, de ses volontés claires, de ses intentions visibles. Sous les yeux de ce Dieu si terrible, personne n'aurait eu l'audace de violer ses ordonnances; nul mortel n'eût osé se mettre dans le cas d'attirer sa colère: enfin nul homme n'eût eu le front d'en imposer en son nom, ou d'interpréter ses volontés suivant ses propres fantaisies.

En effet, quand même on admettrait l'existence du Dieu théologique et la réalité des attributs si discordants qu'on lui donne, l'on n'en peut rien conclure, pour autoriser la conduite ou les cultes qu'on prescrit de lui rendre. La théologie est vraiment "le tonneau des Danaïdes". À force de qualités contradictoires et d'assertions hasardeuses, elle a, pour ainsi dire, tellement garroté son Dieu qu'elle l'a mis dans l'impossibilité d'agir. S'il est infiniment bon, quelle raison aurions-nous de le craindre? S'il est infiniment sage, de quoi nous inquiéter sur notre



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sort? S'il sait tout, pourquoi l'avertir de nos besoins, et le fatiguer de nos prieres? S'il est partout, pourquoi lui elever des temples? S'il est maitre de tout, pourquoi lui faire des sacrifices et des offrandes? S'il est juste, comment croire qu'il punisse des creatures qu'il a rempli de faiblesses? Si la grace fait tout en elles, quelle raison aurait-il de les recompenser? S'il est tout-puissant, comment l'offenser, comment lui resister? S'il est raisonnable, comment se mattrait-il en colere contre des aveugles, a qui il a laisse la liberte de deraisonner? S'il est immuable, de quel droit pretendrions-nous faire changer ses decrets? S'il est inconcevable, pourquoi nous en occuper? S'IL A PARLE, POURQUOI L'UNIVERS N'EST-IL PAS CONVAINCU? Si la connaissance d'un Dieu est la plus necessaire, pourquoi n'est-elle pas la plus evidente et a plus claire?—
“Systeme de la Nature”, London, 1781.

The enlightened and benevolent Pliny thus publicly professes himself an atheist:—
Quapropter effigiem Dei formamque quaerere imbecillitatis humanae reor. Quisquis est Deus (si modo est alius) et quacunq̄ue in parte, totus est sensus, totus est visus, totus auditus, totus animae, totus animi, totus sui...Imperfectae vero in homine naturae praecipua solatia ne deum quidem posse omnia. Namque nec sibi potest mortem consciscere, si velit, quad homini dedit optimum in tantis vitae poenis: nec mortales aeternitata donare, aut revocare defunctos; nec facere ut qui vixit non vixerit, qui honores gessit non gessarit, nullumque habere in praeteritum ius, praeterquam oblivionis, atque (ut facetis quoque argumentis societas haec cum deo copuletur) ut bis dena viginti non sint, et multa similiter efficere non posse.—Per quae declaratur haud dubie naturae potentiam id quoque esse quad Deum vocamus.—Plin. “Nat. Hist.” cap. de Deo.

The consistent Newtonian is necessarily an atheist. See Sir W. Drummond's “Academical Questions”, chapter 3.—Sir W. seems to consider the atheism to which it leads as a sufficient presumption of the falsehood of the system of gravitation; but surely it is more consistent with the good faith of philosophy to admit a deduction from facts than an hypothesis incapable of proof, although it might militate with the obstinate preconceptions of the mob. Had this author, instead of inveighing against the guilt and absurdity of atheism, demonstrated its falsehood, his conduct would have been more suited to the modesty of the sceptic and the toleration of the philosopher.

Omnia enim per Dei potentiam facta sunt: imo quia naturae potentia nulla est nisi ipsa Dei potentia. Certum est nos eatenus Dei potentiam non intelligere, quatenus causas naturales ignoramus; adeoque stulte ad eandem Dei potentiam recurritur, quando rei alicuius causam naturalem, sive est, ipsam Dei potantiam ignoramus.— Spinosa, “Tract. Theologico-Pol.” chapter 1, page 14.

7. 67:—

Ahasuerus, rise!



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'Ahasuerus the Jew crept forth from the dark cave of Mount Carmel. Near two thousand years have elapsed since he was first goaded by never-ending restlessness to rove the globe from pole to pole. When our Lord was wearied with the burthen of His ponderous cross, and wanted to rest before the door of Ahasuerus, the unfeeling wretch drove Him away with brutality. The Saviour of mankind staggered, sinking under the heavy load, but uttered no complaint. An angel of death appeared before Ahasuerus, and exclaimed indignantly, "Barbarian! thou hast denied rest to the Son of man: be it denied thee also, until He comes to judge the world."

'A black demon, let loose from hell upon Ahasuerus, goads him now from country to country; he is denied the consolation which death affords, and precluded from the rest of the peaceful grave.

'Ahasuerus crept forth from the dark cave of Mount Carmel—he shook the dust from his beard—and taking up one of the skulls heaped there, hurled it down the eminence: it rebounded from the earth in shivered atoms. "This was my father!" roared Ahasuerus. Seven more skulls rolled down from rock to rock; while the infuriate Jew, following them with ghastly looks, exclaimed—"And these were my wives!" He still continued to hurl down skull after skull, roaring in dreadful accents—"And these, and these, and these were my children! They COULD DIE; but I! reprobate wretch! alas! I cannot die! Dreadful beyond conception is the judgement that hangs over me. Jerusalem fell—I crushed the sucking babe, and precipitated myself into the destructive flames. I cursed the Romans—but, alas! alas! the restless curse held me by the hair,—and I could not die!

"Rome the giantess fell—I placed myself before the falling statue—she fell and did not crush me. Nations sprang up and disappeared before me;—but I remained and did not die. From cloud-encircled cliffs did I precipitate myself into the ocean; but the foaming billows cast me upon the shore, and the burning arrow of existence pierced my cold heart again. I leaped into Etna's flaming abyss, and roared with the giants for ten long months, polluting with my groans the Mount's sulphureous mouth—ah! ten long months. The volcano fermented, and in a fiery stream of lava cast me up. I lay torn by the torture-snakes of hell amid the glowing cinders, and yet continued to exist.—A forest was on fire: I darted on wings of fury and despair into the crackling wood. Fire dropped upon me from the trees, but the flames only singed my limbs; alas! it could not consume them.—I now mixed with the butchers of mankind, and plunged in the tempest of the raging battle. I roared defiance to the infuriate Gaul, defiance to the victorious German; but arrows and spears rebounded in shivers from my body. The Saracen's flaming sword broke upon my skull: balls in vain hissed upon me: the lightnings of battle glared harmless around my loins: in vain did the elephant trample



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on me, in vain the iron hoof of the wrathful steed! The mine, big with destructive power, burst upon me, and hurled me high in the air—I fell on heaps of smoking limbs, but was only singed. The giant's steel club rebounded from my body; the executioner's hand could not strangle me, the tiger's tooth could not pierce me, nor would the hungry lion in the circus devour me. I cohabited with poisonous snakes, and pinched the red crest of the dragon.—The serpent stung, but could not destroy me. The dragon tormented, but dared not to devour me.—I now provoked the fury of tyrants: I said to Nero, 'Thou art a bloodhound!' I said to Christiern, 'Thou art a bloodhound!', I said to Muley Ismail, 'Thou art a bloodhound!'—The tyrants invented cruel torments, but did not kill me. Ha! not to be able to die—not to be able to die—not to be permitted to rest after the toils of life—to be doomed to be imprisoned for ever in the clay-formed dungeon—to be for ever clogged with this worthless body, its lead of diseases and infirmities—to be condemned to [be]hold for millenniums that yawning monster Sameness, and Time, that hungry hyaena, ever bearing children, and ever devouring again her offspring!—Ha! not to be permitted to die! Awful Avenger in Heaven, hast Thou in Thine armoury of wrath a punishment more dreadful? then let it thunder upon me, command a hurricane to sweep me down to the foot of Carmel, that I there may lie extended; may pant, and writhe, and die.!"

This fragment is the translation of part of some German work, whose title I have vainly endeavoured to discover. I picked it up, dirty and torn, some years ago, in Lincoln's-Inn Fields.

7. 135, 136:—

I will beget a Son, and He shall bear
The sins of all the world.

A book is put into our hands when children, called the Bible, the purport of whose history is briefly this: That God made the earth in six days, and there planted a delightful garden, in which He placed the first pair of human beings. In the midst of the garden He planted a tree, whose fruit, although within their reach, they were forbidden to touch. That the Devil, in the shape of a snake, persuaded them to eat of this fruit; in consequence of which God condemned both them and their posterity yet unborn to satisfy His justice by their eternal misery. That, four thousand years after these events (the human race in the meanwhile having gone unredeemed to perdition), God engendered with the betrothed wife of a carpenter in Judea (whose virginity was nevertheless uninjured), and begat a son, whose name was Jesus Christ; and who was crucified and died, in order that no more men might be devoted to hell-fire, He bearing the burthen of His Father's displeasure by proxy. The book states, in addition, that the soul of whoever disbelieves this sacrifice will be burned with everlasting fire.



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During many ages of misery and darkness this story gained implicit belief; but at length men arose who suspected that it was a fable and imposture, and that Jesus Christ, so far from being a God, was only a man like themselves. But a numerous set of men, who derived and still derive immense emoluments from this opinion, in the shape of a popular belief, told the vulgar that if they did not believe in the Bible they would be damned to all eternity; and burned, imprisoned, and poisoned all the unbiassed and unconnected inquirers who occasionally arose. They still oppress them, so far as the people, now become more enlightened, will allow.

The belief in all that the Bible contains is called Christianity. A Roman governor of Judea, at the instance of a priest-led mob, crucified a man called Jesus eighteen centuries ago. He was a man of pure life, who desired to rescue his countrymen from the tyranny of their barbarous and degrading superstitions. The common fate of all who desire to benefit mankind awaited him. The rabble, at the instigation of the priests, demanded his death, although his very judge made public acknowledgement of his innocence. Jesus was sacrificed to the honour of that God with whom he was afterwards confounded. It is of importance, therefore, to distinguish between the pretended character of this being as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, and his real character as a man, who, for a vain attempt to reform the world, paid the forfeit of his life to that overbearing tyranny which has since so long desolated the universe in his name. Whilst the one is a hypocritical Daemon, who announces Himself as the God of compassion and peace, even whilst He stretches forth His blood-red hand with the sword of discord to waste the earth, having confessedly devised this scheme of desolation from eternity; the other stands in the foremost list of those true heroes who have died in the glorious martyrdom of liberty, and have braved torture, contempt, and poverty in the cause of suffering humanity. (Since writing this note I have some reason to suspect that Jesus was an ambitious man, who aspired to the throne of Judea.

The vulgar, ever in extremes, became persuaded that the crucifixion of Jesus was a supernatural event. Testimonies of miracles, so frequent in unenlightened ages, were not wanting to prove that he was something divine. This belief, rolling through the lapse of ages, met with the reveries of Plato and the reasonings of Aristotle, and acquired force and extent, until the divinity of Jesus became a dogma, which to dispute was death, which to doubt was infamy.

CHRISTIANITY is now the established religion: he who attempts to impugn it must be contented to behold murderers and traitors take precedence of him in public opinion; though, if his genius be equal to his courage, and assisted by a peculiar coalition of circumstances, future ages may exalt him to a divinity, and persecute others in his name, as he was persecuted in the name of his predecessor in the homage of the world.



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The same means that have supported every other popular belief have supported Christianity. War, imprisonment, assassination, and falsehood; deeds of unexampled and incomparable atrocity have made it what it is. The blood shed by the votaries of the God of mercy and peace, since the establishment of His religion, would probably suffice to drown all other sectaries now on the habitable globe. We derive from our ancestors a faith thus fostered and supported: we quarrel, persecute, and hate for its maintenance. Even under a government which, whilst it infringes the very right of thought and speech, boasts of permitting the liberty of the press, a man is pilloried and imprisoned because he is a deist, and no one raises his voice in the indignation of outraged humanity. But it is ever a proof that the falsehood of a proposition is felt by those who use coercion, not reasoning, to procure its admission; and a dispassionate observer would feel himself more powerfully interested in favour of a man who, depending on the truth of his opinions, simply stated his reasons for entertaining them, than in that of his aggressor who, daringly avowing his unwillingness or incapacity to answer them by argument, proceeded to repress the energies and break the spirit of their promulgator by that torture and imprisonment whose infliction he could command.

Analogy seems to favour the opinion that as, like other systems, Christianity has arisen and augmented, so like them it will decay and perish; that as violence, darkness, and deceit, not reasoning and persuasion, have procured its admission among mankind, so, when enthusiasm has subsided, and time, that infallible controverter of false opinions, has involved its pretended evidences in the darkness of antiquity, it will become obsolete; that Milton's poem alone will give permanency to the remembrance of its absurdities; and that men will laugh as heartily at grace, faith, redemption, and original sin, as they now do at the metamorphoses of Jupiter, the miracles of Romish saints, the efficacy of witchcraft, and the appearance of departed spirits.

Had the Christian religion commenced and continued by the mere force of reasoning and persuasion, the preceding analogy would be inadmissible. We should never speculate on the future obsolescence of a system perfectly conformable to nature and reason: it would endure so long as they endured; it would be a truth as indisputable as the light of the sun, the criminality of murder, and other facts, whose evidence, depending on our organization and relative situations, must remain acknowledged as satisfactory so long as man is man. It is an incontrovertible fact, the consideration of which ought to repress the hasty conclusions of credulity, or moderate its obstinacy in maintaining them, that, had the Jews not been a fanatical race of men, had even the resolution of Pontius Pilate been equal to his candour, the Christian religion never could have prevailed, it could not even have existed: on so feeble a thread hangs the most cherished opinion of a sixth of the human race! When will the vulgar learn humility? When will the pride of ignorance blush at having believed before it could comprehend?



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Either the Christian religion is true, or it is false: if true, it comes from God, and its authenticity can admit of doubt and dispute no further than its omnipotent author is willing to allow. Either the power or the goodness of God is called in question, if He leaves those doctrines most essential to the well-being of man in doubt and dispute; the only ones which, since their promulgation, have been the subject of unceasing cavil, the cause of irreconcilable hatred. IF GOD HAS SPOKEN, WHY IS THE UNIVERSE NOT CONVINCED?

There is this passage in the Christian Scriptures: 'Those who obey not God, and believe not the Gospel of his Son, shall be punished with everlasting destruction.' This is the pivot upon which all religions turn:—they all assume that it is in our power to believe or not to believe; whereas the mind can only believe that which it thinks true. A human being can only be supposed accountable for those actions which are influenced by his will. But belief is utterly distinct from and unconnected with volition: it is the apprehension of the agreement or disagreement of the ideas that compose any proposition. Belief is a passion, or involuntary operation of the mind, and, like other passions, its intensity is precisely proportionate to the degrees of excitement. Volition is essential to merit or demerit. But the Christian religion attaches the highest possible degrees of merit and demerit to that which is worthy of neither, and which is totally unconnected with the peculiar faculty of the mind, whose presence is essential to their being.

Christianity was intended to reform the world: had an all-wise Being planned it, nothing is more improbable than that it should have failed: omniscience would infallibly have foreseen the inutility of a scheme which experience demonstrates, to this age, to have been utterly unsuccessful.

Christianity inculcates the necessity of supplicating the Deity. Prayer may be considered under two points of view;—as an endeavour to change the intentions of God, or as a formal testimony of our obedience. But the former case supposes that the caprices of a limited intelligence can occasionally instruct the Creator of the world how to regulate the universe; and the latter, a certain degree of servility analogous to the loyalty demanded by earthly tyrants. Obedience indeed is only the pitiful and cowardly egotism of him who thinks that he can do something better than reason.

Christianity, like all other religions, rests upon miracles, prophecies, and martyrdoms. No religion ever existed which had not its prophets, its attested miracles, and, above all, crowds of devotees who would bear patiently the most horrible tortures to prove its authenticity. It should appear that in no case can a discriminating mind subscribe to the genuineness of a miracle. A miracle is an infraction of nature's law, by a supernatural cause; by a cause acting beyond that eternal circle within which all things are included. God breaks through the law of nature, that He may convince mankind of the truth of that revelation which, in spite of His precautions, has been, since its introduction, the subject of unceasing schism and cavil.



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Miracles resolve themselves into the following question (See Hume's Essay, volume 2 page 121.):—Whether it is more probable the laws of nature, hitherto so immutably harmonious, should have undergone violation, or that a man should have told a lie? Whether it is more probable that we are ignorant of the natural cause of an event, or that we know the supernatural one? That, in old times, when the powers of nature were less known than at present, a certain set of men were themselves deceived, or had some hidden motive for deceiving others; or that God begat a Son, who, in His legislation, measuring merit by belief, evidenced Himself to be totally ignorant of the powers of the human mind—of what is voluntary, and what is the contrary?

We have many instances of men telling lies;—none of an infraction of nature's laws, those laws of whose government alone we have any knowledge or experience. The records of all nations afford innumerable instances of men deceiving others either from vanity or interest, or themselves being deceived by the limitedness of their views and their ignorance of natural causes: but where is the accredited case of God having come upon earth, to give the lie to His own creations? There would be something truly wonderful in the appearance of a ghost; but the assertion of a child that he saw one as he passed through the churchyard is universally admitted to be less miraculous.

But even supposing that a man should raise a dead body to life before our eyes, and on this fact rest his claim to being considered the son of God;—the Humane Society restores drowned persons, and because it makes no mystery of the method it employs, its members are not mistaken for the sons of God. All that we have a right to infer from our ignorance of the cause of any event is that we do not know it: had the Mexicans attended to this simple rule when they heard the cannon of the Spaniards, they would not have considered them as gods: the experiments of modern chemistry would have defied the wisest philosophers of ancient Greece and Rome to have accounted for them on natural principles. An author of strong common sense has observed that 'a miracle is no miracle at second-hand'; he might have added that a miracle is no miracle in any case; for until we are acquainted with all natural causes, we have no reason to imagine others.

There remains to be considered another proof of Christianity—Prophecy. A book is written before a certain event, in which this event is foretold; how could the prophet have foreknown it without inspiration? how could he have been inspired without God? The greatest stress is laid on the prophecies of Moses and Hosea on the dispersion of the Jews, and that of Isaiah concerning the coming of the Messiah. The prophecy of Moses is a collection of every possible cursing and blessing; and it is so far from being marvellous that the one of dispersion should have been fulfilled, that it would have been more surprising if, out of all these,



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none should have taken effect. In Deuteronomy, chapter 28, verse 64, where Moses explicitly foretells the dispersion, he states that they shall there serve gods of wood and stone: 'And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even to the other; AND THERE THOU SHALT SERVE OTHER GODS, WHICH NEITHER THOU NOR THY FATHERS HAVE KNOWN, EVEN GODS OF WOOD AND STONE.' The Jews are at this day remarkably tenacious of their religion. Moses also declares that they shall be subjected to these curses for disobedience to his ritual: 'And it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all the commandments and statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee.' Is this the real reason? The third, fourth, and fifth chapters of Hosea are a piece of immodest confession. The indelicate type might apply in a hundred senses to a hundred things. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is more explicit, yet it does not exceed in clearness the oracles of Delphos. The historical proof that Moses, Isaiah, and Hosea did write when they are said to have written is far from being clear and circumstantial.

But prophecy requires proof in its character as a miracle; we have no right to suppose that a man foreknew future events from God, until it is demonstrated that he neither could know them by his own exertions, nor that the writings which contain the prediction could possibly have been fabricated after the event pretended to be foretold. It is more probable that writings, pretending to divine inspiration, should have been fabricated after the fulfilment of their pretended prediction than that they should have really been divinely inspired, when we consider that the latter supposition makes God at once the creator of the human mind and ignorant of its primary powers, particularly as we have numberless instances of false religions, and forged prophecies of things long past, and no accredited case of God having conversed with men directly or indirectly. It is also possible that the description of an event might have foregone its occurrence; but this is far from being a legitimate proof of a divine revelation, as many men, not pretending to the character of a prophet, have nevertheless, in this sense, prophesied.

Lord Chesterfield was never yet taken for a prophet, even by a bishop, yet he uttered this remarkable prediction: 'The despotic government of France is screwed up to the highest pitch; a revolution is fast approaching; that revolution, I am convinced, will be radical and sanguinary.' This appeared in the letters of the prophet long before the accomplishment of this wonderful prediction. Now, have these particulars come to pass, or have they not? If they have, how could the Earl have foreknown them without inspiration? If we admit the truth of the Christian religion on testimony such as this, we must admit, on the same strength of evidence, that God has affixed the highest rewards to belief, and the eternal tortures of the never-dying worm to disbelief, both of which have been demonstrated to be involuntary.



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The last proof of the Christian religion depends on the influence of the Holy Ghost. Theologians divide the influence of the Holy Ghost into its ordinary and extraordinary modes of operation. The latter is supposed to be that which inspired the Prophets and Apostles; and the former to be the grace of God, which summarily makes known the truth of His revelation to those whose mind is fitted for its reception by a submissive perusal of His word. Persons convinced in this manner can do anything but account for their conviction, describe the time at which it happened, or the manner in which it came upon them. It is supposed to enter the mind by other channels than those of the senses, and therefore professes to be superior to reason founded on their experience.

Admitting, however, the usefulness or possibility of a divine revelation, unless we demolish the foundations of all human knowledge, it is requisite that our reason should previously demonstrate its genuineness; for, before we extinguish the steady ray of reason and common sense, it is fit that we should discover whether we cannot do without their assistance, whether or no there be any other which may suffice to guide us through the labyrinth of life (See Locke's "Essay on the Human Understanding", book 4 chapter 19, on Enthusiasm.): for, if a man is to be inspired upon all occasions, if he is to be sure of a thing because he is sure, if the ordinary operations of the Spirit are not to be considered very extraordinary modes of demonstration, if enthusiasm is to usurp the place of proof, and madness that of sanity, all reasoning is superfluous. The Mahometan dies fighting for his prophet, the Indian immolates himself at the chariot-wheels of Brahma, the Hottentot worships an insect, the Negro a bunch of feathers, the Mexican sacrifices human victims! Their degree of conviction must certainly be very strong: it cannot arise from reasoning, it must from feelings, the reward of their prayers. If each of these should affirm, in opposition to the strongest possible arguments, that inspiration carried internal evidence, I fear their inspired brethren, the orthodox missionaries, would be so uncharitable as to pronounce them obstinate.

Miracles cannot be received as testimonies of a disputed fact, because all human testimony has ever been insufficient to establish the possibility of miracles. That which is incapable of proof itself is no proof of anything else. Prophecy has also been rejected by the test of reason. Those, then, who have been actually inspired are the only true believers in the Christian religion.

Mox numine viso

Virgineei tumuere sinus, innuptaque mater

Arcano stupuit compleri viscera partu,

Auctorem paritura suum. Mortalia corda

Artificem texere poli, latuitque sub uno

Pectore, qui totum late complectitur orbem.—Claudian, "Carmen Paschale".

Does not so monstrous and disgusting an absurdity carry its own infamy and refutation with itself?



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8. 203-207:—

Him, still from hope to hope the bliss pursuing
Which from the exhaustless lore of human weal
Draws on the virtuous mind, the thoughts that rise
In time-destroying infiniteness, gift
With self-enshrined eternity, *etc.*

Time is our consciousness of the succession of ideas in our mind. Vivid sensation, of either pain or pleasure, makes the time seem long, as the common phrase is, because it renders us more acutely conscious of our ideas. If a mind be conscious of an hundred ideas during one minute, by the clock, and of two hundred during another, the latter of these spaces would actually occupy so much greater extent in the mind as two exceed one in quantity. If, therefore, the human mind, by any future improvement of its sensibility, should become conscious of an infinite number of ideas in a minute, that minute would be eternity. I do not hence infer that the actual space between the birth and death of a man will ever be prolonged; but that his sensibility is perfectible, and that the number of ideas which his mind is capable of receiving is indefinite. One man is stretched on the rack during twelve hours; another sleeps soundly in his bed: the difference of time perceived by these two persons is immense; one hardly will believe that half an hour has elapsed, the other could credit that centuries had flown during his agony. Thus, the life of a man of virtue and talent, who should die in his thirtieth year, is, with regard to his own feelings, longer than that of a miserable priest-ridden slave, who dreams out a century of dulness. The one has perpetually cultivated his mental faculties, has rendered himself master of his thoughts, can abstract and generalize amid the lethargy of every-day business;—the other can slumber over the brightest moments of his being, and is unable to remember the happiest hour of his life. Perhaps the perishing ephemeron enjoys a longer life than the tortoise.

Dark flood of time!
Roll as it listeth thee—I measure not
By months or moments thy ambiguous course.
Another may stand by me on the brink
And watch the bubble whirled beyond his ken
That pauses at my feet. The sense of love,
The thirst for action, and the impassioned thought
Prolong my being: if I wake no more,
My life more actual living will contain
Than some gray veteran's of the world's cold school,
Whose listless hours unprofitably roll,
By one enthusiast feeling unredeemed.—

See Godwin's "Pol. Jus." volume 1, page 411; and Condorcet, "Esquisse d'un Tableau Historique des Progres de l'Esprit Humain", epoque 9.



8. 211, 212:—

No longer now
He slays the lamb that looks him in the face.



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I hold that the depravity of the physical and moral nature of man originated in his unnatural habits of life. The origin of man, like that of the universe of which he is a part, is enveloped in impenetrable mystery. His generations either had a beginning, or they had not. The weight of evidence in favour of each of these suppositions seems tolerably equal; and it is perfectly unimportant to the present argument which is assumed. The language spoken, however, by the mythology of nearly all religions seems to prove that at some distant period man forsook the path of nature, and sacrificed the purity and happiness of his being to unnatural appetites. The date of this event seems to have also been that of some great change in the climates of the earth, with which it has an obvious correspondence. The allegory of Adam and Eve eating of the tree of evil, and entailing upon their posterity the wrath of God and the loss of everlasting life, admits of no other explanation than the disease and crime that have flowed from unnatural diet. Milton was so well aware of this that he makes Raphael thus exhibit to Adam the consequence of his disobedience:—

Immediately a place
Before his eyes appeared, sad, noisome, dark;
A lazar-house it seemed; wherein were laid
Numbers of all diseased—all maladies
Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms
Of heart-sick agony, all feverous kinds,
Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,
Intestine stone and ulcer, colic pangs,
Demoniac frenzy, moping melancholy,
And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,
Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence,
Dropsies and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums.

And how many thousands more might not be added to this frightful catalogue!

The story of Prometheus is one likewise which, although universally admitted to be allegorical, has never been satisfactorily explained. Prometheus stole fire from heaven, and was chained for this crime to Mount Caucasus, where a vulture continually devoured his liver, that grew to meet its hunger. Hesiod says that, before the time of Prometheus, mankind were exempt from suffering; that they enjoyed a vigorous youth, and that death, when at length it came, approached like sleep, and gently closed their eyes. Again, so general was this opinion that Horace, a poet of the Augustan age, writes:—

Audax omnia perpeti,
Gens humana ruit per vetitum nefas;
Audax Iapeti genus
Ignem fraude mala gentibus intulit:
Post ignem aetheria domo



Subductum, macies et nova februm
Terris incubuit cohors,
Semotique prius tarda necessitas
Lethi corripuit gradum.



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How plain a language is spoken by all this! Prometheus (who represents the human race) effected some great change in the condition of his nature, and applied fire to culinary purposes; thus inventing an expedient for screening from his disgust the horrors of the shambles. From this moment his vitals were devoured by the vulture of disease. It consumed his being in every shape of its loathsome and infinite variety, inducing the soul-quelling sinkings of premature and violent death. All vice rose from the ruin of healthful innocence. Tyranny, superstition, commerce, and inequality were then first known, when reason vainly attempted to guide the wanderings of exacerbated passion. I conclude this part of the subject with an extract from Mr. Newton's "Defence of Vegetable Regimen", from whom I have borrowed this interpretation of the fable of Prometheus.

'Making allowance for such transposition of the events of the allegory as time might produce after the important truths were forgotten, which this portion of the ancient mythology was intended to transmit, the drift of the fable seems to be this:—Man at his creation was endowed with the gift of perpetual youth; that is, he was not formed to be a sickly suffering creature as we now see him, but to enjoy health, and to sink by slow degrees into the bosom of his parent earth without disease or pain. Prometheus first taught the use of animal food (*primus bovem occidit Prometheus* (Plin. "Nat. Hist". lib. 7 sect. 57.)) and of fire, with which to render it more digestible and pleasing to the taste. Jupiter, and the rest of the gods, foreseeing the consequences of these inventions, were amused or irritated at the short-sighted devices of the newly-formed creature, and left him to experience the sad effects of them. Thirst, the necessary concomitant of a flesh diet' (perhaps of all diet vitiated by culinary preparation), 'ensued; water was resorted to, and man forfeited the inestimable gift of health which he had received from heaven: he became diseased, the partaker of a precarious existence, and no longer descended slowly to his grave. ("Return to Nature". Cadell, 1811.)

But just disease to luxury succeeds,
And every death its own avenger breeds;
The fury passions from that blood began,
And turned on man a fiercer savage—man.

Man, and the animals whom he has infected with his society, or depraved by his dominion, are alone diseased. The wild hog, the mouflon, the bison, and the wolf; are perfectly exempt from malady, and invariably die either from external violence or natural old age. But the domestic hog, the sheep, the cow, and the dog, are subject to an incredible variety of distempers; and, like the corruptors of their nature, have physicians who thrive upon their miseries. The supereminence of man is like Satan's, a supereminence of pain; and the majority of his species, doomed to penury, disease, and crime, have reason to curse the untoward



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event that, by enabling him to communicate his sensations, raised him above the level of his fellow-animals. But the steps that have been taken are irrevocable. The whole of human science is comprised in one question:—How can the advantages of intellect and civilization be reconciled with the liberty and pure pleasures of natural life? How can we take the benefits and reject the evils of the system, which is now interwoven with all the fibres of our being?—I believe that abstinence from animal food and spirituous liquors would in a great measure capacitate us for the solution of this important question.

It is true that mental and bodily derangement is attributable in part to other deviations from rectitude and nature than those which concern diet. The mistakes cherished by society respecting the connection of the sexes, whence the misery and diseases of unsatisfied celibacy, unenjoying prostitution, and the premature arrival of puberty, necessarily spring; the putrid atmosphere of crowded cities; the exhalations of chemical processes; the muffling of our bodies in superfluous apparel; the absurd treatment of infants:—all these and innumerable other causes contribute their mite to the mass of human evil.

Comparative anatomy teaches us that man resembles frugivorous animals in everything, and carnivorous in nothing; he has neither claws wherewith to seize his prey, nor distinct and pointed teeth to tear the living fibre. A Mandarin of the first class, with nails two inches long, would probably find them alone inefficient to hold even a hare. After every subterfuge of gluttony, the bull must be degraded into the ox, and the ram into the wether, by an unnatural and inhuman operation, that the flaccid fibre may offer a fainter resistance to rebellious nature. It is only by softening and disguising dead flesh by culinary preparation that it is rendered susceptible of mastication or digestion; and that the sight of its bloody juices and raw horror does not excite intolerable loathing and disgust. Let the advocate of animal food force himself to a decisive experiment on its fitness, and, as Plutarch recommends, tear a living lamb with his teeth, and plunging his head into its vitals slake his thirst with the steaming blood; when fresh from the deed of horror, let him revert to the irresistible instincts of nature that would rise in judgement against it, and say, 'Nature formed me for such work as this.' Then, and then only, would he be consistent.

Man resembles no carnivorous animal. There is no exception, unless man be one, to the rule of herbivorous animals having cellulated colons.

The orang-outang perfectly resembles man both in the order and number of his teeth. The orang-outang is the most anthropomorphous of the ape tribe, all of which are strictly frugivorous. There is no other species of animals, which live on different food, in which this analogy exists. (Cuvier, "Lecons d'Anat. Comp". tom. 3, pages 169, 373, 448, 465, 480. Rees's "Cyclopaedia", article Man.) In many frugivorous animals, the canine teeth are more pointed and distinct than those of man. The resemblance also of

the human stomach to that of the orang-outang is greater than to that of any other animal.



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The intestines are also identical with those of herbivorous animals, which present a larger surface for absorption and have ample and cellulated colons. The caecum also, though short, is larger than that of carnivorous animals; and even here the orang-outang retains its accustomed similarity.

The structure of the human frame, then, is that of one fitted to a pure vegetable diet, in every essential particular. It is true that the reluctance to abstain from animal food, in those who have been long accustomed to its stimulus, is so great in some persons of weak minds as to be scarcely overcome; but this is far from bringing any argument in its favour. A lamb, which was fed for some time on flesh by a ship's crew, refused its natural diet at the end of the voyage. There are numerous instances of horses, sheep, oxen, and even wood-pigeons, having been taught to live upon flesh, until they have loathed their natural aliment. Young children evidently prefer pastry, oranges, apples, and other fruit, to the flesh of animals; until, by the gradual depravation of the digestive organs, the free use of vegetables has for a time produced serious inconveniences; FOR A TIME, I say, since there never was an instance wherein a change from spirituous liquors and animal food to vegetables and pure water has failed ultimately to invigorate the body, by rendering its juices bland and consentaneous, and to restore to the mind that cheerfulness and elasticity which not one in fifty possesses on the present system. A love of strong liquors is also with difficulty taught to infants. Almost every one remembers the wry faces which the first glass of port produced. Unsophisticated instinct is invariably unerring; but to decide on the fitness of animal food from the perverted appetites which its constrained adoption produces; is to make the criminal a judge in his own cause: it is even worse, it is appealing to the infatuated drunkard in a question of the salubrity of brandy.

