SOLDIER AND SAILOR[1]

THOMAS CAMPBELL

I love contemplating, apart
From all his homicidal glory,
The traits that soften to our heart
Napoleon's story.

'Twas when his banners at Boulogne[2] 5
Armed in our island every freeman,
His navy chanced to capture one
Poor British seaman.

They suffered him, I know not how,
Unprisoned on the shore to roam: 10
And aye was bent his longing brow
On England's home.

His eye, methinks, pursued the flight
Of birds to Britain half-way over
With envy: *they* could reach the white 15
Dear cliffs of Dover.

A stormy midnight watch, he thought,
Than this sojourn would have been dearer,
If but the storm his vessel brought
To England nearer. 20

1. Campbell writes, "The anecdote has been published in several public journals, both French and English. My belief in its authenticity was confirmed by an Englishman long resident in Boulogne, lately telling me that he remembered the circumstance to have been generally talked of in the place."

2. In 1803, 4 and 5 Napoleon was making preparations at Boulogne for an invasion of England. On August 3, 1805, he reviewed at this seaport a line of soldiery nine miles long. See *Life of Napoleon* by Rose, chap. xxi.