

How many reel'd forth their fury to wreak  
 On some suff'ring child, or some partner meek !  
 How many impell'd by the liquid flame,  
 Commenc'd a career of sorrow and shame !

The *King*, with his train, reach'd the river's side,  
 While the moonbeams silver'd the rippling tide,  
 Peaceful and calm stream'd the beautiful light,  
 From the pale fair queen of dim, thoughtful night ;  
 Soft—pure—serene ! as if frail man to win  
 From the foul dominion of blighting sin ;  
 To woo, by her beauty, his thoughts above,  
 To the throne of eternal Mercy and Love !

All silent and lone was the river's side ;  
 But *Alcohol* soon in the distance descried  
 A victim approaching, with frantic tread,  
 And gesture, to rouse both pity and dread :  
 'Twas a female form in youth's early prime,  
 Blighted by guilt, yet untouch'd by time ;  
 Though a shatter'd ruin, the eye could trace  
 Many a vestige of beauty and grace.

'Twas appalling to gaze on a form so young,  
 With shame and remorse, and suffering wrung :—  
 To behold the tearless and frenzied eyes,  
 And the bosom lab'ring with stifled sighs :—  
 To list to the broken, unearthly tone,  
 In which the poor outcast breath'd forth her moan ;  
 To think of the withering strife within,  
 The desolate heart of this child of sin !

"Receive me," she cried, "oh ! thou watery bed !  
 Refuse not to pillow my guilty head,  
 I can bear no longer the scorching pain  
 That burns at my heart, and kindles my brain ;  
 Oh, mother ! 'tis long since I breath'd thy name ;  
 'Tis too pure to dwell on the lip of shame ;  
 Ah ! how gladly would'st thou have died to save  
 Thy child from a drunkard's dishonour'd grave !"