What is the cause of morbid action in the animal system? Not the air we breathe, for our fellow-denizens of nature breathe the same uninjured; not the water we drink (if remote from the pollutions of man and his inventions (The necessity of resorting to some means of purifying water, and the disease which arises from its adulteration in civilized countries, is sufficiently apparent. See Dr. Lambe's "Reports on Cancer". I do not assert that the use of water is in itself unnatural, but that the unperverted palate would swallow no liquid capable of occasioning disease.)), for the animals drink it too; not the earth we tread upon; not the unobscured sight of glorious nature, in the wood, the field, or the expanse of sky and ocean; nothing that we are or do in common with the undiseased inhabitants of the forest. Something, then, wherein we differ from them: our habit of altering our food by fire, so that our appetite is no longer a just criterion for the fitness of its gratification. Except in children, there remain no traces of that instinct which determines, in all other animals, what aliment is natural or otherwise; and so perfectly obliterated are they in the reasoning adults of our species, that it has become necessary to urge considerations drawn from comparative anatomy to prove that we are naturally frugivorous.



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Crime is madness. Madness is disease. Whenever the cause of disease shall be discovered, the root, from which all vice and misery have so long overshadowed the globe, will lie bare to the axe. All the exertions of man, from that moment, may be considered as tending to the clear profit of his species. No sane mind in a sane body resolves upon a real crime. It is a man of violent passions, bloodshot eyes, and swollen veins, that alone can grasp the knife of murder. The system of a simple diet promises no Utopian advantages. It is no mere reform of legislation, whilst the furious passions and evil propensities of the human heart, in which it had its origin, are still unassuaged. It strikes at the root of all evil, and is an experiment which may be tried with success, not alone by nations, but by small societies, families, and even individuals. In no cases has a return to vegetable diet produced the slightest injury; in most it has been attended with changes undeniably beneficial. Should ever a physician be born with the genius of Locke, I am persuaded that he might trace all bodily and mental derangements to our unnatural habits, as clearly as that philosopher has traced all knowledge to sensation. What prolific sources of disease are not those mineral and vegetable poisons that have been introduced for its extirpation! How many thousands have become murderers and robbers, bigots and domestic tyrants, dissolute and abandoned adventurers, from the use of fermented liquors; who, had they slaked their thirst only with pure water, would have lived but to diffuse the happiness of their own unperverted feelings! How many groundless opinions and absurd institutions have not received a general sanction from the sottishness and intemperance of individuals! Who will assert that, had the populace of Paris satisfied their hunger at the ever-furnished table of vegetable nature, they would have lent their brutal suffrage to the proscription-list of Robespierre? Could a set of men, whose passions were not perverted by unnatural stimuli, look with coolness on an auto da fe? Is it to be believed that a being of gentle feelings, rising from his meal of roots, would take delight in sports of blood? Was Nero a man of temperate life? could you read calm health in his cheek, flushed with ungovernable propensities of hatred for the human race? Did Muley Ismael's pulse beat evenly, was his skin transparent, did his eyes beam with healthfulness, and its invariable concomitants, cheerfulness and benignity? Though history has decided none of these questions, a child could not hesitate to answer in the negative. Surely the bile-suffused cheek of Buonaparte, his wrinkled brow, and yellow eye, the ceaseless inquietude of his nervous system, speak no less plainly the character of his unresting ambition than his murders and his victories. It is impossible, had Buonaparte descended from a race of vegetable feeders, that he could have had either the inclination or the power to ascend the



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throne of the Bourbons. The desire of tyranny could scarcely be excited in the individual, the power to tyrannize would certainly not be delegated by a society neither frenzied by inebriation nor rendered impotent and irrational by disease. Pregnant indeed with inexhaustible calamity is the renunciation of instinct, as it concerns our physical nature; arithmetic cannot enumerate, nor reason perhaps suspect, the multitudinous sources of disease in civilized life. Even common water, that apparently innocuous pabulum, when corrupted by the filth of populous cities, is a deadly and insidious destroyer. (Lambe's "Reports on Cancer".) Who can wonder that all the inducements held out by God Himself in the Bible to virtue should have been vainer than a nurse's tale; and that those dogmas, by which He has there excited and justified the most ferocious propensities, should have alone been deemed essential; whilst Christians are in the daily practice of all those habits which have infected with disease and crime, not only the reprobate sons, but those favoured children of the common Father's love? Omnipotence itself could not save them from the consequences of this original and universal sin.

There is no disease, bodily or mental, which adoption of vegetable diet and pure water has not infallibly mitigated, wherever the experiment has been fairly tried. Debility is gradually converted into strength; disease into healthfulness; madness, in all its hideous variety, from the ravings of the fettered maniac to the unaccountable irrationalities of ill-temper, that make a hell of domestic life, into a calm and considerate evenness of temper, that alone might offer a certain pledge of the future moral reformation of society. On a natural system of diet, old age would be our last and our only malady; the term of our existence would be protracted; we should enjoy life, and no longer preclude others from the enjoyment of it; all sensational delights would be infinitely more exquisite and perfect; the very sense of being would then be a continued pleasure, such as we now feel it in some few and favoured moments of our youth. By all that is sacred in our hopes for the human race, I conjure those who love happiness and truth to give a fair trial to the vegetable system. Reasoning is surely superfluous on a subject whose merits an experience of six months would set for ever at rest. But it is only among the enlightened and benevolent that so great a sacrifice of appetite and prejudice can be expected, even though its ultimate excellence should not admit of dispute. It is found easier, by the short-sighted victims of disease, to palliate their torments by medicine than to prevent them by regimen. The vulgar of all ranks are invariably sensual and indocile; yet I cannot but feel myself persuaded that when the benefits of vegetable diet are mathematically proved, when it is as clear that those who live naturally are exempt from premature death as that nine is not one, the



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most sottish of mankind will feel a preference towards a long and tranquil, contrasted with a short and painful, life. On the average, out of sixty persons four die in three years. Hopes are entertained that, in April, 1814, a statement will be given that sixty persons, all having lived more than three years on vegetables and pure water, are then IN PERFECT HEALTH. More than two years have now elapsed; NOT ONE OF THEM HAS DIED; no such example will be found in any sixty persons taken at random. Seventeen persons of all ages (the families of Dr. Lambe and Mr. Newton) have lived for seven years on this diet without a death, and almost without the slightest illness. Surely, when we consider that some of those were infants, and one a martyr to asthma now nearly subdued, we may challenge any seventeen persons taken at random in this city to exhibit a parallel case. Those who may have been excited to question the rectitude of established habits of diet by these loose remarks, should consult Mr. Newton's luminous and eloquent essay. ("Return to Nature, or Defence of Vegetable Regimen". Cadell, 1811.)

When these proofs come fairly before the world, and are clearly seen by all who understand arithmetic, it is scarcely possible that abstinence from aliments demonstrably pernicious should not become universal. In proportion to the number of proselytes, so will be the weight of evidence; and when a thousand persons can be produced, living on vegetables and distilled water, who have to dread no disease but old age, the world will be compelled to regard animal flesh and fermented liquors as slow but certain poisons. The change which would be produced by simpler habits on political economy is sufficiently remarkable. The monopolizing eater of animal flesh would no longer destroy his constitution by devouring an acre at a meal, and many loaves of bread would cease to contribute to gout, madness and apoplexy, in the shape of a pint of porter, or a dram of gin, when appeasing the long-protracted famine of the hardworking peasant's hungry babes. The quantity of nutritious vegetable matter, consumed in fattening the carcass of an ox, would afford ten times the sustenance, undepraving indeed, and incapable of generating disease, if gathered immediately from the bosom of the earth. The most fertile districts of the habitable globe are now actually cultivated by men for animals, at a delay and waste of aliment absolutely incapable of calculation. It is only the wealthy that can, to any great degree, even now, indulge the unnatural craving for dead flesh, and they pay for the greater licence of the privilege by subjection to supernumerary diseases. Again, the spirit of the nation that should take the lead in this great reform would insensibly become agricultural; commerce, with all its vice, selfishness, and corruption, would gradually decline; more natural habits would produce gentler manners, and the excessive complication of political relations would be so far simplified



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that every individual might feel and understand why he loved his country, and took a personal interest in its welfare. How would England, for example, depend on the caprices of foreign rulers if she contained within herself all the necessaries, and despised whatever they possessed of the luxuries, of life? How could they starve her into compliance with their views? Of what consequence would it be that they refused to take her woollen manufactures, when large and fertile tracts of the island ceased to be allotted to the waste of pasturage? On a natural system of diet we should require no spices from India; no wines from Portugal, Spain, France, or Madeira; none of those multitudinous articles of luxury, for which every corner of the globe is rifled, and which are the causes of so much individual rivalry, such calamitous and sanguinary national disputes. In the history of modern times, the avarice of commercial monopoly, no less than the ambition of weak and wicked chiefs, seems to have fomented the universal discord, to have added stubbornness to the mistakes of cabinets, and indocility to the infatuation of the people. Let it ever be remembered that it is the direct influence of commerce to make the interval between the richest and the poorest man wider and more unconquerable. Let it be remembered that it is a foe to everything of real worth and excellence in the human character. The odious and disgusting aristocracy of wealth is built upon the ruins of all that is good in chivalry or republicanism; and luxury is the forerunner of a barbarism scarce capable of cure. Is it impossible to realize a state of society, where all the energies of man shall be directed to the production of his solid happiness? Certainly, if this advantage (the object of all political speculation) be in any degree attainable, it is attainable only by a community which holds out no factitious incentives to the avarice and ambition of the few, and which is internally organized for the liberty, security, and comfort of the many. None must be entrusted with power (and money is the completest species of power) who do not stand pledged to use it exclusively for the general benefit. But the use of animal flesh and fermented liquors directly militates with this equality of the rights of man. The peasant cannot gratify these fashionable cravings without leaving his family to starve. Without disease and war, those sweeping curtailers of population, pasturage would include a waste too great to be afforded. The labour requisite to support a family is far lighter than is usually supposed. (It has come under the author's experience that some of the workmen on an embankment in North Wales, who, in consequence of the inability of the proprietor to pay them, seldom received their wages, have supported large families by cultivating small spots of sterile ground by moonlight. In the notes to Pratt's poem, "Bread, or the Poor", is an account of an industrious labourer who, by working in a small garden, before and after his day's task, attained to an enviable state of independence.) The peasantry work, not only for themselves, but for the aristocracy, the army, and the manufacturers.



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The advantage of a reform in diet is obviously greater than that of any other. It strikes at the root of the evil. To remedy the abuses of legislation, before we annihilate the propensities by which they are produced, is to suppose that by taking away the effect the cause will cease to operate. But the efficacy of this system depends entirely on the proselytism of individuals, and grounds its merits, as a benefit to the community, upon the total change of the dietetic habits in its members. It proceeds securely from a number of particular cases to one that is universal, and has this advantage over the contrary mode, that one error does not invalidate all that has gone before.

Let not too much, however, be expected from this system. The healthiest among us is not exempt from hereditary disease. The most symmetrical, athletic, and longlived is a being inexpressibly inferior to what he would have been, had not the unnatural habits of his ancestors accumulated for him a certain portion of malady and deformity. In the most perfect specimen of civilized man, something is still found wanting by the physiological critic. Can a return to nature, then, instantaneously eradicate predispositions that have been slowly taking root in the silence of innumerable ages?—Indubitably not. All that I contend for is, that from the moment of the relinquishing all unnatural habits no new disease is generated; and that the predisposition to hereditary maladies gradually perishes, for want of its accustomed supply. In cases of consumption, cancer, gout, asthma, and scrofula, such is the invariable tendency of a diet of vegetables and pure water.

Those who may be induced by these remarks to give the vegetable system a fair trial, should, in the first place, date the commencement of their practice from the moment of their conviction. All depends upon breaking through a pernicious habit resolutely and at once. Dr. Trotter asserts that no drunkard was ever reformed by gradually relinquishing his dram. (See Trotter on the Nervous Temperament.) Animal flesh, in its effects on the human stomach, is analogous to a dram. It is similar in the kind, though differing in the degree, of its operation. The proselyte to a pure diet must be warned to expect a temporary diminution of muscular strength. The subtraction of a powerful stimulus will suffice to account for this event. But it is only temporary, and is succeeded by an equable capability for exertion, far surpassing his former various and fluctuating strength. Above all, he will acquire an easiness of breathing, by which such exertion is performed, with a remarkable exemption from that painful and difficult panting now felt by almost every one after hastily climbing an ordinary mountain. He will be equally capable of bodily exertion, or mental application, after as before his simple meal. He will feel none of the narcotic effects of ordinary diet. Irritability, the direct consequence of exhausting



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stimuli, would yield to the power of natural and tranquil impulses. He will no longer pine under the lethargy of ennui, that unconquerable weariness of life, more to be dreaded than death itself. He will escape the epidemic madness, which broods over its own injurious notions of the Deity, and 'realizes the hell that priests and beldams feign.' Every man forms, as it were, his god from his own character; to the divinity of one of simple habits no offering would be more acceptable than the happiness of his creatures. He would be incapable of hating or persecuting others for the love of God. He will find, moreover, a system of simple diet to be a system of perfect epicurism. He will no longer be incessantly occupied in blunting and destroying those organs from which he expects his gratification. The pleasures of taste to be derived from a dinner of potatoes, beans, peas, turnips, lettuces, with a dessert of apples, gooseberries, strawberries, currants, raspberries, and in winter, oranges, apples and pears, is far greater than is supposed. These who wait until they can eat this plain fare with the sauce of appetite will scarcely join with the hypocritical sensualist at a lord-mayor's feast, who declaims against the pleasures of the table. Solomon kept a thousand concubines, and owned in despair that all was vanity. The man whose happiness is constituted by the society of one amiable woman would find some difficulty in sympathizing with the disappointment of this venerable debauchee.

I address myself not only to the young enthusiast, the ardent devotee of truth and virtue, the pure and passionate moralist, yet unvitiated by the contagion of the world. He will embrace a pure system, from its abstract truth, its beauty, its simplicity, and its promise of wide-extended benefit; unless custom has turned poison into food, he will hate the brutal pleasures of the chase by instinct; it will be a contemplation full of horror, and disappointment to his mind, that beings capable of the gentlest and most admirable sympathies should take delight in the death-pangs and last convulsions of dying animals. The elderly man, whose youth has been poisoned by intemperance, or who has lived with apparent moderation, and is afflicted with a wide variety of painful maladies, would find his account in a beneficial change produced without the risk of poisonous medicines. The mother, to whom the perpetual restlessness of disease and unaccountable deaths incident to her children are the causes of incurable unhappiness, would on this diet experience the satisfaction of beholding their perpetual healths and natural playfulness. (See Mr. Newton's book. His children are the most beautiful and healthy creatures it is possible to conceive; the girls are perfect models for a sculptor; their dispositions are also the most gentle and conciliating; the judicious treatment, which they experience in other points, may be a correlative cause of this. In the first five years of their



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life, of 18,000 children that are born, 7,500 die of various diseases; and how many more of those that survive are not rendered miserable by maladies not immediately mortal? The quality and quantity of a woman's milk are materially injured by the use of dead flesh. In an island near Iceland, where no vegetables are to be got, the children invariably die of tetanus before they are three weeks old, and the population is supplied from the mainland.—Sir G. Mackenzie's "History of Iceland". See also "Emile", chapter 1, pages 53, 54, 56.) The most valuable lives are daily destroyed by diseases that it is dangerous to palliate and impossible to cure by medicine. How much longer will man continue to pimp for the gluttony of Death, his most insidious, implacable, and eternal foe?

Alla drakontas agrious kaleite kai pardaleis kai leontas, autoi de miaiphoneite eis omoteta katalipontes ekeinois ouden ekeinois men gar o phonos trophe, umin de opson estin..."Oti gar ouk estin anthropo kata phusin to sarkophagein, proton men apo ton somaton deloutai tes kataskeues. Oudeni gar eoike to anthropou soma ton epi sarkophagia gegonoton, ou grupotes cheilous, ouk ozutes onuchos, ou traxutes odontos proestin, ou koilias eutonia kai pneumatos thermotes, trepsai kai katergasasthai dunate to baru kai kreodes all autothen e phusis te leioteti ton odonton kai te smikroteti tou stomatos kai te malakoteti tes glosses kai te pros pepsin ambluteti tou pneumatou, exomnutai ten sarkophagian. Ei de legeis pepyrukenai seauton epi toiauten edoden, o boulei phagein proton autos apokteinon, all autos dia seauton, me chesamenos kopidi mede tumpano tini mede pelekei alla, os lukoi kai arktoi kai leontes autoi osa esthiousi phoneuousin, anele degmati boun e stomati sun, e apna e lagoon diarrexon kai phage prospeson eti zontos, os ekeina...Emeis d' outos en to miaiphono truphomen, ost ochon to kreas prosagoreuomen, eit ochon pros auto to kreas deometha, anamignuntes elaion oionon meli garon oxos edusmasi Suriakois Arabikois, oster ontos nekron entaphiazontes. Kai gar outos auton dialuthenton kai melachthenton kai tropon tina prosapenton ergon esti ten pechin kratesai, kai diakratepheises de deinas barutetas empoiei kai nosodeis apechias...Outo to proton agprion ti zoon ebrothe kai kakourgon, eit ornis tis e ichthus eilkusto kai geusamenon outo kai promeletesan en ekeinois to thonikon epi boun ergaten elthe kai to kosmion probaton kai ton oikouron alektruona kai kata mikron outo ten aplestian stomosantes epi sphagas anthropon kai polemous kai phonous proelthon.—Plout. peri tes Sarkophagias.

NOTE ON QUEEN MAB, BY MRS. SHELLEY.



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Shelley was eighteen when he wrote "Queen Mab"; he never published it. When it was written, he had come to the decision that he was too young to be a 'judge of controversies'; and he was desirous of acquiring 'that sobriety of spirit which is the characteristic of true heroism.' But he never doubted the truth or utility of his opinions; and, in printing and privately distributing "Queen Mab", he believed that he should further their dissemination, without occasioning the mischief either to others or himself that might arise from publication. It is doubtful whether he would himself have admitted it into a collection of his works. His severe classical taste, refined by the constant study of the Greek poets, might have discovered defects that escape the ordinary reader; and the change his opinions underwent in many points would have prevented him from putting forth the speculations of his boyish days. But the poem is too beautiful in itself, and far too remarkable as the production of a boy of eighteen, to allow of its being passed over: besides that, having been frequently reprinted, the omission would be vain. In the former edition certain portions were left out, as shocking the general reader from the violence of their attack on religion. I myself had a painful feeling that such erasures might be looked upon as a mark of disrespect towards the author, and am glad to have the opportunity of restoring them. The notes also are reprinted entire—not because they are models of reasoning or lessons of truth, but because Shelley wrote them, and that all that a man at once so distinguished and so excellent ever did deserves to be preserved. The alterations his opinions underwent ought to be recorded, for they form his history.

A series of articles was published in the "New Monthly Magazine" during the autumn of the year 1832, written by a man of great talent, a fellow-collegian and warm friend of Shelley: they describe admirably the state of his mind during his collegiate life. Inspired with ardour for the acquisition of knowledge, endowed with the keenest sensibility and with the fortitude of a martyr, Shelley came among his fellow-creatures, congregated for the purposes of education, like a spirit from another sphere; too delicately organized for the rough treatment man uses towards man, especially in the season of youth, and too resolute in carrying out his own sense of good and justice, not to become a victim. To a devoted attachment to those he loved he added a determined resistance to oppression. Refusing to fag at Eton, he was treated with revolting cruelty by masters and boys: this roused instead of taming his spirit, and he rejected the duty of obedience when it was enforced by menaces and punishment. To aversion to the society of his fellow-creatures, such as he found them when collected together in societies, where one egged on the other to acts of tyranny, was joined the deepest sympathy and compassion; while the attachment he felt for individuals, and the admiration with which he regarded their powers and their virtues, led him to entertain a high opinion of the perfectibility of human nature; and he believed that all could reach the highest grade of moral improvement, did not the customs and prejudices of society foster evil passions and excuse evil actions.



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The oppression which, trembling at every nerve yet resolute to heroism, it was his ill-fortune to encounter at school and at college, led him to dissent in all things from those whose arguments were blows, whose faith appeared to engender blame and hatred. 'During my existence,' he wrote to a friend in 1812, 'I have incessantly speculated, thought, and read.' His readings were not always well chosen; among them were the works of the French philosophers: as far as metaphysical argument went, he temporarily became a convert. At the same time, it was the cardinal article of his faith that, if men were but taught and induced to treat their fellows with love, charity, and equal rights, this earth would realize paradise. He looked upon religion, as it is professed, and above all practised, as hostile instead of friendly to the cultivation of those virtues which would make men brothers.

Can this be wondered at? At the age of seventeen, fragile in health and frame, of the purest habits in morals, full of devoted generosity and universal kindness, glowing with ardour to attain wisdom, resolved at every personal sacrifice to do right, burning with a desire for affection and sympathy,—he was treated as a reprobate, cast forth as a criminal.

The cause was that he was sincere; that he believed the opinions which he entertained to be true. And he loved truth with a martyr's love; he was ready to sacrifice station and fortune, and his dearest affections, at its shrine. The sacrifice was demanded from, and made by, a youth of seventeen. It is a singular fact in the history of society in the civilized nations of modern times that no false step is so irretrievable as one made in early youth. Older men, it is true, when they oppose their fellows and transgress ordinary rules, carry a certain prudence or hypocrisy as a shield along with them. But youth is rash; nor can it imagine, while asserting what it believes to be true, and doing what it believes to be right, that it should be denounced as vicious, and pursued as a criminal.

Shelley possessed a quality of mind which experience has shown me to be of the rarest occurrence among human beings: this was his UNWORLDLINESS. The usual motives that rule men, prospects of present or future advantage, the rank and fortune of those around, the taunts and censures, or the praise, of those who were hostile to him, had no influence whatever over his actions, and apparently none over his thoughts. It is difficult even to express the simplicity and directness of purpose that adorned him. Some few might be found in the history of mankind, and some one at least among his own friends, equally disinterested and scornful, even to severe personal sacrifices, of every baser motive. But no one, I believe, ever joined this noble but passive virtue to equal active endeavours for the benefit of his friends and mankind in general, and to equal power to produce the advantages he desired. The world's brightest gauds



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and its most solid advantages were of no worth in his eyes, when compared to the cause of what he considered truth, and the good of his fellow-creatures. Born in a position which, to his inexperienced mind, afforded the greatest facilities to practise the tenets he espoused, he boldly declared the use he would make of fortune and station, and enjoyed the belief that he should materially benefit his fellow-creatures by his actions; while, conscious of surpassing powers of reason and imagination, it is not strange that he should, even while so young, have believed that his written thoughts would tend to disseminate opinions which he believed conducive to the happiness of the human race.

If man were a creature devoid of passion, he might have said and done all this with quietness. But he was too enthusiastic, and too full of hatred of all the ills he witnessed, not to scorn danger. Various disappointments tortured, but could not tame, his soul. The more enmity he met, the more earnestly he became attached to his peculiar views, and hostile to those of the men who persecuted him.

He was animated to greater zeal by compassion for his fellow-creatures. His sympathy was excited by the misery with which the world is burning. He witnessed the sufferings of the poor, and was aware of the evils of ignorance. He desired to induce every rich man to despoil himself of superfluity, and to create a brotherhood of property and service, and was ready to be the first to lay down the advantages of his birth. He was of too uncompromising a disposition to join any party. He did not in his youth look forward to gradual improvement: nay, in those days of intolerance, now almost forgotten, it seemed as easy to look forward to the sort of millennium of freedom and brotherhood which he thought the proper state of mankind as to the present reign of moderation and improvement. Ill-health made him believe that his race would soon be run; that a year or two was all he had of life. He desired that these years should be useful and illustrious. He saw, in a fervent call on his fellow-creatures to share alike the blessings of the creation, to love and serve each other, the noblest work that life and time permitted him. In this spirit he composed "Queen Mab".

He was a lover of the wonderful and wild in literature, but had not fostered these tastes at their genuine sources—the romances and chivalry of the middle ages—but in the perusal of such German works as were current in those days. Under the influence of these he, at the age of fifteen, wrote two short prose romances of slender merit. The sentiments and language were exaggerated, the composition imitative and poor. He wrote also a poem on the subject of Ahasuerus—being led to it by a German fragment he picked up, dirty and torn, in Lincoln's Inn Fields. This fell afterwards into other hands, and was considerably altered before it was printed. Our earlier English poetry was



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almost unknown to him. The love and knowledge of Nature developed by Wordsworth—the lofty melody and mysterious beauty of Coleridge’s poetry—and the wild fantastic machinery and gorgeous scenery adopted by Southey—composed his favourite reading; the rhythm of “Queen Mab” was founded on that of “Thalaba”, and the first few lines bear a striking resemblance in spirit, though not in idea, to the opening of that poem. His fertile imagination, and ear tuned to the finest sense of harmony, preserved him from imitation. Another of his favourite books was the poem of “Gebir” by Walter Savage Landor. From his boyhood he had a wonderful facility of versification, which he carried into another language; and his Latin school-verses were composed with an ease and correctness that procured for him prizes, and caused him to be resorted to by all his friends for help. He was, at the period of writing “Queen Mab”, a great traveller within the limits of England, Scotland, and Ireland. His time was spent among the loveliest scenes of these countries. Mountain and lake and forest were his home; the phenomena of Nature were his favourite study. He loved to inquire into their causes, and was addicted to pursuits of natural philosophy and chemistry, as far as they could be carried on as an amusement. These tastes gave truth and vivacity to his descriptions, and warmed his soul with that deep admiration for the wonders of Nature which constant association with her inspired.

He never intended to publish “Queen Mab” as it stands; but a few years after, when printing “Alastor”, he extracted a small portion which he entitled “The Daemon of the World”. In this he changed somewhat the versification, and made other alterations scarcely to be called improvements.

Some years after, when in Italy, a bookseller published an edition of “Queen Mab” as it originally stood. Shelley was hastily written to by his friends, under the idea that, deeply injurious as the mere distribution of the poem had proved, the publication might awaken fresh persecutions. At the suggestion of these friends he wrote a letter on the subject, printed in the “Examiner” newspaper—with which I close this history of his earliest work.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ‘EXAMINER.’

‘Sir,

‘Having heard that a poem entitled “Queen Mab” has been surreptitiously published in London, and that legal proceedings have been instituted against the publisher, I request the favour of your insertion of the following explanation of the affair, as it relates to me.

‘A poem entitled “Queen Mab” was written by me at the age of eighteen, I daresay in a sufficiently intemperate spirit—but even then was not intended for publication, and a few copies only were struck off, to be distributed among my personal friends. I have not seen this production for several years. I doubt not but that it is perfectly worthless in

point of literary composition; and that, in all that concerns moral and political speculation,



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as well as in the subtler discriminations of metaphysical and religious doctrine, it is still more crude and immature. I am a devoted enemy to religious, political, and domestic oppression; and I regret this publication, not so much from literary vanity, as because I fear it is better fitted to injure than to serve the sacred cause of freedom. I have directed my solicitor to apply to Chancery for an injunction to restrain the sale; but, after the precedent of Mr. Southey's "Wat Tyler" (a poem written, I believe, at the same age, and with the same unreflecting enthusiasm), with little hope of success.

'Whilst I exonerate myself from all share in having divulged opinions hostile to existing sanctions, under the form, whatever it may be, which they assume in this poem, it is scarcely necessary for me to protest against the system of inculcating the truth of Christianity or the excellence of Monarchy, however true or however excellent they may be, by such equivocal arguments as confiscation and imprisonment, and invective and slander, and the insolent violation of the most sacred ties of Nature and society.

'SIR,

'I am your obliged and obedient servant,

'PERCY B. SHELLEY.

'Pisa, June 22, 1821.'

[Of the following pieces the "Original Poetry by Victor and Cazire", the Poems from "St. Irvyne, or The Rosicrucian", "The Posthumous Fragments of Margaret Nicholson" and "The Devil's Walk", were published by Shelley himself; the others by Medwin, Rossetti, Forman and Dowden, as indicated in the several prefatory notes.]

VERSES ON A CAT.

[Published by Hogg, "Life of Shelley", 1858; dated 1800.]

1.

A cat in distress,
Nothing more, nor less;
Good folks, I must faithfully tell ye,
As I am a sinner,
It waits for some dinner 5
To stuff out its own little belly.



2.

You would not easily guess
All the modes of distress
Which torture the tenants of earth;
And the various evils, *10*
Which like so many devils,
Attend the poor souls from their birth.

3.

Some a living require,
And others desire
An old fellow out of the way; *15*
And which is the best
I leave to be guessed,
For I cannot pretend to say.

4.

One wants society,
Another variety, *20*
Others a tranquil life;
Some want food,
Others, as good,
Only want a wife.

5.

But this poor little cat *25*
Only wanted a rat,
To stuff out its own little maw;
And it were as good
SOME people had such food,
To make them HOLD THEIR JAW! 30



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FRAGMENT: OMENS.

[Published by Medwin, "Shelley Papers", 1833; dated 1807.]

Hark! the owlet flaps his wings
In the pathless dell beneath;
Hark! 'tis the night-raven sings
Tidings of approaching death.

EPITAPHIUM.

[LATIN VERSION OF THE EPITAPH IN GRAY'S ELEGY.]

[Published by Medwin, "Life of Shelley", 1847; dated 1808-9.]

1.

Hic sinu fessum caput hospitali
Cespitis dormit juvenis, nec illi
Fata ridebant, popularis ille
Nescius aerae.

2.

Musa non vultu genus arroganti 5
Rustica natum grege despicata,
Et suum tristis puerum notavit
Sollicitudo.

3.

Indoles illi bene larga, pectus
Veritas sedem sibi vindicavit, 10
Et pari tantis meritis beavit
Munere coelum.

4.

Omne quad moestis habuit miserto
Corde largivit lacrimam, recepit
Omne quod coelo voluit, fidelis 15
Pectus amici.

5.

Longius sed tu fuge curiosus



Caeteras laudes fuge suspicari,
 Caeteras culpas fuge velle tractas
 Sede tremenda. 20

6.
 Spe tremescentes recubant in illa
 Sede virtutes pariterque culpae,
 In sui Patris gremio, tremenda
 Sede Deique.

IN HOROLOGIUM.

[Published by Medwin, "Life of Shelley", 1847; dated 1809.]

Inter marmoreas Leonorae pendula colles
 Fortunata nimis Machina dicit horas.
 Quas MANIBUS premit illa duas insensa papillas
 Cur mihi sit DIGITO tangere, amata, nefas?

A DIALOGUE.

[Published (without title) by Hogg, "Life of Shelley", 1858; dated 1809. Included in the Esdaile manuscript book.]

DEATH:

For my dagger is bathed in the blood of the brave,
 I come, care-worn tenant of life, from the grave,
 Where Innocence sleeps 'neath the peace-giving sod,
 And the good cease to tremble at Tyranny's nod;
 I offer a calm habitation to thee,— 5
Say, victim of grief, wilt thou slumber with me?
My mansion is damp, cold silence is there,
But it lulls in oblivion the fiends of despair;
Not a groan of regret, not a sigh, not a breath,
Dares dispute with grim Silence the empire of Death. 10
 I offer a calm habitation to thee,—
 Say, victim of grief, wilt thou slumber with me?

MORTAL:

Mine eyelids are heavy; my soul seeks repose,
 It longs in thy cells to embosom its woes,
 It longs in thy cells to deposit its load, 15



*Where no longer the scorpions of Perfidy goad,—
Where the phantoms of Prejudice vanish away,
And Bigotry's bloodhounds lose scent of their prey.
Yet tell me, dark Death, when thine empire is o'er,
What awaits on Futurity's mist-covered shore? 20*



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DEATH:

Cease, cease, wayward Mortal! I dare not unveil
The shadows that float o'er Eternity's vale;
Nought waits for the good but a spirit of Love,
That will hail their blest advent to regions above.
For Love, Mortal, gleams through the gloom of my sway, 25
And the shades which surround me fly fast at its ray.
Hast thou loved?—Then depart from these regions of hate,
And in slumber with me blunt the arrows of fate.
I offer a calm habitation to thee.—
Say, victim of grief, wilt thou slumber with me? 30

MORTAL:

Oh! sweet is thy slumber! oh! sweet is the ray
Which after thy night introduces the day;
How concealed, how persuasive, self-interest's breath,
Though it floats to mine ear from the bosom of Death!
I hoped that I quite was forgotten by all, 35
Yet a lingering friend might be grieved at my fall,
And duty forbids, though I languish to die,
When departure might heave Virtue's breast with a sigh.
O Death! O my friend! snatch this form to thy shrine,
And I fear, dear destroyer, I shall not repine. 40

NOTE:

22 o'er Esdaile manuscript; on 1858.

TO THE MOONBEAM.

[Published by Hogg, "Life of Shelley", 1858: dated 1809. Included in the Esdaile manuscript book.]

1.

