

And gloomed against the starlight trembling down,
 With heart all shaken by their brows a-frown ;
 Or, haply, seated on some fallen pine,
 Some monarch of the mountains, hurled supine
 By the tall hurricane in grapple strong,
 And bleaching, now, a skeleton among
 His sombre brethren groaning at the sky—
 In haunts so weird, while midnight held the sky,
 And demonhood the mountains, there he drew
 Such kindred births of music to the view
 Of spirit-apprehensions, from a womb
 Of thought so dreadly like, in power and gloom,
 Their own perverted essence, that, I wot,
 They made the wild musician, on the spot,
 Free of their dark domains—a brother, he,
 Who yet might swell their ghostly company.

In vain his father—for, alas ! he stood
 To lack a mother's love—the stubborn mood
 Of headstrong genius strove to shape and bend
 After more homely fashion. How the trend
 Of a young torrent may a shepherd's crook
 Train to the courses of a placid brook,
 When, (swelled in secret at some fountain-head
 By spout of driving tempests where they shed
 A heart of deluge on the stabbing steep),
 In growing strength the youthful giant leaps
 At gambol with the pebble boulders thrown
 As feather to his play, till, mighty grown,
 He shakes the mountains in his thunderous glee,
 A Ruin full-grown to wanton liberty ?

As well the simple mountain sire might sway
 That torrent genius, once it broke to play,
 Growing and swelling to a rush of power
 That fed on thoughts let loose in thunder shower.
 The rugged father, (sprouted at the knees
 Of frugal happiness and thrifty ease ;
 With something in him of the mountain air—
 Strong though untutored ; simple, stern, and bare
 Of any touch of genius), stood aghast
 To see his single issue hurtling past
 All fence of healthful custom of his kind—
 Not idle, but as errant as the wind,
 As hard to chain a meted end unto.
 And, finding admonition only drew
 A sequent inattention in its train—
 Not for the boy, though strong, was cross of grain,
 But that his soul would soar at unawares
 From common element to loftier airs—
 Anon with force the father strove to tame ;