

THE DEPARTED YEAR.

BY ROBERT MONTGOMERY, AUTHOR OF "THE OMNIPRESENCE OF THE DEITY, &c. &c."

In silent night the vision of the dead passed by—
 I saw our friends all pass—
 And oh! in silent night I saw the open graves—
 I saw th' immortal host!

KLOPSTOCK'S ODES.

A VISION, by eternity unveil'd
 When midnight in her trace of darkness lay,
 My soul beheld,—Methought that time and earth
 Had vanish'd, while the unforgotten dead
 In glory bright and bodiless appear'd :—
 How deep their gaze! oh, how divine their smile!
 A pensive mildness, an immortal grace,
 Each semblance wore: the father had not lost
 That light paternal which his living eyes,
 To greet his children, loved to have express'd;
 Still on the mother's placid brow was throned
 A tenderness, that triumph'd o'er decay;
 And perish'd babes, whose beauty dazzled time,
 In the young bloom of resurrection rose,
 Serenely glad, and innocently bright.

And thus, by dreams of never-dying soul,
 The dead around us, with a voiceless power,
 Are present, mentally distinct and known:
 As though some charm, whose links are unbeheld,
 The living and the dead conjoin'd; that love,
 E'en in the grave, no gloomy trance might bear,
 But thro' immortal in the spirit's core!

Thought flies the banquet, to embrace the tomb:
 And, oh! if joy-wing'd hours awhile seduce
 A faithful mourner from his fond regret;
 If the dull prose of daily life contract
 And dry his feelings into worldly dust,
 Or selfish duty,—how divinely pure
 The calm of intellectual grief again!
 There can creative fondness from the world
 Of parted spirits all it loved evoke:
 And he whose years are chronicles of woe,
 From the strange earth, where few companions dwell,
 Can wander where the hopes of youth repose,
 And make eternity his mighty home!—

A knell comes booming on the dismal air,
 And my dark song in solemn echo rolls

To that dread music;—from this orb of time,
 Another in the noon of manhood call'd
 To lie and fester with unfeeling clay!—
 Oh God! the terror of Thy rising frown
 Mantles the universe with more than night!
 Each Kingdom, like a childless Rachel, mourns.
 A power of Darkness, on the wings of death,
 Hath travell'd earth with pestilential speed,
 And left but havoc to declare his flight!—
 How many tombs this year hath dug! what homes
 Are fill'd with desolation's fearful calm!
 The chairs are vacant where the forms we loved
 So oft reposed,—where *still* their semblance chains
 Our fix'd and fond delusion!—in the streets,
 Like silent mourners in a talking crowd,
 Cold mansions tenantless and still remain,
 From whose glad chambers rush'd the household
 tones

That made sweet music to a social mind!
 And many a garden, whose luxuriant green
 And laurell'd bowers the sunbeams loved to grace,
 In weedy ruin is decaying now :—
 The hands it welcomed with rewarding bloom
 Are iced by death, and ne'er can tend it more!

And thou, lone sharer of a widowed lot!
 Where is the language, though a seraph hymn'd
 The poetry of heaven,—to picture thee,
 Doom'd to remain on desolation's rock,
 And look for ever where the past lies dead!
 What is the world to thy benighted soul?
 A dungeon!—save that there thy children's tones
 Can ring with gladness its sepulchral gloom.
 Placid, and cold, and spiritually pale,
 Art thou; the lustre of thy youth is dimm'd,
 The verdure of thy spirit o'er!—in vain
 The beaming eloquence of day attracts
 The heart's communion with creation's joy;
 Like twilight imaged on a bank of snow,
 The smile that waneth o'er thy marble cheek