Moonbeam, leave the shadowy vale,
To bathe this burning brow.
Moonbeam, why art thou so pale,
As thou walkest o'er the dewy dale,
Where humble wild-flowers grow? 5
Is it to mimic me?
But that can never be;
For thine orb is bright,



*And the clouds are light,
That at intervals shadow the star-studded night. 10*

2.
Now all is deathly still on earth;
Nature's tired frame reposes;
And, ere the golden morning's birth
Its radiant hues discloses,
Flies forth its balmy breath. 15
*But mine is the midnight of Death,
And Nature's morn
To my bosom forlorn
Brings but a gloomier night, implants a deadlier thorn.*

3.
Wretch! Suppress the glare of madness 20
*Struggling in thine haggard eye,
For the keenest throb of sadness,
Pale Despair's most sickening sigh,
Is but to mimic me;
And this must ever be, 25*
When the twilight of care,
And the night of despair,
Seem in my breast but joys to the pangs that rankle there.

NOTE:
28 rankle Esdaile manuscript wake 1858.

THE SOLITARY.

[Published by Rossetti, "Complete Poetical Works of P. B. S.", 1870; dated 1810.
Included in the Esdaile manuscript book.]



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1.
Dar'st thou amid the varied multitude
To live alone, an isolated thing?
To see the busy beings round thee spring,
And care for none; in thy calm solitude,
A flower that scarce breathes in the desert rude 5
To Zephyr's passing wing?

2.
Not the swart Pariah in some Indian grove,
Lone, lean, and hunted by his brother's hate,
Hath drunk so deep the cup of bitter fate
As that poor wretch who cannot, cannot love: 10
*He bears a load which nothing can remove,
A killing, withering weight.*

3.
He smiles—'tis sorrow's deadliest mockery;
He speaks—the cold words flow not from his soul;
He acts like others, drains the genial bowl,— 15
*Yet, yet he longs—although he fears—to die;
He pants to reach what yet he seems to fly,
Dull life's extremest goal.*

TO DEATH.

[Published (without title) by Hogg, "Life of Shelley", 1858; dated 1810. Included (under the title, "To Death") in the Esdaile manuscript book.]

Death! where is thy victory?
To triumph whilst I die,
To triumph whilst thine ebon wing
Enfolds my shuddering soul?
O Death! where is thy sting? 5
*Not when the tides of murder roll,
When nations groan, that kings may bask in bliss,
Death! canst thou boast a victory such as this—
When in his hour of pomp and power
His blow the mightiest murderer gave, 10
Mid Nature's cries the sacrifice
Of millions to glut the grave;*



When sunk the Tyrant Desolation's slave;
Or Freedom's life-blood streamed upon thy shrine;
Stern Tyrant, couldst thou boast a victory such as mine? 15

To know in dissolution's void
That mortals' baubles sunk decay;
That everything, but Love, destroyed
Must perish with its kindred clay,—
Perish Ambition's crown, 20
*Perish her sceptred sway:
From Death's pale front fades Pride's fastidious frown.
In Death's damp vault the lurid fires decay,
That Envy lights at heaven-born Virtue's beam—
That all the cares subside, 25*
Which lurk beneath the tide
Of life's unquiet stream;—
Yes! this is victory!
And on yon rock, whose dark form glooms the sky,
To stretch these pale limbs, when the soul is fled; 30
*To baffle the lean passions of their prey,
To sleep within the palace of the dead!
Oh! not the King, around whose dazzling throne
His countless courtiers mock the words they say,
Triumphs amid the bud of glory blown, 35*
As I in this cold bed, and faint expiring groan!



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Tremble, ye proud, whose grandeur mocks the woe
Which props the column of unnatural state!
You the plainings, faint and low,
From Misery's tortured soul that flow, 40
Shall usher to your fate.

Tremble, ye conquerors, at whose fell command
The war-fiend riots o'er a peaceful land!
You Desolation's gory throng
Shall bear from Victory along 45
To that mysterious strand.

NOTE:

10 murderer Esdaile manuscript; murders 1858.

LOVE'S ROSE.

[Published (without title) by Hogg, "Life of Shelley", 1858; dated 1810. Included in the Esdaile manuscript book.]

1.
Hopes, that swell in youthful breasts,
Live not through the waste of time!
Love's rose a host of thorns invests;
Cold, ungenial is the clime,
Where its honours blow. 5
*Youth says, 'The purple flowers are mine,'
Which die the while they glow.*

2.
Dear the boon to Fancy given,
Retracted whilst it's granted:
Sweet the rose which lives in Heaven, 10
*Although on earth 'tis planted,
Where its honours blow,
While by earth's slaves the leaves are riven
Which die the while they glow.*

3.
Age cannot Love destroy, 15
But perfidy can blast the flower,



*Even when in most unwary hour
It blooms in Fancy's bower.
Age cannot Love destroy,
But perfidy can rend the shrine 20
In which its vermeil splendours shine.*

NOTES:

Love's Rose—The title is Rossetti's, 1870.
2 not through Esdaile manuscript; they this, 1858.

EYES: A FRAGMENT.

[Published by Rossetti, "Complete Poetical Works of P. B. S.", 1870; dated 1810.
Included (four unpublished eight-line stanzas) in the Esdaile manuscript book.]

How eloquent are eyes!
Not the rapt poet's frenzied lay
When the soul's wildest feelings stray
Can speak so well as they.
How eloquent are eyes! 5
*Not music's most impassioned note
On which Love's warmest fervours float
Like them bids rapture rise.*

Love, look thus again,—
That your look may light a waste of years, 10
*Darting the beam that conquers cares
Through the cold shower of tears.
Love, look thus again!*

ORIGINAL POETRY BY VICTOR AND CAZIRE.

[Published by Shelley, 1810. A Reprint, edited by Richard Garnett, C.B., LL.D., was
issued by John Lane, in 1898. The punctuation of the original edition is here retained.]



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A Person complained that whenever he began to write, he never could arrange his ideas in grammatical order. Which occasion suggested the idea of the following lines:

1.

Here I sit with my paper, my pen and my ink,
First of this thing, and that thing, and t'other thing think;
Then my thoughts come so pell-mell all into my mind,
That the sense or the subject I never can find:
This word is wrong placed,—no regard to the sense,
The present and future, instead of past tense,
Then my grammar I want; O dear! what a bore,
I think I shall never attempt to write more,
With patience I then my thoughts must arraign,
Have them all in due order like mutes in a train, 10
*Like them too must wait in due patience and thought,
Or else my fine works will all come to nought.
My wit too's so copious, it flows like a river,
But disperses its waters on black and white never;
Like smoke it appears independent and free, 15*
But ah luckless smoke! it all passes like thee—
Then at length all my patience entirely lost,
My paper and pens in the fire are tossed;
But come, try again—you must never despair,
Our Murray's or Entick's are not all so rare, 20
*Implore their assistance—they'll come to your aid,
Perform all your business without being paid,
They'll tell you the present tense, future and past,
Which should come first, and which should come last,
This Murray will do—then to Entick repair, 25*
To find out the meaning of any word rare.
This they friendly will tell, and ne'er make you blush,
With a jeering look, taunt, or an O fie! tush!
Then straight all your thoughts in black and white put,
Not minding the if's, the be's, and the but, 30
*Then read it all over, see how it will run,
How answers the wit, the retort, and the pun,
Your writings may then with old Socrates vie,
May on the same shelf with Demosthenes lie,
May as Junius be sharp, or as Plato be sage. 35*
The pattern or satire to all of the age;
But stop—a mad author I mean not to turn,
Nor with thirst of applause does my heated brain burn,
Sufficient that sense, wit, and grammar combined,



My letters may make some slight food for the mind; 40
*That my thoughts to my friends I may freely impart,
In all the warm language that flows from the heart.
Hark! futurity calls! it loudly complains,
It bids me step forward and just hold the reins,
My excuse shall be humble, and faithful, and true, 45*
Such as I fear can be made but by few—
Of writers this age has abundance and plenty,
Three score and a thousand, two millions and twenty,
Three score of them wits who all sharply vie,
To try what odd creature they best can belie,



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50

*A thousand are prudes who for CHARITY write,
 And fill up their sheets with spleen, envy, and spite[,]
 One million are bards, who to Heaven aspire,
 And stuff their works full of bombast, rant, and fire,
 T'other million are wags who in Grubstreet attend, 55
 And just like a cobbler the old writings mend,
 The twenty are those who for pulpits indite,
 And pore over sermons all Saturday night.
 And now my good friends—who come after I mean,
 As I ne'er wore a cassock, or dined with a dean. 60
 Or like cobblers at mending I never did try,
 Nor with poets in lyrics attempted to vie;
 As for prudes these good souls I both hate and detest,
 So here I believe the matter must rest.—
 I've heard your complaint—my answer I've made, 65
 And since to your calls all the tribute I've paid,
 Adieu my good friend; pray never despair,
 But grammar and sense and everything dare,
 Attempt but to write dashing, easy, and free,
 Then take out your grammar and pay him his fee, 70
 Be not a coward, shrink not to a tense,
 But read it all over and make it out sense.
 What a tiresome girl!—pray soon make an end,
 Else my limited patience you'll quickly expend.
 Well adieu, I no longer your patience will try— 75
 So swift to the post now the letter shall fly.*

JANUARY, 1810.

2.

TO MISS — — [HARRIET GROVE] FROM MISS — — [ELIZABETH SHELLEY].

For your letter, dear — [Hattie], accept my best thanks,
 Rendered long and amusing by virtue of franks,
 Though concise they would please, yet the longer the better,
 The more news that's crammed in, more amusing the letter,
 All excuses of etiquette nonsense I hate, 5
*Which only are fit for the tardy and late,
 As when converse grows flat, of the weather they talk,
 How fair the sun shines—a fine day for a walk,
 Then to politics turn, of Burdett's reformation,*



One declares it would hurt, t'other better the nation, 10
Will ministers keep? sure they've acted quite wrong,
The burden this is of each morning-call song.
So — is going to — you say,
I hope that success her great efforts will pay [—]
That [the Colonel] will see her, be dazzled outright, 15
And declare he can't bear to be out of her sight.
Write flaming epistles with love's pointed dart,
Whose sharp little arrow struck right on his heart,
Scold poor innocent Cupid for mischievous ways,
He knows not how much to laud forth her praise, 20
That he neither eats, drinks or sleeps for her sake,
And hopes her hard heart some compassion will take,
A refusal would kill him, so desperate his flame,
But he fears, for he knows she is not common game,



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Then praises her sense, wit, discernment and grace, 25
*He's not one that's caught by a sly looking face,
Yet that's TOO divine—such a black sparkling eye,
At the bare glance of which near a thousand will die;
Thus runs he on meaning but one word in ten,
More than is meant by most such kind of men, 30*
For they're all alike, take them one with another,
Begging pardon—with the exception of my brother.
Of the drawings you mention much praise I have heard,
Most opinion's the same, with the difference of word,
Some get a good name by the voice of the crowd, 35
*Whilst to poor humble merit small praise is allowed,
As in parliament votes, so in pictures a name,
Oft determines a fate at the altar of fame.—
So on Friday this City's gay vortex you quit,
And no longer with Doctors and Johnny cats sit— 40*
Now your parcel's arrived — [Bysshe's] letter shall go,
I hope all your joy mayn't be turned into woe,
Experience will tell you that pleasure is vain,
When it promises sunshine how often comes rain.
So when to fond hope every blessing is nigh, 45
*How oft when we smile it is checked with a sigh,
When Hope, gay deceiver, in pleasure is dressed,
How oft comes a stroke that may rob us of rest.
When we think ourselves safe, and the goal near at hand,
Like a vessel just landing, we're wrecked near the strand, 50*
And though memory forever the sharp pang must feel,
'Tis our duty to bear, and our hardship to steel—
May misfortunes dear Girl, ne'er thy happiness cloy,
May thy days glide in peace, love, comfort and joy,
May thy tears with soft pity for other woes flow, 55
*Woes, which thy tender heart never may know,
For hardships our own, God has taught us to bear,
Though sympathy's soul to a friend drops a tear.
Oh dear! what sentimental stuff have I written,
Only fit to tear up and play with a kitten. 60*
What sober reflections in the midst of this letter!
Jocularity sure would have suited much better;
But there are exceptions to all common rules,
For this is a truth by all boys learned at schools.



Now adieu my dear — [Hattie] I'm sure I must tire, 65
*For if I do, you may throw it into the fire,
So accept the best love of your cousin and friend,
Which brings this nonsensical rhyme to an end.*

APRIL 30, 1810.

NOTE:

19 mischievous]mischevious 1810.

3. SONG.

Cold, cold is the blast when December is howling,
Cold are the damps on a dying man's brow,—
Stern are the seas when the wild waves are rolling,
And sad is the grave where a loved one lies low;
But colder is scorn from the being who loved thee, 5
*More stern is the sneer from the friend who has proved thee,
More sad are the tears when their sorrows have moved thee,
Which mixed with groans anguish and wild madness flow—*



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And ah! poor — has felt all this horror,
Full long the fallen victim contended with fate: 10
*'Till a destitute outcast abandoned to sorrow,
She sought her babe's food at her ruiner's gate—
Another had charmed the remorseless betrayer,
He turned laughing aside from her moans and her prayer,
She said nothing, but wringing the wet from her hair, 15*
Crossed the dark mountain side, though the hour it was late.
*'Twas on the wild height of the dark Penmanmawr,
That the form of the wasted — reclined;
She shrieked to the ravens that croaked from afar,
And she sighed to the gusts of the wild sweeping wind.— 20*
*I call not yon rocks where the thunder peals rattle,
I call not yon clouds where the elements battle,
But thee, cruel — I call thee unkind!'*—

Then she wreathed in her hair the wild flowers of the mountain,
And deliriously laughing, a garland entwined, 25
*She bedewed it with tears, then she hung o'er the fountain,
And leaving it, cast it a prey to the wind.*
*'Ah! go,' she exclaimed, 'when the tempest is yelling,
'Tis unkind to be cast on the sea that is swelling,
But I left, a pitiless outcast, my dwelling, 30*
My garments are torn, so they say is my mind—'

Not long lived —, but over her grave
Waved the desolate form of a storm-blasted yew,
Around it no demons or ghosts dare to rave,
But spirits of peace steep her slumbers in dew. 35
*Then stay thy swift steps mid the dark mountain heather,
Though chill blow the wind and severe is the weather,
For perfidy, traveller! cannot bereave her,
Of the tears, to the tombs of the innocent due.—*

JULY, 1810.

4. SONG.

Come [Harriet!] sweet is the hour,
Soft Zephyrs breathe gently around,
The anemone's night-boding flower,
Has sunk its pale head on the ground.



'Tis thus the world's keenness hath torn, 5
Some mild heart that expands to its blast,
'Tis thus that the wretched forlorn,
Sinks poor and neglected at last.—

The world with its keenness and woe,
Has no charms or attraction for me, 10
Its unkindness with grief has laid low,
The heart which is faithful to thee.
The high trees that wave past the moon,
As I walk in their umbrage with you,
All declare I must part with you soon, 15
All bid you a tender adieu!—

Then [Harriet]! dearest farewell,
You and I love, may ne'er meet again;
These woods and these meadows can tell
How soft and how sweet was the strain.— 20

APRIL, 1810.

5. SONG.

DESPAIR.

Ask not the pallid stranger's woe,
With beating heart and throbbing breast,
Whose step is faltering, weak, and slow,
As though the body needed rest.—



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Whose 'wildered eye no object meets, 5
Nor cares to ken a friendly glance,
With silent grief his bosom beats,—
Now fixed, as in a deathlike trance.

Who looks around with fearful eye,
And shuns all converse with man kind, 10
As though some one his griefs might spy,
And soothe them with a kindred mind.

A friend or foe to him the same,
He looks on each with equal eye;
The difference lies but in the name, 15
To none for comfort can he fly.—

'Twas deep despair, and sorrow's trace,
To him too keenly given,
Whose memory, time could not efface—
His peace was lodged in Heaven.— 20

He looks on all this world bestows,
The pride and pomp of power,
As trifles best for pageant shows
Which vanish in an hour.

When torn is dear affection's tie, 25
Sinks the soft heart full low;
It leaves without a parting sigh,
All that these realms bestow.

JUNE, 1810.

6. SONG.

SORROW.

To me this world's a dreary blank,
All hopes in life are gone and fled,
My high strung energies are sank,
And all my blissful hopes lie dead.—

The world once smiling to my view, 5
Showed scenes of endless bliss and joy;
The world I then but little knew,
Ah! little knew how pleasures cloy;



All then was jocund, all was gay,
No thought beyond the present hour, 10
*I danced in pleasure's fading ray,
Fading alas! as drooping flower.*

Nor do the heedless in the throng,
One thought beyond the morrow give[,]
They court the feast, the dance, the song, 15
Nor think how short their time to live.

The heart that bears deep sorrow's trace,
What earthly comfort can console,
It drags a dull and lengthened pace,
'Till friendly death its woes enroll.— 20

The sunken cheek, the humid eyes,
E'en better than the tongue can tell;
In whose sad breast deep sorrow lies,
Where memory's rankling traces dwell.—

The rising tear, the stifled sigh, 25
*A mind but ill at ease display,
Like blackening clouds in stormy sky,
Where fiercely vivid lightnings play.*

Thus when souls' energy is dead,
When sorrow dims each earthly view, 30
*When every fairy hope is fled,
We bid ungrateful world adieu.*

AUGUST, 1810.

7. SONG.

HOPE.

And said I that all hope was fled,
That sorrow and despair were mine,
That each enthusiast wish was dead,
Had sank beneath pale Misery's shrine.—



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Seest thou the sunbeam's yellow glow, 5
That robes with liquid streams of light;
Yon distant Mountain's craggy brow.
And shows the rocks so fair,—so bright—

Tis thus sweet expectation's ray,
In softer view shows distant hours, 10
And portrays each succeeding day,
As dressed in fairer, brighter flowers,—

The vermeil tinted flowers that blossom;
Are frozen but to bud anew,
Then sweet deceiver calm my bosom, 15
Although thy visions be not true,—

Yet true they are,—and I'll believe,
Thy whisperings soft of love and peace,
God never made thee to deceive,
'Tis sin that bade thy empire cease. 20

Yet though despair my life should gloom,
Though horror should around me close,
With those I love, beyond the tomb,
Hope shows a balm for all my woes.

AUGUST, 1810.

8. SONG.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN.

Oh! what is the gain of restless care,
And what is ambitious treasure?
And what are the joys that the modish share,
In their sickly haunts of pleasure?

My husband's repast with delight I spread, 5
What though 'tis but rustic fare,
May each guardian angel protect his shed,
May contentment and quiet be there.

And may I support my husband's years,
May I soothe his dying pain, 10
And then may I dry my fast falling tears,
And meet him in Heaven again.



JULY, 1810.

9. SONG.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.

Ah! grasp the dire dagger and couch the fell spear,
If vengeance and death to thy bosom be dear,
The dastard shall perish, death's torment shall prove,
For fate and revenge are decreed from above.

Ah! where is the hero, whose nerves strung by youth, 5
Will defend the firm cause of justice and truth;
With insatiate desire whose bosom shall swell,
To give up the oppressor to judgement and Hell—

For him shall the fair one twine chaplets of bays,
To him shall each warrior give merited praise, 10
And triumphant returned from the clangour of arms,
He shall find his reward in his loved maiden's charms.

In ecstatic confusion the warrior shall sip,
The kisses that glow on his love's dewy lip,
And mutual, eternal, embraces shall prove, 15
The rewards of the brave are the transports of love.

OCTOBER, 1809.

10. THE IRISHMAN'S SONG.

The stars may dissolve, and the fountain of light
May sink into ne'er ending chaos and night,
Our mansions must fall, and earth vanish away,
But thy courage O Erin! may never decay.



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See! the wide wasting ruin extends all around, 5
Our ancestors' dwellings lie sunk on the ground,
Our foes ride in triumph throughout our domains,
And our mightiest heroes lie stretched on the plains.

Ah! dead is the harp which was wont to give pleasure,
Ah! sunk is our sweet country's rapturous measure, 10
But the war note is waked, and the clangour of spears,
The dread yell of Sloghan yet sounds in our ears.

Ah! where are the heroes! triumphant in death,
Convulsed they recline on the blood sprinkled heath,
Or the yelling ghosts ride on the blast that sweeps by, 15
And 'my countrymen! vengeance!' incessantly cry.

OCTOBER, 1809.

11. SONG.

Fierce roars the midnight storm
O'er the wild mountain,
Dark clouds the night deform,
Swift rolls the fountain—

See! o'er yon rocky height, 5
Dim mists are flying—
See by the moon's pale light,
Poor Laura's dying!

Shame and remorse shall howl,
By her false pillow— 10
Fiercer than storms that roll,
O'er the white billow;

No hand her eyes to close,
When life is flying,
But she will find repose, 15
For Laura's dying!

Then will I seek my love,
Then will I cheer her,
Then my esteem will prove,
When no friend is near her. 20



On her grave I will lie,
When life is parted,
On her grave I will die,
For the false hearted.

DECEMBER, 1809.

12. SONG.

TO [HARRIET].

Ah! sweet is the moonbeam that sleeps on yon fountain,
And sweet the mild rush of the soft-sighing breeze,
And sweet is the glimpse of yon dimly-seen mountain,
'Neath the verdant arcades of yon shadowy trees.

But sweeter than all was thy tone of affection, 5
*Which scarce seemed to break on the stillness of eve,
Though the time it is past!—yet the dear recollection,
For aye in the heart of thy [Percy] must live.*

Yet he hears thy dear voice in the summer winds sighing,
Mild accents of happiness lisp in his ear, 10
*When the hope-winged moments athwart him are flying,
And he thinks of the friend to his bosom so dear.—*

And thou dearest friend in his bosom for ever
Must reign unalloyed by the fast rolling year,
He loves thee, and dearest one never, Oh! never 15
Canst thou cease to be loved by a heart so sincere.

AUGUST, 1810.

NOTE:

11 hope-winged]hoped-winged 1810.

13. SONG.

TO — [HARRIET].



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Stern, stern is the voice of fate's fearful command,
When accents of horror it breathes in our ear,
Or compels us for aye bid adieu to the land,
Where exists that loved friend to our bosom so dear,

'Tis sterner than death o'er the shuddering wretch bending, 5
*And in skeleton grasp his fell sceptre extending,
Like the heart-stricken deer to that loved covert wending,
Which never again to his eyes may appear—*

And ah! he may envy the heart-stricken quarry,
Who bids to the friend of affection farewell, 10
*He may envy the bosom so bleeding and gory,
He may envy the sound of the drear passing knell,*

Not so deep is his grief on his death couch reposing,
When on the last vision his dim eyes are closing!
As the outcast whose love-raptured senses are losing, 15
The last tones of thy voice on the wild breeze that swell!

Those tones were so soft, and so sad, that ah! never,
Can the sound cease to vibrate on Memory's ear,
In the stern wreck of Nature for ever and ever,
The remembrance must live of a friend so sincere. 20

AUGUST, 1810.

14. SAINT EDMOND'S EVE.

Oh! did you observe the Black Canon pass,
And did you observe his frown?
He goeth to say the midnight mass,
In holy St. Edmond's town.

He goeth to sing the burial chaunt, 5
*And to lay the wandering sprite,
Whose shadowy, restless form doth haunt,
The Abbey's drear aisle this night.*

It saith it will not its wailing cease,
'Till that holy man come near, 10
*'Till he pour o'er its grave the prayer of peace,
And sprinkle the hallowed tear.*



The Canon's horse is stout and strong
The road is plain and fair,
But the Canon slowly wends along, 15
And his brow is gloomed with care.

Who is it thus late at the Abbey-gate?
Sullen echoes the portal bell,
It sounds like the whispering voice of fate,
It sounds like a funeral knell. 20

The Canon his faltering knee thrice bowed,
And his frame was convulsed with fear,
When a voice was heard distinct and loud,
'Prepare! for thy hour is near.'

He crosses his breast, he mutters a prayer, 25
To Heaven he lifts his eye,
He heeds not the Abbot's gazing stare,
Nor the dark Monks who murmured by.

Bare-headed he worships the sculptured saints
That frown on the sacred walls, 30
His face it grows pale,—he trembles, he faints,
At the Abbot's feet he falls.

And straight the father's robe he kissed,
Who cried, 'Grace dwells with thee,
The spirit will fade like the morning mist, 35
At your benedicite.



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'Now haste within! the board is spread,
Keen blows the air, and cold,
The spectre sleeps in its earthy bed,
'Till St. Edmond's bell hath tolled,— 40

'Yet rest your wearied limbs to-night,
You've journeyed many a mile,
To-morrow lay the wailing sprite,
That shrieks in the moonlight aisle.

'Oh! faint are my limbs and my bosom is cold, 45
*Yet to-night must the sprite be laid,
Yet to-night when the hour of horror's told,
Must I meet the wandering shade.*

'Nor food, nor rest may now delay,—
For hark! the echoing pile, 50
*A bell loud shakes!—Oh haste away,
O lead to the haunted aisle.'*

The torches slowly move before,
The cross is raised on high,
A smile of peace the Canon wore, 55
But horror dimmed his eye—

And now they climb the footworn stair,
The chapel gates unclose,
Now each breathed low a fervent prayer,
And fear each bosom froze— 60

Now paused awhile the doubtful band
And viewed the solemn scene,—
Full dark the clustered columns stand,
The moon gleams pale between—

'Say father, say, what cloisters' gloom 65
*Conceals the unquiet shade,
Within what dark unhallowed tomb,
The corse unblessed was laid.'*

'Through yonder drear aisle alone it walks,
And murmurs a mournful plaint, 70
*Of thee! Black Canon, it wildly talks,
And call on thy patron saint—*



The pilgrim this night with wondering eyes,
As he prayed at St. Edmond's shrine,
From a black marble tomb hath seen it rise, 75
And under yon arch recline.'—

'Oh! say upon that black marble tomb,
What memorial sad appears.'—
'Undistinguished it lies in the chancel's gloom,
No memorial sad it bears'— 80

The Canon his paternoster reads,
His rosary hung by his side,
Now swift to the chancel doors he leads,
And untouched they open wide,

Resistless, strange sounds his steps impel, 85
To approach to the black marble tomb,
'Oh! enter, Black Canon,' a whisper fell,
'Oh! enter, thy hour is come.'

He paused, told his beads, and the threshold passed.
Oh! horror, the chancel doors close, 90
A loud yell was borne on the rising blast,
And a deep, dying groan arose.

The Monks in amazement shuddering stand,
They burst through the chancel's gloom,
From St. Edmond's shrine, lo! a skeleton's hand, 95
Points to the black marble tomb.



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Lo! deeply engraved, an inscription blood red,
In characters fresh and clear—
'The guilty Black Canon of Elmham's dead,
And his wife lies buried here!' 100

In Elmham's tower he wedded a Nun,
To St. Edmond's his bride he bore,
On this eve her noviciate here was begun,
And a Monk's gray weeds she wore;—

O! deep was her conscience dyed with guilt, 105
Remorse she full oft revealed,
Her blood by the ruthless Black Canon was spilt,
And in death her lips he sealed;

Her spirit to penance this night was doomed,
'Till the Canon atoned the deed, 110
Here together they now shall rest entombed,
'Till their bodies from dust are freed—

Hark! a loud peal of thunder shakes the roof,
Round the altar bright lightnings play,
Speechless with horror the Monks stand aloof, 115
And the storm dies sudden away—

The inscription was gone! a cross on the ground,
And a rosary shone through the gloom,
But never again was the Canon there found,
Or the Ghost on the black marble tomb. 120

15. REVENGE.

'Ah! quit me not yet, for the wind whistles shrill,
Its blast wanders mournfully over the hill,
The thunder's wild voice rattles madly above,
You will not then, cannot then, leave me my love.—'

I must dearest Agnes, the night is far gone— 5
I must wander this evening to Strasburg alone,
I must seek the drear tomb of my ancestors' bones,
And must dig their remains from beneath the cold stones.

'For the spirit of Conrad there meets me this night,
And we quit not the tomb 'till dawn of the light, 10



*And Conrad's been dead just a month and a day!
So farewell dearest Agnes for I must away,—*

'He bid me bring with me what most I held dear,
Or a month from that time should I lie on my bier,
And I'd sooner resign this false fluttering breath, 15
Than my Agnes should dread either danger or death,

'And I love you to madness my Agnes I love,
My constant affection this night will I prove,
This night will I go to the sepulchre's jaw
Alone will I glut its all conquering maw'— 20

'No! no loved Adolphus thy Agnes will share,
In the tomb all the dangers that wait for you there,
I fear not the spirit,—I fear not the grave,
My dearest Adolphus I'd perish to save'—

'Nay seek not to say that thy love shall not go, 25
*But spare me those ages of horror and woe,
For I swear to thee here that I'll perish ere day,
If you go unattended by Agnes away'—*

The night it was bleak the fierce storm raged around,
The lightning's blue fire-light flashed on the ground, 30
*Strange forms seemed to flit,—and howl tidings of fate,
As Agnes advanced to the sepulchre gate.—*



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The youth struck the portal,—the echoing sound
Was fearfully rolled midst the tombstones around,
The blue lightning gleamed o'er the dark chapel spire, 35
And tinged were the storm clouds with sulphurous fire.

Still they gazed on the tombstone where Conrad reclined,
Yet they shrank at the cold chilling blast of the wind,
When a strange silver brilliance pervaded the scene,
And a figure advanced—tall in form—fierce in mien. 40

A mantle encircled his shadowy form,
As light as a gossamer borne on the storm,
Celestial terror sat throned in his gaze,
Like the midnight pestiferous meteor's blaze.—

SPIRIT:

Thy father, Adolphus! was false, false as hell, 45
*And Conrad has cause to remember it well,
He ruined my Mother, despised me his son,
I quitted the world ere my vengeance was done.*

I was nearly expiring—'twas close of the day,—
A demon advanced to the bed where I lay, 50
*He gave me the power from whence I was hurled,
To return to revenge, to return to the world,—*

Now Adolphus I'll seize thy best loved in my arms,
I'll drag her to Hades all blooming in charms,
On the black whirlwind's thundering pinion I'll ride, 55
And fierce yelling fiends shall exult o'er thy bride—

He spoke, and extending his ghastly arms wide,
Majestic advanced with a swift noiseless stride,
He clasped the fair Agnes—he raised her on high,
And cleaving the roof sped his way to the sky— 60

All was now silent,—and over the tomb,
Thicker, deeper, was swiftly extended a gloom,
Adolphus in horror sank down on the stone,
And his fleeting soul fled with a harrowing groan.

DECEMBER, 1809.

16. GHASTA OR, THE AVENGING DEMON!!!



The idea of the following tale was taken from a few unconnected German Stanzas.—
The principal Character is evidently the Wandering Jew, and although not mentioned by name, the burning Cross on his forehead undoubtedly alludes to that superstition, so prevalent in the part of Germany called the Black Forest, where this scene is supposed to lie.

Hark! the owlet flaps her wing,
In the pathless dell beneath,
Hark! night ravens loudly sing,
Tidings of despair and death.—

Horror covers all the sky, 5
Clouds of darkness blot the moon,
Prepare! for mortal thou must die,
Prepare to yield thy soul up soon—

Fierce the tempest raves around,
Fierce the volleyed lightnings fly, 10
Crashing thunder shakes the ground,
Fire and tumult fill the sky.—

Hark! the tolling village bell,
Tells the hour of midnight come,
Now can blast the powers of Hell, 15
Fiend-like goblins now can roam—



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See! his crest all stained with rain,
A warrior hastening speeds his way,
He starts, looks round him, starts again,
And sighs for the approach of day. 20

See! his frantic steed he reins,
See! he lifts his hands on high,
Implores a respite to his pains,
From the powers of the sky.—

He seeks an Inn, for faint from toil, 25
*Fatigue had bent his lofty form,
To rest his wearied limbs awhile,
Fatigued with wandering and the storm.*

... ..

Slow the door is opened wide—
With trackless tread a stranger came, 30
*His form Majestic, slow his stride,
He sate, nor spake,—nor told his name—*

Terror blanched the warrior's cheek,
Cold sweat from his forehead ran,
In vain his tongue essayed to speak,— 35
At last the stranger thus began:

'Mortal! thou that saw'st the sprite,
Tell me what I wish to know,
Or come with me before 'tis light,
Where cypress trees and mandrakes grow. 40

'Fierce the avenging Demon's ire,
Fiercer than the wintry blast,
Fiercer than the lightning's fire,
When the hour of twilight's past'—

The warrior raised his sunken eye. 45
*It met the stranger's sullen scowl,
'Mortal! Mortal! thou must die,'
In burning letters chilled his soul.*

WARRIOR:
Stranger! whoso'er you are,



I feel impelled my tale to tell— 50
*Horrors stranger shalt thou hear,
Horrors drear as those of Hell.*

O'er my Castle silence reigned,
Late the night and drear the hour,
When on the terrace I observed, 55
A fleeting shadowy mist to lower.—

Light the cloud as summer fog,
Which transient shuns the morning beam;
Fleeting as the cloud on bog,
That hangs or on the mountain stream.— 60

Horror seized my shuddering brain,
Horror dimmed my starting eye.
In vain I tried to speak,—In vain
My limbs essayed the spot to fly—

At last the thin and shadowy form, 65
*With noiseless, trackless footsteps came,—
Its light robe floated on the storm,
Its head was bound with lambent flame.*

In chilling voice drear as the breeze
Which sweeps along th' autumnal ground, 70
*Which wanders through the leafless trees,
Or the mandrake's groan which floats around.*

'Thou art mine and I am thine,
'Till the sinking of the world,
I am thine and thou art mine, 75
'Till in ruin death is hurled—



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'Strong the power and dire the fate,
Which drags me from the depths of Hell,
Breaks the tomb's eternal gate,
Where fiendish shapes and dead men yell, 80

'Haply I might ne'er have shrank
From flames that rack the guilty dead,
Haply I might ne'er have sank
On pleasure's flowery, thorny bed—

—'But stay! no more I dare disclose, 85
*Of the tale I wish to tell,
On Earth relentless were my woes,
But fiercer are my pangs in Hell—*

'Now I claim thee as my love,
Lay aside all chilling fear, 90
*My affection will I prove,
Where sheeted ghosts and spectres are!*

'For thou art mine, and I am thine,
'Till the dreaded judgement day,
I am thine, and thou art mine— 95
Night is past—I must away.'

