

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,  
 Their homely joys, and destiny obscure ;  
 Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile,  
 The short and simple annals of the Poor. 30

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,  
 And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,  
 Awaits alike the inevitable hour.  
 The paths of glory lead but to the grave. 35

Nor you, ye Proud, impute to these the fault,  
 Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,  
 Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault  
 The pealing anthem swells the note of praise. 40

Can storied urn or animated bust  
 Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath ?  
 Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,  
 Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death ?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid  
 Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire ;  
 Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,  
 Or wak'd to ecstasy the living lyre. 45

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page,  
 Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll ;  
 Chill Penury repress'd their noble rage,  
 And froze the genial current of the soul. 50

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,  
 The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear ;  
 Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,  
 And waste its sweetness on the desert air. 55

Some village-Hampden, that with dauntless breast  
 The little tyrant of his fields withstood ;  
 Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,  
 Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood. 60

Th' applause of list'ning senates to command,  
 The threats of pain and ruin to despise,  
 To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,  
 And read their history in a nation's eyes,