Still I gazed, and still the form
Pressed upon my aching sight,
Still I braved the howling storm,
When the ghost dissolved in night.— 100

Restless, sleepless fled the night,
Sleepless as a sick man's bed,
When he sighs for morning light,
When he turns his aching head,—

Slow and painful passed the day. 105
*Melancholy seized my brain,
Lingering fled the hours away,
Lingering to a wretch in pain.—*

At last came night, ah! horrid hour,
Ah! chilling time that wakes the dead, 110
*When demons ride the clouds that lower,
—The phantom sat upon my bed.*



In hollow voice, low as the sound
Which in some charnel makes its moan,
What floats along the burying ground, 115
The phantom claimed me as her own.

Her chilling finger on my head,
With coldest touch congealed my soul—
Cold as the finger of the dead,
Or damps which round a tombstone roll— 120

Months are passed in lingering round,
Every night the spectre comes,
With thrilling step it shakes the ground,
With thrilling step it round me roams—

Stranger! I have told to thee, 125
All the tale I have to tell—
Stranger! canst thou tell to me,
How to 'scape the powers of Hell?—

STRANGER:

Warrior! I can ease thy woes,
Wilt thou, wilt thou, come with me— 130
Warrior! I can all disclose,
Follow, follow, follow me.

Yet the tempest's duskiest wing,
Its mantle stretches o'er the sky,
Yet the midnight ravens sing, 135
'Mortal! Mortal! thou must die.'

At last they saw a river clear,
That crossed the heathy path they trod,
The Stranger's look was wild and drear,
The firm Earth shook beneath his nod— 140



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He raised a wand above his head,
He traced a circle on the plain,
In a wild verse he called the dead,
The dead with silent footsteps came.

A burning brilliance on his head, 145
Flaming filled the stormy air,
In a wild verse he called the dead,
The dead in motley crowd were there.—

'Ghast! Ghast! come along,
Bring thy fiendish crowd with thee, 150
Quickly raise th' avenging Song,
Ghast! Ghast! come to me.'

Horrid shapes in mantles gray,
Flit athwart the stormy night,
'Ghast! Ghast! come away, 155
Come away before 'tis light.'

See! the sheeted Ghost they bring,
Yelling dreadful o'er the heath,
Hark! the deadly verse they sing,
Tidings of despair and death! 160

The yelling Ghost before him stands,
See! she rolls her eyes around,
Now she lifts her bony hands,
Now her footsteps shake the ground.

STRANGER:
Phantom of Theresa say, 165
Why to earth again you came,
Quickly speak, I must away!
Or you must bleach for aye in flame,—

PHANTOM:
Mighty one I know thee now,
Mightiest power of the sky, 170
Know thee by thy flaming brow,
Know thee by thy sparkling eye.

That fire is scorching! Oh! I came,
From the caverned depth of Hell,



My fleeting false Rodolph to claim, 175
Mighty one! I know thee well.—

STRANGER:

Ghast! seize yon wandering sprite,
Drag her to the depth beneath,
Take her swift, before 'tis light,
Take her to the cells of death! 180

Thou that heardst the trackless dead,
In the mouldering tomb must lie,
Mortal! look upon my head,
Mortal! Mortal! thou must die.

Of glowing flame a cross was there, 185
*Which threw a light around his form,
Whilst his lank and raven hair,
Floated wild upon the storm.—*

The warrior upwards turned his eyes,
Gazed upon the cross of fire, 190
*There sat horror and surprise,
There sat God's eternal ire.—*

A shivering through the Warrior flew,
Colder than the nightly blast,
Colder than the evening dew, 195
When the hour of twilight's past.—

Thunder shakes th' expansive sky,
Shakes the bosom of the heath,
'Mortal! Mortal! thou must die'—
The warrior sank convulsed in death. 200

JANUARY, 1810.

NOTES: 114 *its]it* 1810. 115 What]query Which?



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17. FRAGMENT, OR THE TRIUMPH OF CONSCIENCE.

'Twas dead of the night when I sate in my dwelling,
 One glimmering lamp was expiring and low,—
 Around the dark tide of the tempest was swelling,
 Along the wild mountains night-ravens were yelling,
 They bodingly presaged destruction and woe! 5

'Twas then that I started, the wild storm was howling,
 Nought was seen, save the lightning that danced on the sky,
 Above me the crash of the thunder was rolling,
 And low, chilling murmurs the blast wafted by.—

My heart sank within me, unheeded the jar 10
Of the battling clouds on the mountain-tops broke,
Unheeded the thunder-peal crashed in mine ear,
This heart hard as iron was stranger to fear,
But conscience in low noiseless whispering spoke.
 'Twas then that her form on the whirlwind uprearing, 15
 The dark ghost of the murdered Victoria strode,
 Her right hand a blood reeking dagger was bearing,
 She swiftly advanced to my lonesome abode.—
 I wildly then called on the tempest to bear me!

... ..

POEMS FROM ST. IRVYNE, OR, THE ROSICRUCIAN.

["St. Irvyne; or The Rosicrucian", appeared early in 1811 (see "Bibliographical List"). Rossetti (1870) relying on a passage in Medwin's "Life of Shelley" (1 page 74), assigns 1, 4, 5, and 6 to 1808, and 2 and 4 to 1809. The titles of 1, 3, 4, and 5 are Rossetti's; those of 2 and 6 are Dowden's.]

1.—VICTORIA.

[Another version of "The Triumph of Conscience" immediately preceding.]

1.

'Twas dead of the night, when I sat in my dwelling;
 One glimmering lamp was expiring and low;



Around, the dark tide of the tempest was swelling,
Along the wild mountains night-ravens were yelling,—
They bodingly presaged destruction and woe. 5

2.

'Twas then that I started!—the wild storm was howling,
Nought was seen, save the lightning, which danced in the sky;
Above me, the crash of the thunder was rolling,
And low, chilling murmurs, the blast wafted by.

3.

My heart sank within me—unheeded the war 10
Of the battling clouds, on the mountain-tops, broke;—
Unheeded the thunder-peal crashed in mine ear—
This heart, hard as iron, is stranger to fear;
But conscience in low, noiseless whispering spoke.

4.

'Twas then that her form on the whirlwind upholding, 15
The ghost of the murdered Victoria strode;
In her right hand, a shadowy shroud she was holding,
She swiftly advanced to my lonesome abode.

5. I wildly then called on the tempest to bear me—'

...

NOTE:

1.—Victoria: without title, 1811.



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2.—ON THE DARK HEIGHT OF JURA.

1.

Ghosts of the dead! have I not heard your yelling
Rise on the night-rolling breath of the blast,
When o'er the dark aether the tempest is swelling,
And on eddying whirlwind the thunder-peal passed?

2.

For oft have I stood on the dark height of Jura, 5
Which frowns on the valley that opens beneath;
Oft have I braved the chill night-tempest's fury,
Whilst around me, I thought, echoed murmurs of death.

3.

And now, whilst the winds of the mountain are howling,
O father! thy voice seems to strike on mine ear; 10
In air whilst the tide of the night-storm is rolling,
It breaks on the pause of the elements' jar.

4.

On the wing of the whirlwind which roars o'er the mountain
Perhaps rides the ghost of my sire who is dead:
On the mist of the tempest which hangs o'er the fountain,
Whilst a wreath of dark vapour encircles his head.

NOTE:

2.—On the Dark, *etc.*: without title, 1811;
The Father's Spectre, Rossetti, 1870.

3.—SISTER ROSA: A BALLAD.

1.

The death-bell beats!—
The mountain repeats
The echoing sound of the knell;
And the dark Monk now
Wraps the cowl round his brow, 5
As he sits in his lonely cell.

2.

And the cold hand of death
Chills his shuddering breath,
As he lists to the fearful lay



Which the ghosts of the sky, 10
As they sweep wildly by,
Sing to departed day.
And they sing of the hour
When the stern fates had power
To resolve Rosa's form to its clay. 15

3.
But that hour is past;
And that hour was the last
Of peace to the dark Monk's brain.
Bitter tears, from his eyes, gushed silent and fast;
And he strove to suppress them in vain. 20

4.
Then his fair cross of gold he dashed on the floor,
When the death-knell struck on his ear.—
'Delight is in store
For her evermore;
But for me is fate, horror, and fear.' 25

5.
Then his eyes wildly rolled,
When the death-bell tolled,
And he raged in terrific woe.
And he stamped on the ground,—
But when ceased the sound, 30
Tears again began to flow.

6.
And the ice of despair
Chilled the wild throb of care,
And he sate in mute agony still;
Till the night-stars shone through the cloudless air, 35
And the pale moonbeam slept on the hill.

7.
Then he knelt in his cell:—
And the horrors of hell
Were delights to his agonized pain,
And he prayed to God to dissolve the spell, 40
Which else must for ever remain.



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8.
And in fervent pray'r he knelt on the ground,
Till the abbey bell struck One:
His feverish blood ran chill at the sound:
A voice hollow and horrible murmured around— 45
'The term of thy penance is done!'

9.
Grew dark the night;
The moonbeam bright
Waxed faint on the mountain high;
And, from the black hill, 50
Went a voice cold and still,—
'Monk! thou art free to die.'

10.
Then he rose on his feet,
And his heart loud did beat,
And his limbs they were palsied with dread; 55
Whilst the grave's clammy dew
O'er his pale forehead grew;
And he shuddered to sleep with the dead.

11.
And the wild midnight storm
Raved around his tall form, 60
As he sought the chapel's gloom:
And the sunk grass did sigh
To the wind, bleak and high,
As he searched for the new-made tomb.

12.
And forms, dark and high, 65
Seemed around him to fly,
And mingle their yells with the blast:
And on the dark wall
Half-seen shadows did fall,
As horrified he onward passed. 70

13.
And the storm-fiends wild rave
O'er the new-made grave,
And dread shadows linger around.



The Monk called on God his soul to save,
And, in horror, sank on the ground. 75

14.
Then despair nerved his arm
To dispel the charm,
And he burst Rosa's coffin asunder.
And the fierce storm did swell
More terrific and fell, 80
And louder pealed the thunder.

15.
And laughed, in joy, the fiendish throng,
Mixed with ghosts of the mouldering dead:
And their grisly wings, as they floated along,
Whistled in murmurs dread. 85

16.
And her skeleton form the dead Nun reared
Which dripped with the chill dew of hell.
In her half-eaten eyeballs two pale flames appeared,
And triumphant their gleam on the dark Monk glared,
As he stood within the cell. 90

17.
And her lank hand lay on his shuddering brain;
But each power was nerved by fear.—
'I never, henceforth, may breathe again;
Death now ends mine anguished pain.—
The grave yawns,—we meet there.' 95

18.
And her skeleton lungs did utter the sound,
So deadly, so lone, and so fell,
That in long vibrations shuddered the ground;
And as the stern notes floated around,
A deep groan was answered from hell.

NOTE:

3.—Sister Rosa: Ballad, 1811.



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4.—ST. IRVYNE'S TOWER.

1.

How swiftly through Heaven's wide expanse
Bright day's resplendent colours fade!
How sweetly does the moonbeam's glance
With silver tint St. Irvyne's glade!

2.

No cloud along the spangled air, 5
Is borne upon the evening breeze;
How solemn is the scene! how fair
The moonbeams rest upon the trees!

3.

Yon dark gray turret glimmers white,
Upon it sits the mournful owl; 10
Along the stillness of the night,
Her melancholy shriekings roll.

4.

But not alone on Irvyne's tower,
The silver moonbeam pours her ray;
It gleams upon the ivied bower, 15
It dances in the cascade's spray.

5.

'Ah! why do dark'ning shades conceal
The hour, when man must cease to be?
Why may not human minds unveil
The dim mists of futurity?— 20

6.

'The keenness of the world hath torn
The heart which opens to its blast;
Despised, neglected, and forlorn,
Sinks the wretch in death at last.'

NOTE:

4.—St. Irvyne's Tower: Song, 1810.

5.—BEREAVEMENT.



1.

How stern are the woes of the desolate mourner,
As he bends in still grief o'er the hallowed bier,
As enanguished he turns from the laugh of the scorner,
And drops, to Perfection's remembrance, a tear;
When floods of despair down his pale cheek are streaming, 5
When no blissful hope on his bosom is beaming,
Or, if lulled for awhile, soon he starts from his dreaming,
And finds torn the soft ties to affection so dear.

2.

Ah! when shall day dawn on the night of the grave,
Or summer succeed to the winter of death? 10
Rest awhile, hapless victim, and Heaven will save
The spirit, that faded away with the breath.
Eternity points in its amaranth bower,
Where no clouds of fate o'er the sweet prospect lower,
Unspeakable pleasure, of goodness the dower, 15
When woe fades away like the mist of the heath.

NOTE:

5.—Bereavement: Song, 1811.

6.—THE DROWNED LOVER.

1.

Ah! faint are her limbs, and her footstep is weary,
Yet far must the desolate wanderer roam;
Though the tempest is stern, and the mountain is dreary,
She must quit at deep midnight her pitiless home.
I see her swift foot dash the dew from the whortle, 5
As she rapidly hastes to the green grove of myrtle;
And I hear, as she wraps round her figure the kirtle,
'Stay thy boat on the lake,—dearest Henry, I come.'

2.

High swelled in her bosom the throb of affection,
As lightly her form bounded over the lea, 10
And arose in her mind every dear recollection;
'I come, dearest Henry, and wait but for thee.'
How sad, when dear hope every sorrow is soothing,
When sympathy's swell the soft bosom is moving,
And the mind the mild joys of affection is proving, 15
Is the stern voice of fate that bids happiness flee!



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3.

Oh! dark lowered the clouds on that horrible eve,
And the moon dimly gleamed through the tempested air;
Oh! how could fond visions such softness deceive?
Oh! how could false hope rend, a bosom so fair? 20
*Thy love's pallid corse the wild surges are laving,
O'er his form the fierce swell of the tempest is raving;
But, fear not, parting spirit; thy goodness is saving,
In eternity's bowers, a seat for thee there.*

6.—The Drowned Lover: Song. 1811; The Lake-Storm, Rossetti, 1870.

POSTHUMOUS FRAGMENTS OF MARGARET MCHOLSON.

Being Poems found amongst the Papers of that noted Female who attempted the life of the King in 1786. Edited by John Fitzvictor.

[The "Posthumous Fragments", published at Oxford by Shelley, appeared in November, 1810. See "Bibliographical List".]

ADVERTISEMENT.

The energy and native genius of these Fragments must be the only apology which the Editor can make for thus intruding them on the public notice. The first I found with no title, and have left it so. It is intimately connected with the dearest interests of universal happiness; and much as we may deplore the fatal and enthusiastic tendency which the ideas of this poor female had acquired, we cannot fail to pay the tribute of unequivocal regret to the departed memory of genius, which, had it been rightly organized, would have made that intellect, which has since become the victim of frenzy and despair, a most brilliant ornament to society.

In case the sale of these Fragments evinces that the public have any curiosity to be presented with a more copious collection of my unfortunate Aunt's poems, I have other papers in my possession which shall, in that case, be subjected to their notice. It may be supposed they require much arrangement; but I send the following to the press in the same state in which they came into my possession. J. F.

**WAR.**

Ambition, power, and avarice, now have hurled
Death, fate, and ruin, on a bleeding world.
See! on yon heath what countless victims lie,
Hark! what loud shrieks ascend through yonder sky;
Tell then the cause, 'tis sure the avenger's rage 5
Has swept these myriads from life's crowded stage:
Hark to that groan, an anguished hero dies,
He shudders in death's latest agonies;
Yet does a fleeting hectic flush his cheek,
Yet does his parting breath essay to speak— 10
'Oh God! my wife, my children—Monarch thou
For whose support this fainting frame lies low;
For whose support in distant lands I bleed,
Let his friends' welfare be the warrior's meed.
He hears me not—ah! no—kings cannot hear, 15



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*For passion's voice has dulled their listless ear.
To thee, then, mighty God, I lift my moan,
Thou wilt not scorn a suppliant's anguished groan.
Oh! now I die—but still is death's fierce pain—
God hears my prayer—we meet, we meet again.'* 20
He spake, reclined him on death's bloody bed,
And with a parting groan his spirit fled.
Oppressors of mankind to YOU we owe
The baleful streams from whence these miseries flow;
For you how many a mother weeps her son, 25
*Snatched from life's course ere half his race was run!
For you how many a widow drops a tear,
In silent anguish, on her husband's bier!
'Is it then Thine, Almighty Power,' she cries,
'Whence tears of endless sorrow dim these eyes? 30*
Is this the system which Thy powerful sway,
Which else in shapeless chaos sleeping lay,
Formed and approved?—it cannot be—but oh!
Forgive me, Heaven, my brain is warped by woe.'
'Tis not—He never bade the war-note swell, 35
*He never triumphed in the work of hell—
Monarchs of earth! thine is the baleful deed,
Thine are the crimes for which thy subjects bleed.
Ah! when will come the sacred fated time,
When man unsullied by his leaders' crime, 40*
Despising wealth, ambition, pomp, and pride,
Will stretch him fearless by his foe-men's side?
Ah! when will come the time, when o'er the plain
No more shall death and desolation reign?
When will the sun smile on the bloodless field, 45
*And the stern warrior's arm the sickle wield?
Not whilst some King, in cold ambition's dreams,
Plans for the field of death his plodding schemes;
Not whilst for private pique the public fall,
And one frail mortal's mandate governs all. 50*
Swelled with command and mad with dizzying sway;
Who sees unmoved his myriads fade away.
Careless who lives or dies—so that he gains
Some trivial point for which he took the pains.
What then are Kings?—I see the trembling crowd, 55
I hear their fulsome clamours echoed loud;



*Their stern oppressor pleased appears awhile,
But April's sunshine is a Monarch's smile—
Kings are but dust—the last eventful day
Will level all and make them lose their sway; 60
Will dash the sceptre from the Monarch's hand,
And from the warrior's grasp wrest the ensanguined brand.
Oh! Peace, soft Peace, art thou for ever gone,
Is thy fair form indeed for ever flown?
And love and concord hast thou swept away, 65
As if incongruous with thy parted sway?
Alas, I fear thou hast, for none appear.
Now o'er the palsied earth stalks giant Fear,
With War, and Woe, and Terror, in his train;—*



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List'ning he pauses on the embattled plain, 70
Then speeding swiftly o'er the ensanguined heath,
Has left the frightful work to Hell and Death.
See! gory Ruin yokes his blood-stained car,
He scents the battle's carnage from afar;
Hell and Destruction mark his mad career, 75
He tracks the rapid step of hurrying Fear;
Whilst ruined towns and smoking cities tell,
That thy work, Monarch, is the work of Hell.
'It is thy work!' I hear a voice repeat,
Shakes the broad basis of thy bloodstained seat; 80
And at the orphan's sigh, the widow's moan,
Totters the fabric of thy guilt-stained throne—
'It is thy work, O Monarch;' now the sound
Fainter and fainter, yet is borne around,
Yet to enthusiast ears the murmurs tell 85
That Heaven, indignant at the work of Hell,
Will soon the cause, the hated cause remove,
Which tears from earth peace, innocence, and love.

NOTE:

War: the title is Woodberry's, 1893; no title, 1810.

FRAGMENT: SUPPOSED TO BE AN EPITHALAMIUM OF FRANCIS RAVAILLAC AND CHARLOTTE CORDAY.

'Tis midnight now—athwart the murky air,
Dank lurid meteors shoot a livid gleam;
From the dark storm-clouds flashes a fearful glare,
It shows the bending oak, the roaring stream.

I pondered on the woes of lost mankind, 5
I pondered on the ceaseless rage of Kings;
My rapt soul dwelt upon the ties that bind
The mazy volume of commingling things,
When fell and wild misrule to man stern sorrow brings.

I heard a yell—it was not the knell, 10
When the blasts on the wild lake sleep,



*That floats on the pause of the summer gale's swell,
O'er the breast of the waveless deep.*

*I thought it had been death's accents cold
That bade me recline on the shore; 15
I laid mine hot head on the surge-beaten mould,
And thought to breathe no more.*

*But a heavenly sleep
That did suddenly steep
In balm my bosom's pain, 20
Pervaded my soul,
And free from control,
Did mine intellect range again.*

*Methought enthroned upon a silvery cloud,
Which floated mid a strange and brilliant light; 25
My form upborne by viewless aether rode,
And spurned the lessening realms of earthly night.
What heavenly notes burst on my ravished ears,
What beauteous spirits met my dazzled eye!
Hark! louder swells the music of the spheres, 30
More clear the forms of speechless bliss float by,
And heavenly gestures suit aethereal melody.*



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But fairer than the spirits of the air,
More graceful than the Sylph of symmetry,
Than the enthusiast's fancied love more fair, 35
Were the bright forms that swept the azure sky.
Enthroned in roseate light, a heavenly band
Strewed flowers of bliss that never fade away;
They welcome virtue to its native land,
And songs of triumph greet the joyous day 40
When endless bliss the woes of fleeting life repay.

Congenial minds will seek their kindred soul,
E'en though the tide of time has rolled between;
They mock weak matter's impotent control,
And seek of endless life the eternal scene. 45
At death's vain summons THIS will never die,
In Nature's chaos THIS will not decay—
These are the bands which closely, warmly, tie
Thy soul, O Charlotte, 'yond this chain of clay,
To him who thine must be till time shall fade away. 50

Yes, Francis! thine was the dear knife that tore
A tyrant's heart-strings from his guilty breast,
Thine was the daring at a tyrant's gore,
To smile in triumph, to condemn the rest;
And thine, loved glory of thy sex! to tear 55
From its base shrine a despot's haughty soul,
To laugh at sorrow in secure despair,
To mock, with smiles, life's lingering control,
And triumph mid the griefs that round thy fate did roll.

Yes! the fierce spirits of the avenging deep 60
With endless tortures goad their guilty shades.
I see the lank and ghastly spectres sweep
Along the burning length of yon arcades;
And I see Satan stalk athwart the plain;
He hastes along the burning soil of Hell. 65
'Welcome, ye despots, to my dark domain,
With maddening joy mine anguished senses swell
To welcome to their home the friends I love so well.'

...

Hark! to those notes, how sweet, how thrilling sweet
They echo to the sound of angels' feet. 70



...

Oh haste to the bower where roses are spread,
For there is prepared thy nuptial bed.
Oh haste—hark! hark!—they're gone.

...

CHORUS OF SPIRITS:

Stay, ye days of contentment and joy,
Whilst love every care is erasing, 75
Stay ye pleasures that never can cloy,
And ye spirits that can never cease pleasing.

And if any soft passion be near,
Which mortals, frail mortals, can know,
Let love shed on the bosom a tear, 80
And dissolve the chill ice-drop of woe.

SYMPHONY.

FRANCIS:

'Soft, my dearest angel, stay,
Oh! you suck my soul away;
Suck on, suck on, I glow, I glow!
Tides of maddening passion roll, 85
And streams of rapture drown my soul.
Now give me one more billing kiss,
Let your lips now repeat the bliss,
Endless kisses steal my breath,
No life can equal such a death.' 90



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CHARLOTTE:

'Oh! yes I will kiss thine eyes so fair,
And I will clasp thy form;
Serene is the breath of the balmy air,
But I think, love, thou feelest me warm
And I will recline on thy marble neck 95
Till I mingle into thee;
And I will kiss the rose on thy cheek,
And thou shalt give kisses to me.
For here is no morn to flout our delight,
Oh! dost thou not joy at this? 100
And here we may lie an endless night,
A long, long night of bliss.'

Spirits! when raptures move,
Say what it is to love,
When passion's tear stands on the cheek, 105
When bursts the unconscious sigh;
And the tremulous lips dare not speak
What is told by the soul-felt eye.
But what is sweeter to revenge's ear
Than the fell tyrant's last expiring yell? 110
Yes! than love's sweetest blisses 'tis more dear
To drink the floatings of a despot's knell.
I wake—'tis done—'tis over.

NOTE:

66 ye]thou 1810.

DESPAIR.

And canst thou mock mine agony, thus calm
In cloudless radiance, Queen of silver night?
Can you, ye flow'rets, spread your perfumed balm
Mid pearly gems of dew that shine so bright?
And you wild winds, thus can you sleep so still 5
Whilst throbs the tempest of my breast so high?
Can the fierce night-fiends rest on yonder hill,
And, in the eternal mansions of the sky,
Can the directors of the storm in powerless silence lie?



Hark! I hear music on the zephyr's wing, 10
Louder it floats along the unruffled sky;
Some fairy sure has touched the viewless string—
Now faint in distant air the murmurs die.
Awhile it stills the tide of agony.
Now—now it loftier swells—again stern woe 15
Arises with the awakening melody.
Again fierce torments, such as demons know,
In bitterer, feller tide, on this torn bosom flow.

Arise ye sightless spirits of the storm,
Ye unseen minstrels of the aerial song, 20
Pour the fierce tide around this lonely form,
And roll the tempest's wildest swell along.
Dart the red lightning, wing the forked flash,
Pour from thy cloud-formed hills the thunder's roar;
Arouse the whirlwind—and let ocean dash 25
In fiercest tumult on the rocking shore,—
Destroy this life or let earth's fabric be no more.

Yes! every tie that links me here is dead;
Mysterious Fate, thy mandate I obey,
Since hope and peace, and joy, for aye are fled, 30
I come, terrific power, I come away.
Then o'er this ruined soul let spirits of Hell,
In triumph, laughing wildly, mock its pain;
And though with direst pangs mine heart-strings swell,
I'll echo back their deadly yells again, 35
Cursing the power that ne'er made aught in vain.



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FRAGMENT.

Yes! all is past—swift time has fled away,
Yet its swell pauses on my sickening mind;
How long will horror nerve this frame of clay?
I'm dead, and lingers yet my soul behind.
Oh! powerful Fate, revoke thy deadly spell, 5
And yet that may not ever, ever be,
Heaven will not smile upon the work of Hell;
Ah! no, for Heaven cannot smile on me;
Fate, envious Fate, has sealed my wayward destiny.

I sought the cold brink of the midnight surge, 10
I sighed beneath its wave to hide my woes,
The rising tempest sung a funeral dirge,
And on the blast a frightful yell arose.
Wild flew the meteors o'er the maddened main,
Wilder did grief athwart my bosom glare; 15
Stilled was the unearthly howling, and a strain,
Swelled mid the tumult of the battling air,
'Twas like a spirit's song, but yet more soft and fair.

I met a maniac—like he was to me,
I said—'Poor victim, wherefore dost thou roam? 20
And canst thou not contend with agony,
That thus at midnight thou dost quit thine home?'
'Ah there she sleeps: cold is her bloodless form,
And I will go to slumber in her grave;
And then our ghosts, whilst raves the maddened storm, 25
Will sweep at midnight o'er the wildered wave;
Wilt thou our lowly beds with tears of pity lave?'

'Ah! no, I cannot shed the pitying tear,
This breast is cold, this heart can feel no more—
But I can rest me on thy chilling bier, 30
Can shriek in horror to the tempest's roar.'



THE SPECTRAL HORSEMAN.

What was the shriek that struck Fancy's ear
As it sate on the ruins of time that is past?
Hark! it floats on the fitful blast of the wind,
And breathes to the pale moon a funeral sigh.
It is the Benshie's moan on the storm, 5
*Or a shivering fiend that thirsting for sin,
Seeks murder and guilt when virtue sleeps,
Winged with the power of some ruthless king,
And sweeps o'er the breast of the prostrate plain.
It was not a fiend from the regions of Hell 10*
That poured its low moan on the stillness of night:
It was not a ghost of the guilty dead,
Nor a yelling vampire reeking with gore;
But aye at the close of seven years' end,
That voice is mixed with the swell of the storm, 15
*And aye at the close of seven years' end,
A shapeless shadow that sleeps on the hill
Awakens and floats on the mist of the heath.
It is not the shade of a murdered man,
Who has rushed uncalled to the throne of his God, 20*



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And howls in the pause of the eddying storm.
This voice is low, cold, hollow, and chill,
'Tis not heard by the ear, but is felt in the soul.
'Tis more frightful far than the death-daemon's scream,
Or the laughter of fiends when they howl o'er the corpse 25
Of a man who has sold his soul to Hell.
It tells the approach of a mystic form,
A white courser bears the shadowy sprite;
More thin they are than the mists of the mountain,
When the clear moonlight sleeps on the waveless lake. 30
More pale HIS cheek than the snows of Nithona,
When winter rides on the northern blast,
And howls in the midst of the leafless wood.
Yet when the fierce swell of the tempest is raving,
And the whirlwinds howl in the caves of Inisfallen, 35
Still secure mid the wildest war of the sky,
The phantom courser scours the waste,
And his rider howls in the thunder's roar.
O'er him the fierce bolts of avenging Heaven
Pause, as in fear, to strike his head. 40
The meteors of midnight recoil from his figure,
Yet the 'wilderer peasant, that oft passes by,
With wonder beholds the blue flash through his form:
And his voice, though faint as the sighs of the dead,
The startled passenger shudders to hear, 45
More distinct than the thunder's wildest roar.
Then does the dragon, who, chained in the caverns
To eternity, curses the champion of Erin,
Moan and yell loud at the lone hour of midnight,
And twine his vast wreaths round the forms of the daemons; 50
Then in agony roll his death-swimming eyeballs,
Though 'wilderer by death, yet never to die!
Then he shakes from his skeleton folds the nightmares,
Who, shrieking in agony, seek the couch
Of some fevered wretch who courts sleep in vain; 55
Then the tombless ghosts of the guilty dead
In horror pause on the fitful gale.
They float on the swell of the eddying tempest,
And scared seek the caves of gigantic...
Where their thin forms pour unearthly sounds 60



On the blast that sweets the breast of the lake,
And mingles its swell with the moonlight air.

MELODY TO A SCENE OF FORMER TIMES.

Art thou indeed forever gone,
Forever, ever, lost to me?
Must this poor bosom beat alone,
Or beat at all, if not for thee?
Ah! why was love to mortals given, 5
To lift them to the height of Heaven,
Or dash them to the depths of Hell?
Yet I do not reproach thee, dear!
Ah, no! the agonies that swell
This panting breast, this frenzied brain, 10
Might wake my —'s slumb'ring tear.
Oh! Heaven is witness I did love,



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And Heaven does know I love thee still,
Does know the fruitless sick'ning thrill,
When reason's judgement vainly strove 15
*To blot thee from my memory;
But which might never, never be.
Oh! I appeal to that blest day
When passion's wildest ecstasy
Was coldness to the joys I knew, 20
When every sorrow sunk away.
Oh! I had never lived before,
But now those blisses are no more.
And now I cease to live again,
I do not blame thee, love; ah, no! 25
The breast that feels this anguished woe.
Throbs for thy happiness alone.
Two years of speechless bliss are gone,
I thank thee, dearest, for the dream.
'Tis night—what faint and distant scream 30
Comes on the wild and fitful blast?
It moans for pleasures that are past,
It moans for days that are gone by.
Oh! lagging hours, how slow you fly!
I see a dark and lengthened vale, 35
The black view closes with the tomb;
But darker is the lowering gloom
That shades the intervening dale.
In visioned slumber for awhile
I seem again to share thy smile, 40
I seem to hang upon thy tone.
Again you say, 'Confide in me,
For I am thine, and thine alone,
And thine must ever, ever be.'
But oh! awak'ning still anew, 45
Athwart my enanguished senses flew
A fiercer, deadlier agony!*

[End of "Posthumous Fragments of Margaret Nicholson".]



STANZA FROM A TRANSLATION OF THE MARSEILLAISE HYMN.

[Published by Forman, "Poetical Works of P. B. S.", 1876; dated 1810.]

Tremble, Kings despised of man!
Ye traitors to your Country,
Tremble! Your parricidal plan
At length shall meet its destiny...
We all are soldiers fit to fight, 5
But if we sink in glory's night
Our mother Earth will give ye new
The brilliant pathway to pursue
Which leads to Death or Victory...

BIGOTRY'S VICTIM.

[Published (without title) by Hogg, "Life of Shelley", 1858; dated 1809-10. The title is Rossetti's (1870).]

1.
Dares the lama, most fleet of the sons of the wind,
The lion to rouse from his skull-covered lair?
When the tiger approaches can the fast-fleeting hind
Repose trust in his footsteps of air?
No! Abandoned he sinks in a trance of despair, 5
The monster transfixes his prey,
On the sand flows his life-blood away;
Whilst India's rocks to his death-yells reply,
Protracting the horrible harmony.



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2.

Yet the fowl of the desert, when danger encroaches, 10
Dares fearless to perish defending her brood,
Though the fiercest of cloud-piercing tyrants approaches
Thirsting—ay, thirsting for blood;
And demands, like mankind, his brother for food;
Yet more lenient, more gentle than they; 15
For hunger, not glory, the prey
Must perish. Revenge does not howl in the dead.
Nor ambition with fame crown the murderer's head.

3.

Though weak as the lama that bounds on the mountains,
And endued not with fast-fleeting footsteps of air, 20
Yet, yet will I draw from the purest of fountains,
Though a fiercer than tiger is there.
Though, more dreadful than death, it scatters despair,
Though its shadow eclipses the day,
And the darkness of deepest dismay 25
Spreads the influence of soul-chilling terror around,
And lowers on the corpses, that rot on the ground.

4.

They came to the fountain to draw from its stream
Waves too pure, too celestial, for mortals to see;
They bathed for awhile in its silvery beam, 30
Then perished, and perished like me.
For in vain from the grasp of the Bigot I flee;
The most tenderly loved of my soul
Are slaves to his hated control.
He pursues me, he blasts me! 'Tis in vain that I fly: 35 —
What remains, but to curse him,—to curse him and die?

ON AN ICICLE THAT CLUNG TO THE GRASS OF A GRAVE.

[Published (without title) by Hogg, "Life of Shelley", 1858; dated 1809-10. The poem, with title as above, is included in the Esdaile manuscript book.]

1.

Oh! take the pure gem to where southerly breezes,



Waft repose to some bosom as faithful as fair,
In which the warm current of love never freezes,
As it rises unmingled with selfishness there,
Which, untainted by pride, unpolluted by care, 5
Might dissolve the dim icedrop, might bid it arise,
Too pure for these regions, to gleam in the skies.

2.

Or where the stern warrior, his country defending,
Dares fearless the dark-rolling battle to pour,
Or o'er the fell corpse of a dread tyrant bending, 10
Where patriotism red with his guilt-reeking gore
Plants Liberty's flag on the slave-peopled shore,
With victory's cry, with the shout of the free,
Let it fly, taintless Spirit, to mingle with thee.

3.

For I found the pure gem, when the daybeam returning, 15
Ineffectual gleams on the snow-covered plain,
When to others the wished-for arrival of morning
Brings relief to long visions of soul-racking pain;
But regret is an insult—to grieve is in vain:
And why should we grieve that a spirit so fair 20
Seeks Heaven to mix with its own kindred there?



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4.
But still 'twas some Spirit of kindness descending
To share in the load of mortality's woe,
Who over thy lowly-built sepulchre bending
Bade sympathy's tenderest teardrop to flow. 25
*Not for THEE soft compassion celestials did know,
But if ANGELS can weep, sure MAN may repine,
May weep in mute grief o'er thy low-laid shrine.*

5.
And did I then say, for the altar of glory,
That the earliest, the loveliest of flowers I'd entwine, 30
*Though with millions of blood-reeking victims 'twas gory,
Though the tears of the widow polluted its shrine,
Though around it the orphans, the fatherless pine?
Oh! Fame, all thy glories I'd yield for a tear
To shed on the grave of a heart so sincere. 35*

LOVE.

[Published (without title) by Hogg, "Life of Shelley", 1858; dated 1811. The title is Rossetti's (1870).]

Why is it said thou canst not live
In a youthful breast and fair,
Since thou eternal life canst give,
Canst bloom for ever there?
Since withering pain no power possessed, 5
*Nor age, to blanch thy vermeil hue,
Nor time's dread victor, death, confessed,
Though bathed with his poison dew,
Still thou retain'st unchanging bloom,
Fixed tranquil, even in the tomb. 10*
And oh! when on the blest, reviving,
The day-star dawns of love,
Each energy of soul surviving
More vivid, soars above,
Hast thou ne'er felt a rapturous thrill, 15
*Like June's warm breath, athwart thee fly,
O'er each idea then to steal,
When other passions die?*



*Felt it in some wild noonday dream,
When sitting by the lonely stream, 20
Where Silence says, 'Mine is the dell';
And not a murmur from the plain,
And not an echo from the fell,
Disputes her silent reign.*

ON A FETE AT CARLTON HOUSE: FRAGMENT.

[Published by Rossetti, "Complete Poetical Works of P. B. S.", 1870; dated 1811.]

By the mossy brink,
With me the Prince shall sit and think;
Shall muse in visioned Regency,
Rapt in bright dreams of dawning Royalty.

TO A STAR.

[Published (without title) by Hogg, "Life of Shelley", 1858; dated 1811. The title is Rossetti's (1870).]

Sweet star, which gleaming o'er the darksome scene
Through fleecy clouds of silvery radiance fliest,
Spanglet of light on evening's shadowy veil,
Which shrouds the day-beam from the waveless lake,
Lighting the hour of sacred love; more sweet
Than the expiring morn-star's paly fires:—



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*Sweet star! When wearied Nature sinks to sleep,
And all is hushed,—all, save the voice of Love,
Whose broken murmurings swell the balmy blast
Of soft Favonius, which at intervals 10
Sighs in the ear of stillness, art thou aught but
Lulling the slaves of interest to repose
With that mild, pitying gaze? Oh, I would look
In thy dear beam till every bond of sense
Became enamoured— 15*

TO MARY WHO DIED IN THIS OPINION.

[Published by Rossetti, "Complete Poetical Works of P. B. S.", 1870; dated 1810-11.]

1.

Maiden, quench the glare of sorrow
Struggling in thine haggard eye:
Firmness dare to borrow
From the wreck of destiny;
For the ray morn's bloom revealing 5
*Can never boast so bright an hue
As that which mocks concealing,
And sheds its loveliest light on you.*

2.

Yet is the tie departed
Which bound thy lovely soul to bliss? 10
*Has it left thee broken-hearted
In a world so cold as this?
Yet, though, fainting fair one,
Sorrow's self thy cup has given,
Dream thou'lt meet thy dear one,
Never more to part, in Heaven. 15*

3.

Existence would I barter
For a dream so dear as thine,
And smile to die a martyr
On affection's bloodless shrine. 20



*Nor would I change for pleasure
That withered hand and ashy cheek,
If my heart enshrined a treasure
Such as forces thine to break.*

A TALE OF SOCIETY AS IT IS: FROM FACTS, 1811.

[Published (from Esdaile manuscript with title as above) by Rossetti, "Complete Poetical Works of P. B. S.", 1870. Rossetti's title is "Mother and Son".]

1.
She was an aged woman; and the years
Which she had numbered on her toilsome way
Had bowed her natural powers to decay.
She was an aged woman; yet the ray
Which faintly glimmered through her starting tears, 5
*Pressed into light by silent misery,
Hath soul's imperishable energy.
She was a cripple, and incapable
To add one mite to gold-fed luxury:
And therefore did her spirit dimly feel 10*
That poverty, the crime of tainting stain,
Would merge her in its depths, never to rise again.

2.
One only son's love had supported her.
She long had struggled with infirmity,
Lingering to human life-scenes; for to die, 15
*When fate has spared to rend some mental tie,
Would many wish, and surely fewer dare.
But, when the tyrant's bloodhounds forced the child
For his cursed power unhallowed arms to wield—
Bend to another's will—become a thing 20*
More senseless than the sword of battlefield—
Then did she feel keen sorrow's keenest sting;
And many years had passed ere comfort they would bring.



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3.

For seven years did this poor woman live
In unparticipated solitude. 25
*Thou mightst have seen her in the forest rude
Picking the scattered remnants of its wood.
If human, thou mightst then have learned to grieve.
The gleanings of precarious charity
Her scantiness of food did scarce supply. 30*
The proofs of an unspeaking sorrow dwelt
Within her ghastly hollowness of eye:
Each arrow of the season's change she felt.
Yet still she groans, ere yet her race were run,
One only hope: it was—once more to see her son. 35

4.

It was an eve of June, when every star
Spoke peace from Heaven to those on earth that live.
She rested on the moor. 'Twas such an eve
When first her soul began indeed to grieve:
Then he was here; now he is very far. 40
*The sweetness of the balmy evening
A sorrow o'er her aged soul did fling,
Yet not devoid of rapture's mingled tear:
A balm was in the poison of the sting.
This aged sufferer for many a year 45*
Had never felt such comfort. She suppressed
A sigh—and turning round, clasped William to her breast!

5.

And, though his form was wasted by the woe
Which tyrants on their victims love to wreak,
Though his sunk eyeballs and his faded cheek 50
*Of slavery's violence and scorn did speak,
Yet did the aged woman's bosom glow.
The vital fire seemed re-illumed within
By this sweet unexpected welcoming.
Oh, consummation of the fondest hope 55*
That ever soared on Fancy's wildest wing!
Oh, tenderness that foundst so sweet a scope!
Prince who dost pride thee on thy mighty sway,
When THOU canst feel such love, thou shalt be great as they!

6.

Her son, compelled, the country's foes had fought, 60



*Had bled in battle; and the stern control
Which ruled his sinews and coerced his soul
Utterly poisoned life's unmingled bowl,
And unsubduable evils on him brought.
He was the shadow of the lusty child 65
Who, when the time of summer season smiled,
Did earn for her a meal of honesty,
And with affectionate discourse beguiled
The keen attacks of pain and poverty;
Till Power, as envying her this only joy, 70
From her maternal bosom tore the unhappy boy.*

7.
And now cold charity's unwelcome dole
Was insufficient to support the pair;
And they would perish rather than would bear
The law's stern slavery, and the insolent stare 75
*With which law loves to rend the poor man's soul—
The bitter scorn, the spirit-sinking noise
Of heartless mirth which women, men, and boys
Wake in this scene of legal misery.*



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...

NOTES: *28 grieve Esdaile manuscript; feel, 1870. 37 to those on earth that live Esdaile manuscripts; omitted, 1870.*

TO THE REPUBLICANS OF NORTH AMERICA.

[Published (from the Esdaile manuscript with title as above) by Rossetti, "Complete Poetical Works of P. B. S.", 1870; dated 1812. Rossetti's title is "The Mexican Revolution".]

1.

Brothers! between you and me
Whirlwinds sweep and billows roar:
Yet in spirit oft I see
On thy wild and winding shore
Freedom's bloodless banners wave,— 5
*Feel the pulses of the brave
Unextinguished in the grave,—
See them drenched in sacred gore,—
Catch the warrior's gasping breath
Murmuring 'Liberty or death!' 10*

2.

Shout aloud! Let every slave,
Crouching at Corruption's throne,
Start into a man, and brave
Racks and chains without a groan:
And the castle's heartless glow, 15
*And the hovel's vice and woe,
Fade like gaudy flowers that blow—
Weeds that peep, and then are gone
Whilst, from misery's ashes risen,
Love shall burst the captive's prison. 20*

3.

Cotopaxi! bid the sound
Through thy sister mountains ring,
Till each valley smile around
At the blissful welcoming!
And, O thou stern Ocean deep, 25



*Thou whose foamy billows sweep
Shores where thousands wake to weep
Whilst they curse a villain king,
On the winds that fan thy breast
Bear thou news of Freedom's rest! 30*

4.
Can the daystar dawn of love,
Where the flag of war unfurled
Floats with crimson stain above
The fabric of a ruined world?
Never but to vengeance driven 35
*When the patriot's spirit shriven
Seeks in death its native Heaven!
There, to desolation hurled,
Widowed love may watch thy bier,
Balm thee with its dying tear. 40*

TO IRELAND.

[Published, 1-10, by Rossetti, "Complete Poetical Works of P. B. S.", 1870; 11-17, 25-28, by Dowden, "Life of Shelley", 1887; 18-24 by Kingsland, "Poet-Lore", July, 1892. Dated 1812.]

1.
Bear witness, Erin! when thine injured isle
Sees summer on its verdant pastures smile,
Its cornfields waving in the winds that sweep
The billowy surface of thy circling deep!
Thou tree whose shadow o'er the Atlantic gave 5
*Peace, wealth and beauty, to its friendly wave, its blossoms fade,
And blighted are the leaves that cast its shade;
Whilst the cold hand gathers its scanty fruit,
Whose chillness struck a canker to its root. 10*



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2.

I could stand
Upon thy shores, O Erin, and could count
The billows that, in their unceasing swell,
Dash on thy beach, and every wave might seem
An instrument in Time the giant's grasp, 15
To burst the barriers of Eternity.
Proceed, thou giant, conquering and to conquer;
March on thy lonely way! The nations fall
Beneath thy noiseless footstep; pyramids
That for millenniums have defied the blast, 20
And laughed at lightnings, thou dost crush to nought.
Yon monarch, in his solitary pomp,
Is but the fungus of a winter day
That thy light footstep presses into dust.
Thou art a conqueror, Time; all things give way 25
Before thee but the 'fixed and virtuous will';
The sacred sympathy of soul which was
When thou wert not, which shall be when thou perishest.

...

ON ROBERT EMMET'S GRAVE.

[Published from the Esdaile manuscript book by Dowden, "Life of Shelley", 1887; dated 1812.]

...

6.

No trump tells thy virtues—the grave where they rest
With thy dust shall remain unpolluted by fame,
Till thy foes, by the world and by fortune caressed,
Shall pass like a mist from the light of thy name.

7.

When the storm-cloud that lowers o'er the day-beam is gone, 5
Unchanged, unextinguished its life-spring will shine;
When Erin has ceased with their memory to groan,
She will smile through the tears of revival on thine.



THE RETROSPECT: CWM ELAN, 1812.

[Published from the Esdaile manuscript book by Dowden, "Life of Shelley", 1887.]

A scene, which 'wildered fancy viewed
In the soul's coldest solitude,
With that same scene when peaceful love
Flings rapture's colour o'er the grove,
When mountain, meadow, wood and stream 5
*With unalloying glory gleam,
And to the spirit's ear and eye
Are unison and harmony.
The moonlight was my dearer day;
Then would I wander far away, 10*
And, lingering on the wild brook's shore
To hear its unremitting roar,
Would lose in the ideal flow
All sense of overwhelming woe;
Or at the noiseless noon of night 15
*Would climb some heathy mountain's height,
And listen to the mystic sound
That stole in fitful gasps around.
I joyed to see the streaks of day
Above the purple peaks decay, 20*
And watch the latest line of light
Just mingling with the shades of night;
For day with me was time of woe
When even tears refused to flow;
Then would I stretch my languid frame



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25

*Beneath the wild woods' gloomiest shade,
And try to quench the ceaseless flame
That on my withered vitals preyed;
Would close mine eyes and dream I were
On some remote and friendless plain, 30
And long to leave existence there,
If with it I might leave the pain
That with a finger cold and lean
Wrote madness on my withering mien.*

*It was not unrequited love 35
That bade my 'wildered spirit rove;
'Twas not the pride disdainful life,
That with this mortal world at strife
Would yield to the soul's inward sense,
Then groan in human impotence, 40
And weep because it is not given
To taste on Earth the peace of Heaven.
'Twas not that in the narrow sphere
Where Nature fixed my wayward fate
There was no friend or kindred dear 45
Formed to become that spirit's mate,
Which, searching on tired pinion, found
Barren and cold repulse around;
Oh, no! yet each one sorrow gave
New graces to the narrow grave. 50
For broken vows had early quelled
The stainless spirit's vestal flame;
Yes! whilst the faithful bosom swelled,
Then the envenomed arrow came,
And Apathy's unaltering eye 55
Beamed coldness on the misery;
And early I had learned to scorn
The chains of clay that bound a soul
Panting to seize the wings of morn,
And where its vital fires were born 60
To soar, and spur the cold control
Which the vile slaves of earthly night
Would twine around its struggling flight.*

*Oh, many were the friends whom fame
Had linked with the unmeaning name, 65*



*Whose magic marked among mankind
The casket of my unknown mind,
Which hidden from the vulgar glare
Imbided no fleeting radiance there.
My darksome spirit sought—it found 70
A friendless solitude around.
For who that might undaunted stand,
The saviour of a sinking land,
Would crawl, its ruthless tyrant's slave,
And fatten upon Freedom's grave, 75
Though doomed with her to perish, where
The captive clasps abhorred despair.*

*They could not share the bosom's feeling,
Which, passion's every throb revealing,
Dared force on the world's notice cold 80
Thoughts of unprofitable mould,
Who bask in Custom's fickle ray,
Fit sunshine of such wintry day!
They could not in a twilight walk
Weave an impassioned web of talk, 85
Till mysteries the spirits press
In wild yet tender awfulness,*



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Then feel within our narrow sphere
How little yet how great we are!
But they might shine in courtly glare, 90
*Attract the rabble's cheapest stare,
And might command where'er they move
A thing that bears the name of love;
They might be learned, witty, gay,
Foremost in fashion's gilt array, 95*
On Fame's emblazoned pages shine,
Be princes' friends, but never mine!

Ye jagged peaks that frown sublime,
Mocking the blunted scythe of Time,
Whence I would watch its lustre pale 100
*Steal from the moon o'er yonder vale
Thou rock, whose bosom black and vast,
Bared to the stream's unceasing flow,
Ever its giant shade doth cast
On the tumultuous surge below: 105*

Woods, to whose depths retires to die
The wounded Echo's melody,
And whither this lone spirit bent
The footstep of a wild intent:

Meadows! whose green and spangled breast 110
*These fevered limbs have often pressed,
Until the watchful fiend Despair
Slept in the soothing coolness there!
Have not your varied beauties seen
The sunken eye, the withering mien, 115*
Sad traces of the unuttered pain
That froze my heart and burned my brain.
How changed since Nature's summer form
Had last the power my grief to charm,
Since last ye soothed my spirit's sadness, 120
*Strange chaos of a mingled madness!
Changed!—not the loathsome worm that fed
In the dark mansions of the dead,
Now soaring through the fields of air,*



And gathering purest nectar there, 125
A butterfly, whose million hues
The dazzled eye of wonder views,
Long lingering on a work so strange,
Has undergone so bright a change.
How do I feel my happiness? 130
I cannot tell, but they may guess
Whose every gloomy feeling gone,
Friendship and passion feel alone;
Who see mortality's dull clouds
Before affection's murmur fly, 135
Whilst the mild glances of her eye
Pierce the thin veil of flesh that shrouds
The spirit's inmost sanctuary.
O thou! whose virtues latest known,
First in this heart yet claim'st a throne; 140
Whose downy sceptre still shall share
The gentle sway with virtue there;
Thou fair in form, and pure in mind,
Whose ardent friendship rivets fast
The flowery band our fates that bind, 145
Which incorruptible shall last
When duty's hard and cold control
Has thawed around the burning soul,—
The gloomiest retrospects that bind
With crowns of thorn the bleeding mind, 150
The prospects of most doubtful hue
That rise on Fancy's shuddering view,—
Are gilt by the reviving ray
Which thou hast flung upon my day.



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FRAGMENT OF A SONNET.

TO HARRIET.

[Published from the Esdaile manuscript book by Dowden, "Life of Shelley", 1887; dated August 1, 1812.]

Ever as now with Love and Virtue's glow
May thy unwithering soul not cease to burn,
Still may thine heart with those pure thoughts o'erflow
Which force from mine such quick and warm return.

TO HARRIET.

[Published, 5-13, by Forman, "Poetical Works of P. B. S.", 1876; 58-69, by Shelley, "Notes to Queen Mab", 1813; and entire (from the Esdaile manuscript book) by Dowden, "Life of Shelley", 1887; dated 1812.]

It is not blasphemy to hope that Heaven
More perfectly will give those nameless joys
Which throb within the pulses of the blood
And sweeten all that bitterness which Earth
Infuses in the heaven-born soul. O thou 5
*Whose dear love gleamed upon the gloomy path
Which this lone spirit travelled, drear and cold,
Yet swiftly leading to those awful limits
Which mark the bounds of Time and of the space
When Time shall be no more; wilt thou not turn 10*
Those spirit-beaming eyes and look on me,
Until I be assured that Earth is Heaven,
And Heaven is Earth?—will not thy glowing cheek,
Glowing with soft suffusion, rest on mine,
And breathe magnetic sweetness through the frame 15
*Of my corporeal nature, through the soul
Now knit with these fine fibres? I would give
The longest and the happiest day that fate
Has marked on my existence but to feel
ONE soul-reviving kiss...O thou most dear, 20*



'Tis an assurance that this Earth is Heaven,
And Heaven the flower of that untainted seed
Which springeth here beneath such love as ours.
Harriet! let death all mortal ties dissolve,
But ours shall not be mortal! The cold hand 25
Of Time may chill the love of earthly minds
Half frozen now; the frigid intercourse
Of common souls lives but a summer's day;
It dies, where it arose, upon this earth.
But ours! oh, 'tis the stretch of Fancy's hope 30
To portray its continuance as now,
Warm, tranquil, spirit-healing; nor when age
Has tempered these wild ecstasies, and given
A soberer tinge to the luxurious glow
Which blazing on devotion's pinnacle 35
Makes virtuous passion supersede the power
Of reason; nor when life's aestival sun
To deeper manhood shall have ripened me;
Nor when some years have added judgement's store
To all thy woman sweetness, all the fire 40
Which throbs in thine enthusiast heart; not then
Shall holy friendship (for what other name



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May love like ours assume?), not even then
Shall Custom so corrupt, or the cold forms
Of this desolate world so harden us, 45
*As when we think of the dear love that binds
Our souls in soft communion, while we know
Each other's thoughts and feelings, can we say
Unblushingly a heartless compliment,
Praise, hate, or love with the unthinking world, 50*
Or dare to cut the unrelaxing nerve
That knits our love to virtue. Can those eyes,
Beaming with mildest radiance on my heart
To purify its purity, e'er bend
To soothe its vice or consecrate its fears? 55
*Never, thou second Self! Is confidence
So vain in virtue that I learn to doubt
The mirror even of Truth? Dark flood of Time,
Roll as it listeth thee; I measure not
By month or moments thy ambiguous course. 60*
Another may stand by me on thy brink,,
And watch the bubble whirled beyond his ken,
Which pauses at my feet. The sense of love,
The thirst for action, and the impassioned thought
Prolong my being; if I wake no more, 65
*My life more actual living will contain
Than some gray veteran's of the world's cold school,
Whose listless hours unprofitably roll
By one enthusiast feeling unredeemed,
Virtue and Love! unbending Fortitude, 70*
Freedom, Devotedness and Purity!
That life my Spirit consecrates to you.

SONNET.

TO A BALLOON LADEN WITH KNOWLEDGE.

[Published from the Esdaile manuscript book by Dowden, "Life of Shelley", 1887; dated August, 1812.]



Bright ball of flame that through the gloom of even
Silently takest thine aethereal way,
And with surpassing glory dimm'st each ray
Twinkling amid the dark blue depths of Heaven,—
Unlike the fire thou bearest, soon shalt thou
Fade like a meteor in surrounding gloom,
Whilst that, unquenchable, is doomed to glow
A watch-light by the patriot's lonely tomb;
A ray of courage to the oppressed and poor;
A spark, though gleaming on the hovel's hearth, 10
Which through the tyrant's gilded domes shall roar;
A beacon in the darkness of the Earth;
A sun which, o'er the renovated scene,
Shall dart like Truth where Falsehood yet has been.

SONNET.

ON LAUNCHING SOME BOTTLES FILLED WITH KNOWLEDGE INTO THE BRISTOL CHANNEL.

[Published from the Esdaile manuscript book by Dowden, "Life of Shelley", 1887; dated August, 1812.]



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Vessels of heavenly medicine! may the breeze
Auspicious waft your dark green forms to shore;
Safe may ye stem the wide surrounding roar
Of the wild whirlwinds and the raging seas;
And oh! if Liberty e'er deigned to stoop 5
From yonder lowly throne her crownless brow,
Sure she will breathe around your emerald group
The fairest breezes of her West that blow.
Yes! she will waft ye to some freeborn soul
Whose eye-beam, kindling as it meets your freight, 10
Her heaven-born flame in suffering Earth will light,
Until its radiance gleams from pole to pole,
And tyrant-hearts with powerless envy burst
To see their night of ignorance dispersed.

THE DEVIL'S WALK.

A BALLAD.

[Published as a broadside by Shelley, 1812.]

1.

Once, early in the morning, Beelzebub arose,
With care his sweet person adorning,
He put on his Sunday clothes.

2.

He drew on a boot to hide his hoof, 5
He drew on a glove to hide his claw,
His horns were concealed by a Bras Chapeau,
And the Devil went forth as natty a Beau
As Bond-street ever saw.

3.

He sate him down, in London town, 10
Before earth's morning ray;
With a favourite imp he began to chat,
On religion, and scandal, this and that,
Until the dawn of day.



4.

And then to St. James's Court he went, 15
And St. Paul's Church he took on his way;
He was mighty thick with every Saint,
Though they were formal and he was gay.

5.

The Devil was an agriculturist,
And as bad weeds quickly grow, 20
In looking over his farm, I wist,
He wouldn't find cause for woe.

6.

He peeped in each hole, to each chamber stole,
His promising live-stock to view;
Grinning applause, he just showed them his claws, 25
And they shrunk with affright from his ugly sight,
Whose work they delighted to do.

7.

Satan poked his red nose into crannies so small
One would think that the innocents fair,
Poor lambkins! were just doing nothing at all 30
But settling some dress or arranging some ball,
But the Devil saw deeper there.

8.

A Priest, at whose elbow the Devil during prayer
Sate familiarly, side by side,
Declared that, if the Tempter were there, 35
His presence he would not abide.
Ah! ah! thought Old Nick, that's a very stale trick,
For without the Devil, O favourite of Evil,
In your carriage you would not ride.

9.

Satan next saw a brainless King, 40
Whose house was as hot as his own;
Many Imps in attendance were there on the wing,
They flapped the pennon and twisted the sting,
Close by the very Throne.



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10.

Ah! ah! thought Satan, the pasture is good, 45
My Cattle will here thrive better than others;
They dine on news of human blood,
They sup on the groans of the dying and dead,
And supperless never will go to bed;
Which will make them fat as their brothers. 50

11.

Fat as the Fiends that feed on blood,
Fresh and warm from the fields of Spain,
Where Ruin ploughs her gory way,
Where the shoots of earth are nipped in the bud,
Where Hell is the Victor's prey, 55
Its glory the meed of the slain.

12.

Fat—as the Death-birds on Erin's shore,
That glutted themselves in her dearest gore,
And flitted round Castlereagh,
When they snatched the Patriot's heart, that HIS grasp 60
Had torn from its widow's maniac clasp,
—And fled at the dawn of day.

13.

Fat—as the Reptiles of the tomb,
That riot in corruption's spoil,
That fret their little hour in gloom, 65
And creep, and live the while.

14.

Fat as that Prince's maudlin brain,
Which, addled by some gilded toy,
Tired, gives his sweetmeat, and again
Cries for it, like a humoured boy. 70

15.

For he is fat,—his waistcoat gay,
When strained upon a levee day,
Scarce meets across his princely paunch;
And pantaloons are like half-moons
Upon each brawny haunch. 75



16.

How vast his stock of calf! when plenty
Had filled his empty head and heart,
Enough to satiate foplings twenty,
Could make his pantaloons seams start.

17.

The Devil (who sometimes is called Nature), 80
*For men of power provides thus well,
Whilst every change and every feature,
Their great original can tell.*

18.

Satan saw a lawyer a viper slay,
That crawled up the leg of his table, 85
*It reminded him most marvellously
Of the story of Cain and Abel.*

19.

The wealthy yeoman, as he wanders
His fertile fields among,
And on his thriving cattle ponders, 90
*Counts his sure gains, and hums a song;
Thus did the Devil, through earth walking,
Hum low a hellish song.*

20.

For they thrive well whose garb of gore
Is Satan's choicest livery, 95
*And they thrive well who from the poor
Have snatched the bread of penury,
And heap the houseless wanderer's store
On the rank pile of luxury.*

21.

The Bishops thrive, though they are big; 100
*The Lawyers thrive, though they are thin;
For every gown, and every wig,
Hides the safe thrift of Hell within.*



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22.

Thus pigs were never counted clean,
Although they dine on finest corn; *105*
And cormorants are sin-like lean,
Although they eat from night to morn.

23.

Oh! why is the Father of Hell in such glee,
As he grins from ear to ear?
Why does he doff his clothes joyfully, *110*
As he skips, and prances, and flaps his wing,
As he sidles, leers, and twirls his sting,
And dares, as he is, to appear?

24.

A statesman passed—alone to him,
The Devil dare his whole shape uncover, *115*
To show each feature, every limb,
Secure of an unchanging lover.

25.

At this known sign, a welcome sight,
The watchful demons sought their King,
And every Fiend of the Stygian night, *120*
Was in an instant on the wing.

26.

Pale Loyalty, his guilt-steeled brow,
With wreaths of gory laurel crowned:
The hell-hounds, Murder, Want and Woe,
Forever hungering, flocked around; *125*
From Spain had Satan sought their food,
'Twas human woe and human blood!

27.

Hark! the earthquake's crash I hear,—
Kings turn pale, and Conquerors start,
Ruffians tremble in their fear, *130*
For their Satan doth depart.

28.

This day Fiends give to revelry
To celebrate their King's return,



And with delight its Sire to see
Hell's adamantine limits burn. 135

29.

But were the Devil's sight as keen
As Reason's penetrating eye,
His sulphurous Majesty I ween,
Would find but little cause for joy.

30.

For the sons of Reason see 140
*That, ere fate consume the Pole,
The false Tyrant's cheek shall be
Bloodless as his coward soul.*

NOTE:

55 *Where cj. Rossetti; When 1812.*

FRAGMENT OF A SONNET.

FAREWELL TO NORTH DEVON.

[Published (from the Esdaile manuscript book) by Dowden, "Life of Shelley", 1887;
dated August, 1812.]

Where man's profane and tainting hand
Nature's primaeval loveliness has marred,
And some few souls of the high bliss debarred
Which else obey her powerful command;
...mountain piles 5
That load in grandeur Cambria's emerald vales.

ON LEAVING LONDON FOR WALES.

[Published (from the Esdaile manuscript book) by Dowden, "Life of Shelley", 1887;
dated November, 1812.]

Hail to thee, Cambria! for the unfettered wind
Which from thy wilds even now methinks I feel,
Chasing the clouds that roll in wrath behind,
And tightening the soul's laxest nerves to steel;
True mountain Liberty alone may heal 5



*The pain which Custom's obduracies bring,
And he who dares in fancy even to steal
One draught from Snowdon's ever sacred spring
Blots out the unholyest rede of worldly witnessing.*



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And shall that soul, to selfish peace resigned, 10
So soon forget the woe its fellows share?
Can Snowdon's Lethe from the free-born mind
So soon the page of injured penury tear?
Does this fine mass of human passion dare
To sleep, unhonouring the patriot's fall, 15
Or life's sweet load in quietude to bear
While millions famish even in Luxury's hall,
And Tyranny, high raised, stern lowers on all?

No, Cambria! never may thy matchless vales
A heart so false to hope and virtue shield; 20
Nor ever may thy spirit-breathing gales
Waft freshness to the slaves who dare to yield.
For me!...the weapon that I burn to wield
I seek amid thy rocks to ruin hurled,
That Reason's flag may over Freedom's field, 25
Symbol of bloodless victory, wave unfurled,
A meteor-sign of love effulgent o'er the world.

...

Do thou, wild Cambria, calm each struggling thought;
Cast thy sweet veil of rocks and woods between,
That by the soul to indignation wrought 30
Mountains and dells be mingled with the scene;
Let me forever be what I have been,
But not forever at my needy door
Let Misery linger speechless, pale and lean;
I am the friend of the unfriended poor,— 35
Let me not madly stain their righteous cause in gore.

THE WANDERING JEW'S SOLILOQUY.

[Published (from the Esdaile manuscript book) by Bertram Dobell, 1887.]

Is it the Eternal Triune, is it He
Who dares arrest the wheels of destiny
And plunge me in the lowest Hell of Hells?
Will not the lightning's blast destroy my frame?
Will not steel drink the blood-life where it swells? 5



*No—let me hie where dark Destruction dwells,
To rouse her from her deeply caverned lair,
And, taunting her cursed sluggishness to ire,
Light long Oblivion's death-torch at its flame
And calmly mount Annihilation's pyre. 10*
Tyrant of Earth! pale Misery's jackal Thou!
Are there no stores of vengeful violent fate
Within the magazines of Thy fierce hate?
No poison in the clouds to bathe a brow
That lowers on Thee with desperate contempt? 15
*Where is the noonday Pestilence that slew
The myriad sons of Israel's favoured nation?
Where the destroying Minister that flew
Pouring the fiery tide of desolation
Upon the leagued Assyrian's attempt? 20*
Where the dark Earthquake-daemon who engorged
At the dread word Korah's unconscious crew?
Or the Angel's two-edged sword of fire that urged
Our primal parents from their bower of bliss
(Reared by Thine hand) for errors not their own 25
*By Thine omniscient mind foredoomed, foreknown?
Yes! I would court a ruin such as this,
Almighty Tyrant! and give thanks to Thee—
Drink deeply—drain the cup of hate; remit this—I may die.*



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EVENING.

TO HARRIET.

[Published by Dowden, "Life of Shelley", 1887. Composed July 31, 1813.]

O thou bright Sun! beneath the dark blue line
Of western distance that sublime descendest,
And, gleaming lovelier as thy beams decline,
Thy million hues to every vapour lendest,
And, over cobweb lawn and grove and stream 5
Sheddest the liquid magic of thy light,
Till calm Earth, with the parting splendour bright,
Shows like the vision of a beauteous dream;
What gazer now with astronomic eye
Could coldly count the spots within thy sphere? 10
Such were thy lover, Harriet, could he fly
The thoughts of all that makes his passion dear,
And, turning senseless from thy warm caress,—
Pick flaws in our close-woven happiness.

TO IANTHE.

[Published by Dowden, "Life of Shelley", 1887. Composed September, 1813.]

I love thee, Baby! for thine own sweet sake;
Those azure eyes, that faintly dimpled cheek,
Thy tender frame, so eloquently weak,
Love in the sternest heart of hate might wake;
But more when o'er thy fitful slumber bending 5
Thy mother folds thee to her wakeful heart,
Whilst love and pity, in her glances blending,
All that thy passive eyes can feel impart:
More, when some feeble lineaments of her,
Who bore thy weight beneath her spotless bosom, 10
As with deep love I read thy face, recur,—
More dear art thou, O fair and fragile blossom;



Dearest when most thy tender traits express
The image of thy mother's loveliness.

SONG FROM THE WANDERING JEW.

[Published as Shelley's by Medwin, "Life of Shelley", 1847, 1 page 58.]

See yon opening flower
Spreads its fragrance to the blast;
It fades within an hour,
Its decay is pale—is fast.
Paler is yon maiden; 5
Faster is her heart's decay;
Deep with sorrow laden,
She sinks in death away.

FRAGMENT FROM THE WANDERING JEW.

[Published as Shelley's by Medwin, "Life of Shelley", 1847, 1 page 56.]

The Elements respect their Maker's seal!
Still Like the scathed pine tree's height,
Braving the tempests of the night
Have I 'scaped the flickering flame.
Like the scathed pine, which a monument stands 5
Of faded grandeur, which the brands
Of the tempest-shaken air
Have riven on the desolate heath;
Yet it stands majestic even in death,
And rears its wild form there. 10,



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TO THE QUEEN OF MY HEART.

[Published as Shelley's by Medwin, "The Shelley Papers", 1833, and by Mrs. Shelley, "Poetical Works", 1839, 1st edition; afterwards suppressed as of doubtful authenticity.]

1.
Shall we roam, my love,
To the twilight grove,
When the moon is rising bright;
Oh, I'll whisper there,
In the cool night-air, 5
What I dare not in broad daylight!

2.
I'll tell thee a part
Of the thoughts that start
To being when thou art nigh;
And thy beauty, more bright 10
Than the stars' soft light,
Shall seem as a weft from the sky.

3.
When the pale moonbeam
On tower and stream
Sheds a flood of silver sheen, 15
How I love to gaze
As the cold ray strays
O'er thy face, my heart's throned queen!

4.
Wilt thou roam with me
To the restless sea, 20
And linger upon the steep,
And list to the flow
Of the waves below
How they toss and roar and leap?

5.
Those boiling waves, 25
And the storm that raves
At night o'er their foaming crest,



*Resemble the strife
That, from earliest life,
The passions have waged in my breast. 30*

6.
Oh, come then, and rove
To the sea or the grove,
When the moon is rising bright;
And I'll whisper there,
In the cool night-air, 35
What I dare not in broad daylight.

NOTES ON THE TEXT AND ITS PUNCTUATION.

In the case of every poem published during Shelley's lifetime, the text of this edition is based upon that of the editio princeps or earliest issue. Wherever our text deviates verbally from this exemplar, the word or words of the editio princeps will be found recorded in a footnote. In like manner, wherever the text of the poems first printed by Mrs. Shelley in the "Posthumous Poems" of 1824 or the "Poetical Works" of 1839 is modified by manuscript authority or otherwise, the reading of the earliest printed text has been subjoined in a footnote. Shelley's punctuation—or what may be presumed to be his—has been retained, save in the case of errors (whether of the transcriber or the printer) overlooked in the revision of the proof-sheets, and of a few places where the pointing, though certainly or seemingly Shelley's, tends to obscure the sense or grammatical construction. In the following notes the more important textual difficulties are briefly discussed, and the readings embodied in the text of this edition, it is hoped, sufficiently justified. An attempt has also been made to record the original punctuation where it is here departed from.



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1. THE DAEMON OF THE WORLD: PART 1.

The following paragraph, relating to this poem, closes Shelley's "Preface" to "Alastor", *etc.*, 1816:—'The Fragment entitled "The Daemon of the World" is a detached part of a poem which the author does not intend for publication. The metre in which it is composed is that of "Samson Agonistes" and the Italian pastoral drama, and may be considered as the natural measure into which poetical conceptions, expressed in harmonious language, necessarily fall.'

2. Lines 56, 112, 184, 288. The editor has added a comma at the end of these lines, and a period (for the comma of 1816) after by, line 279.

3. Lines 167, 168. The editio princeps has a comma after And, line 167, and heaven, line 168.

1. THE DAEMON OF THE WORLD: PART 2.

Printed by Mr. Forman from a copy in his possession of "Queen Mab", corrected by Shelley's hand. See "The Shelley Library", pages 36-44, for a detailed history and description of this copy.

2. Lines 436-438. Mr. Forman prints:— Which from the exhaustless lore of human weal
Draws on the virtuous mind, the thoughts that rise
In time-destroying infiniteness, gift,
etc. Our text exhibits both variants—lore for 'store,' and Dawns for 'Draws'—found in Shelley's note on the corresponding passage of "Queen Mab" (8 204-206). See editor's note on this passage. Shelley's comma after infiniteness, line 438, is omitted as tending to obscure the construction.

1. ALASTOR; OR THE SPIRIT OF SOLITUDE.

"Preface". For the concluding paragraph see editor's note on "The Daemon of the World": Part 1.

2. Conducts, O Sleep, to thy, *etc.* (line 219.) The Shelley texts, 1816, 1824, 1839, have Conduct here, which Forman and Dowden retain. The suggestion that Shelley may have written 'death's blue vaults' (line 216) need not, in the face of 'the dark gate of death' (line 211), be seriously considered; Conduct must, therefore, be regarded as a fault in grammar. That Shelley actually wrote Conduct is not impossible, for his grammar is not seldom faulty (see, for instance, "Revolt of Islam, Dedication", line 60); but it is most improbable that he would have committed a solecism so striking both to eye and ear. Rossetti and Woodberry print Conducts, *etc.* The final s is often a vanishing quantity in Shelley's manuscripts. Or perhaps the compositor's hand was misled by his eye, which may have dropped on the words, Conduct to thy, *etc.*, seven lines above.



3. Of wave ruining on wave, *etc.* (line 327.) For ruining the text of “Poetical Works”, 1839, both editions, has running—an overlooked misprint, surely, rather than a conjectural emendation. For an example of ruining as an intransitive (= ‘falling in ruins,’ or, simply, ‘falling in streams’) see “Paradise Lost”, 6 867-869:— Hell heard th’ insufferable noise, Hell saw Heav’n ruining from Heav’n, and would have



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fled Affrighted, *etc.* Ruining, in the sense of 'streaming,' 'trailing,' occurs in Coleridge's "Melancholy: a Fragment" (Sibylline Leaves, 1817, page 262):— Where ruining ivies propped the ruins steep— "Melancholy" first appeared in "The Morning Post", December 7, 1797, where, through an error identical with that here assumed in the text of 1839, running appears in place of ruining—the word intended, and doubtless written, by Coleridge.

4. Line 349. With Mr. Stopford Brooke, the editor substitutes here a colon for the full stop which, in editions 1816, 1824, and 1839, follows ocean. Forman and Dowden retain the full stop; Rossetti and Woodberry substitute a semicolon.

5. And nought but gnarled roots of ancient pines Branchless and blasted, clenched with grasping roots The unwilling soil. (lines 530-532.) Editions 1816, 1824, and 1839 have roots (line 530)—a palpable misprint, the probable origin of which may be seen in the line which follows. Rossetti conjectures trunks, but stumps or stems may have been Shelley's word.

6. Lines 543-548. This somewhat involved passage is here reprinted exactly as it stands in the editio princeps, save for the comma after and, line 546, first introduced by Dowden, 1890. The construction and meaning are fully discussed by Forman ("Poetical Works" of Shelley, edition 1876, volume 1 pages 39, 40), Stopford Brooke ("Poems of Shelley", G. T. S., 1880, page 323), Dobell ("Alastor", *etc.*, Facsimile Reprint, 2nd edition 1887, pages 22-27), and Woodberry ("Complete P. W. of Shelley", 1893, volume 1 page 413).

1. THE REVOLT OF ISLAM.

The revised text (1818) of this poem is given here, as being that which Shelley actually published. In order to reconvert the text of "The Revolt of Islam" into that of "Laon and Cythna", the reader must make the following alterations in the text. At the end of the "Preface" add:—

'In the personal conduct of my Hero and Heroine, there is one circumstance which was intended to startle the reader from the trance of ordinary life. It was my object to break through the crust of those outworn opinions on which established institutions depend. I have appealed therefore to the most universal of all feelings, and have endeavoured to strengthen the moral sense, by forbidding it to waste its energies in seeking to avoid actions which are only crimes of convention. It is because there is so great a multitude of artificial vices that there are so few real virtues. Those feelings alone which are benevolent or malevolent, are essentially good or bad. The circumstance of which I speak was introduced, however, merely to accustom men to that charity and toleration which the exhibition of a practice widely differing from their own has a tendency to



promote. (The sentiments connected with and characteristic of this circumstance have no personal reference to the Writer.—[Shelley's Note.]) Nothing indeed can be more mischievous than many actions, innocent in themselves, which might bring down upon individuals the bigoted contempt and rage of the multitude.'



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2 21 1: I had a little sister whose fair eyes

2 25 2: To love in human life, this sister sweet,

3 1 1: What thoughts had sway over my sister's slumber

3 1 3: As if they did ten thousand years outnumber

4 30 6: And left it vacant—'twas her brother's face—

5 47 5: I had a brother once, but he is dead!—

6 24 8: My own sweet sister looked), with joy did quail,

6 31 6: The common blood which ran within our frames,

6 39 6-9:

With such close sympathies, for to each other
Had high and solemn hopes, the gentle might
Of earliest love, and all the thoughts which smother
Cold Evil's power, now linked a sister and a brother.

6 40 1: And such is Nature's modesty, that those

8 4 9: Dream ye that God thus builds for man in solitude?

8 5 1: What then is God? Ye mock yourselves and give

8 6 1: What then is God? Some moonstruck sophist stood

8 6 8, 9: And that men say God has appointed Death On all who scorn his will to wreak
immortal wrath.

8 7 1-4:

Men say they have seen God, and heard from God,
Or known from others who have known such things,
And that his will is all our law, a rod
To scourge us into slaves—that Priests and Kings

8 8 1: And it is said, that God will punish wrong;

8 8 3, 4: And his red hell's undying snakes among Will bind the wretch on whom he
fixed a stain

8 13 3, 4: For it is said God rules both high and low, And man is made the captive of his
brother;



9 13 8: To curse the rebels. To their God did they

9 14 6: By God, and Nature, and Necessity.

9 15. The stanza contains ten lines—lines 4-7 as follows:

There was one teacher, and must ever be,
They said, even God, who, the necessity
Of rule and wrong had armed against mankind,
His slave and his avenger there to be;

9 18 3-6:

And Hell and Awe, which in the heart of man
Is God itself; the Priests its downfall knew,
As day by day their altars lovelier grew,
Till they were left alone within the fane;

10 22 9: On fire! Almighty God his hell on earth has spread!

10 26 7, 8:

Of their Almighty God, the armies wind
In sad procession: each among the train

10 28 1: O God Almighty! thou alone hast power.

10 31 1: And Oromaze, and Christ, and Mahomet,

10 32 1: He was a Christian Priest from whom it came

10 32 4: To quell the rebel Atheists; a dire guest

10 32 9: To wreak his fear of God in vengeance on mankind

10 34 5, 6: His cradled Idol, and the sacrifice Of God to God's own wrath—that Islam's
creed

10 35 9: And thrones, which rest on faith in God, nigh overturned.

10 39 4: Of God may be appeased. He ceased, and they



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10 40 5: With storms and shadows girt, sate God, alone,

10 44 9: As 'hush! hark! Come they yet? God, God, thine hour is near!'

10 45 8: Men brought their atheist kindred to appease

10 47 6: The threshold of God's throne, and it was she!

11 16 1: Ye turn to God for aid in your distress;

11 25 7: Swear by your dreadful God.'—'We swear, we swear!'

12 10 9: Truly for self, thus thought that Christian Priest indeed,

12 11 9: A woman? God has sent his other victim here.

12 12 6-8:

Will I stand up before God's golden throne,
And cry, 'O Lord, to thee did I betray
An Atheist; but for me she would have known

12 29 4: In torment and in fire have Atheists gone;

12 30 4: How Atheists and Republicans can die;

2. Aught but a lifeless clod, until revived by thee (Dedic. 6 9).

So Rossetti; the Shelley editions, 1818 and 1839, read clog, which is retained by Forman, Dowden, and Woodberry. Rossetti's happy conjecture, clod, seems to Forman 'a doubtful emendation, as Shelley may have used clog in its [figurative] sense of weight, encumbrance.'—Hardly, as here, in a poetical figure: that would be to use a metaphor within a metaphor. Shelley compares his heart to a concrete object: if clog is right, the word must be taken in one or other of its two recognized LITERAL senses—'a wooden shoe,' or 'a block of wood tied round the neck or to the leg of a horse or a dog.' Again, it is of others' hearts, not of his own, that Shelley here deplores the icy coldness and weight; besides, how could he appropriately describe his heart as a weight or encumbrance upon the free play of impulse and emotion, seeing that for Shelley, above all men, the heart was itself the main source and spring of all feeling and action? That source, he complains, has been dried up—its emotions desiccated—by the crushing impact of other hearts, heavy, hard and cold as stone. His heart has become withered and barren, like a lump of earth parched with frost—'a lifeless clod.' Compare "Summer and Winter", lines 11-15:—

'It was a winter such as when birds die
In the deep forests; and the fishes lie
Stiffened in the translucent ice, which makes



Even the mud and slime of the warm lakes
A wrinkled clod as hard as brick;' *etc.*, *etc.*

The word revived suits well with clod; but what is a revived clog? Finally, the first two lines of the following stanza (7) seem decisive in favour of Roseetti's word.

If any one wonders how a misprint overlooked in 1818 could, after twenty-one years, still remain undiscovered in 1839, let him consider the case of clog in Lamb's parody on Southey's and Coleridge's "Dactyls" (Lamb, "Letter to Coleridge", July 1, 1796):—

Sorely your Dactyls do drag along limp-footed;
Sad is the measure that hangs a clog round 'em so, *etc.*, *etc.*



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Here the misprint, *clod*, which in 1868 appeared in Moxon's edition of the "Letters of Charles Lamb", has through five successive editions and under many editors—including Fitzgerald, Ainger, and Macdonald—held its ground even to the present day; and this, notwithstanding the preservation of the true reading, *clog*, in the texts of Talfourd and Carew Hazlitt. Here then is the case of a palpable misprint surviving, despite positive external evidence of its falsity, over a period of thirty-six years.

3. And walked as free, *etc.* (Ded. 7 6).

Walked is one of Shelley's occasional grammatical laxities. Forman well observes that *walkedst*, the right word here, would naturally seem to Shelley more heinous than a breach of syntactic rule. Rossetti and, after him, Dowden print *walk*. Forman and Woodberry follow the early texts.

4. 1 9 1-7. Here the text follows the punctuation of the editio princeps, 1818, with two exceptions: a comma is inserted (1) after *scale* (line 201), on the authority of the Bodleian manuscript (Locock); and (2) after *neck* (line 205), to indicate the true construction. Mrs. Shelley's text, 1839, has a semicolon after *plumes* (line 203), which Rossetti adopts. Forman (1892) departs from the pointing of Shelley's edition here, placing a period at the close of line 199, and a dash after *blended* (line 200).

5. What life, what power, was, *etc.* (1 11 1.) The editio princeps, 1818, wants the commas here.

6. ...and now We are embarked—the mountains hang and frown Over the starry deep that gleams below, A vast and dim expanse, as o'er the waves we go. (1 23 6-9.) With Woodberry I substitute after *embarked* (7) a dash for the comma of the editio princeps; with Rossetti I restore to below (8) a comma which I believe to have been overlooked by the printer of that edition. Shelley's meaning I take to be that 'a vast and dim expanse of mountain hangs frowning over the starry deep that gleams below it as we pass over the waves.'

7. As King, and Lord, and God, the conquering Fiend did own,—(1 28 9.) So Forman (1892), Dowden; the editio princeps, has a full stop at the close of the line,—where, according to Mr. Locock, no point appears in the Bodleian manuscript.

8. Black-winged demon forms, *etc.* (1 30 7.) The Bodleian manuscript exhibits the requisite hyphen here, and in *golden-pinioned* (32 2).

9. 1 31 2, 6. The 'three-dots' point, employed by Shelley to indicate a pause longer than that of a full stop, is introduced into these two lines on the authority of the Bodleian manuscript. In both cases it replaces a dash in the editio princeps. See list of punctual variations below. Mr. Locock reports the presence in the manuscript of what he justly terms a 'characteristic' comma after *Soon* (31 2).



10. ...mine shook beneath the wide emotion. (1 38 9.) For emotion the Bodleian manuscript has commotion (Locock)—perhaps the fitter word here.



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11. Deep slumber fell on me:—my dreams were fire— (1 40 1.) The dash after fire is from the Bodleian manuscript,—where, moreover, the somewhat misleading but indubitably Shelleyan comma after passion (*editio princeps*, 40 4) is wanting (Locock). I have added a dash to the comma after cover (40 5) in order to clarify the sense.

12. And shared in fearless deeds with evil men, (1 44 4.) With Forman and Dowden I substitute here a comma for the full stop of the *editio princeps*. See also list of punctual variations below (stanza 44).

13.

The Spirit whom I loved, in solitude
Sustained his child: (1 45 4, 5.)

The comma here, important as marking the sense as well as the rhythm of the passage, is derived from the Bodleian manuscript (Locock).

14.

I looked, and we were sailing pleasantly,
Swift as a cloud between the sea and sky;
Beneath the rising moon seen far away,
Mountains of ice, *etc.* (1 47 4-7.)

The *editio princeps* has a comma after sky (5) and a semicolon after away (6)—a pointing followed by Forman, Dowden, and Woodberry. By transposing these points (as in our text), however, a much better sense is obtained; and, luckily, this better sense proves to be that yielded by the Bodleian manuscript, where, Mr. Locock reports, there is a semicolon after sky (5), a comma after moon (6), and no point whatsoever after away (6).

15. Girt by the deserts of the Universe; (1 50 4.) So the Bodleian manuscript, anticipated by Woodberry (1893). Rossetti (1870) had substituted a comma for the period of *editio princeps*.

16. Hymns which my soul had woven to Freedom, strong The source of passion,
whence they rose, to be; Triumphant strains, which, *etc.* (2 28 6-8.) The *editio princeps*, followed by Forman, has passion whence (7). Mrs. Shelley, "Poetical Works" 1839, both editions, prints: strong The source of passion, whence they rose to be Triumphant strains, which, *etc.*

17. But, pale, were calm with passion—thus subdued, *etc.* (2 49 6.) With Rossetti, Dowden, Woodberry, I add a comma after But to the pointing of the *editio princeps*. Mrs. Shelley, "Poetical Works", 1839, both editions, prints: But pale, were calm.—With passion thus subdued, *etc.*



18. Methought that grate was lifted, *etc.* (3 25 1.) Shelley's and Mrs. Shelley's editions have gate, which is retained by Forman. But cf. 3 14 2, 7. Dowden and Woodberry follow Rossetti in printing grate.

19. Where her own standard, *etc.* (4 24 5.) So Mrs. Shelley, "Poetical Works", 1839, both editions.

20. Beneath whose spires, which swayed in the red flame, (5 54 6.) Shelley's and Mrs. Shelley's editions (1818, 1839) give red light here,—an oversight perpetuated by Forman, the rhyme-words name (8) and frame (9) notwithstanding. With Rossetti, Dowden, Woodberry, I print red flame,—an obvious emendation proposed by Fleay.



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21. —when the waves smile, As sudden earthquakes light many a volcano-isle, Thus sudden, unexpected feast was spread, *etc.* (6 7 8, 9; 8 1.) With Forman, Dowden, Woodberry, I substitute after isle (7 9) a comma for the full stop of editions 1818, 1839 (retained by Rossetti). The passage is obscure: perhaps Shelley wrote ‘lift many a volcano-isle.’ The plain becomes studded in an instant with piles of corpses, even as the smiling surface of the sea will sometimes become studded in an instant with many islands uplifted by a sudden shock of earthquake.

22. 7 7 2-6. The editio princeps punctuates thus:— and words it gave Gestures and looks, such as in whirlwinds bore Which might not be withstood, whence none could save All who approached their sphere, like some calm wave Vexed into whirlpools by the chasms beneath; This punctuation is retained by Forman; Rossetti, Dowden, Woodberry, place a comma after gave (2) and Gestures (3), and—adopting the suggestion of Mr. A.C. Bradley—enclose line 4 (Which might...could save) in parentheses; thus construing which might not be withstood and whence none could save as adjectival clauses qualifying whirlwinds (3), and taking bore (3) as a transitive verb governing All who approached their sphere (5). This, which I believe to be the true construction, is perhaps indicated quite as clearly by the pointing adopted in the text—a pointing moreover which, on metrical grounds, is, I think, preferable to that proposed by Mr. Bradley. I have added a dash to the comma after sphere (5), to indicate that it is Cythna herself (and not All who approached, *etc.*) that resembles some calm wave, *etc.*

23. Which dwell in lakes, when the red moon on high Pause ere it wakens tempest;— (7 22 6, 7.) Here when the moon Pause is clearly irregular, but it appears in editions 1818, 1839, and is undoubtedly Shelley’s phrase. Rossetti cites a conjectural emendation by a certain ‘C.D. Campbell, Mauritius’:—which the red moon on high Pours ere it wakens tempest; but cf. “Julian and Maddalo”, lines 53, 54:— Meanwhile the sun paused ere it should alight, Over the horizon of the mountains. —and “Prince Athanase”, lines 220, 221:— When the curved moon then lingering in the west Paused, in yon waves her mighty horns to wet, *etc.*

24. —time imparted Such power to me—I became fearless-hearted, *etc.* (7 30 4, 5.) With Woodberry I replace with a dash the comma (editio princeps) after me (5) retained by Forman, deleted by Rossetti and Dowden. Shelley’s (and Forman’s) punctuation leaves the construction ambiguous; with Woodberry’s the two clauses are seen to be parallel—the latter being appositive to and explanatory of the former; while with Dowden’s the clauses are placed in correlation: time imparted such power to me that I became fearless-hearted.

25. Of love, in that lorn solitude, *etc.* (7 32 7.) All editions prior to 1876 have lone solitude, *etc.* The important emendation lorn was first introduced into the text by Forman, from Shelley’s revised copy of “Laon and Cythna”, where lone is found to be turned into lorn by the poet’s own hand.



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26. And Hate is throned on high with Fear her mother, *etc.* (8 13 5.) So the editio princeps; Forman, Dowden, Woodberry, following the text of “Laon and Cythna”, 1818, read, Fear his mother. Forman refers to 10 42 4, 5, where Fear figures as a female, and Hate as ‘her mate and foe.’ But consistency in such matters was not one of Shelley’s characteristics, and there seems to be no need for alteration here. Mrs. Shelley (1839) and Rossetti follow the editio princeps.

27. The ship fled fast till the stars ’gan to fail, And, round me gathered, *etc.* (8 26 5, 6.) The editio princeps has no comma after And (6). Mrs. Shelley (1839) places a full stop at fail (5) and reads, All round me gathered, *etc.*

28. Words which the lore of truth in hues of flame, *etc.* (9 12 6.) The editio princeps, followed by Rossetti and Woodberry, has hues of grace [cf. note (20) above]; Forman and Dowden read hues of flame. For instances of a rhyme-word doing double service, see 9 34 6, 9 (thee...thee); 6 3 2, 4 (arms...arms); 10 5 1, 3 (came...came).

29. Led them, thus erring, from their native land; (10 5 6.) Editions 1818, 1839 read home for land here. All modern editors adopt Fleay’s cj., land [rhyming with band (8), sand (9)].

30. 11 11 7. Rossetti and Dowden, following Mrs. Shelley (1839), print writhed here.

31. When the broad sunrise, *etc.* (12 34 3.) When is Rossetti’s cj. (accepted by Dowden) for Where (1818, 1839), which Forman and Woodberry retain. In 11 24 1, 12 15 2 and 12 28 7 there is Forman’s cj. for then (1818).

32. a golden mist did quiver Where its wild surges with the lake were blended,— (12 40 3, 4.) Where is Rossetti’s cj. (accepted by Forman and Dowden) for When (editions 1818, 1839; Woodberry). See also list of punctual variations below.

33. Our bark hung there, as on a line suspended, *etc.* (12 40 5.) Here on a line is Rossetti’s cj. (accepted by all editors) for one line (editions 1818, 1839). See also list of punctual variations below.

34. LIST OF PUNCTUAL VARIATIONS. Obvious errors of the press excepted, our text reproduces the punctuation of Shelley’s edition (1818), save where the sense is likely to be perverted or obscured thereby. The following list shows where the pointing of the text varies from that of the editio princeps (1818) which is in every instance recorded here.

DEDICATION, 7. long. (9).

CANTO 1. 9. scale (3), neck (7). 11. What life what power (1). 22. boat, (8), lay (9). 23. embarked, (7), below A vast (8, 9). 26. world (1), chaos: Lo! (2). 28. life: (2), own. (9). 29. mirth, (6). 30. language (2), But, when (5). 31. foundations—soon (2), war— thrones



(6), multitude, (7). 32. flame, (4). 33. lightnings (3), truth, (5), brood, (5), hearts, (8). 34. Fiend (6). 35. keep (8). 37. mountains— (8). 38. unfold, (1), woe: (4), show, (5). 39. gladness, (6) 40 fire, (1), cover, (5), far (6). 42. kiss. (9). 43. But (5). 44. men. (4), fame; (7). 45. loved (4). 47. sky, (5), away (6). 49. dream, (2), floods. (9). 50. Universe. (4), language (6). 54. blind. (4). 57. mine—He (8). 58. said— (5). 60. tongue, (9).



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CANTO 2. 1. which (4). 3. Yet flattering power had (7). 4. lust, (6). 6. kind, (2). 11. Nor, (2). 13. ruin. (3), trust. (9). 18. friend (3). 22. thought, (6), fancies (7). 24. radiancy, (3). 25. dells, (8). 26. waste, (4) 28. passion (7). 31. yet (4). 32. which (3). 33. blight (8), who (8). 37. seat; (7). 39. not—'wherefore (1). 40. good, (5). 41. tears (7). 43. air (2). 46. fire, (3). 47. stroke, (2). 49. But (6).

CANTO 3. 1. dream, (4). 3. shown (7), That (9). 4. when, (3). 5. ever (7). 7. And (1). 16. Below (6). 19. if (4). 25. thither, (2). 26. worm (2), there, (3). 27. beautiful, (8). 28. And (1). 30. As (1).

CANTO 4. 2. fallen—We (6). 3. ray, (7). 4. sleep, (5). 8. fed (6). 10. wide; (1), sword (7). 16. chance, (7). 19. her (3), blending (8). 23. tyranny, (4). 24. unwillingly (1). 26. blood; (2). 27. around (2), as (4). 31. or (4). 33. was (5).

CANTO 5. 1. flow, (5). 2. profound—Oh, (4), veiled, (6). 3. victory (1), face— (8). 4. swim, (5) 6. spread, (2), outsprung (5), far, (6), war, (8). 8. avail (5). 10. weep; (4), tents (8). 11. lives, (8). 13. beside (1). 15. sky, (3). 17. love (4). 20. Which (9). 22. gloom, (8). 23. King (6). 27. known, (4). 33. ye? (1), Othman— (3). 34. pure— (7). 35. people (1). 36. where (3). 38. quail; (2). 39. society, (8). 40. see (1). 43. light (8), throne. (9). 50. skies, (6). 51. Image (7), isles; all (9), amaze. When (9, 10), fair. (12). 51. 1: will (15), train (15). 51. 2: wert, (5). 51. 4: brethren (1). 51. 5: steaming, (6). 55. creep. (9).

CANTO 6. 1. snapped (9). 2. gate, (2). 5. rout (4), voice, (6), looks, (6). 6. as (1). 7. prey, (1), isle. (9). 8. sight (2). 12. glen (4). 14. almost (1), dismounting (4). 15. blood (2). 21. reins:—We (3), word (3). 22. crest (6). 25. And, (1), and (9). 28. but (3), there, (8). 30. air. (9). 32. voice:— (1). 37. frames; (5). 43. mane, (2), again, (7). 48. Now (8). 51. hut, (4). 54. waste, (7).

CANTO 7. 2. was, (5). 6. dreams (3). 7. gave Gestures and (2, 3), withstood, (4), save (4), sphere, (5). 8. sent, (2). 14. taught, (6), sought, (8). 17. and (6). 18. own (5), beloved:— (5). 19. tears; (2), which, (3), appears, (5). 25. me, (1), shapes (5). 27. And (1). 28. strength (1). 30. Aye, (3), me, (5). 33. pure (9). 38. wracked; (4), cataract, (5).

CANTO 8. 2. and (2). 9. shadow (5). 11. freedom (7), blood. (9). 13. Woman, (8), bond-slave, (8). 14. pursuing (8), wretch! (9). 15. home, (3). 21. Hate, (1). 23. reply, (1). 25. fairest, (1). 26. And (6). 28. thunder (2).

CANTO 9. 4. hills, (1), brood, (6). 5. port—alas! (1). 8. grave (2). 9. with friend (3), occupations (7), overnumber, (8). 12. lair; (5), Words, (6). 15. who, (4), armed, (5), misery. (9). 17. call, (4). 20. truth (9). 22. sharest; (4). 23. Faith, (8). 28. conceive (8). 30. and as (5), hope (8). 33. thoughts:—Come (7). 34. willingly (2). 35. ceased, (8). 36. undight; (4).



CANTO 10. 2. tongue, (1). 7. conspirators (6), wolves, (8). 8. smiles, (5). 9. bands, (2)
11. file did (5). 18. but (5). 19. brought, (5). 24. food (5). 29. worshippers (3). 32. west
(2). 36. foes, (5). 38. now! (2). 40. alone, (5). 41. morn—at (1). 42. below, (2). 43. deep,
(7), pest (8). 44. drear (8). 47. 'Kill me!' they (9). 48. died, (8).



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CANTO 11. 4. which, (6), eyes, (8). 5. tenderness (7). 7. return—the (8). 8. midnight— (1). 10. multitude (1). 11. cheeks (1), here (4). 12. come, give (3). 13. many (1). 14. arrest, (4), terror, (6). 19. thus (1). 20. Stranger: 'What (5). 23. People: (7).

CANTO 12. 3. and like (7). 7. away (7). 8. Fairer it seems than (7). 10. self, (9). 11. divine (2), beauty— (3). 12. own. (9). 14. fear, (1), choose, (4). 17. death? the (1). 19. radiance (3). 22. spake; (5). 25. thee beloved;— (8). 26. towers (6). 28. repent, (2). 29. withdrawn, (2). 31. stood a winged Thought (1). 32. gossamer, (6). 33. stream (1). 34. sunrise, (3), gold, (3), quiver, (4). 35. abode, (4). 37. wonderful; (3), go, (4). 40. blended: (4), heavens, (6), lake; (6).

1. PRINCE ATHANASE.

Lines 28-30. The punctuation here ("Poetical Works", 1839) is supported by the Bodleian manuscript, which has a full stop at relief (line 28), and a comma at chief (line 30). The text of the "Posthumous Poems", 1824, has a semicolon at relief and a full stop at chief. The original draft of lines 29, 30, in the Bodleian manuscript, runs:— He was the child of fortune and of power,

And, though of a high race the orphan Chief, *etc.* —which is decisive in favour of our punctuation (1839). See Locock, "Examination", *etc.*, page 51.

2. Which wake and feed an ever-living woe,— (line 74.) All the editions have on for an, the reading of the Bodleian manuscript, where it appears as a substitute for his, the word originally written. The first draft of the line runs: Which nursed and fed his everliving woe. Wake, accordingly, is to be construed as a transitive (Locock).

3.

Lines 130-169. This entire passage is distinctly cancelled in the Bodleian manuscript, where the following revised version of lines 125-129 and 168-181 is found some way later on:—

Prince Athanase had one beloved friend,
An old, old man, with hair of silver white,
And lips where heavenly smiles would hang and blend
With his wise words; and eyes whose arrowy light
Was the reflex of many minds; he filled
From fountains pure, nigh overgrown and [lost],
The spirit of Prince Athanase, a child;
And soul-sustaining songs of ancient lore
And philosophic wisdom, clear and mild.
And sweet and subtle talk they evermore
The pupil and the master [share], until
Sharing that undiminishable store,
The youth, as clouds athwart a grassy hill
Outrun the winds that chase them, soon outran



His teacher, and did teach with native skill
Strange truths and new to that experienced man;
So [?] they were friends, as few have ever been
Who mark the extremes of life's discordant span.

The words bracketed above, and in Fragment 5 of our text, are cancelled in the manuscript (Locock).

4. And blighting hope, *etc.* (line 152.) The word blighting here, noted as unsuitable by Rossetti, is cancelled in the Bodleian manuscript (Locock).



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5. She saw between the chestnuts, far beneath, *etc.* (line 154.) The reading of editions 1824, 1839 (beneath the chestnuts) is a palpable misprint.
6. And sweet and subtle talk they evermore, The pupil and the master, shared; (lines 173, 174.) So edition 1824, which is supported by the Bodleian manuscript,—both the cancelled draft and the revised version: cf. note above. “Poetical Works”, 1839, has now for they—a reading retained by Rossetti alone of modern editors.
7. Line 193. The ‘three-dots’ point at storm is in the Bodleian manuscript.
8. Lines 202-207. The Bodleian manuscript, which has a comma and dash after nightingale, bears out James Thomson’s (‘B. V.’s’) view, approved by Rossetti, that these lines form one sentence. The manuscript has a dash after here (line 207), which must be regarded as ‘equivalent to a full stop or note of exclamation’ (Locock). Editions 1824, 1839 have a note of exclamation after nightingale (line 204) and a comma after here (line 207).
9. Fragment 3 (lines 230-239). First printed from the Bodleian manuscript by Mr. C.D. Locock. In the space here left blank, line 231, the manuscript has manhood, which is cancelled for some monosyllable unknown—query, spring?
10. And sea-buds burst under the waves serene:— (line 250.) For under edition 1839 has beneath, which, however, is cancelled for under in the Bodleian manuscript (Locock).
11. Lines 251-254. This, with many other places from line 222 onwards, evidently lacks Shelley’s final corrections.
12. Line 259. According to Mr. Locock, the final text of this line in the Bodleian manuscript runs:— Exulting, while the wide world shrinks below, *etc.*
13. Fragment 5 (lines 261-278). The text here is much tortured in the Bodleian manuscript. What the editions give us is clearly but a rough and tentative draft. ‘The language contains no third rhyme to mountains (line 262) and fountains (line 264).’ Locock. Lines 270-278 were first printed by Mr. Locock.
14. Line 289. For light (Bodleian manuscript) here the editions read bright. But light is undoubtedly the right word: cf. line 287. Investeth (line 285), Rossetti’s *cj.* for Investeth (1824, 1839) is found in the Bodleian manuscript.
15. Lines 297-302 (the darts...ungarmented). First printed by Mr. Locock from the Bodleian manuscript.
16. Another Fragment (A). Lines 1-3 of this Fragment reappear in a modified



shape in the Bodleian manuscript of “Prometheus Unbound”, 2 4 28-30:—

Or looks which tell that while the lips are calm

And the eyes cold, the spirit weeps within

Tears like the sanguine sweat of agony;

Here the lines are cancelled—only, however, to reappear in a heightened shape in “The Cenci”, 1 1 111-113:—

The dry, fixed eyeball; the pale quivering lip,

Which tells me that the spirit weeps within

Tears bitterer than the bloody sweat of Christ.

(Garnett, Locock.)



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17. PUNCTUAL VARIATIONS. The punctuation of “Prince Athanase” is that of “Poetical Works”, 1839, save in the places specified in the notes above, and in line 60—where there is a full stop, instead of the comma demanded by the sense, at the close of the line.

ROSALIND AND HELEN.

1.

A sound from there, *etc.* (line 63.)

Rossetti's *cj.*, there for thee, is adopted by all modern editors.

2. And down my cheeks the quick tears fell, *etc.* (line 366.) The word fell is Rossetti's *cj.* (to rhyme with tell, line 369) for ran 1819, 1839).

3. Lines 405-409. The syntax here does not hang together, and Shelley may have been thinking of this passage amongst others when, on September 6, 1819, he wrote to Ollier:—'In the “Rosalind and Helen” I see there are some few errors, which are so much the worse because they are errors in the sense.' The obscurity, however, may have been, in part at least, designed: Rosalind grows incoherent before breaking off abruptly. No satisfactory emendation has been proposed.

4. Where weary meteor lamps repose, *etc.* (line 551.) With Woodberry I regard Where, his *cj.* for When (1819, 1839), as necessary for the sense.

5. With which they drag from mines of gore, *etc.* (line 711.) Rossetti proposes yore for gore here, or, as an alternative, rivers of gore, *etc.* If yore be right, Shelley's meaning is: 'With which from of old they drag,' *etc.* But cf. Note (3) above.

6. Where, like twin vultures, *etc.* (line 932.) Where is Woodberry's reading for When (1819, 1839). Forman suggests Where but does not print it.

7.

Lines 1093-1096. The *editio princeps* (1819) punctuates:—

Hung in dense flocks beneath the dome,
That ivory dome, whose azure night
With golden stars, like heaven, was bright
O'er the split cedar's pointed flame;

8. Lines 1168-1170. Sunk (line 1170) must be taken as a transitive in this passage, the grammar of which is defended by Mr. Swinburne.

9. Whilst animal life many long years Had rescue from a chasm of tears; (lines 1208-9.) Forman substitutes rescue for rescued (1819, 1839)—a highly probable *cj.* adopted by Dowden, but rejected by Woodberry. The sense is: 'Whilst my life, surviving by the physical functions merely, thus escaped during many years from hopeless weeping.'



10. PUNCTUAL VARIATIONS. The following is a list of punctual variations, giving in each case the pointing of the editio princeps (1819):—heart 257; weak 425; Aye 492; There—now 545; immortally 864; not, 894; bleeding, 933; Fidelity 1055; dome, 1093; bright 1095; tremble, 1150; life-dissolving 1166; words, 1176; omit parentheses lines 1188-9; bereft, 1230.

JULIAN AND MADDALO.

1. Line 158. Salutations past; (1824); Salutations passed; (1839). Our text follows Woodberry.

2. —we might be all We dream of happy, high, majestic. (lines 172-3.) So the Hunt manuscript, edition 1824, has a comma after of (line 173), which is retained by Rossetti and Dowden.



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3. —his melody is interrupted—now we hear the din, *etc.* (lines 265-6.) So the Hunt manuscript; his melody is interrupted now: we hear the din, *etc.*, 1824, 1829.

4.

Lines 282-284. The editio princeps (1824) runs:—
Smiled in their motions as they lay apart,
As one who wrought from his own fervid heart
The eloquence of passion: soon he raised, *etc.*

5. Line 414. The editio princeps (1824) has a colon at the end of this line, and a semicolon at the close of line 415.

6. The ‘three-dots’ point, which appears several times in these pages, is taken from the Hunt manuscript and serves to mark a pause longer than that of a full stop.

7. He ceased, and overcome leant back awhile, *etc.* (line 511.) The form leant is retained here, as the stem-vowel, though unaltered in spelling, is shortened in pronunciation. Thus leant (pronounced ‘lent’) from lean comes under the same category as crept from creep, leapt from leap, cleft from cleave, *etc.*—perfectly normal forms, all of them. In the case of weak preterites formed without any vowel-change, the more regular formation with ed is that which has been adopted in this volume. See Editor’s “Preface”.

8. CANCELLED FRAGMENTS OF JULIAN AND MADDALO. These were first printed by Dr. Garnett, “Relics of Shelley”, 1862.

9. PUNCTUAL VARIATIONS. Shelley’s final transcript of “Julian and Maddalo”, though written with great care and neatness, is yet very imperfectly punctuated. He would seem to have relied on the vigilance of Leigh Hunt—or, failing Hunt, of Peacock—to make good all omissions while seeing the poem through the press. Even Mr. Buxton Forman, careful as he is to uphold manuscript authority in general, finds it necessary to supplement the pointing of the Hunt manuscript in no fewer than ninety-four places. The following table gives a list of the pointings adopted in our text, over and above those found in the Hunt manuscript. In all but four or five instances, the supplementary points are derived from Mrs. Shelley’s text of 1824.

1. Comma added at end of line: 40, 54, 60, 77, 78, 85, 90, 94, 107, 110, 116, 120, 123, 134, 144, 145, 154, 157, 168, 179, 183, 191, 196, 202, 203, 215, 217, 221, 224, 225, 238, 253, 254, 262, 287, 305, 307, 331, 338, 360, 375, 384, 385, 396, 432, 436, 447, 450, 451, 473, 475, 476, 511, 520, 526, 541, 582, 590, 591, 592, 593, 595, 603, 612.

2. Comma added elsewhere: seas, 58; vineyards, 58; dismounted, 61; evening, 65; companion, 86; isles, 90; meant, 94; Look, Julian, 96; maniacs, 110; maker, 113; past, 114; churches, 136; rainy, 141; blithe, 167; beauty, 174; Maddalo, 192; others, 205; this,



232; respects, 241; shriek, 267; wrote, 286; month, 300; cried, 300; O, 304; and, 306; misery, disappointment, 314; soon, 369; stay, 392; mad, 394; Nay, 398; serpent, 399; said, 403; cruel, 439; hate, 461; hearts, 483; he, 529; seemed, 529; Unseen, 554; morning, 582; aspect, 585; And, 593; remember, 604; parted, 610.



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3. Semicolon added at end of line: 101, 103, 167, 181, 279, 496.
4. Colon added at end of line: 164, 178, 606, 610.
5. Full stop added at end of line: 95, 201, 299, 319, 407, 481, 599, 601, 617.
6. Full stop added elsewhere: transparent. 85; trials. 472; Venice, 583.
7. Admiration—note added at end of line: 392, 492; elsewhere: 310, 323,
8. Dash added at end of line: 158, 379.
9. Full stop for comma (manuscript): eye. 119.
10. Full stop for dash (manuscript): entered. 158.
11. Colon for full stop (manuscript): tale: 596.
12. Dash for colon (manuscript): this— 207; prepared— 379.
13. Comma and dash for semicolon (manuscript): expressionless,— 292.
14. Comma and dash for comma (manuscript): not,— 127.

PROMETHEUS UNBOUND.

The variants of B. (Shelley's 'intermediate draft' of "Prometheus Unbound", now in the Bodleian Library), here recorded, are taken from Mr. C.D. Locock's "Examination", *etc.*, Clarendon Press, 1903. See Editor's Prefatory Note, above.

1. Act 1, line 204. B. has—shaken in pencil above—peopled.
2. Hark that outcry, *etc.* (1 553.) All editions read Mark that outcry, *etc.* As Shelley nowhere else uses Mark in the sense of List, I have adopted Hark, the reading of B.
3. Gleamed in the night. I wandered, *etc.* (1 770.) Forman proposes to delete the period at night.
4. But treads with lulling footstep, *etc.* (1 774.) Forman prints killing—a misreading of B. Editions 1820, 1839 read silent.
5. ...the eastern star looks white, *etc.* (1 825.) B. reads wan for white.



6. Like footsteps of weak melody, *etc.* (2 1 89.) B. reads far (above a cancelled lost) for weak.
7. And wakes the destined soft emotion,— Attracts, impels them; (2 2 50, 51.) The editio princeps (1820) reads destined soft emotion, Attracts, *etc.*; “Poetical Works”, 1839, 1st edition reads destined: soft emotion Attracts, *etc.* “Poetical Works”, 1839, 2nd edition reads destined, soft emotion Attracts, *etc.* Forman and Dowden place a period, and Woodberry a semicolon, at destined (line 50).
8. There steams a plume-uplifting wind, *etc.* (2 2 53.) Here steams is found in B., in the editio princeps (1820) and in the 1st edition of “Poetical Works”, 1839. In the 2nd edition, 1839, streams appears—no doubt a misprint overlooked by the editress.
9. Sucked up and hurrying: as they fleet, *etc.* (2 2 60.) So “Poetical Works”, 1839, both editions. The editio princeps (1820) reads hurrying as, *etc.*
10. See’st thou shapes within the mist? (2 3 50.) So B., where these words are substituted for the cancelled I see thin shapes within the mist of the editio princeps (1820). ‘The credit of discovering the true reading belongs to Zupitza’ (Locock).



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11. 2 4 12-18. The construction is faulty here, but the sense, as Professor Woodberry observes, is clear.

12. ...but who rains down, *etc.* (2 4 100.) The editio princeps (1820) has reigns—a reading which Forman bravely but unsuccessfully attempts to defend.

13. Child of Light! thy limbs are burning, *etc.* (2 5 54.) The editio princeps (1820) has lips for limbs, but the word membre in Shelley's Italian prose version of these lines establishes limbs, the reading of B. (Locock).

14. Which in the winds and on the waves doth move, (2 5 96.) The word and is Rossetti's conjectural emendation, adopted by Forman and Dowden. Woodberry unhappily observes that 'the emendation corrects a faultless line merely to make it agree with stanzaic structure, and...is open to the gravest doubt.' Rossetti's conjecture is fully established by the authority of B.

15. 3 4 172-174. The editio princeps (1820) punctuates: mouldering round These imaged to the pride of kings and priests, A dark yet mighty faith, a power, *etc.* This punctuation is retained by Forman and Dowden; that of our text is Woodberry's.

16. 3 4 180, 188. A dash has been introduced at the close of these two lines to indicate the construction more clearly. And for the sake of clearness a note of interrogation has been substituted for the semicolon of 1820 after Passionless (line 198).

17. Where lovers catch ye by your loose tresses; (4 107.) B. has sliding for loose (cancelled).

18. By ebbing light into her western cave, (4 208.) Here light is the reading of B. for night (all editions). Mr. Locock tells us that the anticipated discovery of this reading was the origin of his examination of the Shelley manuscripts at the Bodleian. In printing night Marchant's compositor blundered; yet 'we cannot wish the fault undone, the issue of it being so proper.'

19. Purple and azure, white, and green, and golden, (4 242.) The editio princeps (1820) reads white, green and golden, *etc.*—white and green being Rossetti's emendation, adopted by Forman and Dowden. Here again—cf. note on (17) above—Prof. Woodberry commits himself by stigmatizing the correction as one 'for which there is no authority in Shelley's habitual versification.' Rossetti's conjecture is confirmed by the reading of B., white and green, *etc.*

20. Filling the abyss with sun-like lightnings, (4 276.) The editio princeps (1820) reads lightnings, for which Rossetti substitutes lightnings—a conjecture described by Forman as 'an example of how a very slight change may produce a very calamitous result.' B.



however supports Rossetti, and in point of fact Shelley usually wrote lightnings, even where the word counts as a dissyllable (Locock).

21. Meteors and mists, which throng air's solitudes:— (4 547.) For throng (cancelled) B. reads feed, *i.e.*, 'feed on' (cf. Pasturing flowers of vegetable fire, 3 4 110)—a reading which carries on the metaphor of line 546 (ye untameable herds), and ought, perhaps, to be adopted into the text.



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22. PUNCTUAL VARIATIONS. The punctuation of our text is that of the editio princeps (1820), except in the places indicated in the following list, which records in each instance the pointing of 1820:—

Act 1.—empire. 15; O, 17; God 144; words 185; internally. 299; O, 302; gnash 345; wail 345; Sufferer 352; agony. 491; Between 712; cloud 712; vale 826.

Act 2:

Scene 1.—air 129; by 153; fire, 155.

Scene 2.—noonday, 25; hurrying 60.

Scene 3.—mist. 50.

Scene 4.—sun, 4; Ungazed 5; on 103; ay 106; secrets. 115.

Scene 5.—brightness 67.

Act 3:

Scene 3.—apparitions, 49; beauty, 51; phantoms, (omit parentheses) 52; reality, 53; wind 98.

Scene 4.—toil 109; fire. 110; feel; 114; borne; 115; said 124; priests, 173; man, 180; hate, 188; Passionless; 198.

Act 4.—dreams, 66; be. 165; light. 168; air, 187; dreams, 209; woods 211; thunder-storm, 215; lie 298; bones 342; blending. 343; mire. 349; pass, 371; kind 385; move. 387.

THE CENCI.

1. The deed he saw could not have rated higher Than his most worthless life:— (1 1 24, 25.) Than is Mrs. Shelley's emendation (1839) for That, the word in the editio princeps (1819) printed in Italy, and in the (standard) edition of 1821. The sense is: 'The crime he witnessed could not have proved costlier to redeem than his murder has proved to me.'

2. And but that there yet remains a deed to act, *etc.* (1 1 100.) Read: And but : that there yet : remains : *etc.*

3. 1 1 111-113. The earliest draft of these lines appears as a tentative fragment in the Bodleian manuscript of "Prince Athanase" (vid. supr.). In the Bodleian manuscript of "Prometheus Unbound" they reappear (after 2 4 27) in a modified shape, as follows:— Or looks which tell that while the lips are calm And the eyes cold, the spirit weeps within Tears like the sanguine sweat of agony; Here again, however, the passage is cancelled, once more to reappear in its final and most effective shape in "The Cenci" (Locock).

4. And thus I love you still, but holily, Even as a sister or a spirit might; (1 2 24, 25.) For this, the reading of the standard edition (1821), the editio princeps has, And yet I love,



etc., which Rossetti retains. If yet be right, the line should be punctuated:— And yet I love you still,—but holily, Even as a sister or a spirit might;

5.

What, if we,

The desolate and the dead, were his own flesh,

His children and his wife, *etc.* (1 3 103-105.)

For were (104) Rossetti *cj.* are or wear. Wear is a plausible emendation, but the text as it stands is defensible.

6. But that no power can fill with vital oil That broken lamp of flesh. (3 2 17, 18.) The standard text (1821) has a Shelleyan comma after oil (17), which Forman retains. Woodberry adds a dash to the comma, thus making that (17) a demonstrative pronoun indicating broken lamp of flesh. The pointing of our text is that of editions 1819, 1839, But that (17) is to be taken as a prepositional conjunction linking the dependent clause, no power...lamp of flesh, to the principal sentence, So wastes...kindled mine (15, 16).



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7. The following list of punctual variations indicates the places where our pointing departs from that of the standard text of 1821, and records in each instance the pointing of that edition:—

Act 1, Scene 2:—Ah! No, 34; Scene 3:—hope, 29; Why 44;
love 115; thou 146; Ay 146.

Act 2, Scene 1:—Ah! No, 13; Ah! No, 73; courage 80; nook 179;
Scene 2:—fire, 70; courage 152.

Act 3, Scene 1:—Why 64; mock 185; opinion 185; law 185; strange 188;
friend 222;
Scene 2:—so 3; oil, 17.

Act 4, Scene 1:—wrong 41; looked 97; child 107;
Scene 3:—What 19; father, (omit quotes) 32.

Act 5, Scene 2:—years 119;
Scene 3:—Ay, 5; Guards 94;
Scene 4:—child, 145.

THE MASK OF ANARCHY.

Our text follows in the main the transcript by Mrs. Shelley (with additions and corrections in Shelley's hand) known as the 'Hunt manuscript.' For the readings of this manuscript we are indebted to Mr. Buxton Forman's Library Edition of the Poems, 1876. The variants of the 'Wise manuscript' (see Prefatory Note) are derived from the Facsimile edited in 1887 for the Shelley Society by Mr. Buxton Forman.

1. Like Eldon, an ermined gown; (4 2.) The editio princeps (1832) has Like Lord E— here. Lord is inserted in minute characters in the Wise manuscript, but is rejected from our text as having been cancelled by the poet himself in the (later) Hunt manuscript.
2. For he knew the Palaces Of our Kings were rightly his; (20 1, 2.) For rightly (Wise manuscript) the Hunt manuscript and editions 1832, 1839 have nightly which is retained by Rossetti and in Forman's text of 1876. Dowden and Woodberry print rightly which also appears in Forman's latest text ("Aldine Shelley", 1892).
3. In a neat and happy home. (54 4.) For In (Wise manuscript, editions 1832, 1839) the Hunt manuscript reads To a neat, *etc.*, which is adopted by Rossetti and Dowden, and appeared in Forman's text of 1876. Woodberry and Forman (1892) print In a neat, *etc.*
4. Stanzas 70 3, 4; 71 1. These form one continuous clause in every text save the editio princeps, 1832, where a semicolon appears after around (70 4).



5. Our punctuation follows that of the Hunt manuscript, save in the following places, where a comma, wanting in the manuscript, is supplied in the text:—gay 47; came 58; waken 122; shaken 123; call 124; number 152; dwell 163; thou 209; thee 249; fashion 287; surprise 345; free 358. A semicolon is supplied after earth (line 131).

PETER BELL THE THIRD.

Thomas Brown, Esq., the Younger, H. F., to whom the “Dedication” is addressed, is the Irish poet, Tom Moore. The letters H. F. may stand for ‘Historian of the Fudges’ (Garnett), *Hibernicae Filius* (Rossetti), or, perhaps, *Hibernicae Fidicen*. Castles and Oliver (3 2 1; 7 4 4) were government spies, as readers of Charles Lamb are aware. The allusion in 6 36 is to Wordsworth’s “Thanksgiving Ode on The Battle of Waterloo”, original version, published in 1816:— But Thy most dreaded instrument, In working out a pure intent, Is Man—arrayed for mutual slaughter, —Yea, Carnage is Thy daughter!



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1. Lines 547-549 (6 18 5; 19 1, 2). These lines evidently form a continuous clause. The full stop of the editio princeps at rocks, line 547, has therefore been deleted, and a semicolon substituted for the original comma at the close of line 546.
2. 'Ay—and at last desert me too.' (line 603.) Rossetti, who however follows the editio princeps, saw that these words are spoken—not by Peter to his soul, but—by his soul to Peter, by way of rejoinder to the challenge of lines 600-602:—'And I and you, My dearest Soul, will then make merry, As the Prince Regent did with Sherry.' In order to indicate this fact, inverted commas are inserted at the close of line 602 and the beginning of line 603.
3. The punctuation of the editio princeps, 1839, has been throughout revised, but—with the two exceptions specified in notes (1) and (2) above—it seemed an unprofitable labour to record the particular alterations, which serve but to clarify—in no instance to modify—the sense as indicated by Mrs. Shelley's punctuation.

LETTER TO MARIA GISBORNE.

Our text mainly follows Mrs. Shelley's transcript, for the readings of which we are indebted to Mr. Buxton Forman's Library Edition of the Poems, 1876. The variants from Shelley's draft are supplied by Dr. Garnett.

1. Lines 197-201. These lines, which are wanting in editions 1824 and 1839 (1st edition), are supplied from Mrs. Shelley's transcript and from Shelley's draft (Boscombe manuscript). In the 2nd edition of 1839 the following lines appear in their place:— Your old friend Godwin, greater none than he; Though fallen on evil times, yet will he stand, Among the spirits of our age and land, Before the dread tribunal of To-come The foremost, whilst rebuke stands pale and dumb.
2. Line 296. The names in this line are supplied from the two manuscripts. In the "Posthumous Poems" of 1824 the line appears:—Oh! that H— — and — were there, *etc.*
3. The following list gives the places where the pointing of the text varies from that of Mrs. Shelley's transcript as reported by Mr. Buxton Forman, and records in each case the pointing of that original:—Turk 26; scorn 40; understood, 49; boat— 75; think, 86; believe; 158; are; 164; fair 233; cameleopard; 240; Now 291.

THE WITCH OF ATLAS.

1. The following list gives the places where our text departs from the pointing of the editio princeps ("Dedication", 1839; "Witch of Atlas", 1824), and records in each case the original pointing:— DEDIC.—pinions, 14; fellow, 41; Othello, 45. WITCH OF ATLAS.



—bliss; 164; above. 192; gums 258; flashed 409; sunlight, 409; Thamondocana. 424;
by. 432; engraven. 448; apart, 662; mind! 662.

EPIPSYCHIDION.

1. The following list gives the places where our text departs from the pointing of the editio princeps, 1821, with the original point in each case:—love, 44; pleasure; 68; flowing 96; where! 234; passed 252; dreamed, 278; Night 418; year), 440; children, 528.



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ADONAIS.

1. The following list indicates the places in which the punctuation of this edition departs from that of the editio princeps, of 1821, and records in each instance the pointing of that text:—thou 10; Oh 19; apace, 65; Oh 73; flown 138; Thou 142; Ah 154; immersed 167; corpse 172; tender 172; his 193; they 213; Death 217; Might 218; bow, 249; sighs 314; escape 320; Cease 366; dark 406; forth 415; dead, 440; Whilst 493.

HELLAS.

A Reprint of the original edition (1822) of “Hellas” was edited for the Shelley Society in 1887 by Mr. Thomas J. Wise. In Shelley’s list of Dramatis Personae the Phantom of Mahomet the Second is wanting. Shelley’s list of Errata in edition 1822 was first printed in Mr. Buxton Forman’s Library Edition of the Poems, 1876 (4 page 572). These errata are silently corrected in the text.

1. For Revenge and Wrong bring forth their kind, *etc.* (lines 728-729.) “For” has no rhyme (unless “are” and “despair” are to be considered such): it requires to rhyme with “hear.” From this defect of rhyme, and other considerations, I (following Mr. Fleay) used to consider it almost certain that “Fear” ought to replace “For”; and I gave “Fear” in my edition of 1870...However, the word in the manuscript [“Williams transcript”] is “For,” and Shelley’s list of errata leaves this unaltered—so we must needs abide by it.—Rossetti, “Complete Poetical Works of P. B. S.,” edition 1878 (3 volumes), 2 page 456.

2. Lines 729-732. This quatrain, as Dr. Garnett (“Letters of Shelley”, 1884, pages 166, 249) points out, is an expansion of the following lines from the “Agamemmon” of Aeschylus (758-760), quoted by Shelley in a letter to his wife, dated ‘Friday, August 10, 1821’:— to dussebes— meta men pleiona tiktei, sphetera d’ eikota genna.

3. Lines 1091-1093. This passage, from the words more bright to the close of line 1093, is wanting in the editio princeps, 1822, its place being supplied by asterisks. The lacuna in the text is due, no doubt, to the timidity of Ollier, the publisher, whom Shelley had authorised to make excisions from the notes. In “Poetical Works”, 1839, the lines, as they appear in our text, are restored; in Galignani’s edition of “Coleridge, Shelley, and Keats” (Paris, 1829), however, they had already appeared, though with the substitution of wise for bright (line 1091), and of unwithstood for unsubdued (line 1093). Galignani’s reading—native for votive—in line 1095 is an evident misprint. In Ascham’s edition of Shelley (2 volumes, fcp. 8vo., 1834), the passage is reprinted from Galignani.

4. The following list shows the places in which our text departs from the punctuation of the editio princeps, 1822, and records in each instance the pointing of that edition:— dreams 71; course. 125; mockery 150; conqueror 212; streams 235; Moslems 275; West 305; moon, 347; harm, 394; shame, 402; anger 408; descends 447; crime 454; banner. 461; Phanae, 470; blood 551; tyrant 557; Cydaris, 606; Heaven 636; Highness



638; man 738; sayest 738; One 768; mountains 831; dust 885; consummation? 902;
dream 921; may 923; death 935; clime. 1005; feast, 1025; horn, 1032; Noon, 1045;
death 1057; dowers 1094.



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CHARLES THE FIRST.

To Mr. Rossetti we owe the reconstruction of this fragmentary drama out of materials partly published by Mrs. Shelley in 1824, partly recovered from manuscript by himself. The bracketed words are, presumably, supplied by Mr. Rossetti to fill actual lacunae in the manuscript; those queried represent indistinct writing. Mr. Rossetti's additions to the text are indicated in the footnotes. In one or two instances Mr. Forman and Dr. Garnett have restored the true reading. The list of Dramatis Personae is Mr. Forman's.

THE TRIUMPH OF LIFE.

1.

Lines 131-135. This grammatically incoherent passage is thus conjecturally emended by Rossetti:—

Fled back like eagles to their native noon;
For those who put aside the diadem
Of earthly thrones or gems...,
Whether of Athens or Jerusalem,
Were neither mid the mighty captives seen, *etc.*

In the case of an incomplete poem lacking the author's final corrections, however, restoration by conjecture is, to say the least of it, gratuitous.

2. Line 282. The words, 'Even as the deeds of others, not as theirs.' And then—are wanting in editions 1824, 1839, and were recovered by Dr. Garnett from the Boscombe manuscript. Mrs. Shelley's note here runs:—'There is a chasm here in the manuscript which it is impossible to fill. It appears from the context that other shapes pass and that Rousseau still stood beside the dreamer.' Mr. Forman thinks that the 'chasm' is filled up by the words restored from the manuscript by Dr. Garnett. Mr. A.C. Bradley writes: 'It seems likely that, after writing "I have suffered...pain", Shelley meant to strike out the words between "known" [276] and "I" [278], and to fill up the gap in such a way that "I" would be the last word of the line beginning "May well be known".'

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

1. TO —. Mrs. Shelley tentatively assigned this fragment to 1817. 'It seems not improbable that it was addressed at this time [June, 1814] to Mary Godwin.' Dowden, "Life", 1 422, Woodberry suggests that 'Harriet answers as well, or better, to the situation described.'

2. ON DEATH. These stanzas occur in the Esdaile manuscript along with others which Shelley intended to print with "Queen Mab" in 1813; but the text was revised before publication in 1816.



3. TO —. 'The poem beginning "Oh, there are spirits in the air," was addressed in idea to Coleridge, whom he never knew'—writes Mrs. Shelley. Mr. Bertram Dobell, Mr. Rossetti and Professor Dowden, however, incline to think that we have here an address by Shelley in a despondent mood to his own spirit.

4. LINES. These appear to be antedated by a year, as they evidently allude to the death of Harriet Shelley in November, 1816.

5. ANOTHER FRAGMENT TO MUSIC. To Mr. Forman we owe the restoration of the true text here—'food of Love.' Mrs. Shelley printed 'god of Love.'



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6. MARENGHI, lines 92, 93. The 1870 (Rossetti) version of these lines is:— White bones, and locks of dun and yellow hair, And ringed horns which buffaloes did wear— The words locks of dun (line 92) are cancelled in the manuscript. Shelley's failure to cancel the whole line was due, Mr. Locock rightly argues, to inadvertence merely; instead of buffaloes the manuscript gives the buffalo, and it supplies the 'wonderful line' (Locock) which closes the stanza in our text, and with which Mr. Locock aptly compares "Mont Blanc", line 69:— Save when the eagle brings some hunter's bone, And the wolf tracks her there.

7.

ODE TO LIBERTY, lines 1, 2. On the suggestion of his brother, Mr. Alfred Forman, the editor of the Library Edition of Shelley's Poems (1876), Mr. Buxton Forman, printed these lines as follows:—

A glorious people vibrated again:

The lightning of the nations, Liberty,

From heart to heart, *etc.*

The testimony of Shelley's autograph in the Harvard College manuscript, however, is final against such a punctuation.

8. Lines 41, 42. We follow Mrs. Shelley's punctuation (1839). In Shelley's edition (1820) there is no stop at the end of line 41, and a semicolon closes line 42.

9. ODE TO NAPLES. In Mrs. Shelley's editions the various sections of this Ode are severally headed as follows:—'Epode 1 alpha, Epode 2 alpha, Strophe alpha 1, Strophe beta 2, Antistrophe alpha gamma, Antistrophe beta gamma, Antistrophe beta gamma, Antistrophe alpha gamma, Epode 1 gamma, Epode 2 gamma. In the manuscript, Mr. Locock tells us, the headings are 'very doubtful, many of them being vaguely altered with pen and pencil.' Shelley evidently hesitated between two or three alternative ways of indicating the structure and corresponding parts of his elaborate song; hence the chaotic jumble of headings printed in editions 1824, 1839. So far as the "Epodes" are concerned, the headings in this edition are those of editions 1824, 1839, which may be taken as supported by the manuscript (Locock). As to the remaining sections, Mr. Locock's examination of the manuscript leads him to conclude that Shelley's final choice was:—'Strophe 1, Strophe 2, Antistrophe 1, Antistrophe 2, Antistrophe 1 alpha, Antistrophe 2 alpha.' This in itself would be perfectly appropriate, but it would be inconsistent with the method employed in designating the "Epodes". I have therefore adopted in preference a scheme which, if it lacks manuscript authority in some particulars, has at least the merit of being absolutely logical and consistent throughout.

Mr. Locock has some interesting remarks on the metrical features of this complex ode. On the 10th line of Antistrophe 1a (line 86 of the ode)—Aghast she pass from the Earth's disk—which exceeds by one foot the 10th lines of the two corresponding divisions, Strophe 1 and Antistrophe 1b, he observes happily enough that 'Aghast may well have been intended to disappear.' Mr. Locock does



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not seem to notice that the closing lines of these three answering sections—(1) hail, hail, all hail!—(2) Thou shalt be great—All hail!—(3) Art Thou of all these hopes.—O hail! increase by regular lengths—two, three, four iambs. Nor does he seem quite to grasp Shelley's intention with regard to the rhyme scheme of the other triple group, Strophe 2, Antistrophe 2a, Antistrophe 2b. That of Strophe 2 may be thus expressed: —a-a-bc; d-d-bc; a-c-d; b-c. Between this and Antistrophe 2a (the second member of the group) there is a general correspondence with, in one particular, a subtle modification. The scheme now becomes a-a-bc; d-d-bc; a-c-b; d-c: *i.e.* the rhymes of lines 9 and 10 are transposed—God (line 9) answering to the halfway rhymes of lines 3 and 6, gawd and unawed, instead of (as in Strophe 2) to the rhyme-endings of lines 4 and 5; and, vice versa, fate (line 10) answering to desolate and state (lines 4 and 5), instead of to the halfway rhymes aforesaid. As to Antistrophe 2b, that follows Antistrophe 2a, so far as it goes; but after line 9 it breaks off suddenly, and closes with two lines corresponding in length and rhyme to the closing couplet of Antistrophe 1b, the section immediately preceding, which, however, belongs not to this group, but to the other. Mr. Locock speaks of line 124 as 'a rhymeless line.' Rhymeless it is not, for shore, its rhyme-termination, answers to bower and power, the halfway rhymes of lines 118 and 121 respectively. Why Mr. Locock should call line 12 an 'unmetrical line,' I cannot see. It is a decasyllabic line, with a trochee substituted for an iambus in the third foot—Around : me gleamed : many a : bright se : pulchre.

10. THE TOWER OF FAMINE.—It is doubtful whether the following note is Shelley's or Mrs. Shelley's: 'At Pisa there still exists the prison of Ugolino, which goes by the name of "La Torre della Fame"; in the adjoining building the galley-slaves are confined. It is situated on the Ponte al Mare on the Arno.'

11. GINEVRA, line 129: Through seas and winds, cities and wildernesses. The footnote omits Professor Dowden's conjectural emendation—woods—for winds, the reading of edition 1824 here.

12. THE LADY OF THE SOUTH. Our text adopts Mr. Forman's correction—drouth for drought—in line 3. This should have been recorded in a footnote.

13. HYMN TO MERCURY, line 609. The period at now is supported by the Harvard manuscript.

JUVENILIA.

QUEEN MAB.

1.

Throughout this varied and eternal world



Soul is the only element: the block
That for uncounted ages has remained
The moveless pillar of a mountain's weight
Is active, living spirit. (4, lines 139-143.)

This punctuation was proposed in 1888 by Mr. J. R. Tutin (see "Notebook of the Shelley Society", Part 1, page 21), and adopted by Dowden, "Poetical Works of Shelley", Macmillan, 1890. The editio princeps (1813), which is followed by Forman (1892) and Woodberry (1893), has a comma after element and a full stop at remained.



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2.

Guards...from a nation's rage

Secure the crown, *etc.* (4, lines 173-176.)

So Mrs. Shelley ("Poetical Works", 1839, both editions), Rossetti, Forman, Dowden. The editio princeps reads Secures, which Woodberry defends and retains.

3. 4, lines 203-220: omitted by Mrs. Shelley from the text of "Poetical Works", 1839, 1st edition, but restored in the 2nd edition of 1839. See above, "Note on Queen Mab, by Mrs. Shelley".

4. All germs of promise, yet when the tall trees, *etc.* (5, line 9.) So Rossetti, Dowden, Woodberry. In editions 1813 (editio princeps) and 1839 ("Poetical Works", both editions) there is a full stop at promise which Forman retains.

5. Who ever hears his famished offspring's scream, *etc.* (5, line 116.) The editio princeps has offsprings—an evident misprint.

6. 6, lines 54-57, line 275: struck out of the text of "Poetical Works", 1839 (1st edition), but restored in the 2nd edition of that year. See Note 3 above.

7. The exterminable spirit it contains, *etc.* (7, line 23.) Exterminable seems to be used here in the sense of 'illimitable' (N. E. D.). Rossetti proposes interminable, or inexterminable.

8. A smile of godlike malice reillumed, *etc.* (7, line 180.) The editio princeps and the first edition of "Poetical Works", 1839, read reillumined here, which is retained by Forman, Dowden, Woodberry. With Rossetti, I follow Mrs. Shelley's reading in "Poetical Works", 1839 (2nd edition).

9. One curse alone was spared—the name of God. (8, line 165.) Removed from the text, "Poetical Works", 1839 (1st edition); restored, "Poetical Works", 1839 (2nd edition). See Notes 3 and 6 above.

10. Which from the exhaustless lore of human weal Dawns on the virtuous mind, *etc.* (8, lines 204-205.) With some hesitation as to lore, I reprint these lines as they are given by Shelley himself in the note on this passage (*supra*). The text of 1813 runs:— Which from the exhaustless store of human weal Draws on the virtuous mind, *etc.* This is retained by Woodberry, while Rossetti, Forman, and Dowden adopt eclectic texts, Forman and Dowden reading lore and Draws, while Rossetti, again, reads store and Dawns. Our text is supported by the authority of Dr. Richard Garnett. The comma after infiniteness (line 206) has a metrical, not a logical, value.



11. Nor searing Reason with the brand of God. (9, line 48.) Removed from the text, “Poetical Works”, 1839 (1st edition), by Mrs. Shelley, who failed, doubtless through an oversight, to restore it in the second edition. See Notes 3, 6, and 9 above.

12. Where neither avarice, cunning, pride, nor care, *etc.* (9, line 67.) The editio princeps reads pride, or care, which is retained by Forman and Woodberry. With Rossetti and Dowden, I follow Mrs. Shelley’s text, “Poetical Works”, 1839 (both editions).

NOTES TO QUEEN MAB.



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1. The mine, big with destructive power, burst under me, *etc.* (Note on 7 67.) This is the reading of the “Poetical Works” of 1839 (2nd edition). The editio princeps (1813) reads burst upon me. Doubtless under was intended by Shelley: the occurrence, thrice over, of upon in the ten lines preceding would account for the unconscious substitution of the word here, either by the printer, or perhaps by Shelley himself in his transcript for the press.

2. ...it cannot arise from reasoning, *etc.* (Note on 7 135.) The editio princeps (1813) has conviction for reasoning here—an obvious error of the press, overlooked by Mrs. Shelley in 1839, and perpetuated in his several editions of the poems by Mr. H. Buxton Forman. Reasoning, Mr. W.M. Rossetti’s conjectural emendation, is manifestly the right word here, and has been adopted by Dowden and Woodberry.

3. Him, still from hope to hope, *etc.* (Note on 8 203-207.) See editor’s note 10 on “Queen Mab” above.

1. A DIALOGUE.—The titles of this poem, of the stanzas “On an Icicle”, *etc.*, and of the lines “To Death”, were first given by Professor Dowden (“Poetical Works of P. B. S.”, 1890) from the Esdaile manuscript book. The textual corrections from the same quarter (see footnotes *passim*) are also owing to Professor Dowden.

2. ORIGINAL POETRY BY VICTOR AND CAZIRE.—Dr. Garnett, who in 1898 edited for Mr. John Lane a reprint of these long-lost verses, identifies “Victor’s” coadjutrix, “Cazire”, with Elizabeth Shelley, the poet’s sister. ‘The two initial pieces are the only two which can be attributed to Elizabeth Shelley with absolute certainty, though others in the volume may possibly belong to her’ (Garnett).

3. SAINT EDMOND’S EVE. This ballad-tale was “conveyed” in its entirety by “Cazire” from Matthew Gregory Lewis’s “Tales of Terror”, 1801, where it appears under the title of “The Black Canon of Elmham; or, Saint Edmond’s Eve”. Stockdale, the publisher of “Victor and Cazire”, detected the imposition, and communicated his discovery to Shelley—when ‘with all the ardour natural to his character he [Shelley] expressed the warmest resentment at the imposition practised upon him by his coadjutor, and entreated me to destroy all the copies, of which about one hundred had been put into circulation.’

4. TO MARY WHO DIED IN THIS OPINION.—From a letter addressed by Shelley to Miss Hitchener, dated November 23, 1811.

5. A TALE OF SOCIETY.—The titles of this and the following piece were first given by Professor Dowden from the Esdaile manuscript, from which also one or two corrections in the text of both poems, made in Macmillan’s edition of 1890, were derived.



A LIST OF THE PRINCIPAL EDITIONS OF SHELLEY'S POETICAL WORKS,

SHOWING THE VARIOUS PRINTED SOURCES OF THE CONTENTS OF THIS
EDITION.

1. (1) Original Poetry; : By : Victor and Cazire. : Call it not vain:—they do not err, :
Who say, that, when the poet dies, : Mute Nature mourns her worshipper. : “Lay of the
Last Minstrel.” : Worthing : Printed by C. and W. Phillips, : for the Authors; : And sold
by J. J. Stockdale, 41, Pall-Mall, : And all other Booksellers. 1810.

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(2) Original : Poetry : By : Victor & Cazire : [Percy Bysshe Shelley : & Elizabeth Shelley] : Edited by : Richard Garnett C.B., LL.D. : Published by : John Lane, at the Sign : of the Bodley Head in : London and New York : MDCCCXCVIII.

2. Posthumous Fragments : of : Margaret Nicholson; : Being Poems Found Amongst the Papers of that : Noted Female who attempted the Life : of the King in 1786. : Edited by : John Fitz-Victor. : Oxford: : Printed and sold by J. Munday : 1810.

3. St. Irvyne; : or, : The Rosicrucian. : A Romance. : By : A Gentleman : of the University of Oxford. : London: : Printed for J. J. Stockdale, : 41, Pall Mall. : 1811.

4. The Devil's Walk; a Ballad. Printed as a broadside, 1812.

5. Queen Mab; : a : Philosophical Poem: : with Notes. : By : Percy Bysshe Shelley. : *Ecrasez l'Infame!* : "Correspondance de Voltaire." : *Avia Pieridum peragro loca, nullius ante : Trita solo; iuvat integros accedere fonteis; : Atque haurire: iuratque (sic) novos decerpere flores. : Unde prius nulli velarint tempora nausae. : Primum quod magnis doceo de rebus; et arctis : Religionum animos nodis exsolvere pergo. : Lucret. lib. 4 : Dos pou sto, kai kosmon kineso. : Archimedes. : London: : Printed by P. B. Shelley, : 23, Chapel Street, Grosvenor Square. : 1813.*

6. Alastor; : or, : The Spirit of Solitude: : and Other Poems. : By : Percy Bysshe Shelley : London : Printed for Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, Pater-noster Row; and Carpenter and Son, : Old Bond Street: : By S. Hamilton, Weybridge, Surrey : 1816.

7. (1) Laon and Cythna; : or, : The Revolution : of : the Golden City: : A Vision of the Nineteenth Century. : In the Stanza of Spenser. : By : Percy B. Shelley. : *Dos pou sto, kai kosmon kineso. : Archimedes. : London: : Printed for Sherwood, Neely, & Jones, Paternoster-:Row; and C. and J. Ollier, Welbeck-Street: : By B. M'Millan, Bow-Street, Covent-Garden. : 1818.*

(2) The : Revolt of Islam; : A Poem, : in Twelve Cantos. : By : Percy Bysshe Shelley. : London: : Printed for C. and J. Ollier, Welbeck-Street; : By B. M'Millan, Bow-Street, Covent-Garden. : 1818.

(3) A few copies of "The Revolt of Islam" bear date 1817 instead of 1818.

(4) 'The same sheets were used again in 1829 with a third title-page similar to the foregoing [2], but with the imprint "London: : Printed for John Brooks, : 421 Oxford-Street. : 1829."' (H. Buxton Forman, C.B.: *The Shelley Library*, page 73.)

(5) 'Copies of the 1829 issue of "The Revolt of Islam" not infrequently occur with "Laon and Cythna" text.' (Ibid., page 73.)



8. Rosalind and Helen, : A Modern Eclogue; : With Other Poems: : By : Percy Bysshe Shelley. : London: : Printed for C. and J. Ollier, : Vere Street, Bond Street. : 1819.

9. (1) The Cenci. : A Tragedy, : In Five Acts. : By Percy B. Shelley. : Italy. : Printed for C. and J. Ollier, : Vere Street, Bond Street. : London. : 1819.



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(2) *The Cenci* : A Tragedy : In Five Acts : By : Percy Bysshe Shelley : Second Edition : London : C. and J. Ollier Vere Street Bond Street : 1821.

10. *Prometheus Unbound* : A Lyrical Drama : In Four Acts : With Other Poems : By : Percy Bysshe Shelley : *Audisne haec, Amphiaræ, sub terram abdite?* : London : C. and J. Ollier Vere Street Bond Street : 1820.

11. *Oedipus Tyrannus*; or, *Swellfoot The Tyrant*. : A Tragedy. : In Two Acts. : Translated from the Original Doric. : —Choose Reform or civil-war, : When thro' thy streets, instead of hare with dogs, A CONSORT-QUEEN shall hunt a KING with hogs, : Riding on the IONIAN MINOTAUR. : London: : Published for the Author, : By J. Johnston, 98, Cheapside, and sold by all booksellers. : 1820.

12. *Epipsychidion* : Verses Addressed to the Noble : And Unfortunate Lady : Emilia V — : Now Imprisoned in the Convent of — : *L' anima amante si slancia fuori del creato, e si crea nel infinito : un Mondo tutto per essa, diverso assai da questo oscuro e pauroso : baratro.* *Her Own Words.* : London : C. and J. Ollier Vere Street Bond Street : MDCCCXXI.

13. (1) *Adonais* : An Elegy on the Death of John Keats, : Author of *Endymion*, *Hyperion etc.* : By : Percy B. Shelley : *Aster prin men elampes eni zooisin eeos.* : Nun de thanon, lampeis esmeros en pthimenois. : Plato. : Pisa : With the Types of Didot : MDCCCXXI.

(2) *Adonais.* : An Elegy : on the : Death of John Keats, : Author of *Endymion*, *Hyperion, etc.* : By : Percy B. Shelley. : [Motto as in (1)] Cambridge: : Printed by W. Metcalfe, : and sold by Messrs. Gee & Bridges, Market-Hill. : MDCCCXXIX.

14. *Hellas* : A Lyrical Drama : By : Percy B. Shelley : MANTIS EIM' ESTHAON 'AGONON : Oedip. Colon. : London : Charles and James Ollier Vere Street : Bond Street : MDCCCXXII. (The last work issued in Shelley's lifetime.)

15. *Posthumous Poems* : of : Percy Bysshe Shelley. : *In nobil sanguine vita umile e queta, : Ed in alto intelletto on puro core; : Frutto senile in sul giovenil fiore, : E in aspetto pensoso anima lieta.* : Petrarca. : London, 1824: : Printed for John and Henry L. Hunt, : Tavistock Street, Covent Garden. (Edited by Mrs. Shelley.)

16. *The : Masque of Anarchy.* : A Poem. : By Percy Bysshe Shelley. Now first published, with a Preface : by Leigh Hunt. : *Hope is Strong; : Justice and Truth their winged child have found.* : "Revolt of Islam". : London: : Edward Moxon, 64, New Bond Street. : 1832.



17. The Shelley Papers : Memoir : of : Percy Bysshe Shelley : By T. Medwin, Esq. :
And : Original Poems and Papers : By Percy Bysshe Shelley. : Now first collected. :
London: : Whittaker, Treacher, & Co. : 1833. (The Poems occupy pages 109-126.)

18. The : Poetical Works : of : Percy Bysshe Shelley. : Edited : by Mrs Shelley. : Lui
non trov' io, ma suoi santi vestigi : Tutti rivolti alla superna strada : Veggio, lunge da'
laghi averni e stigi.—Petrarca. : In Four Volumes. : Vol. 1 [2 3 4] : London: : Edward
Moxon, Dover Street. : MDCCCXXXIX.



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19. (1) The : Poetical Works : of : Percy Bysshe Shelley: [Vignette of Shelley's Tomb.] London. : Edward Moxon, Dover Street. : 1839. (This is the engraved title-page. The printed title-page runs:—)

(2) The : Poetical Works : of Percy Bysshe Shelley. : Edited : By Mrs. Shelley. : [Motto from Petrarch as in 18] London: : Edward Moxon, Dover Street. : M.DCCC.XL. (Large octavo, printed in double columns. The Dedication is dated 11th November, 1839.)

20. Essays, : Letters from Abroad, : Translations and Fragments, : By : Percy Bysshe Shelley. : Edited : By Mrs. Shelley. : [Long prose motto translated from Schiller] : In Two Volumes. : Volume 1 [2] : London: : Edward Moxon, Dover Street. : MDCCCXL.

21. Relics of Shelley. : Edited by : Richard Garnett. : [Lines 20-24 of "To Jane": 'The keen stars,' etc.] : London: : Edward Moxon & Co., Dover Street. : 1862.

22. The : Poetical Works : of : Percy Bysshe Shelley: : Including Various Additional Pieces : From Manuscript and Other Sources. : The Text carefully revised, with Notes and : A Memoir, : By William Michael Rossetti. : Volume 1 [2] : [Moxon's Device.] : London: : E. Moxon, Son, & Co., 44 Dover Street, W. : 1870.

23. The Daemon of the World : By : Percy Bysshe Shelley : The First Part : as published in 1816 with "Alastor" : The Second Part : Deciphered and now First Printed from his own Manuscript : Revision and Interpolations in the Newly Discovered : Copy of "Queen Mab" : London : Privately printed by H. Buxton Forman : 38 Marlborough Hill : 1876.

24. The Poetical Works : of : Percy Bysshe Shelley : Edited by : Harry Buxton Forman : In Four Volumes : Volume 1 [2 3 4] London : Reeves and Turner 196 Strand : 1876.

25. The Complete : Poetical Works : of : Percy Bysshe Shelley. : The Text carefully revised with Notes and : A Memoir, : by : William Michael Rossetti. : In Three Volumes. : Volume 1 [2 3] London: : E. Moxon, Son, And Co., : Dorset Buildings, Salisbury Square, E.C. : 1878.

26. The Poetical Works : of Percy Bysshe Shelley : Given from His Own Editions and Other Authentic Sources : Collated with many Manuscripts and with all Editions of Authority : Together with Prefaces and Notes : His Poetical Translations and Fragments : and an Appendix of : Juvenilia : [Publisher's Device.] Edited by Harry Buxton Forman : In Two Volumes. : Volume 1 [2] London : Reeves and Turner, 196, Strand : 1882.



27. The : Poetical Works : of : Percy Bysshe Shelley : Edited by : Edward Dowden : London : Macmillan and Co, Limited : New York: The Macmillan Company : 1900.

28. The Poetical Works of : Percy Bysshe Shelley : Edited with a Memoir by : H. Buxton Forman : In Five Volumes [Publisher's Device.] Volume 1 [2 3 4 5] London : George Bell and Sons : 1892.

29. The : Complete Poetical Works : of : Percy Bysshe Shelley : The Text newly collated and revised : and Edited with a Memoir and Notes : By George Edward Woodberry : Centenary Edition : In Four Volumes : Volume 1 [2 3 4] [Publisher's Device.] London : Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co. : Limited : 1893.



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30. An Examination of the : Shelley Manuscripts : In the Bodleian Library : Being a collation thereof with the printed : texts, resulting in the publication of : several long fragments hitherto unknown, : and the introduction of many improved : readings into "Prometheus Unbound", and : other poems, by : C.D. Locock, B.A. : Oxford : At the Clarendon Press : 1903.

The early poems from the Esdaile manuscript book, which are included in this edition by the kind permission of the owner of the volume, Charles E.J. Esdaile, Esq., appeared for the first time in Professor Dowden's "Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley", published in the year 1887.

One poem from the same volume; entitled "The Wandering Jew's Soliloquy", was printed in one of the Shelley Society Publications (Second Series, No. 12), a reprint of "The Wandering Jew", edited by Mr. Bertram Dobell in 1887.

INDEX OF FIRST LINES.

A cat in distress :
A gentle story of two lovers young :
A glorious people vibrated again :
A golden-winged Angel stood :
A Hater he came and sat by a ditch :
A man who was about to hang himself :
A pale Dream came to a Lady fair :
A portal as of shadowy adamant :
A rainbow's arch stood on the sea :
A scene, which 'wilder'd fancy viewed :
A Sensitive Plant in a garden grew :
A shovel of his ashes took :
A widow bird sate mourning :
A woodman whose rough heart was out of tune :
Ah! faint are her limbs, and her footstep is weary :
Ah! grasp the dire dagger and couch the fell spear :
Ah! quit me not yet, for the wind whistles shrill :
Ah, sister! Desolation is a delicate thing :
Ah! sweet is the moonbeam that sleeps on yon fountain :
Alas! for Liberty! :
Alas, good friend, what profit can you see :
Alas! this is not what I thought life was :
Ambition, power, and avarice, now have hurled :
Amid the desolation of a city :



Among the guests who often stayed :
An old, mad, blind, despised, and dying king :
And can'st thou mock mine agony, thus calm :
And earnest to explore within—around :
And ever as he went he swept a lyre :
And, if my grief should still be dearer to me :
And like a dying lady, lean and pale :
And many there were hurt by that strong boy :
And Peter Bell, when he had been :
And said I that all hope was fled :
And that I walk thus proudly crowned withal :
And the cloven waters like a chasm of mountains :
And when the old man saw that on the green :
And where is truth? On tombs? for such to thee :
And who feels discord now or sorrow? :
Arethusa arose :
Ariel to Miranda:—Take :
Arise, arise, arise! :
Art thou indeed forever gone :
Art thou pale for weariness :
As a violet's gentle eye :
As from an ancestral oak :
As I lay asleep in Italy :
As the sunrise to the night :
Ask not the pallid stranger's woe :
At the creation of the Earth :
Away! the moor is dark beneath the moon :



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Bear witness, Erin! when thine injured isle :
Before those cruel Twins, whom at one birth :
Beside the dimness of the glimmering sea :
Best and brightest, come away! :
Break the dance, and scatter the song :
Bright ball of flame that through the gloom of even :
Bright clouds float in heaven :
Bright wanderer, fair coquette of Heaven :
Brothers! between you and me :
'Buona notte, buona notte!'—Come mai :
By the mossy brink :

Chameleons feed on light and air :
Cold, cold is the blast when December is howling :
Come, be happy!—sit near me :
Come [Harriet]! sweet is the hour :
Come hither, my sweet Rosalind :
Come, thou awakener of the spirit's ocean :
Corpses are cold in the tomb :

Dares the lama, most fleet of the sons of the wind :
Dar'st thou amid the varied multitude :
Darkness has dawned in the East :
Daughters of Jove, whose voice is melody :
Dear home, thou scene of earliest hopes and joys :
Dearest, best and brightest :
Death is here and death is there :
Death! where is thy victory? :
Do evil deeds thus quickly come to end?
Do you not hear the Aziola cry? :

Eagle! why soarest thou above that tomb? :
Earth, ocean, air, beloved brotherhood :
Echoes we: listen!
Ever as now with Love and Virtue's glow :

Faint with love, the Lady of the South :
Fairest of the Destinies :
False friend, wilt thou smile or weep :
Far, far away, O ye :
Fiend, I defy thee! with a calm, fixed mind :
Fierce roars the midnight storm :
Flourishing vine, whose kindling clusters glow :
Follow to the deep wood's weeds :



For me, my friend, if not that tears did tremble :
For my dagger is bathed in the blood of the brave :
For your letter, dear [Hattie], accept my best thanks :
From all the blasts of heaven thou hast descended :
From the cities where from caves :
From the ends of the earth, from the ends of the earth :
From the forests and highlands :
From unremembered ages we :

Gather, O gather :
Ghosts of the dead! have I not heard your yelling :
God prosper, speed, and save :
Good-night? ah! no; the hour is ill :
Great Spirit whom the sea of boundless thought :
Guido, I would that Lapo, thou, and I :

Hail to thee, blithe Spirit! :
Hail to thee, Cambria! for the unfettered wind :
Hark! the owlet flaps her wing :
Hark! the owlet flaps his wings :
Hast thou not seen, officious with delight :
He came like a dream in the dawn of life :
He wanders, like a day-appearing dream :
Hell is a city much like London :
Her hair was brown, her sphered eyes were brown :
Her voice did quiver as we parted :
Here I sit with my paper, my pen and my ink :
'Here lieth One whose name was writ on water' :
Here, my dear friend, is a new book for you :



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Here, oh, here :
Hic sinu fessum caput hospitali :
His face was like a snake's—wrinkled and loose :
Honey from silkworms who can gather :
Hopes, that swell in youthful breasts :
How eloquent are eyes :
How, my dear Mary,—are you critic-bitten :
How stern are the woes of the desolate mourner :
How sweet it is to sit and read the tales :
How swiftly through Heaven's wide expanse :
How wonderful is Death :
How wonderful is Death :

I am afraid these verses will not please you, but :
I am as a spirit who has dwelt :
I am drunk with the honey wine :
I arise from dreams of thee :
I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers :
I dreamed that, as I wandered by the way :
I dreamed that Milton's spirit rose, and took :
I faint, I perish with my love! I grow :
I fear thy kisses, gentle maiden :
I hated thee, fallen tyrant! I did groan :
I love thee, Baby! for thine own sweet sake :
I loved—alas! our life is love :
I met a traveller from an antique land :
I mourn Adonis dead—loveliest Adonis :
I pant for the music which is divine :
I rode one evening with Count Maddalo :
I sate beside a sage's bed :
I sate beside the Steersman then, and gazing :
I sing the glorious Power with azure eyes :
I stood upon a heaven-cleaving turret :
I stood within the City disinterred :
I weep for Adonais—he is dead' :
I went into the deserts of dim sleep :
I would not be a king—enough :
If gibbets, axes, confiscations, chains :
If I esteemed you less, Envy would kill :
If I walk in Autumn's even :



In the cave which wild weeds cover :
In the sweet solitude of this calm place :
Inter marmoreas Leonorae pendula colles :
Is it that in some brighter sphere :
Is it the Eternal Triune, is it He :
Is not to-day enough? Why do I peer :
It is not blasphemy to hope that Heaven :
It is the day when all the sons of God :
It lieth, gazing on the midnight sky :
It was a bright and cheerful afternoon :

Kissing Helena, together :

Let there be light! said Liberty :
Let those who pine in pride or in revenge :
Life of Life! thy lips enkindle :
Lift not the painted veil which those who live :
Like the ghost of a dear friend dead :
Listen, listen, Mary mine :
Lo, Peter in Hell's Grosvenor Square :

Madonna, wherefore hast thou sent to me :
Maiden, quench the glare of sorrow :
Many a green isle needs must be :
Melodious Arethusa, o'er my verse :
Men of England, wherefore plough :
Methought I was a billow in the crowd :
Mighty eagle! thou that soarest :
Mine eyes were dim with tears unshed :
Monarch of Gods and Daemons, and all Spirits :
Month after month the gathered rains descend :
Moonbeam, leave the shadowy vale :
Muse, sing the deeds of golden Aphrodite :



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Music, when soft voices die :
My coursers are fed with the lightning :
My dearest Mary, wherefore hast thou gone :
My faint spirit was sitting in the light :
My head is heavy, my limbs are weary :
My head is wild with weeping for a grief :
My lost William, thou in whom :
My Song, I fear that thou wilt find but few :
My soul is an enchanted boat :
My spirit like a charmed bark doth swim :
My thoughts arise and fade in solitude :
My wings are folded o'er mine ears :

Night, with all thine eyes look down! :
Night! with all thine eyes look down! :
No access to the Duke! You have not said :
No, Music, thou art not the 'food of Love' :
No trump tells thy virtues :
Nor happiness, nor majesty, nor fame :
Not far from hence. From yonder pointed hill :
Now had the loophole of that dungeon, still :
Now the last day of many days :

O Bacchus, what a world of toil, both now :
O happy Earth! reality of Heaven :
O Mary dear, that you were here :
O mighty mind, in whose deep stream this age :
O pillow cold and wet with tears! :
O Slavery! thou frost of the world's prime :
O that a chariot of cloud were mine! :
O that mine enemy had written :
O thou bright Sun! beneath the dark blue line :
O thou immortal deity :
O thou, who plumed with strong desire :
O universal Mother, who dost keep :
O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being :
O world! O life! O time! :
Offspring of Jove, Calliope, once more :
Oh! did you observe the black Canon pass :
Oh! take the pure gem to where southerly breezes :



Oh! there are spirits of the air :
Oh! what is the gain of restless care :
On a battle-trumpet's blast :
On a poet's lips I slept :
On the brink of the night and the morning :
Once, early in the morning :
One sung of thee who left the tale untold :
One word is too often profaned :
Orphan Hours, the Year is dead :
Our boat is asleep on Serchio's stream :
Our spoil is won :
Out of the eastern shadow of the Earth :
Over the utmost hill at length I sped :

Palace-roof of cloudless nights! :
Pan loved his neighbour Echo—but that child :
People of England, ye who toil and groan :
Peter Bells, one, two and three :
Place, for the Marshal of the Masque! :
Poet of Nature, thou hast wept to know :
Prince Athanase had one beloved friend :

Rarely, rarely, comest thou :
Reach me that handkerchief!—My brain is hurt :
Returning from its daily quest, my Spirit :
Rome has fallen, ye see it lying :
Rough wind, that moanest loud :



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Sacred Goddess, Mother Earth :
See yon opening flower :
Serene in his unconquerable might :
Shall we roam, my love :
She comes not; yet I left her even now :
She left me at the silent time :
She saw me not—she heard me not—alone :
She was an aged woman; and the years :
Silence! Oh, well are Death and Sleep and Thou :
Silver key of the fountain of tears :
Sing, Muse, the son of Maia and of Jove :
Sleep, sleep on! forget thy pain :
So now my summer task is ended, Mary :
So we sate joyous as the morning ray :
Stern, stern is the voice of fate's fearful command :
Such hope, as is the sick despair of good :
Such was Zonoras; and as daylight finds :
Summer was dead and Autumn was expiring :
Sweet Spirit! Sister of that orphan one :
Sweet star, which gleaming o'er the darksome scene :
Swift as a spirit hastening to his task :
Swifter far than summer's flight :
Swiftly walk o'er the western wave :

Tell me, thou Star, whose wings of light :
That matter of the murder is hushed up :
That night we anchored in a woody bay :
That time is dead for ever, child! :
The awful shadow of some unseen Power :
The babe is at peace within the womb :
The billows on the beach are leaping around it :
The cold earth slept below :
The curtain of the Universe :
The death-bell beats! :
The death knell is ringing :
The Devil, I safely can aver :
The Devil now knew his proper cue :
The Elements respect their Maker's seal! :
The everlasting universe of things :
The fierce beasts of the woods and wildernesses :
The fiery mountains answer each other :
The fitful alternations of the rain :
The flower that smiles to-day :



The fountains mingle with the river :
The gentleness of rain was in the wind :
The golden gates of Sleep unbar :
The joy, the triumph, the delight, the madness :
The keen stars were twinkling :
The odour from the flower is gone :
The old man took the oars, and soon the bark :
The pale stars are gone :
The pale stars of the morn :
The pale, the cold, and the moony smile :
The path through which that lovely twain :
The rose that drinks the fountain dew :
The rude wind is singing :
The season was the childhood of sweet June :
The serpent is shut out from Paradise :
The sleepless Hours who watch me as I lie :
The spider spreads her webs, whether she be :
The starlight smile of children, the sweet looks :
The stars may dissolve, and the fountain of light :
The sun is set; the swallows are asleep :
The sun is warm, the sky is clear :
The sun makes music as of old :
The transport of a fierce and monstrous gladness :
The viewless and invisible Consequence :
The voice of the Spirits of Air and of Earth :
The warm sun is failing, the bleak wind is wailing



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:
The waters are flashing :
The wind has swept from the wide atmosphere :
The world is dreary :
The world is now our dwelling-place :
The world's great age begins anew :
Then weave the web of the mystic measure :
There is a voice, not understood by all :
There is a warm and gentle atmosphere :
There late was One within whose subtle being :
There was a little lawny islet :
There was a youth, who, as with toil and travel :
These are two friends whose lives were undivided :
They die—the dead return not—Misery :
Those whom nor power, nor lying faith, nor toil :
Thou art fair, and few are fairer :
Thou art the wine whose drunkenness is all :
Thou living light that in thy rainbow hues :
Thou supreme Goddess! by whose power divine :
Thou wert not, Cassius, and thou couldst not be :
Thou wert the morning star among the living :
Thrice three hundred thousand years :
Thus to be lost and thus to sink and die :
Thy beauty hangs around thee like :
Thy country's curse is on thee, darkest crest :
Thy dewy looks sink in my breast :
Thy little footsteps on the sands :
Thy look of love has power to calm :
'Tis midnight now—athwart the murky air :
'Tis the terror of tempest. The rags of the sail :
To me this world's a dreary blank :
To the deep, to the deep :
To thirst and find no fill—to wail and wander :
Tremble, Kings despised of man :
'Twas at the season when the Earth upsprings :
'Twas at this season that Prince Athanase :
'Twas dead of the night, when I sat in my dwelling :
'Twas dead of the night when I sate in my dwelling :

Unfathomable Sea! whose waves are years :
Unrisen splendour of the brightest sun :



Vessels of heavenly medicine! may the breeze :
Victorious Wrong, with vulture scream :

Wake the serpent not—lest he :
Was there a human spirit in the steed :
We are as clouds that veil the midnight moon :
We come from the mind :
We join the throng :
We meet not as we parted :
We strew these opiate flowers :
Wealth and dominion fade into the mass :
Weave the dance on the floor of the breeze :
Weep not, my gentle boy; he struck but me :
What! alive and so bold, O Earth? :
What art thou, Presumptuous, who profanest :
What Mary is when she a little smiles :
What men gain fairly—that they should possess :
'What think you the dead are?' :
What thoughts had sway o'er Cythna's lonely slumber :
What was the shriek that struck Fancy's ear :
When a lover clasps his fairest :
When May is painting with her colours gay :
When passion's trance is overpast :
When soft winds and sunny skies :
When the lamp is shattered :
When the last hope of trampled France had failed :
When winds that move not its calm surface sweep :



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Where art thou, beloved To-morrow? :
Where man's profane and tainting hand :
Whose is the love that gleaming through the world :
Why is it said thou canst not live :
Wild, pale, and wonder-stricken, even as one :
Wilt thou forget the happy hours :
Within a cavern of man's trackless spirit :
Worlds on worlds are rolling ever :
Would I were the winged cloud :

Ye congregated powers of heaven, who share :
Ye Dorian woods and waves, lament aloud :
Ye gentle visitations of calm thought :
Ye hasten to the grave! What seek ye there :
Ye who intelligent the Third Heaven move :
Ye wild-eyed Muses, sing the Twins of Jove :
Yes! all is past—swift time has fled away :
Yes, often when the eyes are cold and dry :
Yet look on me—take not thine eyes away :
You said that spirits spoke, but it was thee :
Your call was as a winged car :